

**Investigating the Translation of Euphemism in the  
Quran from Arabic into English**

**OSAMA ABDULRAHMAN ALQAHTANI**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Liverpool John  
Moores University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**July 2017**

## Abstract

This study investigated the accuracy and quality across five different translations of the Quran from Arabic into English, focusing on euphemism. It evaluated the degree of faithfulness or deviation in meaning from the original and corroborated whether this is due to the translating approach or inadequate understanding of the meaning of Quranic text. It assessed the main features of euphemistic expressions in the Quran, how euphemistic expressions have been translated, and provided recommendations on how to improve the translation of euphemistic expressions in the Quran.

Throughout its long history, translation and translation studies have never been free from conflicting views. Translation is one of the most researched topics and no other issue has preoccupied theorists and practitioners as much as the translation debate which has brought about a split of views, specifically into those who claim that translation is an art and those who believe that translation is a science. Each camp puts forward unrealistic expectations of what translation is and what it can achieve. Despite the boom in translation studies over the last decades which has provided interesting and fresh insights, it remains an area which has little theoretical base and very few research landmarks. Translation has rarely managed to rise above mere comparative analysis of language pairs, examining their cross linguistic and cultural differences. Translation approaches, procedures and techniques are not one size fits all. They may work well for Indo-European languages but may not for Semitic languages, for instance. They are often prescriptive, abstract and lack practical implications.

Highly expressive and colourful components of any language are often deliberately substituted by euphemistic expressions. Euphemism is thus a purposeful act of softening existing terms or expressions with neutral, courteous and 'clean' words. Euphemism is said to be a form of deception. This study examined the translation of euphemism in the Quran focusing on the English versions of the Quran by Abdel Haleem, Khan and Al-Hilali, Yusuf Ali, Arberry, and Pickthall. It was found that translators often underestimate the complexity of translation, particularly the translation of euphemism in the Quran

Based on the nature of the problem and the research questions, the method adopted in this study used a qualitative approach starting with text based analysis of a broad sample of euphemistic expressions from the five selected versions of translations of the Quran. This was supported by semi-structured interviews with professional translators to gauge their views and perceptions regarding the meanings of euphemism in the Quran.

The key findings suggest that there is no single method which will address all of the challenges faced by the translators of euphemisms of the Quran. Moreover, many Islamic concepts and cultural bound items are untranslatable, thus loss of some meaning is inevitable. Findings revealed that straightforward and mechanical transfer of euphemisms from the Quran produces meaningless or clumsy utterances because there is no direct correspondence between Arabic and English euphemistic expressions. Therefore, translating euphemism in the Quran goes beyond mere linguistic transfer.

This study has several practical implications. Firstly, it will benefit translators of the Quran by providing fresh insights into dealing with some of the challenges of translating euphemism from the Quran. Secondly, it will provide a platform for further research on translating euphemism as it has expanded the existing literature on translating euphemistic expressions from the Quran to benefit future researchers.

## Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I thank Allah Almighty for giving me the ability to complete this study.

I am extremely grateful to my former supervisor Dr. Karim Menacere for his support, valuable advice, and constructive suggestions which helped me and guided me throughout the journey of this research. My thanks are also extended to my current Director of Studies, Dr. Elena Teso, who continued the journey with me and gave me useful advice and guidance. My thanks are also due to Dr. Scott Foster for his continued support and encouragement.

I would like to express special thanks to my father Dr. Abdulrahman Alqahtani. He has been a role model, a mentor, and an inspiration to me throughout my life and without him I would not have been able to accomplish anything.

Many thanks are due to my lovely wife Nora and my beautiful children Abdulrhman and Nawaf for their love, patience, encouragement, and continuous support.

Last but not least, a thank you to all my friends who helped me with their kind advice and support.

## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgments .....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
List of Tables .....	ix
List of Figures .....	x
Abbreviations .....	xi
Transliteration Table.....	xii
Chapter One.....	1
Introduction .....	1
1.1 Purpose of the Study .....	1
1.2 Background of the study.....	2
1.2.1 An overview of the key literature .....	3
1.2.2 Rationale for translating the Quran .....	6
1.3 Statement of the problem.....	10
1.4 Significance of the study .....	14
1.5 Research Objectives:.....	14
1.6 Research Questions: .....	15
1.7 Research Design .....	15
1.8 Structure of the study.....	16
1.9 Summary.....	18
Chapter Two .....	19
The place and importance of Arabic in the Quran .....	19
2.1 Introduction .....	19
2.2 The Arabic language.....	19
2.3 Varieties of Arabic.....	20
2.4 The Quran .....	20
2.5 A brief history of the translation of the Quran .....	22
2.6 (Un)translatability of the Quran .....	24
2.7 Summary.....	27
Chapter Three.....	28
The field of Translation Studies.....	28
3.1 Introduction .....	28
3.2 The discipline of Translation Studies .....	28
3.3 Art vs. Science debate.....	30
3.4 Methods of translation.....	33
3.4.1 Word-for-word (Literal) translation .....	36
3.4.2 Sense-for-sense (Free) Translation .....	39
3.5 Invisibility in translation .....	40
3.5.1 Advantages and disadvantages of Domestication and Foreignisation .....	42
3.5.2 A critical assessment .....	44

<b>3.6 The notion of equivalence.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>3.6.1 A critical assessment.....</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>3.6.2 Interpretations on equivalence and translation .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>3.6.3 Limitations of equivalence .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>3.7 Functional theories of translation .....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>3.7.1 Text types approach and the Integrated Approach .....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>3.7.2 Translational action Approach .....</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>3.7.3 Skopos Theory .....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>3.7.4 Functional model of Text Analysis .....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>3.7.5 Concluding remarks.....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>3.8 Summary.....</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Chapter Four.....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Understanding Euphemism in English and Arabic.....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>4.1 Introduction .....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>4.2. Defining Euphemism in English .....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>4.2.1 Euphemisms as a linguistic tool.....</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>4.2.2 Types of Euphemisms .....</b>	<b>76</b>
4.2.2.1 Abstraction .....	77
4.2.2.2 Indirection .....	77
4.2.2.3 Litotes .....	78
4.2.2.4 Mispronunciation.....	78
4.2.2.5 Modification.....	78
4.2.2.6 Personification .....	78
4.2.2.7 Slang.....	79
<b>4.3 Euphemism in Arabic.....</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>4.3.1 al-Knayh,t as a Euphemistic Tool .....</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>4.3.2 al-T'ryd as a Euphemistic Tool .....</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>4.3.3 al-Tltf as a Euphemistic Tool.....</b>	<b>88</b>
4.3.3.1 Antonyms.....	91
4.3.3.2 Circumlocutions .....	91
4.3.3.3 Remodeling.....	91
4.3.3.4 Ellipsis.....	92
4.3.3.5 Understatement and overstatement .....	92
<b>4.4 Summary.....</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>Chapter Five .....</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>Methodology and Methods.....</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>5.1 Introduction .....</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>5.2 Purpose and importance of research.....</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>5.3 Distinguishing Methodology and Methods.....</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>5.4 The importance of methodological assumptions in research .....</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>5.5 Key research philosophies: positivism and interpretivism .....</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>5.5.1 Positivism .....</b>	<b>103</b>
5.5.1.2 Criticism of positivism .....	106
<b>5.6 Interpretivism .....</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>5.7 Data Collection Instruments .....</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>5.7.1 Quantitative vs. qualitative research methods .....</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>5.7.2 Quantitative approach .....</b>	<b>112</b>

5.7.3 Qualitative research approach.....	113
5.8 Research methodology of the study .....	119
5.8.1 Purpose of research.....	121
5.8.2 Justification for selecting exploratory research for this study ...	122
5.9 The research philosophy selected for this study .....	124
5.10 Content analysis as a form of textual analysis .....	127
5.10.1 Advantages and limitations of content analysis .....	129
5.10.2 Content analysis adopted in this study .....	130
5.10.3 Aims of Content Analysis .....	134
5.10.4 The structure of the chapter on content analysis .....	134
5.11 Justification for the selection of the sample of euphemisms used in this study .....	135
5.12 Steps used for analysing the data.....	136
5.13 Interviews as a data collection method .....	138
5.13.1 Criteria for selecting qualitative semi-structured interview in this study .....	141
5.13.2 Interview themes and questions .....	143
5.13.3 Selection of participants.....	143
5.14 Conducting Interviews.....	144
5.14.1 Access .....	144
5.14.2 Reliability .....	145
5.14.3 Validity.....	145
5.14.4 Analysis of interviews.....	145
5.15 Ethical considerations .....	146
5.16 Summary .....	147
 Chapter Six .....	 148
Data Analysis and Discussion .....	148
6.1 Introduction .....	148
6.2 Interview procedure .....	149
6.3 Participants' profiles and selection criteria.....	149
6.4 Nature and source of Interview questions.....	150
6.5 Discussion of interview findings .....	151
6.5.1 Theme One: Translators' responses regarding quantity and quality of the English translations of the Quran .....	151
6.5.2 Theme Two: Translators' responses regarding accessibility and challenges of the Quran in translation.....	157
6.5.3 Theme Three: Translators' responses regarding the challenges of translating figurative meaning in the Quran.....	161
6.5.4 Interviewees comments on a sample of translations of euphemisms .....	167
6.6 Summary of interview data analysis .....	172
6.7 Analysis of the translation of euphemisms in the Quran.....	177
6.8 Verse 1: Q 2:187 .....	179
6.8.1 Euphemism 1 .....	179
6.8.2 Euphemism 2.....	182
6.8.3 Euphemism 3.....	183
6.8.4 Euphemism 4.....	185

6.9 Verse 2: Q 2:197 .....	187
6.9.1 Euphemism 5.....	187
6.10 Verse 3: Q 2:222 .....	189
6.10.1 Euphemism 6.....	189
6.10.2 Euphemism 7.....	190
6.10.3 Euphemism 8.....	191
6.11 Verse 4: Q 2:223 .....	192
6.11.1 Euphemism 9 and 10 .....	193
6.12 Verse 5: Q2:226 .....	194
6.12.1 Euphemism 11 and 12 .....	195
6.13 Verse 6: Q2:230 .....	197
6.13.1 Euphemism 13.....	197
6.14 Verse 7 and 8: Q2:236 and 237 .....	199
6.14.1 Euphemism 14 and 15 .....	199
6.15 Verse 9: Q3:47 .....	200
6.15.1 Euphemism 16.....	200
6.16 Verse 10: Q4:15 .....	201
6.16.1 Euphemism 17.....	201
6.17 Verse 11: Q4:21 .....	203
6.17.1 Euphemism 18.....	203
6.18 Verse 12: Q4:23 .....	204
6.18.1 Euphemism 19.....	204
6.19 Verse 13: Q4:24 .....	205
6.19.1 Euphemism 20.....	205
6.20 Verse 14: Q4:25 .....	207
6.20.1 Euphemism 21 and 22 .....	207
6.21 Verse 15: Q4:43 .....	209
6.21.1 Euphemism 23.....	209
6.22 Verse 16: Q7:189 .....	211
6.22.1 Euphemism 24.....	211
6.23 Verse 17: Q12:23 .....	212
6.23.1 Euphemism 25 and 26 .....	212
6.24 Verse 18: 12:24 .....	214
6.24.1 Euphemism 27.....	214
6.25 Verse 19: 58:3.....	215
6.25.1 Euphemism 28.....	216
6.26 Verse 20: Q4:43 .....	217
6.26.1 Euphemism 29.....	217
6.27 Verse 21: Q5:75 .....	218
6.27.1 Euphemism 30.....	218
6.28 Verse 22: Q7:26 .....	220
6.28.1 Euphemism 31.....	220
6.29 Verse 23: Q24:30 .....	221
6.29.1 Euphemism 32.....	221
6.30 Verse 24: Q24:58 .....	222

6.30.1 Euphemism 33.....	222
6.31 Verse 25: Q23:13 .....	223
6.31.1 Euphemism 34.....	223
6.32 Summary.....	224
Chapter Seven .....	226
Conclusion and Recommendations .....	226
7.1 Introduction .....	226
7.2 Linking key literature to the findings of this study.....	227
7.3 Common flaws of the five assessed translations .....	230
7.4 Key findings from the qualitative survey.....	232
7.5 Key findings based on the study objectives .....	234
7.6 Recommendations .....	237
7.7 Contribution to knowledge.....	240
7.8 Limitations of the study.....	241
7.9 Areas for future research .....	242
References.....	243
Appendix 1: Interview themes .....	260

## List of Tables

Table A 1.1 Translations selected for the purpose of this study.....	8
Table B 5.1 Advantages and disadvantages of positivism and interpretivism .....	110
Table C 5.2 Strengths and weaknesses of positivism and interpretivism .....	111
Table D 5.3 Comparison of features of quantitative and qualitative approaches .....	117
Table E 6.1 Interviewees' profiles .....	150
Table F 6.2 Themes and findings of the interviews .....	171

## List of Figures

Figure 5.1 Categories of euphemism in the Quran.....	8
Figure 5.2 Sub-categories of euphemisms of moral decency in the Quran.....	110
Figure 5.3 Sub-categories of euphemisms of hardships in the Quran.....	111
Figure 5.4 Structure of the analysis chapter.....	117

## Abbreviations

<b>SL</b>	<b>Source Language</b>
<b>TL</b>	<b>Target Language</b>
<b>ST</b>	<b>Source Text</b>
<b>TT</b>	<b>Target Text</b>
<b>CE</b>	<b>Common Era</b>
<b>AD</b>	<b>Anno Domini</b>
<b>BC</b>	<b>Before Christ</b>
<b>MSA</b>	<b>Modern Standard Arabic</b>

## Transliteration Table

The following transliterations are adapted from Encyclopedia of Islam.

ع	,	ع	‘
ا	a	غ	gh
ي	i	ف	f
و	u	ق	ḳ
أ	a	ك	k
ب	b	ل	l
ت	t	م	m
ث	th	ن	n
ج	dj	ه	h
ح	ḥ	و	w
خ	kh	ي	y
د	d	آ	ā
ذ	dh	ة	at
ر	r	لا	lā
ز	z	ال	al
س	s		
ش	sh		
ص	ṣ		
ض	ḍ		
ط	ṭ		
ظ	ẓ		
Long Vowels			
أ	ā		
و	ū		
ي	ī		

# Chapter One

## Introduction

### 1.1 Purpose of the Study

There has been a growing interest in translation studies over the last decade (Gile 2010, Gillespie 2011, Parker 2010, Baker 2010, Pym, 2010, Munday 2012, Narasimhan 2013, Wright 2013, Cronin 2013, Bermann and Porter, 2014, etc.). Recent world events have also driven the demand and the need for translation to promote better understanding and closer cultural ties among peoples of the world, no more so than Arabic, which has been translated on a massive scale particularly in matters related to Islamic studies. This study aims to investigate the accuracy and quality across five different translations of the Quran from Arabic into English, focusing on euphemism as a rhetorical device. It will evaluate the degree of faithfulness or deviation in meaning from the original and ascertain whether this is due to the translating approach or inadequate understanding of the meaning of Quranic text. It will also assess the main features of euphemistic expressions in the Quran, how euphemistic expressions have been translated, and provide recommendations on how to improve the translation of euphemistic expressions in the Quran.

Interpreting and analysing data across language boundaries, using qualitative research instruments such as content analysis and text analysis, this research seeks to understand how the translators approach and deal with the language

mind set, translating processes, and cross-language meanings regarding the divine word. It is an area that has had little research attention and addresses an issue of growing significance. It can potentially contribute to clearing up some of the misunderstanding and misconceptions found in the Quran in English.

## **1.2 Background of the study**

Translation as a research topic has generated considerable interest and received plenty of attention from both academics and practitioners. Translation is not new; it has a long history. Throughout the centuries, speakers of different languages communicated with the help of translators/ interpreters. A much-quoted line attributed to the French author Valery Larbaud suggests: *The oldest profession in the world is not the one you think, it is that of the translator.* As a consequence of its longevity, there is a plethora of approaches to understanding and defining translation. Translation studies has reached prominence in the field of research which has helped boost communication in government, business, human resource services and international relations. This is the golden age of translation where translation has made a positive contribution to humanity from Harry Potter to the latest technological or medical breakthrough.

Translators have always been needed to break down language barriers and translation as a topic of study may be considered as 'over-researched', as evidenced by the broad literature that already exists. It could be argued that there is little left to say. Yet translation involving Arabic remains under-

researched. Zethsen (2009: 810) also indicates that there is a research gap that needs to be addressed:

*We need much more empirically-based research to provide a thorough and comprehensive description of intralingual translation and of the similarities and differences between intralingual and interlingual translation.*

Translation plays an invaluable role in bringing the world closer and in enhancing humanity's identification with global citizenship yet translation studies has generated several polemical debates. Snell-Hornby (2006) states that the introduction of machine translation in the 1950's and great linguistic and technological progress has brought translation theory to the fore. Gentzler (2001:187) also states "*the nineties could be characterised as an era which witnessed a boom in translation theory.*" Most existing debates focus on the translator's relationship to the text and on the function of the target text within a socio-cultural context, but authors such as Bassnett (2002) and Venuti (2008) focus on the position of the translator. Thus the boom in translation studies has generated many controversies. Some claim that translation is an impossible task particularly when dealing with sensitive texts such as Biblical or Quranic discourse or in terms of identity and culture references. Others argue that translation has too many flaws whereby loss of information is inevitable.

### **1.2.1 An overview of the key literature**

Although, translating the Quran from Arabic into other languages is fraught with difficulties and has always been viewed with suspicion, there has been a proliferation of translations of the Quran over the last two decades. For many

Arabic and non-Arabic native speakers, the Quran is an extremely difficult text to grasp, especially in translation. Even for those who have spent years studying the Arabic language, the Quran may seem a disorderly, inaccurate, illogical and repetitive text. However, Murata and Chittick (2006: xiv-xix) reject these claims and stress that the Quran is *"undoubtedly one of the most extraordinary [texts] ever put down on paper, precisely, because it is extraordinary, it does not follow people's expectations as to what a book should be."*

The upsurge in translations of the Quran does not mean better quality. Many still are translated in a language that is either ambiguous or difficult to understand. Of course, producing a translation of the Quran which is accessible and user friendly to all readers is easier said than done. Translation is not a matter of words only: it is a matter of making understandable a whole culture. A consistent, logical and coherent version of the Quran in translation reflecting the original is the goal in theory, but, in practice, translators inevitably leave their marks on the translation in their attempts to serve various ideological purposes. This study argues that the Quranic text in translation can never be the finished product; it will never be the real deal. It is always second best. Mir (1989:1) echoes the same view by suggesting that being easily readable and enigmatic at the same time, is what makes the Quran unique and timeless. He explains that the Quran has a small vocabulary constituted by a relatively limited number of Arabic roots.

*The Qur'an has a small vocabulary. According to one computation, the total number of Arabic roots used in the Qur'an is 1702. This might suggest that, from the point of view of language, the Qur'an is*

*a simple enough book to read and understand. In a sense the Qur'an is quite easy to follow, and its small vocabulary does facilitate one's understanding of it. But a serious student soon realises that the language of this book is only deceptively simple. As is testified by the scores of volumes that exist on Qur'anic syntax and grammar alone, almost every Qur'anic verse presents one or more linguistic problem that claims attention and demands a solution. It is only on close study of the Qur'anic language that one begins truly to appreciate its richness and complexity.'*

The conclusion that can be drawn is that, in terms of form and content, the Quran is a simple enough book to read, to follow and to understand, but after an in-depth examination of the Quranic language, it clearly shows its depth and complexity. Translation of the Quran can never be communication between equals. Gain and loss of linguistic, rhetorical devices and cultural features are inevitable. The Quranic text presents various challenges of translation, not simply because of its multifaceted and multidimensional language, but also because of its divine origin; it is not a human creation. For that reason, unlike Modern Arabic which has evolved and been adapted over time, transformed by loan words and borrowing from dominant global languages such as English and French, the Arabic of the Quran is static and has remained an invariable and everlasting language. Its archaic, classic and timeless nature makes the Holy Book a difficult text to read and translate.

Finally, the cliché that all translations are flawed, because words never carry the same meaning or have the same tones and associations in different languages has become generally accepted. However, this is further complicated in the case of translating the Quran which as the 'divine word of

God', calls into question any translation. Translations are challenged not just in terms of their accuracy and fluency but also in terms of authority, legitimacy and translatability. Such questions continue to generate heated debates, even though the Quran has been translated into many languages.

### **1.2.2 Rationale for translating the Quran**

There are multiple reasons for translating the Quran. Firstly, the most pressing need is to provide all Muslims and non-Muslims who do not speak or read Arabic with access to the word of God. God sent the Holy Quran to all people on this earth; it is not exclusive to Arabic speakers. As the majority of Muslims are non-Arabic speakers, their religiosity and spirituality is heavily reliant upon the understanding of the Quran in translation in their own language. Thus Islam is a universal and all-inclusive concept, and the Prophet Muhammad was sent as a Messenger to the whole world, regardless of language, colour, race, etc. وما أرسلناك إلا رحمة للعالمين (Wamâ arsalnâka illâ rahmatan lil'âlameena) (You [Prophet] were sent as a mercy to all humanity). Secondly, in light of the current negative media projection of Islam, a good translation of the Quran helps dispel some of the misconceptions and inaccuracies.

Thus, if the Quran in translation is indistinguishably related to reinforcing the Islamic faith, then, there is a need for translators to produce a version of the Quran that makes clear sense and is as intelligible as in the language of the original, that it may be understood even by the layperson. The Quran was intended to be easily understood, yet the majority of current versions are difficult to comprehend in far too many passages. It can be argued that loss of

meaning in translation is often caused by differences in thought processes and this no more so than in the translation of the Quran in English.

Despite the rapid growth in translation studies over the last decade focusing mainly on Indo-European languages, works on Arabic and its translation remain insignificant. There is a particular shortage regarding studies and research about Quranic text compared to the number of translation studies on the Bible. It can be argued, however, that the existing translations of the Quran do not do justice to both content and to the spirit of the original. In fact, the Quranic text in translation today, often projects a false image and reinforces negative perceptions of Islam.

The use of linguistic and rhetorical features challenges the translators of the Holy Quran, especially when translating such literary devices as metaphor, assonance, epithet, irony, repetition, polysemy, metonymy, and simile. Against this backdrop, this study compares and critically analyses five popular English translations of the Holy Quran. The following table shows the five translations which were selected based on the criteria of whether the translator's mother tongue was Arabic or not in order for the research to have a representative sample of the different variables of the existing translations.

Table A 1.1 Translations selected for the purpose of this study

<b>Translator</b>	<b>Date of publication</b>	<b>Date of first publication</b>	<b>Publishers and place of publication</b>	<b>Title of Translation</b>
Abdel Haleem, M. A. S.A	2010	2004	Oxford University Press	<i>The Quran: a new translation</i>
Khan and Al-Hilali	2011	2007	Maktaba Dar-us-Salam. Al Madinah Al –Munawwarah. Saudi Arabia	<i>Interpretation of The Meaning of The Noble Quran</i>
Ali, A. Y	2013	1977	Amana Publications. United States	<i>The meaning of the Holy Qur'an</i>
Arberry, J. A	2008	1955	Oxford University press.	<i>The Koran Interpreted: a translation</i>
Pickthall, M. M	2006	1996	Amana Publications. United States	<i>The Meaning of the Glorious Quran: Text and Explanatory Translation</i>

The above table represents some of the most referred to translations of the Quran in English. It can be noted that the most recent publications of each translation have been used for the purpose of this study in order to ensure that the edition used in the analysis underwent numerous processes of editing. It is also worth mentioning that some of the translation were published by different publishers at different dates such as the translation by Ali which was first published in (1934), also the translation by Arberry which was first published in (1955) and Pickthall's translation which was first published in (1930). This study aims to evaluate the issue of accuracy and fluency and assesses the quality of translation focusing on euphemistic expressions. It will highlight the

shortcomings and weaknesses and will discuss the different strategies deployed by the various translators to achieve their purpose.

### **1.2.3 A brief history of the translators selected for this study**

Muhammad A. S. Abdel Haleem is a professor of Islamic studies at SOAS, University of London. He was born in Egypt and he learnt the Quran by heart during his childhood. He has published many works in the field of Islamic studies and the translation of the Quran. Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din bin Abdil-Qadir Al-Hilali is a Muslim scholar who was born in Morocco and he was most known for his English translations of Islamic texts such. He obtained his PhD in Arabic literature from the University of Berlin in 1940. Muhammad Muhsin Khan was born in Pakistan and he gained his degree in Medicine and surgery from the University of Punjab. He managed to translate a number Islamic text alongside Al-Hilali such the translations of the book of Sahih Al-Bukhari and the book of Al-Lulu wal Marjan in addition to the translation of the meanings of the interpretation of the Quran into English with Al-Hilali. Abdullah Yusuf Ali was an Indian scholar who obtained a Bachelor's degree in English literature from the university of Bombay and he also gained a degree in Law from the University of Cambridge. He wrote a number of books about Islam and his translation of the Quran into English is one of the most widely used translations in the English speaking countries. Arthur John Arberry was born in Portsmouth and he was educated in the University of Cambridge. He was a prolific scholar in the Arabic language and Islamic studies. His translation of the Quran into English is one of the most noticeable translations written by a non-Muslim scholar. Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall was born in London and he was considered to be a

western Islamic scholar as he was mainly famous for his translation of the Quran into English. Pickthall who was previously a Christian converted into Islam in 1917 and he was a distinguished novelist, journalist and a religious leader.

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

Translators are always faced with difficulties during the process of translating. These issues can be linguistic, grammatical, metaphorical and lexical. Several scholars have strongly argued that the translation of sensitive religious texts may lead to the distortion of divine words. Others have also argued that the translator's ideology can play a role in the manipulation of the intended message of the religious text. The Quran is the most sacred of all books for Muslims and the very nature of the Quranic discourse, alongside the challenges of the translation, ultimately leads to thought-provoking problems when it comes to translating the text faithfully into other languages. This affects the accurate communication of the message of the Quran. Therefore, the Quran has frequently been thought of as being untranslatable. The importance of a translation that transfers the word of Allah (God) faithfully makes it vital to study different translated versions of the Quran. Many translations lack consistency, while others lack quality. Some of the translators use archaic language which makes it difficult for the reader to understand, while others use a simplified language which leads to the loss of the nuances of language in the original. Cultural bound items such as euphemistic expressions pose a problem for the translators from Arabic into English. The translator is confronted with a dilemma - either to minimise the loss of meaning or sacrifice the intended purpose of the

euphemism. But when the discourse of the Quran is considered, the issue is complicated by its complex language and the multiple implicit meanings that euphemistic expressions may carry. By making a comparison between five translations of the Quran, this study aims to identify the challenges of translating euphemistic expressions, and whether the root causes of mistranslations can be attributed to the different approaches applied in the translation of euphemistic expressions or to inadequate knowledge of the source text. Below are a number of verses and their different translations to exemplify the problem:

أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِّنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ

Transliteration: Aw Ja, ahdun minkum min alghaiti.

Literal translation: If one of you comes back from feces

<b>Khan and Al-Hilali translation</b>	<b>Ali's translation</b>	<b>Pickthall's translation</b>	<b>Arberry's translation</b>	<b>Abdel Haleem's translation</b>
Or one of you comes after answering the call of nature	Or one of you cometh from offices of nature	Or one of you cometh from the closet	Or if any of you comes from the privy	Have relieved yourselves

قَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَسَاءٍ يُّوَارِي سَوْءَاتِكُمْ

Transliteration: kad anzalna 'alaykum libasan yuwary saw,atikum

Literal translation: We have bestowed upon you clothes to cover your private parts.

<b>Khan and Al-Hilali translation</b>	<b>Ali's translation</b>	<b>Pickthall's translation</b>	<b>Arberry's translation</b>	<b>Abdel Haleem's translation</b>
We have bestowed raiment upon you to cover yourselves (screen your private parts, etc.)	We have bestowed raiment upon you to cover your shame.	We have revealed unto you raiment to conceal your shame.	We have sent down on you a garment to cover your shameful parts.	We have given you garments to cover your nakedness.

وَابْيَضَّتْ عَيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْحُزَنِ

Transliteration: wabyaḍat ‘aynahu min alḥuzni.

Literal translation: And his eyes turned white because of his sorrow.

<b>Khan and Al-Hilali translation</b>	<b>Ali's translation</b>	<b>Pickthall's translation</b>	<b>Arberry's translation</b>	<b>Abdel Haleem's translation</b>
And he lost his sight because of the sorrow.	And his eyes became white with sorrow.	And his eyes were whitened with sorrow,	And his eyes turned white because of the sorrow.	His eyes went white with grief .

The above sample of translating euphemistic expressions clearly indicate that there are variations in the way euphemistic expressions have been rendered by the different translators, each putting forward vague and sometimes insensitive and awkward translations which sound unnatural in English. The translators of the Quran must convey to the TL reader the same force of the underlying euphemistic meaning, not the same quantity of words as the original. The translator naturalises and subdues the Quranic text and its

culture without distortion or deviation in meaning in order to make it accessible and familiar in the target language. It is not a question of mechanically and literally producing a stilted and often alien version in English.

The sample also shows the inconsistency in the translating approach adopted, due to the absence of a standard and universally acceptable translating technique of dealing with euphemistic expressions. The Quran in translation should be both accurate and readable (fluent): if it cannot be both it must be accurate first.

The vast differences in the understanding and interpretation of the translations of Arabic verses of the Quran often lead to the loss of meaning of such euphemised expressions. Therefore empirical research should be conducted to investigate and analyse inconsistencies and differences in translating Quranic euphemisms. As Nida and Taber (cited in Ran, 2009: 44) argue: *“translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style.”* Nida emphasises reproducing the nearest natural meaning of source language information in the target language, and stylistic characteristics of both the source language and target language is of primary importance.

To put it concisely, translating the Quran is not about producing the same as the original but it is about conveying the meaning not simply the words. It is not reproduction but creation and inspiration. This study holds the view that

translating the Quranic text requires more than linguistic competence; a vast theological knowledge is a must to avoid misinterpretation or misunderstanding, particularly with regards to euphemistic expressions.

#### **1.4 Significance of the study**

Although, there has been extensive research, discussion, analysis and evaluation regarding many topics in translation from different points of view, works on the translation of the Quran remain limited and sketchy. Most of them focus on the general features of the Quran while studies that have investigated the translation of euphemistic expressions in the Quran are rare. This has led to the misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the true message of some verses of the Quran. Therefore this study is worth undertaking as its overall aim is to investigate the issue of the translation of euphemistic expressions in the Quran, thereby contributing to the enhancement of their quality and accuracy.

#### **1.5 Research objectives:**

This study aims to achieve the following research objectives:

1. To critically review the theories and approaches to translation.
2. To analyse the quality and accuracy of the translation of euphemistic expressions in the Quran.
3. To examine the challenges and problems facing the translators of euphemistic expressions in the Quran.
4. To assess and evaluate the factors that lead to loss of meaning in the translation of euphemistic expressions in the Quran.

5. To evaluate the perceptions and views of translation professionals about the current English translations of the Quran.
6. To make recommendations based on the findings of this study on how to minimise the loss of meaning in the translation of euphemistic expressions in the Quran.

### **1.6 Research Questions:**

This study has formulated the following research questions:

1. What are the theories and approaches to translation?
2. Are euphemistic expressions in the Quran translated with accuracy and good quality?
3. What are the challenges and difficulties facing the translators of euphemistic expressions in the Quran?
4. What are the factors that lead to the loss of meaning in the translation of euphemistic expressions in the Quran?
5. What are the perceptions and views of professional translators about the current English translations of the Quran?
6. What recommendations can be made to improve the translation of euphemistic expressions in the Quran from Arabic into English?

### **1.7 Research Design**

Qualitative content analysis is an analysis that consists of techniques that are used in order to compress a lot of words of a certain text into fewer categories based on certain rules. Stemler (2001:7) states "*content analysis has been*

*defined as a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding.*” Usually, content analysis is one of the methods used in the social sciences to study content communication. It is mostly used by researchers in this field for the purpose of analysing recorded transcripts of interviews with participants. The analysis of translated texts involves the textual comparison of a translation with its original. William and Chesterman (2002:6) state *“a translation comparison deals with several translations, into the same language or different languages, of the same original.”*

This study will critically work on defining euphemistic expression in both Arabic and English, the reasons behind its formation in both languages, and the linguistic and rhetorical forms that have been adopted for its formation and translation. The approach of classifying and grouping each expression and its euphemistic use will be conducted through a qualitative content analysis approach which will trace its definitions in classical Arabic sources, and key Arabic exegetical references. The strategies and techniques used in translating euphemistic expressions will be analysed. The target text will also be examined and evaluated in order to find out the accuracy and approach used to translate euphemistic expression into English.

### **1.8 Structure of the study**

This study consists of seven chapters as follows:

**Chapter One: Introduction** - This chapter provides the background of the study which aims to investigate the quality of five translations of the Quran

focusing on how the euphemistic expressions of the Quran have been rendered from Arabic into English. It also assesses the different methods adopted by the translators. In addition, it identifies the nature of the problem that this study addresses. It sets clear research objectives and the rationale of the study.

**Chapter Two: The place and importance of Arabic in the Quran** - this chapter discusses the importance and characteristics of the Arabic language and its different varieties, focusing mainly on the type and nature of the Arabic used in the Quran. It then examines the debate regarding the Quran as a text and whether this sensitive text is translatable or as some claim is untranslatable. Finally, it discusses in brief the major historical milestones of the translation of the Quran.

**Chapter Three: Literature Review Part One** - this chapter critically reviews the literature related to translation studies in line with the research objectives. It analyses the general theories and models of translation and it also discusses the development of the studies of translation over the centuries up to the present. The theories related to translation assessment will also be clarified and discussed. It also identifies the gaps in the literature which this study aims to address.

**Chapter Four: Literature Review Part Two** - this chapter defines the concept of euphemism as a rhetorical device across English and Arabic. It will also focus on the tools and approaches applied in the translation of euphemism.

**Chapter Five: Research Methodology and Methods** - this chapter discusses the research methodology and methods that are suitable for this study. It highlights the study design and the data collection instruments chosen to evaluate the quality of five English translations of the Quran.

**Chapter Six: Data Analysis** - this chapter presents the findings of the research from the data collected through a corpus of text analyses and the interviews conducted with various translation experts.

**Chapter Seven: Conclusions and Recommendations** - this chapter presents the conclusions that have been drawn from the findings in line with the research objectives of the study. In addition, it underlines the limitations, the scope and areas for further research and finally proposes recommendations for improvement based on the findings of the study.

## **1.9 Summary**

This chapter has provided the relevant background information for this study. It has set clear research objectives, formulated the research questions, and identified the nature of the problem this study seeks to address, focusing on the challenges presented by the translation from Arabic into English of euphemistic expressions of the Quran.

## Chapter Two

### The place and importance of Arabic in the Quran

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the research context. It briefly sheds a light on the Arabic language and its different varieties, focusing mainly on the type and nature of the Arabic used in the Quran. It then examines the debate regarding the Quran as a text and whether this sacred text is translatable or, as some Islamic scholars claim, untranslatable. Finally, it discusses in brief the major historical milestones of the translation of the Quran. This chapter is pertinent because it clarifies key debatable issues associated with the translation of the Quran in line with the research objectives of this study.

#### 2.2 The Arabic language

The Arabic language is considered as one of the major world languages. The Arabic language belongs to the Semitic language family. Arabic is spoken throughout the Middle East, North Africa and the Horn of Africa. According to Baker (2011:328) "*Arabic is a southern-central Semitic language spoken by a large population in the Arab and Islamic world*". The Arabic alphabet consists of 28 letters and its writing system is from the right to the left. It is also considered as one of the worlds most used languages and it is the official language for many countries such as Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Libya and Egypt.

### **2.3 Varieties of Arabic**

Arabic is generally divided into three varieties: Classical Arabic, Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and Spoken Arabic (Menacere 2009). Classical Arabic is the form of Arabic found in the Quran. Awad (2005:29) states that classical Arabic is the language of the Quran and it “*presents difficulties beyond those encountered in most foreign languages owing to its style and complex structure*”. Modern standard Arabic is the language of literature, media and education. Books, magazines, newspapers, official documents, street signs and shop signs are all written in Modern Standard Arabic and it is also used in education. The language is the same across the Arab world. Boudelaa and Wilson (2010:482) define MSA as “*the language used for written and formal oral communication, such as broadcast news, courtroom language, and university lectures, and is generally the language of the mass media (radio, television, newspaper)*”. A number of scholars say that Spoken Arabic or regional dialect does not have an explicit set of grammar rules. There are a number of regional dialects such as Egyptian, Maghreb, Levantine and Gulf dialect.

### **2.4 The Quran**

The Quran is the holy book of Islam and it is considered to be the most important holy book for Muslims. According to a number of scholars, the word Quran is derived from the verb ‘qara’a’ which means to read. Denffer (1989:9) identifies the Quran as “*The speech of Allah, sent down upon the last Prophet Muhammad, through the Angel Gabriel, in its precise meaning and precise*

wording, transmitted to us by numerous persons (tawatur), both verbally and in writing”.

The first verses to be revealed to the Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him) were:

اقْرَأْ بِأَسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ. خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ. اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ. الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ. عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ.

سورة العلق آية ٥/١

“Recite in the name of your Lord who created- Created man from a clinging substance. Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous- Who taught by the pen- Taught man that which he knew not”. (Quran 96:1-5) (Saheeh International translation).

The Quran is considered as a miracle revealed to the prophet Mohammed in order to challenge the Arabs of his time who were highly eloquent. Some verses of the Quran show the level of challenge the Quran posed to the Arabs at the prophet's time. The following verse is an example of the powerful eloquence and value of that challenge:

قُلْ لَنْ يَجْتَمِعَ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا.

سورة النحل آية ٨٨

Say, “If mankind and the jinn gathered in order to produce the like of this Qura’an, they could not produce the like of it, even if they were to each other assistant.” (Quran.17:88) (Saheeh International translation)

There are 114 'suras' (chapters) in the Quran, each chapter is divided into 'ayas' or verses. Each chapter has a name that is usually chosen from an expression in one of the verses. The Quran consists of 6236 verses. Some chapters were revealed in Makkah while others were revealed in Madinah. The chapters that were revealed in Makkah usually promise paradise for the believers and also warn sinners of the severe punishment of hellfire. The chapters revealed in Madinah are more prosaic, informative and legalistic. These chapters also define the Islamic law (sharia).

## **2.5 A brief history of the translation of the Quran**

The first known Quranic translation took place when a number of early believers of Islam fled to Abyssinia to seek refuge at the Emperor of Axum at that time. According to Al-Barakati (2013:65) "*It was reported that when they met the Emperor of Axum, they had translated some verses from Chapter 19 (the chapter of Mariam) and recited them before him*". As stated by Islamic tradition confined in the hadith, Emperor Negus of Abyssinia got literature from Muhammad covering verses from the Qur'an (Khan, 2009). Research shows that Salman the Persian had translated verses from the Quran. He was one of the prophet's disciples and he was asked to translate Surah al-Fatihah into the Persian language (Badawi, 2010). Nevertheless, all through Prophet Muhammad's lifetime, no complete chapter from the Qur'an was ever translated into these languages nor any other (Dirks, 2011).

Andrea Arrivabene completed a Roman translation into Italian in 1550. The translation in Italian was used to develop the initial German translation by Salomon Schweigger in 1616 in Nuremberg, which in turn was used for the initial Dutch version in 1641 (Khan, 2009).

The first translation of the Quran into a western language was made by the English scholar Robertus Retenensis in the 12<sup>th</sup> century; this mediaeval Latin version was completed in 1143 and published four centuries later. A French translation was published in 1783, followed by Kasimirski's version in 1840, which was also in French (Abdul-Raof, 2010). According to Fakhry (2009) the 1955 translation of Arthur Arberry (1905-69) was considered to be the first English translation by a bona fide researcher of Islam and Arabic and someone who was regarded as being one of the key authors in the field of translation. As a Cambridge University graduate, Arberry spent quite a few years in the Middle East working on his Arabic and Persian language skills.

Some Arabic scholars of the Qur'an argue that among those Qur'an translations which found favour in Saudi Arabia, and as a result had a wide circulation, was the Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali (1872-1952) version. From its first appearance in 1935 until very lately, it was one of the most widely read English translations among Muslims. As 'Ali worked to produce a modern translation, so did Thomas Irving, a Canadian-American who had made the decision to convert to Islam, changing his name to Ta'lim 'Ali. According to Clearly (2004) even though Irving provides a valuable introduction to the Qur'an with its language, and previous translation history, his own translation is essentially flawed according to the opinion of

some scholars. Still many regard Irving as a key author despite the fact that he makes some simple linguistic mistakes.

## **2.6 (Un)translatability of the Quran**

The issue of the translation of the Quran has always been controversial. It started from the moment the Quran was introduced to people whose mother language was not Arabic. Ever since, many Muslim and non-Muslim scholars have been engaged in debates on the issue of the translatability of the Quran and whether the Quran is translatable or untranslatable.

According to Pym and Turk (2001:273), *“Translatability, inevitably coupled with untranslatability, is an operative concept in the sense that it actively helps structure an entire field of decisions and principles.”* Hatim and Munday (2004:15) define translatability as *“a relative notion that has to do with the extent to which, despite obvious differences in linguistic structure (grammar, vocabulary, etc.), meaning can still be adequately expressed across languages.* Baker (2001:273) also states, *“Translatability is mostly understood as the capacity for some kind of meaning to be transferred from one language to another without undergoing radical change.”*

Many arguments claim that the Quran is untranslatable. Pickthall in his introduction to his work of translating the Quran (2006:ix) acknowledges the question of untranslatability of the Quran. He approaches the issue by saying “It

*is the belief of the traditional Shayks<sup>1</sup> and the present writer that the Qur'an cannot be translated". He also adds "I cannot reproduce its inimitable symphony, the very sounds of which move men to tears and ecstasy.*

Badawi (1996:ix) also states " *A translation of a literary text can never capture the beauty and majesty of the original. Some translators abandon style in favour of delivering the meaning as faithfully as possible".*

Abdul-Raof (2010:1) also addressed the issue of the untranslatability of the Quran by stressing the difference between the original version of the Quran and its translation. According to him "*The translation, however, should not be looked at as a replacement of the original version of the Qur'an in Arabic". He also adds "Qur'anic expressions and structures are Qur'an bound and cannot be reproduced in an equivalent manner to the original in terms of structure, mystical effect on the reader, and intentionality of source text".*

Irving (2010:14) also agrees that the untranslatability of the Quran is a major issue as he points out "*The Qur'an - the uncreated Word of God - was revealed through the medium of a human language, namely Arabic, and it is only by reading it in the original that one may feel and enjoy its real beauty and grandeur". Irving (2010:ibid) also adds "To that extent, the Qur'an remains untranslatable, but that must not suggest that efforts should not be made to render its meaning in another language".*

---

<sup>1</sup> A man respected for his piety or religious learning.

A number of Muslim scholars consider the translations of the Quran as an explanation and interpretation; such as, Murata and Chittick (2006) who believe that the translation of the Quran is simply an explanation and an interpretation and not the original text of the Quran. They also added that the Quran has been translated a number of times into English and that every translation reflects the translator's understanding of the Quran and that none of the translations is considered to be the original Quran. They also suggest that a number of traditional scholars strongly regret the translating of the Quran for fear of any distortion that may appear in it.

According to Chesterman (1997:21-22) *"God's word remained God's word, regardless of the language it was expressed in"*. He also adds *"if you believe that you have a mission to spread this word, you quickly find yourself in a quandary. The word is holy; how then can it be changed? For translation not only substitutes one word-meaning for another but also reconstructs the structural form in which these word-meanings are embedded"*.

El-Farran (2006) suggests in his article *'The problem in translating the Noble Quran'*, that there is no fear regarding the translation of the Quran as the original Quran exists and will always exist. But he also adds *"the translation of the Quran cannot be considered as the Quran itself. It is better to call it the interpretation of the Quran from the translator's point of view"*. He also states that *"the translator is expected to commit mistakes whether he had a good intention (or bad intention)"*.

Baker (2011:227) also agrees that the Quran is untranslatable and that any translation is a form of explanation. She states “*any attempt at translating the Qur’an is essentially a form of exegesis, or at least is based on an understanding of the text and consequently projects a certain point of view: hence the preference it is given to Muslim as opposed to non-Muslim translators*”.

Tibawi (2004) in his article *Is The Qur’an Translatable? Early Muslim opinion* clearly indicates that he opposes any attempt to translate the Quran into other language. He claims that Arabic is a very rich language and that its vocabulary is concise and full of metaphor and it cannot be rivaled by any other language in this sense.

Tibawi (2004:ibid) also raises two very important questions regarding the translation of the Quran “(a) *Is it permissible to translate the Arabic Qur’an into another tongue?* (b) *Is it lawful to recite the translated Qur’an in prayer?*”

## **2.7 summary**

In this chapter the Arabic language has been explained and its different varieties have been identified. A brief introduction to the Quran and a brief history of its translation among different time periods has been discussed. The notion of the translatability and untranslatability of the Quran was examined. This examination contained a detailed discussion of the points of view regarding that issue. This study takes the view that everything is translatable; however, loss of meaning in the translation of the Quran is unavoidable.

## Chapter Three

### The field of Translation Studies

#### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter critically reviews a variety of theoretical aspects related to the field of translation. It provides an introduction to the discipline of translation studies and examines the development of translation studies up to the present time.

#### 3.2. The discipline of Translation Studies

Throughout history, translation has made inter-linguistic communication possible between people. Translation studies as a research area has generated much interest from both practitioners and academics. The proliferation of translation studies has produced many strategies, concepts and approaches providing useful insights and benefits for both researchers and professional translators. However, many of the techniques and approaches are too abstract and lack empirical evidence. The literature on translation studies covers several key debates that will be highlighted and assessed in this study.

Translation studies as a fully-fledged topic area has come a long way. It has gained popularity and has expanded its scope. As Baker (1998) points out that the field of translation studies refers to the academic discipline which studies

the area of translation in general and this includes literary and non-literary translation alongside different forms of oral interpreting in addition to dubbing and subtitling. Translation studies emerged from the prescriptive theories that had dominated both theory and practice. This clearly illustrates the theorists' approach to prescribe translation skills and the rules of translation. This study reviews and evaluates the methods and elements of translation studies' approaches, theories and techniques to determine their importance to translation practice and translation theories.

There are a number of definitions of translation, which is understandable as there are vast differences in the materials to be translated, and the needs of the target language readers/receptors are also varied and diverse.

Baker (1998) states that the academic discipline which studies the field of translation was identified and denoted by different names during various eras. Thus translation means different things to different people and translation has a huge influence in the lives of people on a daily basis. Hatim and Munday, (2004:3) claim, "*Translation is a phenomenon that has a huge effect on everyday life*".

Translation is a slippery term as it is difficult and elusive to define. Translation has been defined with different perspectives and orientations, according to the person, the text and the approach applied. Reiss (2000) defines translation as a method of communication between two languages and the main objective usually is to produce a TT that is functionally equivalent to a ST.

Farghal (2012:26) points out that:

*Translation is an age-long activity which is necessitated by the fact that groups belonging to different language communities have been coming into contact with one another for social, economic, cultural and political reasons, among others, since the dawn of history.*

This clearly shows that unlike other fields of knowledge, the field of translation studies was first a merely practical field and it is only recently that it also became a theoretical domain. This, however, made it very difficult to develop a complete theory for the field of translation studies and this is due to the fact that this field is divergent and it is linked to other fields of knowledge.

### **3.3. Art vs. Science debate**

Translation is never without controversial views and translation theorists have argued whether translation is an art or a science. Zaixi (1997) states that translation is a method, a process, and a matter of conveying and transferring. Its skills and technology can be developed and learned and it usually involves the use of language in an innovative manner therefore this means it is an art Chukovskii (1984:93) does not consider translation as a science but argues that it is not just an art but also a high level of art. Zaixi (1997:340) on the other hand claims that the theoretical aspect of translation studies has to be treated as a science because it is “*a system of knowledge about translation*”.

Newmark (1991) is of the view that translation is a craft and art and not a science and in some contexts it is only a matter of taste.

Baker (2011:4) points out that translation is an independent academic discipline which like any new emerging discipline it relies on the “*findings and theories*” of various related scientific fields in order to “*develop and formalise its own methods*”..” According to Munday (2012:8-9) the term translation falls under three categories;

1. *intralingual (within one language; example: paraphrase and re-wording)*
2. *interlingual (between two languages)*
3. *intersemiotic (which is between systems)*

On the other hand, Hatim and Mason (1997) view translation from a cultural perspective as a mean of communication which tries to convey in between cultural and linguistic boundaries another method of communication which might have been planned for various purposes and different target audiences.

Nevertheless, Catford (1978) believes that translation as a practice is always moving in a single direction as it is always performed from a SL into a TL. Further more Catford (1978) defines translation as the act of replacing a textual material in a SL by using equivalent textual materials in the TL

Nida (1969:12) considers translation as a ‘product’ and he claims that translation must: “*aim primarily at reproducing the message. To reproduce the message, one must make a good many grammatical and lexical adjustments.*”

On the other hand, Ghazala (2008:1) describes translation as: "*all the processes and methods used to render and/or transfer the meaning of the source language text into the target language as closely, completely and accurately as possible*".

Translation is an important element in the lives of people and Arabs have recognised the importance of translation for centuries. This was a result of the relations that linked them to their neighbours such as the Persians and the Romans.

There have been a number of attempts to define translation studies from Arabic speaking scholars' perspectives. Mansour (2006:27) defines the concept of translation from an Arabic perspective:

"الترجمة هي: نقل الكلام من لغة إلى أخرى بطريقة صحيحة نحواً ومعنى ، دون نقصان أو زيادة يخل بالمضمون."

*Translation is: the transfer of speech from one language into the other accurately in terms of grammar and meaning without any omissions or additions that might change the meaning of the context of the ST. (My translation).*

Essa (2013:1) defines translation as:

"الترجمة هي نقل الكلام من لغة إلى أخرى. وهي التعبير عن معنى كلام في لغة بكلام آخر من لغة أخرى، مع الوفاء بجميع معانيه ومقاصده".

Translation is the transfer of speech from a language into another. It is expressing the meaning of words in a language into another language, and fulfilling its purposes and meanings. (My translation).

Owji's (2013:1) view of translation is: *"a complicated task, during which the meaning of the source- language text should be conveyed to the target-language readers."*

To summarise, the debate seems to be ongoing over whether translation is an art or a science. Nevertheless, this thesis is of the position that irrespective of whether it is considered to be a science or an art, the most important thing is that a good translation must achieve the same functions in the TL as the original did in the SL.

### **3.4 Methods of translation**

Translation is used to transfer written or spoken SL texts to the same equivalent in the TL. The aim of translation is to reproduce different kinds of texts such as religious literary and scientific texts into another language and consequently making the translated texts available to more readers. According to Ghazala (2008:3):

*A method of translation can be defined as 'the way we translate', whether we translate literally or freely, the words or the meanings, the form or the content, the letter or the spirit, the manner or the matter, the form or the message, the direct meaning or the implied meaning, in context or out of context.*

There are a number of methods associated with translation. Some of these methods are:

1. Word-for-word translation

2. Sense-for-sense translation
3. Semantic translation
4. Idiomatic translation
5. Communicative translation

This study will focus on the 'word-for-word and 'sense-for-sense' methods of translation, as they are the commonly used methods in the translation of sacred texts. Many Islamic scholars have refused and rejected the method of word for word translation in the translation of the Quran. They argue that this form of translation does not transfer the intended meaning and message of the Quran from Arabic into the TL.

There has been a debate over word-for-word and sense-for-sense methods, and this debate has been long-running. Munday (2012:29) says that it is: "*the central recurring theme of 'word-for-word' and 'sense-for-sense' translation, a debate that has dominated much of translation theory.*"

Munday (2012:35) looks at the history of the methods of translation adopted in the Arab world as he states:

*The 'literal' and 'free' poles surface once again in the rich translation tradition of the Arab world, which created the great centre of translation in Baghdad. There was intense translation activity in the Abbasid period (750-1250 CE), encompassing a range of languages and topics.*

Baker and Hanna (2012:333) elaborated more on the methods used in the Abbasid period:

*Two methods of translation seem to have been adopted during this period (Rosenthal 1975:17). The first, associated with Yuhanna Ibn al-Bitriq and Ibn Naima al Himsi, was highly literal and consisted of translating each Greek word with an equivalent Arabic word and, where none existed, borrowing the Greek word into Arabic. This method was not successful overall and many of the translations carried out by al-Bitriq were later revised under al-Mamun, most notably by Hunayn Ibn Ishaq and al-Jawhari, consisted of translating sense for sense, creating fluent target texts which conveyed the meaning of the original without distorting the target language.*

This clearly shows that the methods of word for word translation and sense for sense translation were recognised and adopted at an early period of the Arab world. It should be pointed out that during that period one of the famous Arab scholars of that period wrote about translation and managed to discuss a theory related to translation. This scholar was Al-Jahiz who was born in Basra in 781 CE. He discussed many types of texts and the appropriate approach to the translation of such texts. He discussed the translation of books of religion containing information about God. Al Jahiz (1965:77) stated:

" هذا قولنا في كتب الهندسة، والتنجيم، والحساب، واللحون، فكيف لو كانت هذه الكتب كتب دين واخبار عن الله".

This is what we have to say on the books of geometry, astrology, and arithmetic, but what if these books were religious books and on Allah. (My translation).

This indicates how he distinguished between the approaches and methods used to translate sacred texts and the approaches and methods used to translate other types of texts.

#### **3.4.1 Word-for-word (literal) translation**

Many translation theorists agree that word-for-word (literal) translation is a translation that preserves, as much as possible, the structure and form of ST but with a great emphasis on rendering one language into another without paying any regard to the sense of the ST. Like any approach or concept, word-for-word translation is open for debate. This form of translation was primarily linked with the translation of sacred texts. In other words, this means that the word of God cannot be changed, misinterpreted, modified or tampered with.

Newmark (1988:45-46) suggests word-for-word translation is *“often demonstrated as interlinear translation, with the TL immediately below the SL words. The SL word-order is preserved and the words translated singly by their most common meanings, out of context.”*

Dickins (2002:16) is of the view that *“In literal translation, the denotative meaning of words is taken as if straight from the dictionary (that is, out of context), but TL grammar is respected.”*

The approach of word-for-word translation became a debatable topic following a number of attempts to translate the Holy Bible from Hebrew and Greek into European languages. Some of the translators of the Bible believed that the

word-for-word translation is the closest translation to the original text. They even claimed that if the translation was not literal it would not be seen as a faithful rendering of the original text. Wallace (2012:1) states: *“perhaps the number one myth about bible translation is that a word for word translation is the best kind. Anyone who is conversant in more than one language recognises that a word for word translation is simply not possible if one is going to communicate in an understandable way in the receptor language”*.

One of those in favour of word-for-word translation is Newmark (1991). He argues that the only way to be close and faithful to the original text and to render the exact meaning is through literal translation. He (1991:124) states: *“if the genius or the particular of the foreign language is to be preserved, cleanly and straight, only two procedures can preserve it - transference and literal translation.”* Newmark (1991:124) also adds, *“When you ask how close, how faithful, how true a version is in relation to the original, you can have nothing else in mind except the ‘spirit’ of the original, which is the reverse of concrete.”*

Some authors claim that word-for-word translation might only be useful in certain texts as Alhammad (2011:23) suggests: *“It may be considered as a method to create a bridge between two cultures. It may be useful in translating scientific or technical texts.”* Despite the fact that some translation theorists believe that word for word translation is the most accurate and closest to the source text, this thesis is of the view that it depends on the nature of the text type. For example if a translator is translating a medical prescription, s/he needs to translate each and every word as it is in the ST. But, in contrast, if the translator is translating a poem, it is almost impossible to approach the text from

a word-for-word translation approach, as this will not transfer the same message, rhyme, rhythm and meaning to the TT.

Even though word-for-word translation may have different terminologies to describe it, according to Barbe (1996:331) "*writers may use different terminology but the concepts appear to be the same.*" The term Formal Equivalence is one of the terms which has been used to refer to the term word-for-word translation.

Nida (1964:159) described its function as "*it focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content.*" Catford (1978) on the other hand referred to it as "Rank-bound translation". Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) called it "Direct translation", while Dryden referred to it as "Metaphrase." Catford (1978:25) is of the view that: "*Literal translation starts from a word-for-word translation, but makes changes in conformity with TL grammar, inserting additional words and changing structures at any rank.*"

To conclude, a translator of a religious text deals with a sensitive text. Therefore a translator needs to be aware of every choice s/he makes, and when to choose word-for-word translation as a method of translating a text and the justifications and reasons behind choosing a certain word or phrase. Taking the translation of the Quran as an example, it is important to point out that some Quranic words do not have a synonym in the TL and thus the translator has to translate it to the nearest possible meaning in the TL. Therefore using word-for-word translation might not be the most accurate and best choice of method in the translation of

some words and expressions in the Quran. An example is the word *taqwa* التقوى in the following verse:

(وتزودوا فإن خير الزاد التقوى)

البقرة ١٩٧

Yusuf Ali	Pickthall	Abdel Haleem	Arberry	Al-Hilali and Khan
And take a provision (with you) for the journey, but the best of provisions is <u>right conduct</u> .	So make provision For yourselves (hereafter) for the best provision is to <u>ward off evil</u> .	Provide well for yourselves: the best provision is to be <u>mindful of God</u>	And take provision; but the best provision is <u>god fearing</u> .	And take a provision (with you) for the journey, but the best provision is <u>At-Taqwa (piety righteousness)</u>

(Q2:197)

Since the underlined term has no exact equivalent in the TL it is impossible for the translators to translate the term using a word-for-word approach.

### 3.4.2 Sense-for-sense (Free) Translation

Sense-for-sense translation is a term used to define the type of translation that aims at transferring the meaning or spirit of the ST rather than rewriting the words in the ST in the TT. Shuttleworth (2014:151) defines sense-for-sense translation as: “A *general term used to describe the type of translation which emphasises transfer of the meaning or spirit of an ST over accurate reproduction of the original wording of ST. The term was originally coined in the first century BC by the Roman writers Cicero and Horace*”. Robinson (1998/2001:87) described this form of translation: “*Free translation in the history*

*of Western translation theory is a kind of taxonomical shifter, taking a variety of different forms depending on what is opposed to it.”*

Newmark (1991:46) states that: *“Free translation reproduces the matter without the manner, or the content without the form of the original.”* Munday (2012:31) also adds that: *“The sense-for-sense approach, on the other hand, allowed the sense or content of the ST to be translated.”*

Sense-for-sense translation according to Ghazala (2008) means to translate freely and without limitations. This means that the translator cannot translate the way s/he likes but the way s/he understands the ST. He states (2008:11) that: *“like literal translation, free translation has been a well-established method of translation since antiquity. Usually it is associated with translating the spirit or the message, not the letter or the form of the text”*. Ghazala (2008:12) points out that: *“all other terms used nowadays to substitute for ‘free’, such as ‘communicative’, ‘dynamic’, ‘pragmatic’, ‘creative’, and ‘idiomatic’ coincide with many of these implications”*.

The conclusion that can be drawn from the above debate on translation is that each author seems to have their view about what constitutes translation studies.

### **3.5 Invisibility in translation**

Venuti (2008) introduced the term that is now referred to as ‘invisibility’. This term is used by him to describe the translator’s role and activity in Anglo-American culture. Alhammad (2011:6) comments on Venuti’s work by stating:

*“Venuti challenges the idea of translator’s invisibility, pointing out that this idea is created, supported, and spread by Anglo-American culture”.* Venuti 2008 (cited in Munday 2012:217-218) sees invisibility as typically being produced in two ways:

- 1) *by the way translators themselves tend to translate ‘fluently’ into English, to produce an idiomatic and ‘readable’ TT, thus creating an ‘illusion of transparency*
- 2) *by the way the translated text is typically read in the target culture: A translated text, whether prose or poetry, fiction or nonfiction, is judged acceptable by most publishers, reviewers and readers when it reads fluently, when the absence of linguistic or stylistic peculiarities makes it seem transparent, giving the appearance that it reflects the foreign writer’s personality or intention or the essential meaning of the foreign text-the appearance, in other words, that the translation is not in fact a translation, but the ‘original’.*

According to Venuti (2008:14) translation is: *“the forcible replacement of the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text with a text that will be intelligible to the target audience”.* He also defines translation as: *“an interpretation that is always limited by its address to specific audiences and by the cultural or institutional situations where the translated text is intended to circulate and function”.*

Owing to the differences in cross-cultural communication, the translator, according to Schleiermacher (cited in Venuti 2008:15): *“either leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, or moves the author towards him”.*

Venuti defined these approaches as ‘domestication’ and ‘foreignisation’. These two concepts constitute his main contribution to the field of translation. Venuti (2008:15) defines the concept of domestication as “*an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values, bringing the author back home*”. On the other hand he defines the concept of foreignisation as “*an ethno deviant pressure on those values to register the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad*”.

This means that a translator needs to make a decision as to whether the translated text is translated as close as possible to the ST, which means adding a foreign flavour to the TT, or whether the text should visibly show its divergence from the ST and therefore make the text much more familiar to the reader of the target text.

Al-Harrasi (2001:25) also defines domestication and foreignisation:

*in domesticating translation, the translator adopts specific translation strategies that eliminate the strangeness of the translated text and make it conform to the expectations of the target language. In such translation, the translator becomes invisible. Foreignising translation, on the other hand, preserves the strangeness of the translation even if it requires breaking the textual conventions in the target culture.*

### **3.5.1 Advantages and disadvantages of Domestication and Foreignisation**

The debate over what translation strategy is best (domestication or foreignisation) is still ongoing among translators and linguists. Munday (2001:148) states that: “*domestication and foreignisation deal with the question of how much a translation assimilates a foreign text to the translating language*

*and culture, and how much it rather signals the differences of that text". According to Venuti (2008:19): "The terms 'domestication' and 'foreignisation' indicate fundamentally ethical attitudes towards a foreign text and culture, ethical effects produced by the choice of a text for translation and by the strategy devised to translate it".*

A major advantage of domestication is that it keeps the languages safe from the possibility of imposing strange conventions and norms. Bassnett (2002:32) clearly states: *"To attempt to impose the value system of the SL culture onto the TL culture is dangerous ground"*. Mansour (2014:30) comments on that same issue: *"However, such domestication will be at the expense of the reader's knowledge expansion and the opportunity to provide insights into the source culture; moreover, it will deprive them from enjoying the full cultural and stylistic message of the author"*. Venuti (2008:264) states: *"A translated text should be the site where linguistic and cultural differences are somehow signaled, where a reader gets some sense of a cultural other"*.

On the other hand, a major advantage of foreignisation is that it offers the target readers a chance to experience a different cultural atmosphere. An example is the word *Tayammum* in the Quran and how some translators have translated it:

فلم تجدوا ماء فتيمموا

النساء ٤٣

*"And you find no water, then perform Tayammun with clean earth and rub therewith your faces and hands."* (Q.4:43) Al-Hilali and Khan (2011)

Furthermore, those in favour of domestication claim that domesticating foreign literature preserves the norms of the source language and keeps it intact from any foreign interference or exotic additions.

### 3.5.2 A critical assessment

Venuti (2008) has made one of the most recent developments and contributions to the cultural aspect of translation studies. He mainly focuses on two areas of translation studies: the translator's manipulation of texts and the position of the translation in the target culture. Nonetheless, Venuti's contribution is limited to Anglo-American culture. Venuti's 'domestication' approach is considered to be a useful strategy for translating cultural specific items if applied to Arabic translation. Referring to religious terms is taboo or very sensitive in many cultures including the Arab culture. So if a translator comes across an expression which has a certain meaning in the SL and a different meaning in the TL, the translator then has to translate this expression according to the values of the society of the TT readers. Take the following verse as an example:

ولكم في القصاص حياة

البقرة ١٧٩

Yusuf Ali	Pickthall	Abdel Haleem	Arberry	Al-Hilali and Khan
In the law of <u>equality</u> there is (saving of) life to you	And there is life for you in <u>retaliation</u>	Fair <u>retribution</u> saves life for you	In <u>retaliation</u> there is life for you	And there is (a saving) of life for you in <i><u>Al-Qisas (the Law of Equality in punishment)</u></i>

(Q.2:179)

In such terms it is very difficult for the translator to explain to the reader the many meanings for the underlined expression within the values of both societies. Therefore, some of the translators had to make additions to the expression to make it more understandable in the TL, while others used different terminologies that do not give the exact meaning of the term in the SL. On the other hand, when a translator uses the foreignisation approach to the translation of the Quran, the translation will be less successful. This is due to the fact that when a translator applies such an approach, s/he keeps the SL values and makes them noticeable in the TL.

The foreignisation approach can take the form of literal translation as in the following examples:

ولا تقربوهن حتى يطهرن

آل عمران ٢٢٢

*“Keep away from women”*: (Q3:222) (Pickthall, 2006).

The literal meaning of the verse is that women should not have sexual contact during their menstrual period until they are purified.

فليعبدوا رب هذا البيت

قریش ٣

*“Let them worship the Lord of this House”* (Q106:3) (Saheeh International, 2012).

If the above verse is foreignised it may confuse the reader, as the reader might not understand which house is the 'House'. In this case and in this verse, The Grand Mosque in Makkah is the 'House'.

In the translation of the Quran, foreignisation can also take the form of transliteration as in;

حافظوا على الصلوات والصلوة الوسطى

البقرة ٢٣٨

*"Guard strictly (five obligatory) As-Salawat (the parayers) especially the middle Salat (i.e. the best prayer-Asr)". (Q 2:238)(Al-Hilali and Khan2011).*

In the previous verses, foreignisation took the form of transliteration by writing the Islamic term in English (Romanised) letters such as Salat and Salawat. Without a doubt, foreignisation of Islamic terms will lead to ambiguity and distortion of their original meaning.

Al-Dammad (2008) gives an example by applying the method of domestication in the translation of an example he provides in Arabic:

*"most of the Kuwaiti ruling family fled to Saudi Arabia";*

”غادرت معظم العائلة الكويتية الى السعودية“

According to Al-Dammad (ibid) this translation is domesticated because the back translation reads: *"Most of the Kuwaiti ruling family left to Saudi Arabia"*. By translating 'fled as 'left' the translator is intentionally trying to save him/her

self from any embarrassments, and this method would even be more important if the translator works or lives in Kuwait as it can also be due to the ideology of the translator. Al-Dammad's (2008) contribution which has been developed from Venuti (2008) is successfully applied in the translation into Arabic by providing a number of examples. This indicates that Venuti's work is not only applicable to Anglo-American culture but it may also be applicable to other cultures such as the Arabic language and culture.

### **3.6 The notion of equivalence**

It is important to start with some definitions in order to clarify what is meant by 'equivalence' and how translation theorists understand such a term. Shuttleworth and Cowie (2014:49) define the term equivalence or translation equivalence as: *"A term used by many writers to describe the nature and the extent of the relationships which exist between SL and TL texts or smaller linguistic units"*. Kenny (2011) considers equivalence to be a dominant concept in translation theory but also a controversial concept. Kashgary (2010:49) insists that: *"The concept of equivalence has been considered as the essence of the translation process. Almost all definitions of translation advanced by various theorists employ one form or another of this concept"*.

A number of theorists have defined the terms of equivalence such as Catford (1956), Nida and Taber (1969), Toury (1980), Koller (1995) and Pym (2010). Equivalence plays an important role in translation. For instance, it has been observed that target and source languages have ranges of equivalents from a

different level of language, including morphemes to sentences. For example, a word in the source language requires to be translated into the target language at the word level. The translation theories indicate that during translation there must be an equivalent between source language and target language. Farghal (2012:29) states that:

*The existing translation models selectively focus on different asymmetries in translation equivalence: Cultural (Casagrande 1954), Situational or Sociolinguistic (Vinay and Darbelnet 1958), Dynamic or psycholinguistic (Nida 1964), Formal or Grammatical (Catford 1965), Semiotic (Jager 1975), Textual (Van Dijk 1972; Beaugrande de 1980; Beaugrande de and Dressler 1981), Functional (Waar de and Nida 1986), and Ideational (Farghal 1994).*

Farghal (1994) argues that the previously mentioned notions of equivalence can be reduced to include formal vs. functional vs. ideational equivalence.

However, many translation theorists have challenged equivalence throughout the history of translation studies. Snell-Hornby (1995:22) clearly states that:

*equivalence is unsuitable as a basic concept in translation theory: the term equivalence, apart from being imprecise and ill-defined (even after heated debate of over twenty years) presents an illusion of symmetry between languages which hardly exists beyond the level of vague approximations and which distort the basic problems of translation.*

Nord (1997:43) is in favour of the vagueness of the notion of equivalence as she states: *“Linguistic translation theories hinge on the concept of equivalence,*

*which has been one of the most ambiguous concepts in translation studies from the start”.*

The formal/ dynamic theory of equivalence was first introduced by Nida (1964) in his book *‘Toward a Science of Translating’*. Najjar (2012:40) states that Nida’s theory: *“involves concepts borrowed from both semantics and pragmatics as well as Chomsky’s transformational generative grammar theory”*. Nida makes an attempt to present a descriptive approach that is mainly based on different contemporary studies related to communication and meaning that are also related to the issues and problems of semantic and linguistic equivalence. He also asserts that a translator should attempt to find the closest possible equivalent in the TL. He claims that there are two types of equivalence in translation: these are formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence. According to Nida (1964:159) formal equivalence focuses attention *“on the message itself, in both form and content.”* He also states that in this kind of translation, the translator is mainly concerned with equivalences such as *“poetry to poetry, sentence to sentence, and concept to concept”*. This form of translation *“aims to allow the reader to understand as much of the SL context as possible”*.

For Bassnett (2002) on the other hand, dynamic equivalence translation is concerned with the equivalent effect. Bassnett (2002:34) states: *“Dynamic equivalence is based on the principle of equivalent effect, i.e. that the relationship between receiver and message should aim at being the same as that between the original receiver and the SL message”*. Furthermore, this form

of equivalence aims according to Nida (1964:159) at “*complete naturalness of expression, and tries to relate the receptor to modes of behavior relevant within the context of his own culture*”. Bassnett (2002:34-35) gives an example to this form of equivalence taken from the Bible ‘*greeting with a holy kiss*’ that is translated as ‘*give one another hearty handshakes all round*’.

An example in Arabic to this form of equivalence is a famous line from one of Shakespeare’s sonnets: ‘*Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day*’, which is translated by many translators into Arabic as

."هل أشبهك بيوم من أيام الربيع".

The back translation of this expression is ‘*Shall I compare thee to a spring day*’. In the culture of the Arab world, a typical summer’s day is usually extremely hot and uncomfortable, therefore the theory of dynamic equivalence is adopted in order for the expression to have the equivalent effect in the TL. Farghal (2012:30) provides an example from translations of the Quran:

*Pickthall (1980) and Shakir (1983) formally render the Quranic verse*

فنظر نظرة في النجوم (الصافات ٨٨)

*{the-looked (he) a look- in the stars}*

*as ‘And he glanced a glance at the stars’ and ‘Then he looked at the stars, looking up once’. One may wonder why the two translators opted for such rendering when more functional ones such as ‘Then he cast a glance at the stars’ or ‘ Then he took a look at the stars’ are available. Apparently, driven by the authority and sanctity of the text, they considered formal equivalence a first priority.*

### 3.6.1 A critical assessment

The significance of Nida's contribution to formal and dynamic equivalence has lessened the focus away from strict word for word equivalence. Munday (2012:68) describes such a contribution as: "*crucial in introducing a receptor-based (or reader-based) orientation to translation theory*". However, both the principle of equivalent effect and the concept of equivalence have been highly criticised for a number of reasons:

1. Equivalence was still overly concerned with the word level (Lefevere 1993:7, cited in Munday 2012:68).
2. Broeck (1978:40) and Larose (1989:78) considered equivalent effect or response to be impossible.
3. From a religious perspective, which claims that the word of God is sacred and cannot be changed, trying to achieve dynamic equivalence by making necessary changes would "*verge on the sacrilegious*".

Nida's theory of equivalence is dismissed by Newmark (1981). This dismissal is based on three accounts:

- The equivalent effect will not always be attainable especially when the ST deals with cultural items not understood by the TL readers.
- The equivalent effect is not always important. This is because of text types, which according to him are, expressive, informative and vocative. Such difference in text types may entail different translation strategies.
- A dynamic equivalence based translation frequently involves a loss of meaning; this will result in many biblical metaphors being lost in such a

translation (Abu-Risha 2010).

Newmark suggested semantic and communicative translation as an alternative to Nida's theory of equivalence. According to Munday (2012:72): "*Newmark has been criticised for his strong prescriptivism, and the language of his evaluations still bears traces of what he himself calls the 'pre-linguistic era' of translation studies*".

### **3.6.2 Interpretations on equivalence and translation**

According to Dickins (2002:19) "*the many different definitions of equivalence in translation fall broadly into one of two categories: they are descriptive or prescriptive*". Descriptive equivalence according to him denotes the "*relationship between ST features and TT features that are seen as directly corresponding to one another, regardless of the quality of the TT*". On the other hand, prescriptive equivalence denotes "*the relationship between an SL expression and the canonic TL rendering of it that is required*".

Bayar (2007:163) differentiates in her work 'To Mean or not to Mean' between four different types of equivalence:

1. Formal equivalence: "*designates an area of correspondence ranging around the word, albeit involving lower units such as the phoneme or the morpheme*". She also states that transliteration, categorical correspondence such as the correspondence of 'noun to noun, verb to verb,' metre, rhythm and rhyme, are all examples of formal equivalence.

2. Semantic equivalence: this sort of equivalence relies on a number of semantic criteria such as, denotation, connotation and propositional content. Bayar (2007) provides an example of an expression which does not have the equivalent meaning in the TL and therefore may be translated by 'explanatory expression'; for example, the word 'nod' in English has no equivalent in Arabic and can be translated as: *ينحني برأسه*
3. Cultural equivalence: aims at the *"reproduction of whatever cultural features the ST holds into the TT. These vary from things specific to geographical situation, the climate, the history, the tradition, the religion, the interpersonal or inter-community social behavior, to any cultural event having an effect on the language community"*. An example of that form of equivalence and its translation from Arabic into English is: *خبر يتلج الصدر* which literally means 'news that freezes the chest'. It is a positive expression, happy news, but the equivalent English expression with the similar positive connotations would probably be associated with warmth such as 'heart-warming news'. Therefore, often positive Arabic connotations are associated with cold while positive connotations in English are linked to warmth.
4. Pragmatic equivalence: tends to reproduce the context and text goals of the SL.

In brief, Bayar's (2007) types of equivalence have been discussed by a number of western theorists, but her examples tend to be limited in form and content. However, there is a high demand for translation studies that focus on Arabic translation, which makes her contribution rather significant.

Baker (2011) makes a contribution to the notion of equivalence in her book *In Other Words* (2011) where she addresses the difficult issue of equivalence through adopting a neutral approach. She argues that equivalence is a relative notion because it is influenced by a variety of linguistic and cultural factors. Baker (2011) classifies equivalence into four types, including an equivalence that can appear both at the word level and above word level during translation, grammatical equivalent, textual equivalent and pragmatic equivalent.

Equivalence at word level, according to Baker (2011) is divided into four types. The first type is the propositional meaning which according to Baker (2011:11): *“arises from the relation between it (the word) and what it refers to or describes in a real or imaginary world, as conceived by the speakers of the particular language”*. This according to her is normally a result of a discrepancy at this level. Baker (2011:11) gives an example of this type of equivalence: *“the propositional meaning of shirt is a piece of clothing worn on the upper part of the body. It would be inaccurate to use shirt to refer to a piece of clothing worn on the foot, such as socks”*.

Expressive meaning is the second type of meaning in this category and according to Baker (2011:11) it: *“relates to the speaker’s feelings or attitude rather than to what words and utterances refer to”*. The difference between *“Don’t complain and Don’t whinge does not lie in their propositional meaning but in the expressiveness of whinge, which suggests that the speaker finds the action annoying”* Baker (2011) argues that removing expressive words will not

cause any loss in the informative account of meaning in the text. Nevertheless, other more sensitive features or forms of meaning such as forcefulness, markedness, etc. will unquestionably be affected.

The third category referred to by Baker (2011) is the presupposed meaning. This type of equivalence according to Baker (2011:12): *“arises from co-occurrence restrictions, that is restrictions on what other words or expressions we expect to see before or after a particular lexical unit”*. These two restrictions can either be *sectional restrictions* or *collocational restrictions*. Sectional restrictions occur when a human subject is expected to precede a particular verb or adjective. On the other hand, collocational restrictions are arbitrary semantic rules but they are still conventional.

The fourth category is evoked meaning. According to Baker (2011:13) this type *“arises from dialect and register variation”*. She states that different forms of language usage are likely to be used in different conditions and contexts. She classifies this category into 3 types:

- *Geographical (e.g. a Scottish dialect, or American as opposed to British English: the difference between lift and elevator*
- *Temporal (e.g. words and structures used by members of different age groups within a community, or words used at different periods in the history of a language: verily and really”*.
- *Social (words and structures used by members of different social classes: scent and perfume, napkin and serviette”*. (Baker 2011:13)

Equivalence above word level may be applicable to collocations, idioms and fixed expressions. This is because these are all figurative and cultural bound and they pose some difficulties to translators when they fall into the trap of translating them literally. Furthermore, another issue that must be considered at this level is markedness vs. unmarkedness as some unmarked ST collocations or idiomatic expressions do not need to be translated with an equivalent.

Grammatical equivalence shows the different grammatical categories found in different languages. It also refers to diversity of grammatical categories across languages and how difficult it is to find an equivalent term or expression in the TT as a result of the range of grammatical rules between languages. Differences in grammatical structures is made clear by Baker (2011) and how these differences might notably change the method or way in which the information or message is carried across languages.

Textual equivalence, on the other hand, refers to the equivalence of source language text and target language text in regard to cohesion and the content of the information. Baker (2011) states that the features of the text are of great importance to the translators as they help their comprehension and analysis of the ST and also help in producing a cohesive and coherent text in the TL. Pragmatic equivalence refers to imprimatur strategies of avoidance that occur during translation. This form of equivalence according to Baker (2011) mainly deals with implicature which is used to refer to what is implied and what is not implied by literal meaning. This means that the emphasis of significance is not what is explicitly said but, to the contrary, what is intended or understood in a given text.

To sum up, Baker (2011) provided a systematic approach to translators through the formation of detailed strategies that can help in tackling a number of translation problems that a translator faces on a daily basis. This signifies her main contribution to the notion of equivalence.

### 3.6.3 Limitations of equivalence

The notion of equivalence has been criticised by a number of translation theorists. The term was disapproved by Snell-Hornby (1995:22) and referred to as “*imprecise and ill defined*”. Al-Barakati (2013:104), on the other hand, views the term from a cultural perspective and he comments on it as being “*too limiting*” especially when there are cultural specific factors which could affect the process of translation. Moreover, the reciting of the Quran in Arabic is considered to be a compulsory task in Islam. Prayers in Islam are not acceptable without reciting the Quran in its original language which is Arabic. According to the Prophet Muhammed “ لا

صلاة لمن لم يقرأ بفاتحة الكتاب

“*There is no prayer for the one who does not recite the Opening of the Book (al-Faatihah)*”. Furthermore, Prophet Muhammed also said: “من قرأ حرفاً من كتاب الله فله

به حسنة والحسنة بعشر أمثالها ، لا أقول الم حرف ولكن ألف حرف ولام حرف و ميم حرف”

“*Whoever reads a letter from the Book of Allah, he will have a reward, and this reward will be multiplied by ten. I am not saying that ‘Alif, Laam, Meem’ (a combination of letters frequently mentioned in the Holy Quran) is a letter, rather I am saying that ‘Alif’ is a letter, ‘Laam’ is a letter and ‘Meem’ is a letter*” (Islam web 2011). Based on what has been discussed, this makes the concept of

complete equivalence between the ST and the TT almost impossible, as the letters of the TL will unquestionably not have the same status as they have in the SL. Al-Barakati (2013).

Nonetheless, one of the most clear and distinct cultural reasons for non-equivalence being applied to the translation of the Quran is the Islamic belief that the Quran is the word of Allah, and therefore it is miraculously unique. Evidence to support this argument can be found in Pickthall (2006:ix) as he comments on that issue: *“it is the belief of the traditional Shaykhs and the present writer that the Quran cannot be translated. Although I have sought to present an almost-literal and appropriate rendering worthy of the Arabic original, I cannot reproduce its inimitable symphony”*.

### **3.7 Functional theories of translation**

There was a move away in the 1970s and 1980s from linguistic typologies of translation shifts to the analysis of translation, which flourished in Germany, and this was as a result of the new functionalist and communicative approach. In general terms, functional theories of translation investigate the process of translation as a means of communication and an act of understanding the meaning in terms of function in context. Chemorion (2008:18) states that the functional approach to translation refers to: *“a variety of approaches, which emphasise the function (skopos) of the target text (and not the function of the source text) as the main criterion that should determine translation decisions”*.

Schaffner (2012:115) defines the functionalist approach as: “a *purposeful transcultural activity*” and argues that “*the linguistic form of the target text is determined by the purpose it is meant to fulfill*”. These approaches are drawn from:

1. Reiss’s work on text type and Mary Snell-Hornby’s integrated approach.
2. Holz-Manttari’s theory of translatorial action.
3. Vermeer’s Skopos theory.
4. Nord’s text analysis model.

All the theories previously discussed deal with the texts at a macro-level, whereas euphemism functions at a micro-level; therefore more than one approach is used for the purpose of this research. This research approaches the translation of euphemism in the Quran from a functional perspective and its main focus will be on the theory of equivalence and the main functional theory adopted will be Nord’s version of the text analysis model. Nevertheless, due to the fact that Nord based her theory on the work of Reiss and Vermeer’s Skopos theory, the main functional theories will be briefly discussed in an attempt to provide a clearer view to the functional theories of translation.

### **3.7.1 Text types approach and the Integrated Approach**

Reiss’s work in the 1970’s builds on the notion of equivalence but it focuses on the text, rather than the word or sentence, as the level at which communication is reached and at which equivalence must be obtained. Munday, (2012:111) states that her approach mainly aims at: “*systematising the assessment of translations. It borrows from the 1934/1965 categorisation of the three functions of language by German psychologist and linguist Karl Buhler (1879-1963)*”.

Reiss's approach consists of three textual categories:

1. Informative text: (to transfer news, knowledge, opinions, etc.).
2. Expressive text: (primarily used to convey contents structured in an artistic mode).
3. Operative text: (used to transmit contents of a persuasive character in order to tempt the receiver of the text to act in the sense intended by the sender of the text).
4. Audio-medial: (films, TV and newspaper advertisements).

Snell-Hornby in her book *Translation studies: An Integrated Approach* reassesses and attempts to integrate a number of different linguistic and literary concepts in order to reach an integrated approach to translation based on text types. Munday (2012:117) states that Snell-Hornby:

*comes from a predominantly German-theoretical background and notably borrows the notion of prototypes of categorising text types. Depending on the text type under consideration, she incorporates cultural history, literary studies, sociocultural and area studies and, for legal, economic, medical and scientific translation, the study of the relevant specialised subject.*

Snell-Hornby (1995:35) gives four hypotheses:

1. *“Translation studies should not be considered a mere offshoot of another discipline or sub-discipline (whether Applied Linguistics or Comparative Literature): both the translator and the translation theorist are rather concerned with a world between disciplines, languages and cultures.*
2. *Whereas linguistics has gradually widened its field of interest from the micro- to the macro-level, translation studies, which is concerned essentially with texts against their situational and cultural background, should adopt the reverse perspective: as maintained by the gestalt*

*psychologist, an analysis of parts cannot provide an understanding of the whole, which must be analysed from top down.*

3. *Translation studies has been hampered by classical modes of categorisation, which operate with rigid dividing-lines, binary opposites, antitheses and dichotomies. Frequently these are mere academic constructs which paralyse the finer differentiation required in all aspects of translation studies.*
4. *Translation studies is essentially concerned with a web of relationships, the importance of individual items being decided by their relevance in the larger context of text, situation and culture.”*

### **3.7.2 Translatorial action Approach**

Manttari named her method ‘translatorial action’, and this approach directs the translator towards action theory. According to Munday (2012:120) her aim was to: *“provide a model and produce guidelines that can be applied to a wide range of professional translation situations”*. Translatorial action sees the process of translation as purpose-driven, outcome-oriented human interaction. Manttari (1984:7-8, cited in Munday 2012:120) describes her approach: *“(it) is not about translating words, sentences or texts but is in every case about guiding the intended co-operation over cultural barriers enabling functionally oriented communication”*. She (2012:120) describes interlingual translation as: *“translatorial action from a source text as a communicative process involving a series of roles and players”*. Manttari (2012) also gives a description of her definition regarding the roles and the players. These definitions are:

- The initiator: the company or individual who requires the translation.
- The commissioner: the individual or agency who approach the translator.
- The ST producer: the individual(s) within the company who write(s) the

ST, and who are not necessarily involved in the TT production.

- The TT user: the person who uses the TT - for example, a teacher using a translated textbook or a rep using sales brochures.
- The TT receiver: the final recipient of the TT - for example, the students using the textbook in the teacher's class or clients reading the translated sales brochures.

Manttari's approach gives options for the process of translation as she tries to avoid terms such as 'texts', and she introduces new terms instead, such as 'message conveyor compounds'. This method gives the translator and interpreter more freedom to use non-textual means in order to convey the message. These methods can be in the form of pictures, sounds or body language. Cheung (2011:138) applies such method to the translation of the Bible:

*the GNB famously incorporated five hundred line drawing by Annie Vallotton illustrating various passages. Accompanied by captions quoted from the text, these help provide information in a manner that Holz-Manttari suggests would be message conveyance.*

### **3.7.3 Skopos Theory**

Skopos is a Greek term that means aim or purpose. Hans J Vermeer first introduced this term into translation theory in the 1970's. According to Mundy (2012), Vermeer and Reiss make the key work on that theory in their book *Groundwork for a General Theory of Translation* that they co-authored. Pym (2010:46) states that Skopos means: *"The purpose or aim of the translation; the function it is supposed to carry out in the situation of reception"*. Skopos theory according to Pym (2010:46) means: *"the set of propositions based on the idea*

*that the target side Skopos or purpose has priority in the translator's decisions".*

According to Munday (2012:122) *"Although Skopos theory pre-dates Holz-Manttari's theory of translatorial action, it may be considered to be part of that same theory because it deals with a translatorial action based on a ST-the action has to be negotiated and performed and has a purpose: that it must be functionally adequate".*

According to the main rules of the theory, A TT is:

1. determined by its skopos.
2. an offer of information in a target culture and TL is an offer of information in a source culture and SL.
3. does not initiate an offer of information in a clearly reversible way.
4. must be internally coherent.
5. must be coherent with the ST.

The five rules above stand in hierarchical order, with the skopos rule predominating.

The conclusion that can be drawn from the above-mentioned study is that the main aim of the translator is to produce a TT that functions in the target audience community. This could mean that accomplishing equivalence with the ST is of less importance. Cheung (2011:139) makes it clear that in Skopos theory: *"the purpose of a translation is dependent on the expectations, requirements or norms of the target culture, which may be considerably different from other cultures who may have received their own translation of a given source text"*. What this means is that the translator makes his/her decisions in producing a target text based on the expectations of the target culture's norms,

conventions, requirements, etc. The theory does not suggest a specific style of a target text, mainly due to the fact that these conditions have to be determined separately according to each particular case. It is different from other approaches such as dynamic equivalence, which “*specifies the form and style at the outset of a translation activity*” (Cheung 2011:139). This means that the functionalist approach of translating based on the needs of the target culture is, according to Pym (2011:45-46), “*a dimension wholly absent from the equivalence paradigm*”.

Skopos theory is summarised by Reiss and Vermeer (1984:101): “*the end justifies the means*”. Every text has to be understood bearing in mind the target culture purpose and not essentially in terms of source text analysis. The function is determined through a definition of the purpose of the translation in the target culture and not through an analysis of the source text. Therefore, the form and content of the target text are formed mainly through its intended purpose and not through the nature of the source text. Also, functionalism takes a target text-oriented perspective of translation, therefore is different from other different theories.

#### **3.7.4 Functional model of Text Analysis**

Nord’s model of text analysis in translation is a holistic model since it overlaps with other approaches. Her model is not limited to any specific type as it does not include any reference to specific characteristics of SL or TL and it is appropriate for both directions. Nord’s approach to translation is from a function-oriented perspective as she (2005:5) herself clearly states: “*My*

*concept of translation is basically functional*". In an attempt to clearly define translation from a functional approach, Nord (2005:32) defines translation as:

*the production of functional target text maintaining a relationship with a given source text that is specified according to the intended or demanded function of the target text (translation skopos). Translation allows a communicative act to take place which, because of existing linguistic and cultural barriers, would not have been possible without it.*

The key word in Nord's definition is 'functional' as she considers function to be an overriding criterion in translation and this is typically parallel to that of the Skopos theory. She makes it clear that the translation Skopos helps the translator to choose which features need to be preserved and which need to be adapted. Nord is of the idea that different types of translation have to be produced in order to serve different communicative functions. Furthermore, she sees translation as a form of intercultural communication that involves the processing of information in the source language and culture prior to it being transferred into the target language and culture. This means that the translator needs to pay extra attention to cultural factors in order to understand a translation that is functional in the TT. Nord makes a distinction between two main types of translation products and process: documentary translation and instrumental translation. Documentary translation functions as a document of a source culture communication between the writer and the ST recipient. Munday (2012:126) gives an example of this: *"in literary translation, where the TT allows the TT receiver access to the ideas of the ST but where the reader is well aware that it is a translation"*.

Nord (1997:47-49) defines four types of documentary translation:

1. An inter-linear translation that focuses on the morphological, lexical and syntactic features of the SL system as presented in the ST. This type of translation is suitable for example, in teaching comparative linguistics.
2. Literal or grammar translation and this type of translation is recognised when a documentary translation is intended to reproduce the word of the original by adjusting syntactic structures and idiomatic use of vocabulary to the norms of the TL.
3. The philological or learned documentary translation. This type of translation is suitable in translating ancient texts such as the Bible and the Quran, because the TT reproduces the ST fairly literally but adds the necessary explanations regarding the ST language in the form of footnotes and glossaries.
4. Foreignising or exoticising translation, and in this type of translation the reader encounters several ST cultural settings which therefore create an impression of exotic strangeness or cultural distance between the TT and its reader.

The instrumental translation according to Nord (2005:80): *“serves as an independent message transmitting instrument in a new communicative action in the target culture, and is intended to fulfil its communicative purpose without the recipient being conscious of reading or hearing a text which, in a different form, was used before in a communicative situation”*. This means that the TT receivers read the TT as if it was a ST written in their own language. Nord (1997:52) quotes a translation of a computer manual as an example. These manuals are translated in a way that the readers would read them as though they were original texts written in the TL. The form of the text is mostly adapted

to target culture norms, conventions of text types, genre, register and tenor. Therefore, the readers are not supposed to be aware of the fact that they are reading a translation. Furthermore, Nord (1997:50-51-52) categorises instrumental translation into three types according to their relationship with the ST:

1. Equi-functional translation. This type of translation preserves the function in the ST and it is used in translating technical texts such as instructions, cooking recipes, tourist information and information regarding products.
2. Hetro-functional translation. This type of translation is used if the function of the original cannot be preserved or must be altered for reasons of cultural and temporal distance.
3. Homologous translation. This type of translation exists when the literary status of the TT corpus corresponds to the literary text corpus of the original in the source culture.

### **3.7.5 Concluding remarks**

The functional theories of translation can help in the translation of sacred texts such as the Bible and the Quran. The Quran is the word of 'Allah' God and it was revealed to Prophet Muhammed. The Quran includes texts of different features, some are informative, expressive, and others are operative. This means that the translator of the Quran needs to first identify these features and then decide on the approach that needs to be taken in the process of the translation. The functional theories of translation can also aid in making the translations much more accessible and easier to understand in the TL by identifying the purpose of the translation prior to translating the Quran. This will

allow the translator more freedom in making certain choices and decisions when it comes to translating certain terms or expressions such as the names of the prophets as in the following example:

"ووهبنا له إسحاق ويعقوب كلا هدينا ونوحا هدينا من قبل ومن ذريته داوود وسليمان وأيوب ويوسف و موسى وهارون وكذلك نجزي المحسنين."

الانعام ٨٤

Yusuf Ali	Pickthall	Abdel Haleem	Arberry	Al-Hilali and Khan
We gave him <u>Isaac and Jacob</u> : all (three) we guided: and before him, we guided <u>Noah</u> , and among his progeny, <u>David</u> , <u>Solomon</u> , <u>Job</u> , <u>Joseph</u> , <u>Moses</u> , and <u>Aron</u> .	And we granted him <u>Isaac and Jacob</u> ; each of them We guided; and <u>Noah</u> did we guide before; and of his seed we guided <u>David</u> and <u>Solomon</u> and <u>Job</u> and <u>Joseph</u> and <u>Moses</u> and <u>Aron</u> .	We gave him <u>Isaac and Jacob</u> , each of whom we guided, as we had guided <u>Noah</u> before, and among his descendants were <u>David</u> , <u>Solomon</u> , <u>Job</u> , <u>Joseph</u> , <u>Moses</u> , and <u>Aron</u> .	And We gave to him <u>Isaac</u> and <u>Jacob</u> -each one We guided, and <u>Noah</u> We guided before; and of his seed <u>David</u> and <u>Solomon</u> , <u>Job</u> and <u>Joseph</u> , <u>Moses</u> and <u>Aron</u> .	And We bestowed upon him <u>Ishaq</u> ( <u>Isaac</u> ) and <u>Yaqub</u> ( <u>Jacob</u> ) each of them We guided and before him, We guided <u>Nuh</u> ( <u>Noah</u> ), and among his progeny <u>Dawud</u> ( <u>David</u> ), <u>Sulaiman</u> ( <u>Solomon</u> ), <u>Ayyub</u> ( <u>Job</u> ), <u>Yusuf</u> ( <u>Joseph</u> ), <u>Musa</u> ( <u>Moses</u> ), and <u>Harun</u> ( <u>Aron</u> ).

Quran (6:84)

All of the translators used the names of the prophets known in the TT culture rather than using the names used in the ST in order to make the translated text function in the SL culture.

In other examples, the translators have failed to identify the purpose of the ST and therefore fell short in translating the intended message in the ST into the TT. An example of that can be found in:

حتى زرتم المقابر

التكاثر آية ٢

<b>Yusuf Ali</b>	<b>Pickthall</b>	<b>Abdel Haleem</b>	<b>Arberry</b>	<b>Al-Hilali and Khan</b>
Until ye visit the graves.	<u>Until you visit the graves.</u>	Until you go into your graves.	Even till you visit the tombs.	Until you visit the graves (i.e. till you die).

Quran (102:2)

In the example above, it can be seen that only Al-Hilali and Khan and Abdel Haleem managed to identify the purpose of the Verse in the ST and thus they were able to translate the meaning which is, 'until you die', into the TT.

Nord (1997:60) emphasises that every translation must be preceded with a translation brief that includes: *"explicit or implicit information"*. Nord (2005:42) also states that any translation process has to be preceded by a functional analysis of both the situation for which the TT is intended and the situation in which the ST was used as a communicative instrument. The method of text analysis functions usually through a number of relevant questions that the translator asks before or during the translation process, and these questions are *"Extratextual about the author and sender of the text and intratextual about the subject matter the text deals with"*. These questions can be outlined as follows:

1. Who is the author/sender of the text?
2. What is the sender's intention?
3. Who are the addressees?
4. Which is the medium of communication?
5. Where is the place and time of text production?
6. Where is the place and time of text reception?
7. What is the motive of communication?
8. What is the subject of the text?

The questions mentioned above which are related to the text analysis method are relevant in the process of translating the Quran as almost all of the questions can be answered by the translator prior to the translation of the Quran. In the chapter related to the analysis of the translation of the euphemistic expressions in the Quran, some of Nord's questions related to the text analysis will be adopted in order to analyse the translations from a functional perspective.

### **3.8 Summary**

In this chapter, an attempt has been made to provide an in-depth investigation of the theoretical aspects of translation studies such as identifying the discipline of translation studies and discussing the debate about the field of translation studies and whether it is an art or a science. The methods of translation were also examined with special emphasis on word-for-word and sense-for sense methods of translation and their relation and application in the translation of the Quran. The terms invisibility of the translator and domestication and foreignisation were also assessed alongside the notion of equivalence and the way in which these terms and concepts can be used in the translation of the Quran. Finally, the functional theories of translation were thoroughly investigated in order to come up with a suitable framework in order to assess the translation of euphemistic expressions in the Quran. The following chapter is dedicated to euphemism in English and in Arabic.

## Chapter Four

### Understanding Euphemism in English and Arabic

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to define the concept of euphemism in English and in Arabic. It provides a definition of euphemism as a linguistic tool and the types and forms of euphemism in English. In addition, it will explain the notion and interpretations of euphemism in Arabic, and the different tools employed, giving examples and the reasons behind their use.

#### 4.2. Defining Euphemism in English

Many writers have attempted to define euphemism. According to Hayajneh (2010:3) *“Each definition has tried to add something to existing ideas about the forms, types and functions of euphemism”*. Longman’s Dictionary of English (2008) defines euphemism as: *“a polite word or expression that you use instead of a more direct one, to avoid shocking or upsetting someone”* while Rahimi and Sharagard (2006:36) state that: *“Euphemisms are words and expressions used to soften or mitigate the reality of the ideas transmitted to an audience”*. Euphemisms are an important and common feature of language use worldwide, and individuals from different cultures and backgrounds use euphemistic terms to utter or to write about the phenomena they find somewhat embarrassing or upsetting, such as words related to gender, death, sickness, and religion. Holder (2007:1) states that euphemism is used for: *“dealing with taboo or*

*sensitive subjects. It is therefore the language of evasion, hypocrisy, prudery, and deceit”.*

#### **4.2.1 Euphemisms as a linguistic tool**

Euphemism is a common linguistic phenomenon. It is a powerful linguistic tool, and according to Rawson (2002:1) *“embedded so deeply in our language that few of us, even those who pride themselves on being plainspoken, ever get through a day without using them”*. Euphemism is a rhetorical device that is used to produce different effects on the listener or reader. It is mostly used for the purpose of remodeling speech through the employment of less offensive or more politically correct words and expressions. In addition it is used to achieve a number of functions, and to fulfil a range of purposes and effects on the target audience. Approaching euphemism from a linguistic perspective, according to Al Barakati (2012:420), is: *“by investigating the linguistic phenomenon that has taken place or the linguistic feature which has been used for euphemism formation”*. Wardhaug (2006:240) suggests that: *“Perhaps one linguistic universal is that no social group use language quite uninhibitedly”*. Al-Barakati (2013:11) points out that euphemism is *“widely used in politics and journalism as an evasive technique to hide facts which should not be exposed to the public”*, adding, *“however, in the religious genre, it serves several different purposes such as demonstrating politeness, offering advice, and beautifying prose, among other functions”*.

Baker (2011:245) states:

*different cultures have different norms of ‘polite behaviour’....They also have different ideas about what is and what is not a ‘taboo’ area.*

*Sex, religion and defecation are taboo subjects in many societies, but not necessarily to the same degree within similar situations.*

Rawson (2002:1) divided euphemism into two general types: positive and negative: *“the positive ones inflate and magnify, making the euphemised items seem altogether grander and more important than they really are”*. Negative euphemisms on the other hand are described by Rawson (2002:1) as euphemisms which: *“deflate and diminish. They are defensive in nature, offsetting the power of tabooed terms and otherwise eradicating from language everything that people prefer not to deal with directly”*. Allan and Burrige (2009:31) define dysphemism euphemism as: *“a word or phrase with connotations that are offensive either about the denotatum or to people addressed or overhearing the utterance”*. According to Allan and Burrige (2009:33) *“orthophemism”* is a term that is neutral, with neither positive connotation (euphemism) nor negative ones (dysphemism), but is still more preferred than a dysphemism. Avoiding taboos is among the reasons that lead people to use euphemism. The other reasons include expressing politeness, disguising and showing elegance. Euphemism may be achieved through different strategies of two main sources: formal innovation and semantic innovation.

Formal innovation is clarified through examples given by Linfoot-Ham (2005) who identifies the many forms this takes, including word formation devices (compounding, blends, onomatopoeia and acronyms, etc.), phonemic modification (back slang, rhyming slang, phonemic replacement or euphemistic mispronunciation and abbreviation). Linfoot-Ham (2005) also illustrates and

semantic innovation and how many euphemisms require to be 'particularised,' within the context to make sense to the reader/listener, e.g. 'innocent' meaning virginal. Sometimes steps are needed to make a connection and reach the intended meaning, e.g. 'loose' which means 'unattached', which leads to the interpretation (sexually easy/available). Colourful metaphorical euphemisms surround bodily functions while reversal of irony includes expressions such as 'blessed' (damned) which enable reference to something 'bad' by using opposites. Overstatement or hyperbole, such as 'fight to glory,' is a common form of euphemism, as is understatement or litotes e.g. 'sleep' (die) and 'not very bright' (thick/stupid).

Allan and Burridge (1991:14) point out that some euphemisms:

*show remarkable inventiveness of either figure or form; and some are indubitably playful...[some use] learned terms or technical jargon instead of common terms, and colloquial instead of formal terms. Many learned terms and some technical jargon is either borrowed from another language or constructed from one: for English, they are mostly derived from Latin or Ancient Greek. Most languages seem to have some euphemisms based borrowed words or morphs.*

Neaman and Silver (1991:10), on the same issue, suggest that some euphemisms are created through semantic widening so that when a term becomes too painful or vivid, words are moved up in a "ladder of abstraction" for instance cancer becomes a growth. Warren (1992) is also of the view that euphemisms may be merely "contextual, conventional or dead". Warren (1992) adds:

*Purely contextual euphemisms are non-formations; conventional euphemisms are euphemisms which originally were contextual but which have established themselves and become dictionary meanings; dead euphemisms are words still in use in the euphemistic sense, but which have lost the euphemistic force they once had.*

Rahimi and Sahragard (2006:30) on the other hand approach euphemism from a critical discourse analysis (CDA) perspective, stating a number of uses of CDA, such as *“the uncovering of implicit ideologies in texts”*. They also argue that euphemism may occur and appear even where it is not initially obvious. They also add: *“The semantic features of the word ‘amazing’ give it a euphemistic tone creating feelings of a pleasant surprise at a fascinating or even presumably unparalleled experience”*. Hayajneh (2010:9) states that

*This extended view of euphemism opens a new door that sees euphemisms not just as a conventional replacement or displacement process or even as a substitution process, but proposes that it has kind, acceptable or friendly connotations which could be used with a euphemistic force.*

This process according to Rahimi and Sahragard (2006:36) *“underlines any word or expression that creates a feeling of a pleasant surprise”*. The same term can have:

*euphemistic implications in one context, and derogatory ones in others... These notions are an indispensable and universal features of language use and usage; people from different cultures and communities employ euphemistic terms to talk or write about the phenomena they find embarrassing (e.g. sex related words), terrifying (e.g. death, war, sickness, catastrophes, pestilences), and taboos (e.g. religion).*

Additional applications of euphemisms can be to raise and promote the importance of the event or phenomena. Euphemisms are also frequently applied to talk in an indirect manner about things whose explicit narrative is seen or considered to be inappropriate. Rahimi and Sahragard (2006:37) give many examples from war: *'friendly fire'*, *'blue on blue'*, *'carpet-bombing'* etc.

#### **4.2.2 Types of Euphemisms**

Many scholars believe euphemism can be categorised into three types: firstly, lexical euphemisms which means dealing with words or things related to words; grammatical euphemisms, which refer to the method and formation of words according to the rules of grammar; and presuppositions, which suggest that the speaker is thinking of something to be true without holding any clear proof. Gonzalez (1992:37) is among those scholars and gives the following examples

1. *Lexical: e.g. "Neutralize" (kill).*
2. *Grammatical or (syntactic):*
  - a) *Nominalisation: e.g. "nuclear release" (dissimulates agents or victim)*
  - b) *Passive construction: "a procedure may be developed" (dissimulates agent, and distances action)*
3. *Presuppositions, hints, etc. e.g. "why NATO needs nuclear arms" (presupposes 'NATO needs nuclear arms').*

Gonzalez (1992) claims that of the three types of euphemism, the last two, which he refers to as *"syntactic and semantic"*, have attracted substantial attention in recent periods as a result of the development achieved in the academic field of text linguistics. On the other hand, the first type, *"Lexical"* is the most typical euphemism and according to Gonzalez (1992:38): *"the*

*euphemised or dissimulated object and its effects are easier to notice by the addressee of the discourse”.*

In contrast, Nichol (2011) identified seven types of euphemisms: Abstraction, indirection, litotes, mispronunciation, modification, personification and slang. These types of euphemisms will be identified alongside some examples in order to clarify the terms.

#### **4.2.2.1 Abstraction**

A number of euphemisms operate as a tool for distancing people from unpleasant or embarrassing truths. Some examples of abstraction are listed below:

<b>Euphemism</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Passed away	Died
In the family way	Pregnant
Ethnic cleansing	Genocide
Put to sleep	Euthanise
The big C	Cancer

#### **4.2.2.2 Indirection**

A euphemism might substitute an overt description of an action such as:

<b>Euphemism</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Sleep with	Sexual intercourse
Break wind	Fart
Call of nature	Urinate or defecate

#### 4.2.2.3 Litotes

Occasionally, euphemisms appear in the form of this rhetorical device in which the seriousness or strength of an idea is softened or reduced by a double negative. It can also be identified as a kind of reverse understatement such as:

<b>Euphemism</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Not attractive	Ugly
Not a little upset	Upset
Not bad	Good

#### 4.2.2.4 Mispronunciation

Modification of pronunciation is a method of euphemism, often for profanities.

<b>Euphemism</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Cripes	Christ
Shoot	Shit
Jeez	Jesus Christ

#### 4.2.2.5 Modification

A directly offensive noun can be converted into a euphemism by changing it to an adjective. Strong swear words are words that are not meant to be spoken lightly and are modified such as eff off, the f-word, a-hole.

#### 4.2.2.6 Personification

In this method of euphemism, people give personal names to things that they prefer not to mention openly, such as giving personal names to genitals. In

other words it means using the third person singular or plural or possessive or any other form in place of the first person at the grammatical level.

#### 4.2.2.7 Slang

A significant number of slang words are used as euphemisms for taboo words, and some produce a vocabulary exclusive to a social group. They may vary according to region or country, such as the word 'pissed' which means 'angry' in the USA but 'drunk' in the UK.

### 4.3 Euphemism in Arabic

Euphemism in Arabic is a rhetorical device and it does not have an exact equivalence to the term used in English. Al-kinayāh for instance, which is a form of euphemism in Arabic, according to Al-Salem (2008:45): "*has no equivalent in English*". Due to the nature of the Arabic language, euphemism is defined in Arabic as al-kinayāh al-Taʿryḍ and al-talaṭuf.

#### 4.3.1 Al-kinayāh as a Euphemistic Tool

Al-shanaḵnaḵ (2011) defined al-kinayāh as:

" الكناية لغة، أن تتكلم بالشيء، وتريد غيره".

"al-kinayāh in language is to speak about something and to mean something else" (My translation). sybawayh (790) stated: "الكناية الإخفاء والستر" "al-kinayāh is to hide and to cover" (My translation). Al-ḥayany (2014:21) explained that al-kinayāh is: "استعمال الفاظ مهذبة دالة على المعنى المراد بدلا من الالفاظ الموضوعه لذلك المعنى"

"the use of polite words denoting the meaning instead of words set for the meaning" (My translation).

Al-Husseini (2007:336) is of the view that al-kinayāh in Arabic is used in order to express three points of view

1. *"The first meaning refers to the way of describing a socially offensive, or unpleasant thing or expression, or socially unacceptable to be mentioned instead of another expression".* The following example of the Quran is used to clarify the previous definition:

ولا تقربوهن حتى يطهرن (Q 2:222)

*"Do not approach them until they are cleansed"* (Abdel Haleem 2010). The underlined word in Arabic is a euphemised expression meaning 'sexual intercourse', and this expression holds an unpleasant suggestion in a sacred text due to the fact that such texts are considered as an act of communication between the sender 'Allah' and the receivers. These texts tend to frequently use more mannerly expressions instead of expressions that hold unpleasant or offensive implications.

2. The second meaning is: *"Arabs used to call each other by using their euphemistic name 'surname' rather than the first name because such a euphemistic name will maximize and increase the honorific and respectable character of the person".*
3. The third meaning of al-kinayāh is: *"Arabs tend to exaggerate the meaning of certain words by using euphemism, implying them*

*without saying words*". In the following example from the Quran, exaggeration is used by means of speaking around a given word:

"الحاقة. ما الحاقة. وما ادراك ما الحاقة" (Q 69:1-2-3)

*"The inevitable Hour!. What is the inevitable Hour?. What will explain to you what the inevitable Hour is? (Abdel Haleem 2010).*

The expression 'The inevitable hour' is a euphemised expression referring to the Day of Judgment. This expression is used for the sake of exaggerating and glorifying the Day of Judgment in the mind of the receivers of the text.

al-kinayāh has been divided into three types by a number of scholars and researchers. The main components of such types are:

a) المكنى به (metaphor for)

b) المكنى عنه (metaphor on behalf of)

something which is usually unpleasant and offensive and is therefore replaced by the euphemistic expression. These components can be clarified by the following examples from the Quran:

"| أو من ينشأ في الحلية وهو في الخصام غير مبين" (Q43:18)

*"Someone who is brought up amongst trinkets, who cannot put together a clear argument"* (Abdel-Haleem 2010)

In this verse from the Quran the euphemistic expression referred to is 'women'. Here, the context of situation refers to the incident when the nonbelievers attributed daughters to Allah. Therefore, Allah is communicating with those nonbelievers in a rhetorical way as to whether the gentler sex (women) who are

typically brought up among trinkets, and who are shy, are able to stand up bravely in a fight.

Al-Husseini (2007:337) elaborates more on this verse:

*Arab rhetoricians divide الكناية 'euphemism' into two groups. In addition, each group is subdivided into different types. The first group involves three types according to the nature of المكنى عنه ( the original expression). The first type of this group refers to the الكناية عن الموصوف (euphemism on behalf of the quality of the described person or thing). The original expression 'women' has been given different qualities and through these qualities we can distinguish the original expression.*

Abdul-Raof (2011:236) classifies two major categories of metonymy in Arabic.

The first is *"Metonymy of an attribute. The expression 'attribute' refers to a characteristic trait such as generosity, courage, and beauty"*. Examples of this type of metonymy are:

1. زيد بساطه تراب      *Zaid's carpet is dust. 'Carpet is dust' is a metonymy for the attribute 'poverty'.*

2. سالم نظيف اليد      *Salim's hand is clean. The expression 'Clean hand' is a metonymy for the attribute 'trustworthiness'.*

3. (Q17:29) ولا تجعل يدك مغلولة إلى عنقك ولا تبسطها كلها البسط

*"And let not your hand be chained to your neck nor open with a complete opening"*. (Pickthall 2006) The full verse refers to the act of being miserly and wasting money.

The second category as classified by Abdul-Raof (2011:236) is: *“Metonymy of a modifier. In this kind of metonymy, the modifier and the affinity are mentioned but the modified is ellipted”*. This can be seen in the following examples:

1. قتل ملك الوحوش      *I killed the king of beasts. The metonymy ‘king of beasts’ here refers to the lion.*

2. وهذا البلد الأمين      (Q95:3)

*“And this City of security”* (i.e., Makkah). (Ali 2013). This illustrates the use of a metonymy of the modified through the ellipsis of the name of Makkah, only referring to it as the City of security.

Some researchers have added more categories to al-Knayh,t such as to summarise or improve the meaning if the expression is shameful. An example of summarisation can be seen in the following verse from the Quran:

"لتركبن طبقا عن طبق" الانشقاق آية ١٩      (Q84:19)

*“Ye Shall surely travel from stage to stage”* (Ali 2013) This verse clearly summarises the life cycle of a person from birth to death.

An example of improving the meaning is in the following example from the Quran:

"كانا يأكلان الطعام" المائدة (Q5:75) *“They had both to eat their (daily) food”*. (Ali 2013)

This verse according to Tafsīr al-Jalālayn (2007:125) is referring to Jesus and his Mother Mary and it is stating that: *“they both used to eat food, like all other human beings, and one who is such cannot be a god because of his compound being and fallible nature, and because of the (impurities such as) urine and excrement that he produces”*.

Finally, if the expression is shameful, other expressions are used, as in the following example from the Quran:

"ولم يمسسني بشر" مريم (Q19:20). "no mortal has touched" (Arberry 2008)

This verse refers to sexual intercourse but Allah mentioned 'touch' to avoid any embarrassment to the person spoken about or for the readers of the text.

#### 4.3.2 al-Ta·ryḍ as a Euphemistic Tool

Al-ta·ryḍ in Arabic means to say something that might seem unpleasant without saying it directly and openly. Al-Barakati (2013) defined al-ta·ryḍ as a word that comes from the verb ʿaraḍ which literary means to widen something. According to Lashyn (1985), altha·aliby (1997) and Alkhwūly (2004) al-ta·ryḍ refers to the meaning intended and not the words uttered. It also means the speech which holds two meanings, an explicit and an implicit meaning. The term ta·ryḍ is mentioned in the Quran in the following verse:

( ولا جناح عليكم فيما عرضتم به من خطبة النساء أو أكننتم في أنفسكم ) (Q2:235)

*"(You will not be blamed whether you give a hint that you wish to marry these women, or keep it to yourselves)"* (Abdel Haleem 2010).

Tafsīr al-Jalālayn (2007:43) gives a detailed explanation of this verse and the use of al-ta·ryḍ in it:

*You would not be at fault regarding the proposal, with the intention of marriage, you present, offer, or hide in your hearts, during the waiting period, to women, whose spouse have died: such as men saying, 'How beautiful you are!', or, 'Who could find one like you?', or 'How many a man must desire you!'.*

Lashyn (1985) defined al-ta'ryḍ as the opposite of saying something overtly. In other words, al-ta'ryḍ can be another form of being discreet about something without intentionally or deliberately lying. He also suggested that al-ta'ryḍ refers to the meaning intended and not the stated words. To further elaborate Lashyn's definition the following example from the Quran is examined:

(قالوا أنت فعلت هذا بآلهتنا يا إبراهيم. قال بل فعله كبيرهم هذا فاسألوهم إن كانوا ينطقون)  
(Q21:62-63)

*"(They said: Is it you who have done this to our gods, O Abraham? He said: But this, their chief has done it. So question them, if they can speak)"* (Pickthall 2006). In the previous verse, the prophet Abraham used al-ta'ryḍ as a way of showing his mockery of their way of thinking. This form of ta'ryḍ can be looked at in two ways according to Lashyn (1985):

1. The prophet Abraham did not want to imply that their chief god did what they were accusing Prophet Abraham of doing, but instead he wanted to say indirectly how weak their gods were and how they are unable to protect themselves, let alone protect others.
2. The prophet Abraham wanted to show them that they have worshiped others besides the Almighty Allah, that the large idol they were worshiping was angry because they worshiped other idols with him and he destroyed the small idols

and this ta'ryḍ according to Lashyn (1985:274) :

(لم يدل عليه اللفظ، بل دل عليه السياق و قرائن الأحوال)

"is not uttered directly but it is understood through the context, circumstances and evidence". (My translation).

Finally, Lashyn (1985) emphasised that al-ta·ryḍ is usually not present in the written or spoken words and this is because it is a presumption and a reference to something and therefore you cannot say that a word is a ta·ryḍ but you say it functions as a ta·ryḍ. In addition, ta·ryḍ is also identified through the signified and the presumption. He also added that al-ta·ryḍ can help the speaker in hiding the words of complaint, criticism, questions, and admonition in between the words, without causing any insult to the other party, as the words might only be understood by the person for whom the al- ta·ryḍ is intended and nobody else.

Alth·aliby (1997) stated that Arabs frequently use al-ta·ryḍ in their speech and that they use it to criticise a person who does not have the same linguistic abilities to allow him to use such rhetorical device. He listed many different situations derived from the traditions of Arabs that act as good examples for al-ta·ryḍ and its use in the Arabic language. What is quite fascinating is that a few of the examples are difficult to comprehend and may seem ambiguous even for the native speakers of Arabic, as it requires prior knowledge of the culture at that time to understand the function of al-ta·ryḍ in these examples. The reason for such ambiguity is that the main purpose of al-ta·ryḍ is to be unclear and not to be obvious, and if these expressions were utterly transparent they would not function as ta·ryḍ anymore. al-th·aliby (1997) gave a number of examples for al-ta·ryḍ that were of two types, uttered ta·ryḍ and embedded ta·ryḍ. Below are a number of examples quoted from al-th·aliby (1997:158):

The first example is an uttered ta·ryḍ: قال لا تؤاخذني بما نسيت (Q18:73)

*“(Moses) said: Be not angry with me that I forgot”.* (Pickthall 2006).

This verse is about the story of the prophet Moses and al-khiḥḍr, a man and a worshiper at that time. Al-tḥaliby quotes Ibn ʿabas’s view on that verse which supports that the ta·ryḍ expression in the previous verse is the part “that I forgot,” as he states that Moses could have simply said “I forgot” but instead he expresses it in different way make a broader statement.

The second example from al-tḥaliby (1997:166) is the embedded ta·ryḍ :

ولد لابن مكرم ابن، فجاءه أبو العيناء مهنتاً، ولما خرج خلف عنده حجراً.

“Ibn makram’s wife gave birth to a boy and he was visited by abw al·yna, to congratulate him. As the visitor was on his way out he left behind him a stone” (My translation).

The stone left behind by abw al·yna indicates that he assumes that the wife of Ibn makram has committed adultery. For a person to understand the embedded message in the previous example, it is essential that the reader is familiar with Islamic juridical ruling of stoning married adulterers. Hence the stone left behind refers to the fact that Ibn makram’s wife should be stoned according to abu al·yna.

Alkhwūly (2004) is one of the scholars who discussed al-ta·ryḍ with special reference to the Quran. According to him, al-ta·ryḍ is the opposite of discreet and it is also words that might have two interpretations, visible and invisible. It can also mean alongside concealment, something which might seem more or longer than what it actually is. The following example form the Quran can further explain Alkhwūly’s definitions:

(وإذا مسه الشر فذو دعاء عريض) (Q:41:51)

*“but when evil touches him, then he has recourse to long supplication”*. (Al-Hilali and Khan 2011).

Alkhwūly also stated that al-ta·ryḍ has a number of distinctive features such as: it is a form of grammatical manipulation; it can be understood explicitly and implicitly; and it can only be understood if the receiver is of a certain level of intelligence and has a high level of language skills. al-ta·ryḍ according to Alkhwūly is also to say something and to mean something else, and he gives an example of this *“when a person in need comes to a person who used to help him during his hard times: I came to say hi to you and to look at you generous face”*. To conclude, Alkhwūly made a distinction between al-Kināyah and al-ta·ryḍ by emphasising that al-ta·ryḍ is more indirect than al-Kināyah due to the fact that al-Kināyah is either verbal or stated but al-ta·ryḍ is only understood from the context of the speech.

#### **4.3.3 al-Talaṭuf as a Euphemistic Tool**

The term talaṭuf in Arabic means to be gentle, careful and polite. A number of scholars defined al- talaṭuf such as al-radjiḥy (2007) and Farghal (2012). The term is mentioned in the Quran in the following verse:

(فليأتكم برزق منه وليتلطف ولا يشعركم بكم أحدا) (Q:18:19)

*“ and let him behave with care and courtesy, and let him not inform any one about you”* (Ali 2013).

Al-radjihiy (2007) defined al- talaṭuf as to be gentle physically and verbally. He also added, al- talaṭuf is used to make the words seem kinder and to soften the meaning. In addition, al- talaṭuf according to him is a convincing style and an intelligent technique used to make the words sound gentler and to smooth their force. Any attempts made to change offensive or harsh terminologies with much gentler words is a form of talaṭuf according to al-radjihiy.

Al-radjihiy identified two situations which force the speaker to resort to al- talaṭuf:

1. The speaker chooses to use al- talaṭuf in a private situation, and this is only possible for those with intelligence, acumen, quick wit and those who have a very good command of Arabic linguistics.
2. The second condition for using al- talaṭuf is in public, and it is used as a way of being polite when using abusive words in front of a group of people.

Below are a number of examples from the Quran and Arabic literature to illustrate the use of such talaṭuf defined by al-radjihiy:

(وَقَدْ أَفْضَىٰ بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ) (Q:4:21)

*"When you have lain with each other"*. (Abdel Haleem 2010).

(فَلَمَّا تَعَشَّىٰهَا) (Q:7:189)

*"And when he covered her"*. (Pickthall 2006).

(هَٰؤُلَاءِ لِبَاسٌ لَّكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَّهُمْ) (Q:2:187)

*"They are your garments and ye are their garments"*. (Ali 2013).

(فَأْتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّىٰ شِئْتُمْ) (Q:2:223)

*"so come unto your tillage as you wish"* (Arberry 2008).

" بنى فلان على أهله "

So-and-so build on his family. (My translation).

All the expressions in the previous verses such as, *lain, covered her, garments, tillage* and *added to his family* are expressions of *talaṭuf* meaning sexual intercourse as stated by al-radjiḥy (2007:14). He also added, that there are several reasons which force the speaker to use *talaṭuf* in their speech such as, optimism, pessimism, fear, panic, wittiness, politeness, shyness and modesty. Examples of politeness, shyness, and modesty were mentioned in the examples stated earlier about sexual intercourse expressions. Optimism and pessimism is used in many languages and cultures according to al-radjiḥy (2007:17), especially when it is used in death and sickness related situations as in saying 'he passed away', instead of saying he died.

Farghal (2012) was also one of the scholars who discussed al- *talaṭuf* in detail. He considered al- *talaṭuf* to be a strategy of linguistic politeness by which an unpleasant word or expression is substituted with one that is indirect or holds a positive approach. He stated (2012:96):

*Lexically, euphemism is one way of creating cognitive synonyms in language, that is, the original expression and its euphemistic counterpart come to share conceptual or descriptive meaning but differ in their attitudinal dimension.*

Farghal (2012) also stated that the use of figurative expressions such as al- *talaṭuf* is very common, mainly in areas such as death, bodily functions, marriage and sex. He additionally divided the use of *talaṭuf* in Arabic into a number of sub-categories.

#### 4.3.3.1 Antonyms

Farghal (2012:99) describes the use of antonyms in Arabic euphemism as an “*interesting phenomena*”. The word is used in an opposite way to its regular meaning. Some examples are listed below to further illustrate this usage (Farghal 2012:99):

Expression	Euphemism	Meaning
Blind person	bsyr	Sighted
Ill or sick	M‘afa	Healthy

#### 4.3.3.2 Circumlocutions

Farghal (2012:100) considers circumlocutions to be another type of Arabic euphemism. This type of euphemism is a figure of speech and it involves indirectly expressing the word or expression through using a number of words. Examples of this type of talaṭuf are:

Expression	Euphemism	Meaning
Luck did not ally with him	Lm yhalfh al-hz	He failed
Sexual assault	l‘tda, jnsy	Rape

#### 4.3.3.3 Remodeling

Remodeling according to Farghal (2012:100) involves substituting the phonological structure of taboo expressions into a euphemistic expression for a euphemistic intention. Examples of the use of this type are:

<b>Expression</b>	<b>Euphemism</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Marriage betrayal	Khyanh,t zwjyh,t	Adultery
Illegitimate child	Tfl ghyr shn·y	Bastard

#### **4.3.3.4 Ellipsis**

In this type of euphemism the speaker is unable to say the whole taboo expression. This type can be noticed in both Arabic and English as in the following example:

<b>Expression</b>	<b>Euphemism</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Son of a...	Ya ibn il...	Son of a bitch

#### **4.3.3.5 Understatement and overstatement**

Understatement and overstatement are likewise, euphemistic expressions implemented in Arabic to euphemise other expressions. An example according to Farghal (2012:100) is:

<b>Expression</b>	<b>Euphemism</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Setback	Nksh,t	Defeat

#### **4.4 Previous Research involving Arabic -English translations of some of the euphemistic expressions in the Quran**

Euphemism is undoubtedly less researched compared to the proliferation of other features of language in translation studies. The following critically review the handful of studies that have been conducted dealing with euphemistic expressions of the Quran in English translation

##### **4.4.1 critique of the relevant studies on the euphemism of the Quran**

Only a limited number of studies have been conducted on the euphemism of the Quran. Abdel Haleem (2011) in his paper *Euphemism in the Qur'an: A case study of Marital Relations as Depicted in Q. 2:222-3* discusses the issue of the translation of euphemisms of the Quran. **Abdel Haleem (2011)** provides a brief historical background details about the verse and its reasons of revelation thus allowing the reader of the work to understand the contextual meanings discussed in the verse alongside the use of Hadith (The Prophet's sayings) to provide a thorough and detailed interpretation of the verse. Abdel Haleem (2011) argues that disregarding the stylistic features of the Quran in discussing and approaching certain subjects results into the misinterpretations and misunderstanding of the meaning of the Quran. Abdel Haleem (2011) used the method of linking and quoting related verses consequently giving a comprehensive image for the reader regarding the verse examined.

One of the limitations of this research is that it only focuses on one translation and it does not compare between other existing versions of translations of the

Quran in order to make a comparison between the different approaches, methods and techniques used in the translation of euphemisms in the Quran as it only deals with the way the Quran uses and applies euphemisms. Additionally, this paper only investigated a sample of a sub-category of the euphemisms of the Quran. Finally, this research did not define euphemism linguistically in Arabic or in English and it did not examine the main functions of euphemisms in either the source language or the target language.

**Albarakati (2014)** examined in his paper '*Tracing a model for euphemism translation, a functional approach of three verses*' from two sub-categories of the euphemisms of the Quran. Although the author gives a concise introduction on the common features of euphemisms in religious texts he fails to define euphemisms in Arabic or English. In the analysis of the five translations Albarakati discussed in detail the meaning of the euphemism analysed, the meaning of the expression in different Arabic lexicons and its most common meanings and usage thus identifying the closest possible meaning of the euphemism of the Quran investigated.

It can be suggested that a detailed introduction on the exegetical references and lexicons used for the analysis could have been used to give the reader of the paper a broader information about the references used for the analysis of the five translations. In addition, a category based selection for the euphemisms selected for the analysis would provide the readers with more information concerning the different categories and sub-categories of the euphemisms of the Quran and their different functions.

**Alqaryouti and Sadeq (2016)** in their paper entitled *Euphemism in the Translation of Surah Al Nisa'a in the Holy Quran* precede their analysis with a definition of euphemism linguistically and they discuss its main functions. A clear methodology of analysis is stated and a comprehensive and in-depth discussion of theoretical background regarding the topic investigated is provided.

However, the researchers' investigation of euphemisms in the Quran is only limited to one Surah (chapter) of the Quran. In addition, they did not justify their choice of euphemism and based on which category. Furthermore, no references were applied in some verses to ascertain that the expression is euphemistic such the use of exegetical references and lexicons. Moreover, the analysis of the euphemism of the Quran is brief and there are some inconsistencies in the translation being analysed as the researchers mentioned in the methodology section that the translation by Pickthall will be used to analyse the euphemisms, but it can be noticed that they used other translators in the analysis in some samples.

The conclusion that can be drawn from the key studies on translating euphemisms in the Quran, highlighted above, is that it is difficult to arrive at a single approach of translating euphemistic expressions. There are recurrent themes and similar explanations of what euphemism means. Each translator seems to put their own touch and spin on how to interpret and translate euphemisms but deep down there is no one size fits all approach to translating Euphemism simply because each language has its unique way of conveying euphemistic expressions.

#### **4.5 Summary**

Though not much attention has been paid to the translation of euphemisms, it can be clearly noticed that there is an agreement among theorists and scholars that euphemisms are an important part of any language and that they may be challenging and problematic to any translator. Nonetheless, theorists have attempted to approach euphemism from different points of view, and they have suggested strategies and methods to be used in the process of translation.

This chapter discussed in detail the concept of euphemism in English and in Arabic. It defined euphemism in English and discussed it as a linguistic tool. It then examined the different types of euphemisms in English. Euphemism in Arabic was also investigated alongside its different forms and types. The different linguistic tools were also identified in this chapter. These different types and forms of euphemisms were discussed in order to lay the foundations for the data analysis chapter as it will help in identifying the different types and forms of euphemisms in the Quran and how they were translated, it will also help in analysing and comparing the different approaches implemented in the translation of these euphemisms by the various translators.

## Chapter Five

### Methodology and Methods

#### 5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the research methodology and methods used in this study. It justifies the reasons for selecting content analysis as the data collection instrument. It discusses the various research philosophies, approaches, strategies and methods. It will explain the motivation behind the methodological choices made in this study which are shaped by the literature review and linked to the research objectives and questions formulated by this study. In addition, this chapter will consider the type and nature of sampling and validity and reliability of the methods of analysis employed to address the aim and objectives of the research.

#### 5.2 Purpose and importance of research

Research is a term which is difficult to pin down. Today's world is research-driven and everyone knows what research means yet there is no agreement on a universal definition. This view is supported by Menacere (2016: 12) who points out that: *"Although research is crucial to both business and academic enterprise, there is little consensus in the literature on how it should be defined; it means different things to different stakeholders."* For some, research is conducted to find a solution to a problem or answer a question. Others believe that research refers to a search for knowledge and in general the researcher is expected to make a contribution in their specific research area. According to Kothari (2009:1) research is a scientific and systematic examination for relevant

information on a particular area. Mertens (2010:2) is of the view that research is:

*a systematic investigation or inquiry whereby data are collected, analysed and interpreted in some way in an effort to understand, describe, predict or control an educational or psychological phenomenon or to empower individuals in such context.*

Research can be summarised according to Rajasekar (2013) as “*how and what*”. It is an investigation finding explanations to scientific and social issues through unbiased and logical analysis. Likewise, Sharp et al (2002:7) are of the view that research is: “*seeking through methodical processes to add to one’s own body of knowledge and to that of others, by the discovery of non-trivial facts and insights.*” In addition, research is assumed to be the examination of an idea with a specific purpose in mind as it allows the researcher to increase knowledge or investigate a theory. A number of scholars such as Clough and Nutbrown (2002:22) claim that the term research refers to the method used for a “*systematic investigation of a phenomena or idea*”. This method can sometimes be correctly “*measured scientifically or data collected*”; this is then analysed and compared in order to find “*trends, similarities or differences*”.

Kumar (2011:26) defines research as: “*one of the ways to find answers to your questions*”, adding that when a person says they are conducting a research study to find answers to a question, they are expressing that the process being applied:

1. *is being undertaken within a framework of a set of philosophies;*

2. *uses producers, methods and techniques that have been tested for their validity and reliability;*

3. *is designed to be unbiased and objective* (Kumar 2011:26)

Burns (2000:3) identifies research as “*a systematic investigation to find answers to a problem*”, while Saunders et al. (2012:680), believe that research means “*the systematic collection and interpretation of information with a clear purpose, to find things out.*” In summary, research may be viewed as a process of enquiry and a systematic and methodical investigation aimed to contribute to and build on existing knowledge.

### **5.3 Distinguishing Methodology and Methods**

The terms ‘methodology’ and ‘methods’ are often confused or used indiscriminately and interchangeably by some researchers. Clearly they are different. Saunders et al. (2009) state that sometimes, confusion exists in the interpretation of the two terms ‘*research methodology*’ and ‘*research methods*’ due to numerous authors’ frequent use of them randomly. According to Menacere (2016:13):

*Methodology refers to the interrelationship which exists between theory, method, data and phenomena under investigation. It is a roadmap which provides a clear vision and directives on how the research is to be conducted.*

The process of choosing an appropriate methodology is considered by Davies and Nathan (2014) to be the first step following the formulation of the research questions. There are two key options available: qualitative or quantitative research. However, according to Davies and Nathan (2014:25) the difference between them is “*not as clear-cut as sometimes assumed*”. The research can

take advantage of the two methods at different times or equally at the same time and this depends on the type of questions the research aims to answer. Likewise Grix (2004:30) is of the view that research methods range from “*in-depth interviews, statistical inference, discourse analysis and archival research of historical documents to participant observation*”. Furthermore, the selection of any method will depend on “*ontological and epistemological assumptions*” and of course, the research questions and the nature of the project being undertaken. Bell (2014) claims that labelling an approach does not necessarily imply that the research cannot alter from it. However he stresses that understanding the main advantages and disadvantages of each approach will most likely help the researcher to select the most suitable methodology for the topic under consideration. In the same vein, methodology according to Crotty, (2003: 3) is “*the strategy, plan of action, process or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods and linking the choice and use of the methods to the desired outcomes.*” Methodology is thought of as both the theoretical and procedural link that puts epistemology and method together (Mertens and Hess-Biber 2013). Della Porta and Keating (2013:28) argue that “*Methods are no more than ways of acquiring data and methodology refers to the way in which methods are used.*” Similarly, Stausberg and Engler (2013: 4-5) also make a distinction between methods and methodology. They define the term method as “*the rules of the game in scholarly work*” while methodology as “*the application and discussion of the underlying principles of the procedures*”.

Mason (2002) emphasises that the notion of methodological strategy needs to be differentiated from that of method, although the selection of method will form

part of the researcher's strategy. For instance, the interview method could only be one component of a series of different methodological approaches. Mason (2002:30) defines methodological strategy as:

*the logic by which you go about answering your research questions. That means it is the logic which underpins the way you design your research project as a potential answer to your research questions, as well as your decisions about most if not all aspects of the research.*

#### **5.4 The importance of methodological assumptions in research**

A methodological underpinning is the foundation of every research project because, in addition to the practicality involved with the research in terms of 'how to research?' and 'what to research?', a research project has a deeper concern: this is 'why research?' (Holden and Lynch, 2004: 2-3). As Menacere (2016:13) points out: "*Outlining a research methodology helps others know what the research is trying to find out, why a particular research is worth undertaking and why is it being conducted in a particular way.*"

Research is constructed upon assumptions which direct the research forward. The term '*assumptions*' refers to the underlying beliefs, commitments and values that determine and shape the methodology of a particular theory. Jennings et al (2005:145) argue that, "*Either explicitly or implicitly, researchers base their work on a series of philosophical assumptions regarding ontology, epistemology, and human nature, which have methodological consequences*".

Therefore, awareness of the philosophical assumptions and researcher stance forms a key part in methodological decision-making within research. This view

is supported by Kincheloe and Berry (2004:6) who stress, “*assumptions shape the outcome of the research*’ and choices made about research methodology ‘*profoundly affect what I find.*”

Similarly, Easterby-Smith et al. (2012: 27) suggest that there are three reasons why an understanding of research philosophical issues is important:

- *A knowledge of philosophy can help to clarify research designs;*
- *A knowledge of philosophy can help the researcher to recognise which designs work or do not work;*
- *A knowledge of philosophy may help the researcher to identify or create designs that may be outside their past experiences.*

Moreover, Saunders, et al. (2009) argue that in research philosophy each researcher follows important views on how they perceive the world and these views and assumptions will greatly affect the research strategy and methodology a researcher chooses as part of their approach. Thus methodology is crucial to research as Menacere (2016:12) maintains:

*It sets the directions of the research and the possible implications of the research. The methodology is also shaped by the literature review. To be fit for purpose, research findings must be founded on a clear methodological framework in order to be readily translatable into action.*

### **5.5 Key research philosophies: positivism and interpretivism**

Methodology and methods literature indicates that positivism and interpretivism are the main philosophies in conducting research in social science (Easterby-

Smith et al., 2012). Positivism and interpretivism are explained in the following sections.

### **5.5.1 Positivism**

This philosophical stance or paradigm views the researcher as an objective analyst and interpreter of a tangible social reality (Remenyi et al., 2002). Positivism enables the researcher to observe reality in a natural social setting, making generalised conclusions and using pre-existing theories to develop a different hypothesis. Positivists believe that there can be no real knowledge except that which is based on observed facts (Bryman, 2012). Gilbert (2008: 7) concurs and argues that positivists deem that society can be explained 'scientifically' according to laws and rational logic. According to Remenyi et al., (1998:32) positivism is *'working with an observable social reality and the end product of such research can be law-like generalisations similar to those produced by the physical and natural scientists.'* Saunders et al. (2009) argue that positivist researchers have the significant aim of generalising their findings to a broader population. Smith (1998:77) provides an interesting view of positivism as believing that knowledge is based on facts and figures:

*Positivist approaches to the social sciences . . . assume things can be studied as hard facts and the relationship between these facts can be established as scientific laws. For positivists, such laws have the status of truth and social objects can be studied in much the same way as natural objects.*

Positivism according to Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998:7) *"bases knowledge solely on observable facts and rejects speculation about 'ultimate origins'."* In addition, Crotty (2003:27) states that *"one thing is certain: positivism is linked to*

*empirical science as closely as ever.”* Moreover, Pring (2014:49) argues that *“one aspect of the scientific paradigm, which educational research might emulate is the experimental design.”*

Denscombe (2003:299) defines positivism as:

*An approach to social research which seeks to apply the natural science model of research to investigation of the social world. It is based on the assumption that there are patterns and regulations, cause and consequences in the social world, just as there are in the natural world. These patterns and regularities in the social world are seen as having their own existence - they are real.*

Bryman (2012:28) see positivism as an *“epistemological position”* that promotes the use of the methods associated with the natural sciences to the study of *“social reality and beyond”*. Nonetheless, various scholars see positivism differently. According to Bryman (2012:28):

- 1. Only phenomena and hence knowledge confirmed by the sense can genuinely be warranted as knowledge.*
- 2. The purpose of theory is to generate hypotheses that can be tested and that will thereby allow explanations of laws to be assessed.*

Positivism considers human behaviour to be as passive, precise and determined by the exterior environment. Grix (2004:82) suggests that positivism is an expression that holds many uses within the social sciences and philosophy. It includes any approach which employs scientific method to human matters regarded as belonging to a *“natural order open to objective enquiry”*. Positivists are of the view that knowledge of the social world can be achieved objectively, in order for the essential parts and sociological world to be

*“observed, measured and studied scientifically, in much the same way the physicists study levers, atoms and pulleys.”* (Thomas 2013:74).

The main aim of positivist research according to O’Leary (2004:5-6) is to explain things that we experience through *“observation and measurement”* with the aim of predicting and controlling the forces that surround us. In addition, positivism indicates that ‘social phenomena’ can be approached by using scientific methods, and this in turn leads to many assumptions about the world and the type of research. Positivists, furthermore, believe that the world is an unchanging entity and that its mysteries are beyond human understanding. Positivists findings are, in general, according to O’Leary (2004:5-6): *“qualitative - represented through numerical data, statistically significant and have to be applicable to the whole population”*. Positivism dominates in science and according to Healy and Perry (2000) presumes that science quantitatively measures independent data about a specific apprehensible reality.

The basic principle of positivism rests on the fact that reality is objective and it exists outside the human behavioural influence. Accordingly, positivism is explained by Easterby-Smith et al. (2008: 57) as a paradigm based on the belief or the assumption that *“The social world exists externally, and its properties should be measured through objective methods and not through sensation, reflection or intuition.”* This suggests that the position of the knower exists apart from the knowledge, which as McNiff and Whitehead, (2002:17-18) point out is *“a free-standing unit with an existence of its own.”* Whereas a positivist seeks ‘to explain’, an interpretivist tries ‘to understand’ reality. Positivism seeks quantifiable observations that lend themselves to statistical analysis.

### 5.5.1.2 Criticism of positivism

Positivism believes that everything can be measured and that the researcher is an outsider and detached from the study. This has been deemed by critics to be one sided and who argue that collecting statistics and numbers is not the answer to understanding meanings, beliefs and experience. Collis and Hussey (2009:56) highlight a number of criticisms of positivism which include:

- *It is impossible to separate people from the social context in which they exist.*
- *People cannot be understood without examining the perceptions they have of their own activities.*
- *Capturing complex phenomena in a single measure is misleading.*

Connell and Nord (1996:1) also criticise positivism arguing that:

- 1) *If reality is external and unknown to humans, then how do we accumulate knowledge regarding it? and*
- 2) *If we are accumulating knowledge about it, how do we know that we're doing it? From this perspective, any philosophical debate is moot because we do ...not know how to discover a correct position on the existence of, let alone the nature of, reality."*

Hughes and Sharrock (1997:66) state that they too are unable to provide any guideline to an appropriate philosophical stance, stating:

*Since the nature of philosophy, and its relationship to other forms of knowledge, is itself a major matter of philosophical dispute, there is, of course, no real basis for us to advocate any one view on these matters as the unequivocally correct conception of the relationship between philosophy and social research.*

## 5.6 Interpretivism

Interpretivism, explores the nature of social phenomena. It is a philosophy which is concerned with the social world. Bryman and Bell (2007) point out that researchers taking an interpretivist position employ several methods for studying the social world so that the reality can be understood and interpreted. Indeed, Denzin and Lincoln (2008:222) indicate that “*interpretivism believes that to understand the meaning of the world one must interpret it.*” Such a paradigm views the world as being socially constructed and subjective, with an observer being a part of that reality. Remenyi et al. (2002:95) state that:

*Interpretivism is a theoretical point of view that advocates the study of direct experience taken at face value; and one which sees behaviour as determined by the phenomena of experience rather than by external, objective and physically described reality.*

Interpretivism is concerned with all forms of lived experiences and events with the aim of finding answers to ‘Why?’, ‘How?’ and ‘What?’ questions (Saunders et al., 2007; Collis and Hussey, 2009). Numerous authors have stressed the importance of an interpretivist/ social constructionist/ phenomenological philosophy for research. Interpretivism or what is also known as post-positivism and anti-positivism is opposite to positivism. Willis (2008) states that interpretivists believe that there are many correct means and methods to knowledge. Walsham (1993) claims that in the tradition of interpretivism there are no right or wrong theories but instead these theories need to be judged according to how suitable they are to the researcher and to those involved in the same research area. They try to develop their hypotheses through an in-

depth examination of a phenomenon of interest. Bryman (2012) states that what makes the interpretivist approach different is that it sees people and their interpretations, views, meanings and understandings as the main source of data. Mason (2002) claims that interpretivism does not necessarily have to rely on complete involvement in a setting. It is therefore able to support and validate studies that employ interview methods with aims such as exploring people's individual and collective understandings, reasoning process, and social norms. Mason (2002) also argues that an interpretive approach not only considers people as a primary source of data but it also seeks their opinions and views rather than imposing any outside opinion or view. Thomas (2010:296) also believes that interpretivists *"use meaning (versus measurement) oriented methods, such as interviewing or participant observation, that rely on a subjective relationship between the researcher and subjects"*. It therefore aims at explaining the subjective causes and meanings that surround social action. It also includes the way people interact, how they think, how they form ideas regarding the world, and the way their world is constructed.

Dash (2005) states that three schools of thought within social science research mark Interpretivism. These are known as phenomenology, ethnomethodology, and symbolic interactionism. All three highlight the human communication with phenomena in their daily activity, and suggest a qualitative as opposed to a quantitative approach to social inquiry. According to Dash (2005) phenomenology is a theoretical point of view which believes that the behaviour of any individual is determined by their experience gained out of their direct interaction with any phenomena. Human beings interpret and attach meanings

to various actions and ideas and construct new ideas during their interaction with numerous phenomena. Hence, empathic understanding has to be developed from the researcher in order to know the different interpretation processes of individuals so that the feelings, motives, and thoughts that are behind the action of others can then be reproduced in the mind of the researcher.

According to Dash (2005:66) this approach studies *“the process by which people invoke certain ‘take-for-granted’ rules about behaviour which they interpret in an interactive situation and make it meaningful.”* The main interest is the interpretations people use in order to make sense of social settings. Symbolic interactionism underlines the interpretations and understandings of interactions which take place between humans. What is unique about this approach according to Dash (2005) is that human beings “interpret” and “define” the actions of others instead of simply responding and reacting to each other’s actions. Therefore, symbolic interactionists claim that only by focusing attention on an individual’s capability of creating objects which are meaningful in the world, will the resulting patterns of human interaction and social organisation be understood. This results in people changing themselves not only through interaction but they will also bring in change to their societies.

Saunders et al. (2007:74) summarise the advantages and disadvantages of both philosophies in the following table:

Table A 5.1 Advantages and disadvantages of positivism and interpretivism

	<b>Positivism</b>	<b>Interpretivism</b>
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economical collection of large amount of data.</li> <li>• Clear theoretical focus for the research at the outset.</li> <li>• Greater opportunity for researcher to retain control of research process.</li> <li>• Easily comparable data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitates understanding of how and why.</li> <li>• Enables a researcher to be alive to changes which occur during the research process.</li> <li>• Good at understanding social processes.</li> </ul>
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inflexible - direction often cannot be changed once data collection has started.</li> <li>• Weak at understanding social process.</li> <li>• Often does not discover the meaning people attach to social phenomena</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data collection can be time consuming.</li> <li>• Data analysis is difficult.</li> <li>• Researcher has to live with the uncertainty.</li> <li>• Patterns may not emerge.</li> <li>• Generally perceived as less credible by non-researchers.</li> </ul>

Source: (Saunders et al. 2007:74)

In conclusion, positivism considers that truth is single and exists concretely independent of the observer and that reality is separate from the individual who observes it. In contrast interpretivism believes that truth is multiple because it is shaped or influenced by the observers and that reality is relative and not detached from the individual who observes it. In addition, positivism relies on experiments and empirical evidence to discover truth. Interpretivism relies on meaning obtained from interviews, text analysis and subjective observation to describe perceived truth. Each philosophy has strengths and weaknesses as illustrated in the following table:

Table B 5.2 Strengths and weaknesses of positivism and interpretivism

Philosophies	Strengths	Weaknesses
<b>Positivism</b>	<p>1-May provide broad coverage of the range of a situation. Can be economical and fast.</p> <p>2-Where statistics are aggregated from large samples, they can be of considerable relevance to policy decisions.</p>	<p>1-Methods employed tend to be rather artificial and inflexible.</p> <p>2-Not very effective for understanding processes or the significance that people attach to actions.</p> <p>3-Not very helpful in generating theories.</p> <p>4-In having a focus on what is, or what has been recently, positivist approaches make it hard for policy makers to infer what actions and changes ought to take place in the future.</p>
<b>Interpretivism</b>	<p>1-Data-gathering methods seen as natural rather than artificial.</p> <p>2-Ability to understand people's meaning.</p> <p>3-Ability to adjust to new issues and ideas as they emerge.</p> <p>4-Contribute to theory generation.</p>	<p>1-Collection can be tedious and require more resources.</p> <p>2-Analysis and interpretation of data may be more difficult.</p> <p>3-Harder to control the pace, progress and end-points of research process.</p> <p>4-Policy makers may give low credibility to results emerging from qualitative approach.</p>

Source: Amaratunga et al., (2002: 20)

## 5.7 Data Collection Instruments

### 5.7.1 Quantitative vs. qualitative research methods

The debate whether quantitative or qualitative methods are more valid in the social sciences is endless. Authors have differentiated between quantitative and qualitative methods and the following section will highlight the views regarding both methods.

### 5.7.2 Quantitative approach

The main purpose of quantitative research is to find answers to questions through the use of scientific techniques. The quantitative methods commonly measure phenomena by using numbers and by testing hypotheses through fixed variables. According to Kumar (2011:104):

*in quantitative research, the measurement and classification requirements of the information that is gathered demand that the study designs are more structured, rigid, fixed and predetermined in their use to ensure accuracy in measurement and classification.*

There are a number of advantages to the quantitative method. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) mention a number of strengths and weaknesses of this approach. These can be summarised as follows:

1. To test and validate the theories constructed about (how and why) phenomena occur.
2. To test the hypotheses which are formed prior to the data collection. It can also simplify the findings of the research if the data are based on random samples of adequate size.
3. If the research findings has been repeated on many different populations and subpopulations it can generalise these findings.
4. It also useful and practical in obtaining data that allows quantitative predictions to be made.
5. The researcher can create a situation that excludes the confusing influence of various variables and this allows the researcher to assess cause and effect relationships more credibly.

6. Using quantitative methods in data collection is relatively quick.
7. It delivers accurate, quantitative numerical data.
8. Data analysis is less time consuming when using statistical software.
9. The research results are reasonably independent of the researcher.
10. Many people consider it to have higher credibility.
11. It is convenient for studying large numbers of people.

On the other hand, the quantitative approach has its limitations and according to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) the disadvantages can be listed as follows:

1. The categories used by the researcher might not reflect the understandings of local constituencies.
2. The theories used by the researcher might not reflect the understandings of the local constituencies.
3. The focus on theory or hypothesis testing rather than on theory and hypothesis generation could result in the researcher missing out on phenomena occurring.
4. The knowledge generated may be too abstract and general to be directly applied to specific local situations, contexts and individual.

### **5.7.3 Qualitative research approach**

A number of researchers have put forward a definition for the qualitative approach. Hakim (1992) states that it is concerned with the individuals' personal

accounts regarding their attitudes, motivations and behaviour. In addition, Hakim (1992:26) points out that:

*it offers richly descriptive reports of individuals' perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, views and feelings, the meanings and interpretations given to events and things, as well as their behaviour; displays how these are put together, more or less coherently and consciously, into frame works which make sense of their experiences; and illuminates the motivations which connect attitudes and behaviour, the discontinuities, or even contradictions, between attitudes and motivations are resolved in particular choices made.*

Qualitative research according to Davies and Nathan (2014) is also defined as a situated activity that positions the observer in the world. It includes a number of interpretive and material practices that make the world visible and it transforms the world into a number of presentations that includes interviews, conversation, photographs, and recording. Qualitative research includes an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world and it attempts to make sense of a certain phenomenon regarding the meanings which are brought by people. Domegan and Fleming (cited in Thomas 2010:302) claim that qualitative research: *“aims to explore and to discover issues about the problem on hand, because very little is known about the problem”*. Qualitative research according to Myers (2008) aims at helping researchers to understand people, and the social and cultural contexts they live within.

Qualitative research is especially useful for the researchers who are unclear about what specific data needs to be collected. Strauss and Corbin (2008) are of the view that qualitative methods are helpful in understanding any

phenomenon which only a little is yet known about it. This method can also help in gaining new perspectives on things about which much is already known, or to gain more in-depth information which may be difficult to express quantitatively. Barton and Lazarsfeld (cited in Najjar 2012:146) suggest that as *“the net of deep-sea explorers, qualitative studies may pull up unexpected and striking things for us to gaze on”*. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) point out a number of strengths and weaknesses of the qualitative approach. The strengths can be summed up as follows:

1. The data are formed according to the participants' personal categories of meaning.
2. It is useful in the study of a limited number of cases comprehensively.
3. It is helpful in describing a complex phenomenon.
4. It provides information on individual cases.
5. When using this method the researcher can conduct cross-case comparison and analysis.
6. It provides description and understanding of an individual's personal experience of a certain phenomenon *“i.e. emic or insider viewpoint”*.
7. It can describe in detail a phenomenon as it is positioned and embedded in local context.
8. The researcher pinpoints circumstantial and setting factors as they relate to the phenomenon of concern.
9. The research is able to study dynamic processes *“i.e., documenting sequential patterns and change”*.

10. Using the primarily method of 'grounded theory' the researcher is able to generate inductively a tentative but explanatory theory about a phenomenon.
11. This method can help the researcher in determining how participants interpret constructs "*e.g., self-esteem, IQ*".
12. The data in qualitative research are usually collected in a naturalistic setting.
13. Qualitative approaches are open to local situations, conditions, and stakeholders needs.
14. Qualitative researchers are responsive to changes that happen during the conduct of a study particularly during comprehensive field work and this may change the focus of their studies as a result.
15. A researcher can use an important case to illustrate intensely a phenomenon to the readers of a report and to determine idiographic causation "*i.e., determination of causes of a particular event*",
16. Qualitative data in the words and categories of the participants lend themselves to the exploration of how and why phenomena occur.

Nevertheless, the qualitative approach has a number of limitations. Johnson and Onwuegbuize (2004) suggest the following reasons:

1. The knowledge produced may not be generalised to other people or other situations "*i.e., findings may be unique to the relatively few people included in the research study*".
2. Making quantitative predictions is difficult.
3. Testing hypothesis and theories is more difficult.

4. Some administrators and commissioners of programmes may consider it to have lower credibility.
5. Collecting the data usually takes more time when compared to quantitative research.
6. The analysis of the data is often time consuming.
7. The researcher's personal biases and idiosyncrasies influence the results more easily.

Grix (2004:122) suggested a comparison of the features of the quantitative and qualitative approaches; these comparisons are illustrated in the following table:

Table C 5.3 Comparison of features of quantitative and qualitative approaches

<b>Quantitative approach</b>	<b>Qualitative approach</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim: to find out numerical quantitates of an event or case: how many, how much?</li> <li>• Goal: prediction control, description, hypothesis testing.</li> <li>• Uses hard data (numbers)</li> <li>• Objective</li> <li>• Usually tackles macro issues, using large, random and representative samples.</li> <li>• Employs a deductive research strategy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim: the nature and essence of an event, person or case.</li> <li>• Goal: understanding, description, discovery, and hypothesis-generation.</li> <li>• Uses soft data (words or images from documents or observations, etc.).</li> <li>• Subjective</li> <li>• Tends to analyse micro-issues, using small, non-representative samples.</li> <li>• Employs an induction research strategy.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Its epistemological orientation is rooted in the positivist tradition.</li> <li>• Aims at identifying general patterns and relationships.</li> <li>• Measures are created prior to data collection and are standardised.</li> <li>• Survey methodology.</li> <li>• Procedures are standard, replication is presumed.</li> <li>• Abstract</li> <li>• Concepts are in form of variables.</li> <li>• Findings attempt to be comprehensive and generalisable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Its epistemological orientation is rooted in the interpretative tradition.</li> <li>• Aims at interpreting events of historical and cultural significance.</li> <li>• Measures are created during interaction with data and are often specific to the individual setting.</li> <li>• Interview (in-depth case-study).</li> <li>• Research procedures are particular, replication rare.</li> <li>• Grounded</li> <li>• Concepts are in the form of themes.</li> <li>• Findings are seen to be precise, narrow and not generalisable.</li> </ul>
---	---

Source Grix (2004:122)

Choosing the appropriate method, as Denscombe (2003) points out, seems to be a difficult decision sometimes as the researcher is met with a range of options and alternatives and thus the researcher has to make strategic decisions regarding which method to choose. Nevertheless, the selection of approach is based on its appropriateness for specific features of investigation and specific types of problem. Therefore, in order to enhance the results, this study adopts the qualitative approach.

Oppenheim (2000) defines research methods as those used for data collection and generation. There are two methods of data collection that can be used by any business research: secondary and primary. Yin (2009) suggests six main evidence sources for use in a case study approach. For Yin (2009), no one data source has complete advantage over another and so multiple evidence sources can aid in the clarification of the genuine meanings of phenomena under investigation. Researchers have also been encouraged to employ more than one method by Silverman (1993) and Denzin and Lincoln (2008), as they recognise the value of corroborating findings so that data validity can be improved.

### **5.8 Research methodology of the study**

The nature of the study's research questions should direct the methodology of any study. Therefore, it is up to the researcher to select the method most suitable to answer the research questions and to achieve the research objectives. Approaches and strategies are selected because *"they are appropriate for specific aspects of investigation and specific kinds of problems"*. The researcher is faced with *"a variety of options and alternatives and has to make strategic decisions about which to choose"* (Denscombe 2003:3). The researcher has two key methods to choose from depending on the nature of the topic and the research questions: to choose either the qualitative or the quantitative approach, or combine the two methods.

This study is interpretivist in nature and this means the attention is focused upon perceptions, views, and words. In order to achieve the aim of this study

and answer the research questions, two methods of data collection were used. A qualitative content analysis strategy is adopted together with semi-structured interviews in order to produce a holistic understanding of rich, contextual, and generally unstructured, non-numeric data.

The motivation behind selecting the above data collection instruments is dictated by the nature of the study which aims to assess translation quality focusing on euphemistic expressions from the Quran in English. The use of quantitative -questionnaire/survey was deemed unsuitable due to the following constraints:

- It is difficult to design a survey due to the wide range of populations with different native languages who use the English version of the Quran
- Significant concentrations of speakers of other languages other than Arabic or English with vast cross-cultural varieties
- Difficulties in designing a comprehensive questionnaire/survey in terms of wording, meaning, complexity, cultural aspects, existence of different perspectives.
- Limited context to clarify the euphemistic meaning
- English Quran readers or users not familiar with the questionnaire culture.

In contrast content analysis is:

- Text- culture- language-driven
- Measurement focuses on identifying how euphemistic expressions from the Quran in Arabic have been transferred into English

Thus this research does not aim to be neutral and entirely objective, with the emphasis firmly placed on measuring, counting and statistical manipulation of quantities and numbers. On the contrary, the purpose of this research is to make sense of how bilingual translators view and feel about the quality of English translations of the Quran with the emphasis very much on assessing how euphemism in the Quran has been conveyed in English.

### **5.8.1 Purpose of Research**

Research can be divided into three different categories: exploratory, explanatory and descriptive. Each serves a different end purpose and can be used singly or in combination. The three main genres of research suggested by the literature on methodology and methods are:

- **to explore** (Exploratory research)
- **to describe** (Descriptive research)
- **to explain** (Explanatory research)

(Saunders and Lewis, 2012)

Kumar (2011) adds to this list correlational research, which is used to establish or discover the existence of a relationship, association or interdependence between two or more aspects of a phenomenon or a situation. Similarly, Hair et al. (2007) argue that, exploratory research is used when the researcher has little knowledge or information of the research problem and wishes to clarify his/her understanding of a problem and gain insights about a topic of interest (Saunders et al., 2012). Hair et al. (2007: 419) points out that descriptive research is “*designed to obtain data that describes the characteristics of the topic of interest in the research.*” The purpose of descriptive research, as Saunders et al. (2012: 669) point out, is “*to produce an accurate presentation*

*of persons, events or situations.*” Saunders and Lewis (2012:113) define explanatory study as “*research that focuses on studying a situation or a problem in order to explain the relationships between variables.*” They indicate that an explanatory study takes descriptive research a stage further by exploring factors and looking for an explanation behind a particular occurrence. Moreover, Punch (2006), argues that while a descriptive study asks about what the case or situation is, an explanatory study asks about why or how this is the case, “*to portray an accurate profile of persons, events, or situations*” (Robson, 2002: 59). As far as this study is concerned, a combination of exploratory and explanatory research is considered fitting.

### **5.8.2 Justification for selecting exploratory research for this study**

This study aims to explore the feature of euphemism from Arabic into English with reference to five different translations of the Quran. It investigates the challenges encountered when translating Quranic euphemistic expressions into English and examines translators’ decision processes. It is research which aims at highlighting the shortcomings and weaknesses in terms of fluency and accuracy, and to discuss the different strategies deployed by the translators. Translators from Arabic into English encounter many problems due to the difference between these two languages in terms of structure and cultural background. These problems are exacerbated when dealing with the euphemistic expression of the Qu’ran.

As a result, this current research is exploratory in nature seeking to investigate the specific euphemistic features of the Quran in translation as they tend to

create more problems for the translator than other language features. Exploratory research aims to explore an area where little is known or little research has been done in the context of assessing the quality of existing translations of the Quran in English. In keeping with the main aim of the study, the research is exploratory, whilst in relation to the additional research objectives, the study can be thought of as explanatory. Research that is considered explanatory aims at providing an explanation regarding the characteristics of euphemism in translation. Explanatory research seeks to understand and explain a phenomenon or situation or problem. Usually it asks the questions 'why' and 'how' a particular phenomenon occurs or whether there is a relationship between two or more factors of a phenomenon. The researcher goes beyond merely describing the characteristics, to analyse and explain why or how something is happening.

Exploratory research projects use pilot studies to explore areas where there is a perceived lack of relevant research and the pilot study can enhance the reliability of the research. Exploratory research has the primary purpose of developing preliminary ideas prior to further investigation to address the research questions (Neuman, 2013; Kumar, 2011). The objective of exploratory research is to investigate the processes related to problems, experiences or meanings related to specific circumstances and to discover new ideas (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2010; Zikmund and Babin, 2009). In attempting to answer questions, such as 'Why?', 'How?' and 'What?' the research can help provide a deeper understanding of phenomena, and the combination of techniques can yield findings that are more robust and richer. The main justification behind using exploratory research is motivated and informed by the following reasons:

1) the extensive literature review on the topic of Quranic translations is exploratory; 2) being an insider researcher who reads and uses English translations of the Quran on a regular basis, 3) conducting interviews with key bilingual translators of Islamic texts.

### **5.9 The research philosophy selected for this study**

The choice of a research method or combination of methods is related to the type of questions asked and to the nature of the problem the study seeks to address. As Brannen (2005:7) argues: *“the researcher’s choice of methods is said to be chiefly driven by the philosophical assumptions - ontological and epistemological - which frame the research or the researcher’s frame of reference.”* But as has been demonstrated, method, methodology, paradigm and epistemology are labels which have been used loosely and are defined in inconsistent and conflicting ways in the research literature.

The philosophical paradigm underpinning this study is predominantly interpretivist. Philosophies are neither better nor worse than each other, but they are better in terms of suitability for research questions (Saunders et al. 2009). The rationale for adopting a qualitative research approach is closely related to the purpose of the study, the nature of the problem and the research questions. Research is often multi-purpose and few studies sit comfortably within a wholly quantitative or qualitative approach. Quantitative/qualitative methods, like philosophies, have advantages and disadvantages, and are selected according to which method best answers the research questions.

A research philosophy contains important assumptions about the way in which reality is viewed. These assumptions underpin and influence the research strategy and the methods selected as part of that strategy. While the philosophy choice is often prompted by the nature of the problem and the research question of the study under consideration, the main influence is likely to be the researcher's view of the relationship between knowledge and the process by which it is generated.

Methodology shapes and is shaped by research objectives and questions. The methodology chosen for this study is informed by the appropriate underpinning philosophy in line with the nature of the problem and objectives of the study. The focus of this study is to explore the different interpretations and translations of Quranic euphemistic expressions from Arabic into English in order to find out the extent to which these rhetorical devices are translatable. Predominantly interpretivist, this study seeks to generate knowledge based on words and meaning. It is also attempting to grasp the experience of the users of the Quran in English, and their expectations and perspectives with regards to the quality of the translation of the English version of the Quran. Positivism is deemed unsuitable because it aims to formulate laws, thus establishing a basis for prediction and generalisation. Although it is widely accepted that the research philosophy, which indicates how the researcher acquires or develops knowledge, is important, it must be stressed that establishing and choosing the most suitable philosophy is still debated amongst researchers. Many authors argue that there is no rule which obliges the researcher to choose one method

for one study, and another for another study. Robson (2002) and Jankowicz (2004) argue that there is neither a magic formula nor a straightforward method to justify which method is better than another for a particular research. Guba and Lincoln (1994:105), argue that questions of research methods are of secondary importance to questions of which paradigm is applicable to the research. They point out that:

*both qualitative and quantitative methods may be used appropriately with any research paradigm. Questions of method are secondary to questions of paradigm, which we define as the basic belief system or world view that guides the investigation, not only in choices of method but in ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways.*

On the same wavelength, Hughes and Sharrock (1997) argue that contemporary realists and empiricists are pragmatics; they do not worry about epistemology and ontology but about the particular problems they are addressing in their study. As Menacere (2016:26) argues, the rationale for selecting particular research methods is neither rule driven nor objective but:

*The rationale for undertaking research is to produce a story that stands up to close scrutiny and presents convincing and reliable evidence that can make a difference.*

Saunders et al. (2007) believe that there is no one research philosophy better than other. Each research philosophy is better at doing different things and, therefore, a researcher should select the methodology and method which can help to achieve their research objectives. As always, which is '*better*' depends on the nature of the problem and the research questions the study is trying to answer. As Saunders et al. (2007: 116) clearly state:

*It would be easy to fall into the trap of thinking that one research approach is 'better' than another. This would miss the point. They are 'better' at doing different things. Of course, the practical reality is that research rarely falls into only one philosophical domain...Business and management research is often a mixture between positivist and interpretivist.*

This study focuses on evaluating the Quran in translation in terms of how sensitively Quranic euphemistic expressions have been rendered by five different translators of the Quran. It evaluates the attitude and opinions of bilingual translators concerning the various interpretations of euphemism in English translations of the Quran. Based on the above arguments and given the nature and objectives of this study, it is justifiable to suggest that the philosophy underpinning this study is predominantly interpretivism.

In summary, rarely is the research methodology and the method a perfect fit for a particular study. Each has its own strengths and weaknesses. The researcher should not try to force fit but should tailor fit the selected method in line with the nature of the research objectives and questions.

#### **5.10 Content analysis as a form of textual analysis**

Content analysis is one of the different forms of textual analysis. It is used to explain and describe features of messages embedded in texts. In general, content analysis is one of the methods in social science adopted in order to study the content of information. This method enables the researcher to use both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Content analysis is helpful as an unobtrusive method which allows the researcher to manage and summarise

large quantities of information, provide valuable historical and cultural insight into a research problem, and triangulate with other research methods. This method is conducted through first selecting the text then unitising the message units, and after that generating content categories, coding the text and finally explaining the results.

Content analysis according to Stausberg and Engler (2013) has a number of functions that can be identified as follows:

1. It is useful for researchers who are interested in tracking specific data to identify and understand a direction or change in certain phenomena over time.
2. Content analysis is appropriate for researchers who want to identify patterns or commonalities within a specific genre.
3. Researchers can use content analysis to identify differences through drawing comparisons between similar types of variables within two different systems or different contexts.
4. Content analysis can be used by researchers to assess the image of particular groups in society.
5. Content analysis can be used to measure a specific phenomenon against some standard in order to classify the phenomenon, make a judgment about it, or to determine how close it is to meeting a particular standard or expectation.
6. Content analysis may be used to relate certain message characteristics to other variables.

### **5.10.1 Advantages and limitations of content analysis**

Any approach has both strong and weak features. Kohlbacher (2006), Alzadjali (2011) and Stausberg and Engler (2013) point out a number of advantages and disadvantages of content analysis and its use. These are as follows:

1. It looks directly at communication through texts or transcripts.
2. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches can be adopted.
3. It can provide valuable historical and cultural insights over time through analysis of texts.
4. Allows closeness to the text and this allows the researcher to alternate between specific categories and relationships and to also statistically analyse the coded form of the text.
5. It can be used to interpret texts.
6. It is an unobtrusive means of analysing interactions.
7. It provides insight into complex models of human thoughts and language use.
8. If it is done well, it is considered to be a relatively exact research method based on hard facts as opposed to Discourse Analysis.

At the same time content analysis has its limitations and these limitations can be summarised as follows:

1. It can be extremely time consuming.
2. This form of analysis is subject to increased error, especially when relational analysis is used to reach a higher level of interpretation.

3. Is usually lacks a theoretical base, or it attempts too liberally to draw meaningful inferences about the relationships and impacts implied in a study.
4. It is inherently reductive, especially when dealing with complex texts.

According to Saunders et al (2012) there are many advantages to using qualitative content analysis as a set of procedures for collecting and organising information in a standardised format that allows analysts to make inferences about the characteristics and meaning of written texts:

- Qualitative research provides a more realistic feel of the world that cannot be experienced with the numerical data and statistical analysis used in quantitative research
- It provides flexible ways of collecting, analysing, and interpreting data
- The use of primary and unstructured data gives qualitative research a descriptive capability (Saunders et al. 2012)

#### **5.10.2 Content analysis adopted in this study**

The use of content analysis by this study is in line with its objectives, that is:

- a. to analyse the quality and accuracy of the translation of euphemistic expressions in the Quran
- b. to examine the challenges and problems facing the translators of euphemistic expressions in the Quran
- c. to assess and evaluate the factors that led to loss of meaning in the translation of euphemistic expressions in the Quran.

There are three distinct approaches to content analysis. According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005) those three approaches are: conventional, directed, and summative content analysis. The three approaches are used to interpret meaning from the content of text data and therefore observe the interpretivist paradigm. Conventional content analysis is used in a study that aims to describe a certain phenomenon and this type is usually appropriate in the case of limited research literature on a phenomenon. One of the main advantages of the conventional approach to content analysis is obtaining direct information from study participants without forcing preconceived categories or theoretical perspectives. One of the limitations of this type of analysis is failing to develop a comprehensive understanding of the context and therefore failing to identify key categories. Another limitation of the conventional approach to content analysis is that it can easily be mistaken with other qualitative methods such as grounded theory.

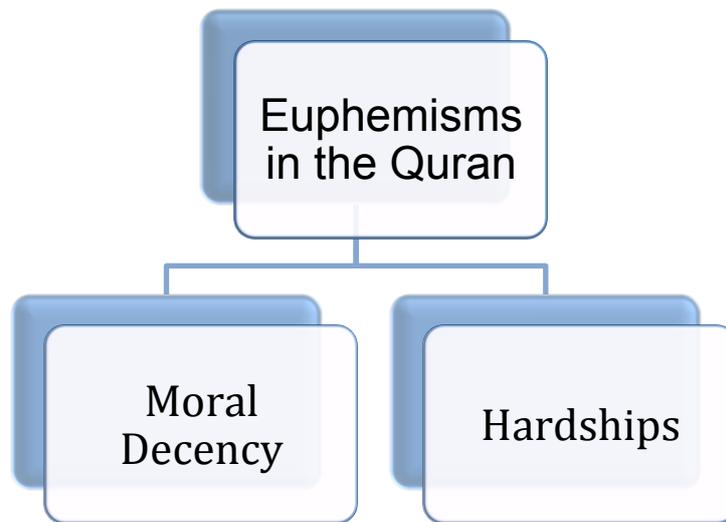
Directed content analysis begins with a theory or relevant research findings as guidance for initial codes. This type of content analysis is guided by a more structured process than the conventional approach. By using existing theory or previous research the researchers begin by identifying key concepts or variables such as preliminary coding categories. Then operational definitions for each category are determined using the theory. If the data is collected mainly through interviews then open-ended questions may be used, followed by targeted questions about the predetermined categories. The key strength of a directed approach to content analysis is that existing theory can be supported and extended. Also as research in an area grows, a directed approach makes

explicit the reality that researchers are unlikely to be working from the naive perception that is often viewed as the hallmark of naturalistic design.

Yet, there are a number of limitations for the directed content analysis approach. The use of theory has some fundamental limitations as the researchers approach the data with an informed but nevertheless strong bias. Consequently, researchers according to Hsieh and Shannon (2005) might be more likely to find evidence that supports rather than that which is not supportive of a theory. Secondly in the process of answering the study's questions, some participants might respond to the questions in a certain way in order to please the researcher. In addition, some sort of overemphasis on the theory can blind researchers to contextual aspects of the phenomenon.

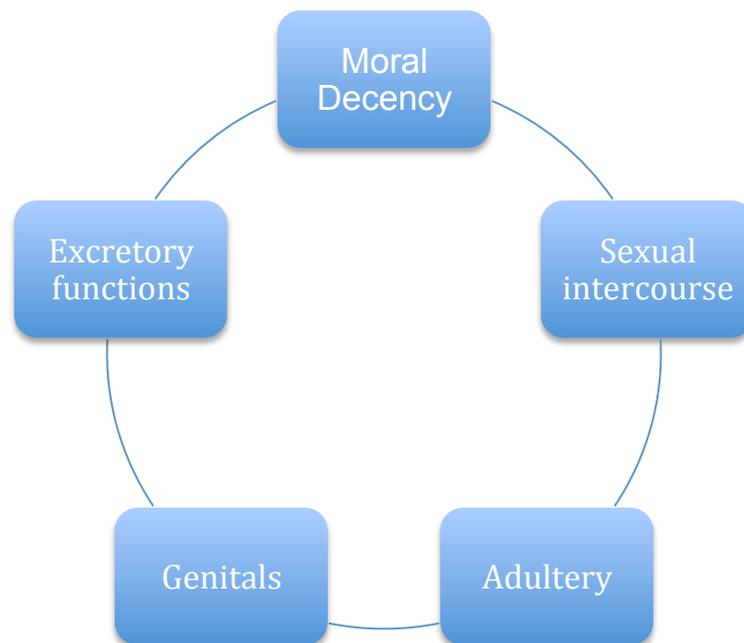
This study will adopt the summative content analysis approach. According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), when a researcher adopts the summative approach to qualitative content analysis the first step to be taken by the researcher should be identifying and quantifying certain words or content texts with the purpose of understanding the contextual use of the words or content. This study will first categorise the euphemistic expressions in the Quran. This step is adopted in order to allow the researcher to first identify the different usage for euphemisms in the Quran and to also choose the expressions used for the purpose of this study based on a clear category. According to Al-Hamad and Salman (2013) euphemisms in the Quran can be categorised and sub-categorised shown in the following figures:

Figure 5.1: Categories of euphemism in the Quran



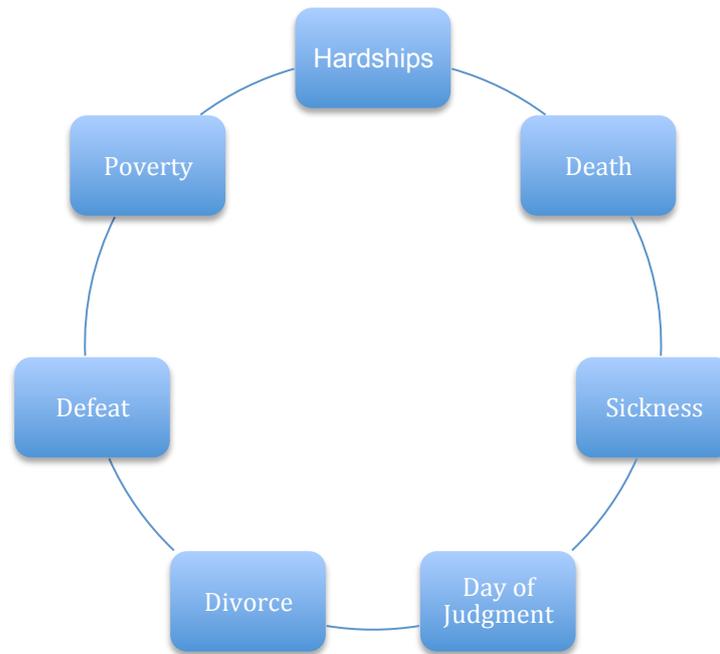
Source: Adopted from Al-Hamad and Salman, (2013: 198)

Figure 5.2 Sub-categories of euphemisms of moral decency in the Quran



Source adopted from Al-Hamad and Salman, (2013:198)

Figure 5.3 Sub-categories of euphemisms of hardships in the Quran



Source: Adopted from Al-Hamad and Salman, (2013: 198)

### 5.10.3 Aims of Content Analysis

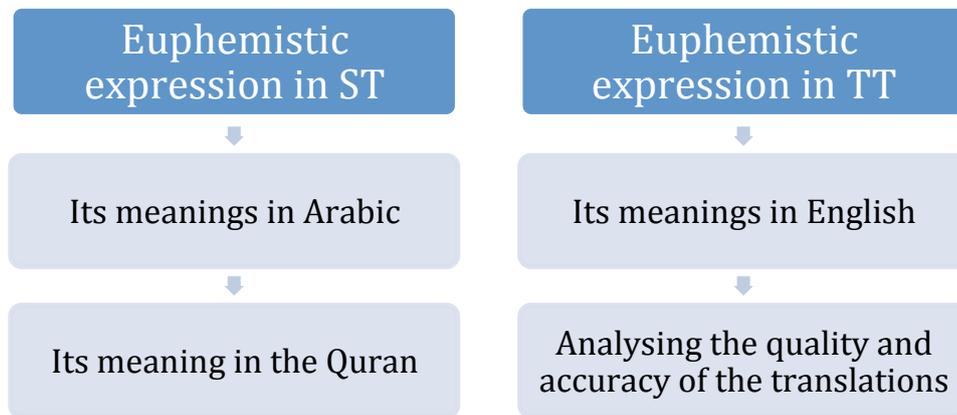
Content analysis is used in order to thoroughly investigate the euphemistic expressions in the Quran starting from the meaning of the words in the Arabic language, their meaning in the Quran, and then the meaning of the term used in English by the translator, before finally assessing the five different translations used for the purpose of this study. The reasons behind selecting these five particular translations are discussed in Chapter One.

### 5.10.4 The structure of the chapter on content analysis

The structure of the analysis chapter is designed to give a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the euphemistic expressions used for this study. This structure is applied in order to first analyse the euphemistic expression through identifying its different meanings in Arabic before finding out the meaning of the

expressions in the Quran by using a number of exegetical books. Then the same is adopted in English by identifying the meanings of the words used in the translated text before comparing it to the source text.

Figure 5.4 Structure of the analysis chapter



Source: Designed by the present researcher

### 5.11 Justification for the selection of the sample of euphemisms used in this study

Euphemistic expressions may sometimes be understood or interpreted differently. Therefore, this research will adopt a specific method in the investigation of these expressions. The euphemistic expressions used for this study are chosen based on the categories set out by this research earlier in this chapter. Some samples from euphemisms of moral decency will be selected and investigated. The interpretations of the selected euphemisms are based on two reliable selected exegeses and these exegeses were selected for the following reasons:

1. They are both widely recognised within the Muslim world.
2. They give thorough, detailed and comprehensive explanations to each and every word in the Quran.

### 5.12 Steps used for analysing the data

The steps adopted for this study will be for the purpose of answering some of the main research questions of this study. The first step is identifying the euphemistic expression in the TT. The expression will be transliterated then its different meanings in the Arabic language will be investigated in-depth with the use of two monolingual Arabic dictionaries. The Arabic monolingual dictionaries used in this research will be *muʿjam almaʿany* and *alqamwūs almuḥyṭ*. This will be followed by a brief discussion of the purpose of revelation of each verse using the book of *asbab alnuzūwl* and *aludjab fy asbab alnuzūwl*. This step is adopted because it is in line with the theoretical framework adopted in this study and which was discussed in Chapter Three. The next step will be using three Quranic exegetical books *Tafsiyr* in order to achieve a better understanding of the verse and to produce accurate meanings for the selected euphemisms. The three books used are *Tafsir ibn kathir*, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* and *altafsyir almuyasar*. Then the five translations will be discussed and compared to each other. The research will firstly identify the meaning of the euphemistic expression used by each translator. The numerous meanings of each euphemistic expression will be identified and thoroughly investigated by using two English language dictionaries. These dictionaries are Longman's Dictionary of Contemporary English and the Oxford Dictionary of English. Then the strategy adopted by each translator will be determined. After comparing the five translations, the closest translation to the correct meaning will be acknowledged and pointed out.

### 5.12.1 References used for assessing the translations

The two dictionaries used for analysing the five translations are *muḥdam almaḥany*, (2010) which is a contemporary online lexicon that provides its users with the definitions of each Arabic term alongside the English translation of the term used. In addition, it also gives the meanings of Quranic terminologies alongside the different meanings of the term in other places in the Quran if applicable. The second dictionary used in this research is *alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ* (2014) by Madjdu aldyn alfyrywuz abady which was first published in 1816 and it is one of the most famous Arabic lexicons.

The books on the reasons of revelation used in assessing the five translations are *asbab alnuzūwl* (1992) which was first published in 1075 by abu alḥasan ḥaly alwaḥidyalniysabuwy and *asbab alnuzūwl* (1997) first published in 1448 by ibn ḥajdar alḥḳalany.

The exegetical references used for the purpose of this study are:

1. *Tafsir ibn kathir* (2016) by ḥimad aldyn ibn kathir alḳurashy aldimashḳy and it is believed that he completed writing this exegetical reference in 1360. This is considered to be one of the most famous and comprehensive exegetical references as it uses the Quran, the sunnah to comment on the verses and it also pays attention to the use of language and the reasons of revelations.
2. *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* (2007) which was published by Jalal aldyn almaḥla and Jalal aldyn alsywṭy. This exegetical reference was completed in 1465 and both writers adopted a method of curtailment in the process of producing this exegetical reference.

3. *altafsyf almuyasar* is one of the most contemporary exegetical references available in present times as it was first published in (1999) by a number of Islamic scholars and experts in the exegesis of the Quran.

### **5.13 Interviews as a data collection method**

Interviews are defined by Kumar (2011:137) as *“any person-to-person interaction, between two or more individuals with a specific purpose in mind”*. O’Leary further indicates that interviewing is a form of data collection which involves researchers asking participants open-ended-questions. Furthermore, the purpose of the interview is to give reliable and valid data that is meaningful to the research objectives. Marshall and Rossman (2010:82) are in support of this statement as they claim that:

*An interview is a method of data collection that may be described as an interaction involving the interviewer and the interviewee, the purpose of which is to obtain valid and reliable information.*

Interviews according to Rowley (2012) are usually used in conducting qualitative research to allow the researcher to collect facts, or to gain insights into or to understand opinions, attitudes, and experiences. Interviewing is a method of creating data through the means of asking people questions orally. However, the ways an interview is conducted may vary. There are a number of reasons for using interview for the purpose of data collection and as a research method. Its flexibility has made it possible for many researchers to use semi-structured interviews, especially those working within an interpretive research tradition.

Gray (2004:214) gives the following reasons for using semi-structured interviews:

1. *There is need to get highly personalized data*
2. *There are opportunities required for probing*
3. *A good return rate is important*
4. *Respondents are not fluent in the native language of the country or where they have difficulties with written language.*

According to Stausberg and Engler (2013:310): “*some interviews are highly structured, others are largely unstructured, and most interviews are semi-structured*”. Interviews are usually used alongside other methods and this reflects the so-called methodological triangulation. One of the primary purposes of qualitative interviews according to Stausberg and Engler (2013) is to help the researcher understand and interpret people’s thoughts, ideas, beliefs, and conceptions. This method begins with people’s experiences and it seeks to get to the bottom of them. Kvale and Brinkmann (2014) claim that the interviewer is a miner trying to detect and uncover knowledge hidden inside the interviewee and this means that the researcher needs to put forward the right questions to get hold of that hidden knowledge.

Structured interviews are a series of pre-determined questions which are answered by the interviewees in the same order. The data analysed in structured interviews tend to usually be more straightforward if compared to other forms of interviews. This is because the researcher can compare and contrast different answers given to the same question. Bryman and Bell (2007) state that structured interviews are based on a specific schedule and exact adherence to the question. The researcher mainly reads the questions during an interaction with the respondent and every question is recorded on a

standardised schedule. This means that every respondent is given the same interview incentive as any other individual participating in the research. On the other hand, unstructured interviews are usually the least reliable type of interviews from the researcher's point of view. As no questions are prepared in advance, interviews commence in an informal manner. This form of interview can be subject to a high level of bias and comparing different answers received from different participants tends to be challenging due to the difference in the formulation of questions.

Semi-structured interview is the most common type of interview and this study aims to adopt this type of interview because it allows the researcher to probe or ask more detailed questions and not to follow only the interview guide. In addition, the researcher is able to explain or rephrase any question that is unclear to the respondent. Cassel and Symon (2012) claim that semi-structured interviews, otherwise known as qualitative interviews, are ideally suited to examine topics in which different levels of meaning need to be explored and this is something which may be very difficult to achieve using quantitative methods.

Semi-structured is a term which covers a wide range of instances, and according to Rowley (2012) it typically refers to a situation in which the interviewer prepares a series of questions which are general in form prior to the interview but the interviewer is able to vary the sequence of the questions. Corbetta (2003:270) points out that semi-structured interviews are where "*The order in which the various topics are dealt with and the wording of the questions are left to the interviewer's discretion.*" In this way, the interviewer is free to

conduct the conversation in a way he/she thinks fits the interview, by asking questions and using suitable words to give the best explanation and ask for clarification if the answer to the question is not clear. Patton (2002:243) recommends to:

*explore, probe, and ask questions that will elucidate and illuminate that particular subject... to build a conversation within a particular subject area, to word questions spontaneously, and to establish a conversational style but with the focus on a particular subject that has been predetermined.*

Nonetheless, the questions that are used in a semi-structured interview tend to be more general in their frame of references if compared to the questions found in a structured interview. This form of interview allows both parties to ask further questions in response to what are seen as significant replies. Bernard (2005) is of the view that semi-structured are the most appropriate choice in situations where the researcher has only one chance to interview someone. Polit and Beck (2006) state that an interview gives quality data regarding what people are doing or thinking about a certain phenomenon. Rowley (20012:162) states that interviews are useful when:

1. *The research objectives centre on understanding experiences, opinions, attitudes, values, and processes.*
2. *There is insufficient known information known about the subject to be able to draft a questionnaire*
3. *The potential interviewee might be more receptive to an interview than other data gathering approaches.*

### **5.13.1 Criteria for selecting qualitative semi-structured interview in this study**

Qualitative semi-structured interviews were selected for use according to the following:

- In order to generate rich descriptive data and the interpretation of data based on meaning not numbers. Qualitative research is associated with exploratory research.
- To gauge the participants' perspectives (bilingual translators) about the issue of euphemistic devices from Arabic into English and gain insights into their views. Contextual and relational elements are deemed as significant to elicit what the content analysis could not provide. The importance of a qualitative approach is to get closer to the participants. Qualitative interviews are effective research instruments for getting deep insights about how people experience, feel and interpret the social world (Mack et al., 2005).
- Semi-structured interviews will give the present researcher the chance to 'probe' for more detailed information by asking the participants to clarify their responses or to elaborate their answers further. A quantitative method would not provide insights into such critical subjective contextual interpretations of euphemism from Arabic. In the five English translations of the Quran selected for study, the level of accuracy of euphemisms from Arabic into English varies, but the nature and the challenge of the problem differs from one translator to another.

Therefore, this study was not based on measurement, but rather the approach adopted is one consistent with an inductive approach and appropriate for a study of an exploratory nature.

### **5.13.2 Interview themes and questions**

The researcher decided to use a qualitative approach to achieve the overall aim of the study as most of the literature on translations of the Quran has mainly focused on qualitative data for deeper theoretical analysis.

The interview was designed with key questions grouped thematically. The data from the literature related to translating the Quran providing insights and knowledge which have been integrated and formulated in the form of interview questions.

### **5.13.3 Selection of participants**

A diverse range of participants were selected to enhance representativeness. Ten people took part although the number of participants selected is irrelevant as the research is qualitative and not quantitative. According to Stausberg and Engler (2013: 313) when doing an interview, two main questions are put forward “*Who and how many?*” The participants in this study are all from the College of Languages and Translation at Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, Saudi Arabia. They all hold a minimum of a Masters degree in either linguistics or translation. The reasons behind using participants from this college is because it is within an Islamic University and within the college there is a unit which works on the translation of Friday sermons from the holy mosques of Makkah and Medina. This means that they work on a weekly basis on Islamic texts and they encounter numerous problematic issues regarding the translation of Islamic texts and this means that they can provide important data for this study.

It is a structured process of knowledge gathering with experts. As a result, the sample is based on:

- First-hand experience in using the Quran in English
- Participants hold vital information in the area under investigation within translation and euphemism
- Semi-structured interviews in this study are viewed as a way of supplementing the content analysis method

#### **5.14 Conducting Interviews**

The interviews that were completed at Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University were semi-structured and were conducted face to face. The questions were stimulated from the literature on how they felt about the current translations of the Quran, how they handled issues with the translations of the Quran and how they approached the translation of euphemisms in the Quran.

##### **5.14.1 Access**

The researcher was granted permission from the Dean of the College of Languages and Translation at Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University to conduct face-to-face interviews with the academic staff in the college.

### **5.14.2 Reliability**

Cooper and Schindler (2006) consider reliability to be the consistency and honesty of a measurement procedure used in a study. Saunders et al. (2012) state that there are four threats to reliability. These four threats are:

1. Error
2. Bias
3. Observer error
4. Observer bias

Consequently, the reliability of a research element helps in confirming the ability of a research tool to offer steady, reliable and consistent results.

### **5.14.3 Validity**

Whitelaw (2001) defines validity as the accuracy of the data collection methods, in the measurement of the concept that needs to be measured, and practically shows whether the research seeks the right concept or not. Creswell (2000) classifies validity into two parts, external validity and internal validity. Therefore, the researcher must make sure that every question is important to the study and, in the case of this study, linked to the translation of euphemistic expressions in the Quran.

### **5.14.4 Analysis of interviews**

There are many formats for analysis such as: Thematic analysis, Comparative analysis, Content analysis, and Discourse analysis (Dawson, 2009). In order to analyse the interviews for this research, content analysis has been chosen which is a *“method where the researcher systematically works through each transcript assigning codes, which may be numbers or words, to specific*

*characteristics within the text*" (Dawson, 2009:122). So in this case, the first step in content analysis is to conceptualise the data, then group them into meaningful categories, and then identify them into themes to explain the data.

### **5.15 Ethical considerations**

Prior to any research, it is vital to consider ethical implications associated with the research. Ethics play a significant role in gaining access to people and organisations for the purpose of gathering data for the study. In addition, being ethical is a fundamental requirement of an evaluation in order to determine whether the study should commence or not. According to Punch (2006) it is important to determine the ethical dimension of any research before conducting it. It is also important for the researcher to implement an ethical code, and to act in a sensitive manner with the collected data because the researcher enters the lives of the participants. Furthermore, according to Easterby-Smith et al. (2002) it has to be taken into account that ethical issues may arise in a clash between the professional and personal interest of the piece of research.

For this research, Liverpool John Moores University's ethical guidelines have been used by the researcher as the main source for determining the ethical issues of this study. An application form of research ethics has been filled out alongside the participant information sheet which has been presented to every participant prior to their contribution. The potential respondents were also informed that their participation was voluntary and that there were no implications for refusing to participate. All participants were asked if they required further clarification and they were also informed that they were free to withdraw anytime during the interview if they wished to do so. The researcher

composed a letter requesting permission to carry out the research and displaying the advantages that could be achieved through the study.

### **5.16 Summary**

It can be concluded that research can be considered to be the first step towards finding answers to the researcher's questions. Nonetheless, there are a variety of methodological strategies that can be used, and the choice of method is up to the researcher only. Also, the methodology of study is likely to evolve or change and to be determined by the nature of the research questions.

This study is interpretivist in nature, which means that the attention of the researcher focuses on perceptions, views and theories. A qualitative strategy was adopted for the purpose of this study. Also, to enhance this study's findings, a content analysis approach and semi-structured interviews were adopted as the main methods of qualitative data collection and they were used to investigate and evaluate the translation of euphemism in the Quran across five different English translations of the Quran selected for this study.

## Chapter Six

### Data Analysis and Discussion

#### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to analyse the findings obtained from the primary data using text analysis of the verses of the Quran which contain euphemisms and through conducting semi-structured interviews. It is worth reiterating that this study aims to examine the quality of the translations of the Quran from Arabic into English across five different versions focusing on how euphemism as a rhetorical device was transferred from Arabic into English. In addition, this research evaluates the extent to which the selected translations are fit for purpose in terms of faithfulness to the original and accuracy in meaning. It seeks to determine whether any deviation, loss or distortion of meaning has occurred and whether it is due to the translating approach or inadequate understanding of the meaning of the Quranic text. It will also assess how euphemistic expressions have been rendered, and provide recommendations on how to improve the translation of euphemistic expressions in the Quran. This quality assessment of Quranic euphemism from Arabic into English is considered as an opportunity to strengthen and enhance the quality of English translations of the Quran. The analysis of the euphemisms in the Quran will be preceded by the analysis of the semi-structured interviews.

## **6.2 Interview Procedure**

The purpose of using semi-structured interviews in this study is to gauge the perceptions and perspectives of professional translators who work frequently on Islamic texts and who are vastly experienced in the field of translation studies in order to get an in-depth and thorough understanding of the enablers and challenges they face. The decision to use interview places the emphasis on personal knowledge and perceptions as data. Semi-structured interviewing is deemed appropriate for this study in order to obtain in-depth meaning as this research is primarily focused in gaining insights about the shades of meanings that euphemistic expressions in the Quran carry.

## **6.3 Participants' profiles and selection criteria**

A number of participants were selected to enhance representativeness, though, as indicated earlier, how many participants were selected is irrelevant due to the fact that the research is qualitative and not quantitative; the emphasis is thus on acquiring knowledge based on words and meanings and not knowledge based on facts and numbers. The participants were selected based on the following criteria:

1. First-hand experience in dealing with the Quran and other Islamic sources in translation.
2. Experience of witnessing misunderstandings or ambiguities in existing English translations of the Quran.
3. Holding vital information in the area of translation studies in general, in terms of translating processes and methods and having a major interest

and knowledge about translation barriers as they experience these challenges in different ways.

The following table shows a breakdown of interviewees' backgrounds in terms of age, qualification and years of work experience.

**Table D 6.1 Interviewees' profiles**

Interviewee	Gender	Qualification	Years of experience	Country of qualification
Interviewee 1	Male	MA	4	UK
Interviewee 2	Male	MA	4	UK
Interviewee 3	Male	PhD	11	UK
Interviewee 4	Male	PhD	12	UK
Interviewee 5	Male	PhD	30	USA
Interviewee 6	Male	PhD	10	Sudan
Interviewee 7	Female	MA	6	Saudi Arabia
Interviewee 8	Male	PhD	26	UK
Interviewee 9	Female	MA	7	UK
Interviewee 10	Female	MA	4	Tunisia

#### **6.4 Nature and source of Interview questions**

The interview questions were formulated mainly from the extensive literature and linked to the research objectives, highlighting the challenges and constraints of rendering euphemistic expressions from Arabic into English with reference to the Quran. The questions are exploratory in nature in order to find

out how professional translators of Islamic texts experience, understand and view the key issues of dealing with sensitive texts from Arabic into English.

## **6.5 Discussion of interview findings**

The researcher started the interview by adopting '*Introductory Questions*': clear, short, and straightforward as a kind of a warm up, for instance *How long have you been working as a translator? Can you tell me, what does your job involve?* Next, there were '*Follow-Up Questions*' such as '*Can you elaborate on what the phrase or term means to you? Can you tell me more?*', and finally '*Probing Questions*' were used to get in-depth information about the various challenges of translating euphemistic expressions of the Quran.

### **6.5.1 Theme One: Translators' responses regarding quantity and quality of the English translations of the Quran**

In response to the first question '*There is a proliferation of so many English translations of the Quran on the market today. Is this good or bad?*', all of the interviewees except interviewee 10 agreed that this is a good thing and some stressed that the translation of the Quran is a matter of interpretation and this means according to interviewee 1 that "*you have more than one understanding of the Quran*" and thus this gives the reader of the Quran a number of options to select from and to use the most suitable translation they want to read. Interviewees 3, 8, and 9 explained why this is a good thing by saying that it could be a result of some previous mistranslations which some translators came across and this made them want to come up with new and updated translations. Others such as interviewee 1 and 2 believed that it was a result of

some shortcomings in previous translations when it comes to the translation of some concepts and according to interviewee 8 some translations “*did not fulfil the meaning or that some concepts were not rendered in a correct manner.*” Another point which is worth mentioning, and which the more experienced interviewees such as 5 and 8 emphasised, is that the more translations there are, the more beneficial it is for the field of translation studies and researchers in the field of the translation of the Quran. This shows the important role played by the different translations of the Quran in the field of translation studies and it also shows the different interpretations it provides for the readers of those different translations. On the other hand interviewee 10 is of the view that this is not a good thing as we are dealing with a sacred text and therefore this sacred text should be approached with extra care and no one should be allowed to tamper with it as translation inevitably leads to loss of meaning or distortion of meaning due to the linguistic, semantic and cultural differences between Arabic and English

When the interviewees were asked the question ‘*Is the process of translating Quranic text different from translating other topics?*’, there was an overall agreement among all the interviewees as they all stated that the process of translating the Quran is different from translating any other topics. Interviewees 1, 2, and 3 all pointed out that it is a “*divine source*” and therefore it needs to be dealt with differently and special approaches need to be adopted in its translation. The most common themes that emerged from the debate is that the majority of interviewees referred to the Quran as *sensitive, divine, and sacred*. This reflects the importance of the Quranic text and why extra attention must be

paid when translating its text. Interviewee 4 pointed out that “*it is related to beliefs*” and because of that more attention should be paid to the translation of the Quran. Interviewees 9 and 10 stressed that the process of translating the Quran is indeed different as the Quran is not any regular text, but it is a miraculous and divine text and that its text is authoritative and consequently the process of communicating the meaning of Allah’s words without alteration or distortion is doubtlessly very sensitive. The view of this study is that this reflects the ongoing debate regarding the translation of the Quran by Muslim scholars on whether it is permissible to translate the Quran or not. Since the text is sacred and divine many Muslim scholars believe that it is impossible to translate the Quran and that it should not be translated because translators may mistranslate a divine and sacred text.

The question ‘*Is there such a thing as a perfect translation of the Quran? Can we speak of a final or authorised translation?*’, appeared to reveal a number of conflicting views and comments between the interviewees. Interviewee 9 stated that every translation has some shortcomings. However, this does not mean that there is no perfect translation of the Quran. She also added that when it comes to the issue of being “authorised,” the translation needs to meet high standards, which means that translators are able to merge authenticity with originality, and they must transmit the meanings of the Quran in a readable context for both Muslims and non-Muslims. Interviewee 7 said that there could be a final and authorised translation “*in one nation or among followers of one Islamic doctrine*”. But interviewee 7 also added that this specific translation could not be generalised among followers of other doctrines. Interviewee 4 was

of the view that there is no such thing as a perfect translation of the Quran and that it does not exist and it will not exist. Interviewee 5 also claimed that this is impossible and there can never be a final or authorised translation of the Quran. Interviewee 6 is of the view that a translation is only authorised if it made use of previous translations and if the translator tried to “*overcome mistakes in those translations*”, but when it comes to a final translation he made it clear that there will not be a final translation of the Quran. Interviewee 8 stated: “*We cannot talk of a final and authorised translation because we have different schools in Islam but it could be final and authorised for a certain school*”.

This is a widely accepted view according to Nida (1964), Broeck (1978), Newmark (1981), Bayar (2007), Abu-Risha (2010), Farghal (2102), and Al-Barakati (2013) that there is no such thing as a perfect equivalent translation in any text or language combination no matter how close they are, for example English and French can be as remote as Arabic and English when it comes to euphemistic expressions because these language features are deeply rooted in their culture.

An example of an authorised translation was given by interviewee 8 as he talked about Al-Hilali and Khan’s translation which according to him is a Saudi funded translation and that this translation can be considered authorised in Saudi Arabia but not final. This clearly shows that there is a marked difference between a ‘final’ and ‘authorised’ translation, and this also means that there are many authorised translations on the market but this does not mean that these authorised translations are free from mistakes of translation.

When the interviewees were asked '*What is your overall view of the existing English translations of the Quran?*', some stated that the translations were different in terms of quality and this according to interviewee 1 gives the reader of the translated texts an overall picture of the message of the ST. Interviewees 2, 4, and 7 all discussed the issue of ideology and its effect on the translators and the way they approach the text prior to translating it. Interviewee 2 claims that it is therefore "*very important for an inclusive understanding of the Quran to have this variety of translations*". Interviewees 3, 6, 8, 9, and 10 all agreed that the translations vary in terms of their quality but good efforts have been made in all of them. Interviewees 5 and 6 also mentioned a very interesting point on that issue by saying that each translation should be judged according to the time it was translated in, as this is a very important issue. Interviewee 6 for instance elaborated more on this issue by stating that "*Ali's translation was the best in its time but nowadays there are better translations than Ali's as it depends on the time of the translation*". This shows that the efforts made by the translators who translated the Quran are appreciated by the current interviewees and even though some translation have a number of shortcomings, the interviewees still made it clear that the efforts were good and helped in spreading the message of the Quran to the readers of the target text.

In response to the question '*As the Quran is viewed as a unique discourse, does a translation of it make it less unique?*', the answers were different to some extent between the interviewees. For instance interviewees 1 and 2 both agreed that the translated text can never be as unique as the source text since

the translated text is a matter of interpretation. Interviewee 7 also added that the process of translation involves additions, omissions and loss of meaning and therefore it cannot be as unique as the source text. On the contrary, interviewee 6 stated that the translated text holds a unique value to a person who does not speak Arabic as this translation transferred the word of the Quran to non-Arabic readers.

The question '*What do you think of the use of old English in the translation of the Quran?*' showed some differences in points of view regarding this issue as all of the interviewees except for 2 and 7 were not in favour of the use of old English in the translation of the Quran and for different reasons Interviewees 1, 3, and 4 said that the translations need to be easy and accessible for a wider audience while interviewee 5 suggested that the use of old English in the translations of the Quran will only complicate things. Interviewee 6 added an important point regarding the use of old English as he states: "*Using old English as some sort of simulation for the Bible is not appropriate, as some people believe that this gives the translated text more sacredness and this not true as language is not sacred and it is only a medium.*"

On the other hand, interviewee 2 said that he is in favour of using old English in the translation of the Quran as it makes it different from other texts and this will create an atmosphere of the archaic use of language in the mind set or intellectual capability of the reader. This research is of the view that the Quran is translated in order to be understood by non-Arabic speakers and as a result using old English in the translation of the Quran may result in some

ambiguousness and it may be confusing for some readers as the educational backgrounds of the readers of the translations may vary.

### **6.5.2 Theme Two: Translator's responses regarding accessibility and challenges of the Quran in translation**

In response to the question '*How can the translators make the Quran in translation more accessible and user friendly?*', three of the interviewees mentioned the use of para-textual elements such as in-text notes, footnotes, endnotes, and commentaries within the translation in order to give more explanations to certain concepts or terminologies (e.g. zakahat, wa,d, Alzihar). Interviewee 3 was less optimistic and he stated that "*regardless of what so ever attempts are made by translators, they will not be able to remove the challenging parts of the Quranic discourse or language.*" Interviewee 4 on the other hand gave a number of suggestions regarding the issue of accessibility and user friendliness and these suggestions were by making the Quran accessible to readers in terms of language and this means using modern English instead of old English. In addition, he mentioned the issue of ideology and he referred to a translation of a feminist and how she translated the Quran from a feminist point of view thus making the translated version of the Quran user friendly from a feminist perspective. Interviewee 7 made it clear that the use of a more communicative method of translation will eventually lead to a more accessible and user-friendly translations of the Quran. Interviewee 9 stressed that the translators need to focus more on the meaning rather than attempting to produce a poetic English translated text. Moreover, interviewee 10 said that the translator should have deep knowledge of Arabic language,

Islamic religion, Islamic culture, and different Islamic sects and doctrines as this will eventually result in a user friendly and accessible translation.

*'What are the advantages and disadvantages of translating the Quran in English?' is a question that revealed a number of different views. One of the main advantages discussed by the interviewees was that as a translation, it is going to make a source text available for the target text readers and this is a significant advantage according to interviewee 1. Interviewee 2 added more elements to this point by stating: "It gives accessibility of understanding the meanings of the Quran for non-native speakers of Arabic or even to the speakers of Arabic because translators have different views and different approaches to the verses of the Quran so if we read translations we may find different areas that are explored in translation."*

Other interviewees focused on the point that the more translations there are of the Quran, the more problems may be overcome. Interviewees 5 and 7 both agreed that its main advantage is that it helps spread the word of Allah and the true message of Islam and it allows the readers a better understanding of Islam. On the other hand, many disadvantages were put forward such as the loss of sense of the source text for those who rely only on the translated text with addition to the loss of many meanings and concepts as indicated by interviewees 8 and 7. Interviewee 5 stated that the lack of transliteration and interpretations in many of the translations leads to the loss of meaning in the target text. Interviewees 1 and 2 both agreed that since the Quran is a sacred text and holds a special importance for Muslims, some meanings might get lost

during the process of translating it into the target text. Also, it can make it difficult for the readers to decide on which version is more reliable and if they ask experts to help them choose a certain translation they can only rely on their ideology to recommend a preferable version of the translation.

The question *'in your view, which is the most readable of the contemporary translations of the Quran?'* was a question which gave a clear indication regarding the quality of the versions of the Quran in English translation used in this study, in terms of their usage amongst professional translators. All of the five translations used for the purpose of this study were mentioned by the interviewees but there were some differences in terms of how many times they were mentioned and what the interviewees' comments were regarding them. Interviewee 1 was in favour of Abdel Haleem's translation as he pointed out that it is a comprehensive translation and that since it was one of the latest translations, the translator tried to avoid some mistakes in previous translations. On the other hand, interviewees 3 and 5 were in favour of Ali's translation, and interviewee 3 points out that he feels that its language is more accessible, readable and reliable than other translations. Interviewees 4, 7, and 10 preferred a different translation from those used in this study and they selected Sahih International's translation and interviewee 4 justified his choice by claiming that it is easy to read structurally and ideologically. Al Hilali and Khan's translation was the best translation for interviewees 6 and 9 as they pointed out that it could currently be the most readable because what was available to them was not available to previous translators. Finally interviewee 8's point of view

was that Arberry's translation was his favourite, despite the fact that some concepts were not conveyed in a correct way.

Responses to the question *'Which words, terms or passages in the Quran cannot possibly be translated into English in such a way as to capture their full meaning?'*, revealed a mutual agreement between all the interviewees as they all talked about "concepts", though with different definitions to the term concept. Interviewees 1, 6, and 7 mentioned concepts that are absent from the target language culture. An example of these concepts are; (zakahat, şadaḫhat, ḥadj, 'umrah) . On the other hand interviewees 2, 3, and 5 were more specific as they talked about religious concepts present in Islam that can never be conveyed totally in another language. Interviewee 8 added another issue related to concepts and that is concepts related to legislation and jurisprudence. Their answers lead to another question which was *"How should a translator deal with that?"* In response to this question all of the interviewees stressed the use of para-textual elements such as footnotes, definitions, foreignisation and explanations. In other words the translator needs to go beyond the textual level in order to clarify this new concept to the target language readers. Interviewee 3 stated: *"A translation is always a matter of approximation, therefore a translator can always provide an approximate translation, and footnoting can be of the ways that help the translators convey meanings."*

Interviewee 8 also said that the only way around this issue is by transliterating and then adding explanations to the translated concept. Interviewee 10 talked about an interesting point which is that a translator needs to be aware of how

many times a certain term occurs in the Quran and their different meanings and the context they are used in, as not taking account of this issue will make it difficult to translate some words or concepts in the Quran.

### **6.5.3 Theme Three: Translator's responses regarding the challenges of translating figurative meaning in the Quran**

The responses were almost the same when the question was asked to what extent is it true that *'metaphors and euphemisms are widely used in the Quran and are often mistranslated or rendered literally without taking into account that language items are unfamiliar in English?'* All of the interviewees agreed that metaphors and euphemisms are usually mistranslated or rendered literally. Interviewee 3 for instance elaborated on this matter by stating that language is socially and culturally related and the translator needs to take into consideration both of these critical issues in the process of translating euphemism and metaphors in the Quran. Interviewee 4 presented more explanations to this issue by saying: *"...because we go beyond the text when we deal with metaphors and euphemisms and these issues are not visible, but they are hidden and this requires lots of work to convey the meaning."*

This means that the equivalent of a euphemism or metaphor in the target language cannot be found in a dictionary. Furthermore, the euphemism in the source language might not be clearly understood in the first place by native Arabic speakers and this makes it difficult for the translator to find an equivalent in the target language. This led to a new question which was asked to the interviewees *"Are you in favour of translating a euphemism with a euphemism?"* Interviewee 5 made it clear that a euphemism should never be translated with a

euphemism in the target language. Interviewee 7 also agreed with him and she said that translators should use explicit language based on the meaning of the Quranic text in Arabic because using implicit language in the process of translating euphemisms can lead to some sort of ambiguousness and misunderstanding of the significance of such euphemism. Interviewee 8 stated that it is a cultural issue since every culture has its different ways of euphemising speech and since the Quran contains many euphemistic expressions, then both approaches can be used and it depends on the source text being translated. In other words if there is an equivalent euphemism in the target language then it should be used and if not then overt and explicit translation should be adopted.

In response to the question '*Is euphemism an evident phenomenon in the Holy Quran?*', all of the interviewees agreed that it is except for one interviewee. Interviewees 1 and 2 said it is an evident phenomenon and interviewee 3 said it was evident especially when it comes to sexual discourse. On the other hand interviewee 4 was of the view that it was not an evident phenomenon even to native speakers of Arabic and some euphemisms could only be noticed and understood by a person who is specialised in Arabic. This means that some euphemistic expressions may go unnoticed for some readers of the source text let alone the translated text. And this shows the importance of this study in improving the translation of euphemistic expressions in the Quran.

The question '*What causes the difficulties in translating Quranic euphemisms into English?*' received a number of different responses. For instance, according

to interviewee 2, it is a result of the different interpretations available for the Quranic verses and this affects the translation, and according to him *“if a follower of a certain doctrine tries to translate the Quran, he would be affected by that interpretation which might mislead him”*. On the other hand interviewee 3 said that it might be because the translators may be addressing people who are not conservative in nature and therefore this makes it difficult on the translator as he/she need to make a choice of whether to use implicit language like the source text or explicit language for the purpose of the target readers. Interviewee 4 was of the view that the lack of knowledge of the Arabic language in addition to insufficient religious background usually leads to difficulties in translating euphemisms from the Quran into English. Interviewees 5 and 6 said that not understanding the culture, Quranic language and the issues surrounding it such as jurisprudence, exegesis, intonations, history and reasons of revelation cause many difficulties for the translators. Finally the richness of the Arabic language if compared to many other languages causes some difficulties and this will result in some complications for the translators of euphemisms in the Quran from Arabic into English.

In response to the question *‘In your opinion, are the flaws in these translations due to the translators’ incompetence or the complex nature of the Quranic language?’*, interviewee 2 said that the translation of the Quran could be the hardest job in the field of translation and therefore any translator who undertakes the translation of the Quran is competent enough but there are elements which affect the methods and approaches taken by the translators. Interviewee 3 agreed with interviewee 2 by saying that the translators of the

Quran are usually competent but it is sometimes the language that imposes itself on the translators. He even added that translators cannot be fully free from the religious discourse and this sometimes leads them to translate euphemistic expressions explicitly because they might be addressing people who are not sensitive when it comes to euphemism. On the other hand interviewees 4, 6, and 7 all agreed that it is due to the incompetence of the translators and the complex nature of the Quran. Interviewee 5 disagreed with all the other interviewees as he claimed that the Quranic text is flexible, deep and profound and it is not difficult and therefore it is a matter of inadequacy of the translators. Interviewees 8, 9, and 10 said it is usually due to the complex nature of the Quranic language but it can also be both and thus people who embark on the task of translating the Quran should be well versed in Arabic as a source language and in English as a target language.

There were different points of view in response to the question *'How would you translate euphemistic words from the Quran which do not have a direct equivalent into English, or any other concepts which are particularly deeply rooted in Islamic culture?'* Interviewees 1 and 4 said that they would opt for literal translation followed by some explanation in the form of footnotes. Interviewee 1 said he would translate literally but he would leave the reader of his translation at liberty to choose the suitable meaning according to the interpretations of the Quran that he/she reads and feels most comfortable with. On the other hand, interviewee 3 said *"personally speaking if I find a euphemistic expression in the Quran, I would try my best to translate it euphemistically."* Interviewees 5, 6, and 8 all said that they would use

explanations or interpretations to convey the most accurate meaning of the word or concept. For instance interviewee 6 said: *“I will first refer to what the Muslim scholars said about this specific euphemistic expression and use what they used because it contains explanations of that expression and this is how I would translate that concept and I would use transliteration alongside explanations because I am not only translating a word but a cultural item”*.

According to this study the best way is to transliterate the euphemistic words which do not have a direct equivalent into English followed by a detailed explanation in the form of para-textual elements in order to convey the complete and accurate meaning of that word or concept.

The question *‘If translation is a mediation between literal and free, the translators of the Quran are always making choices that emphasize one at the expense of another. In your view which is the better option?’*, showed that the interviewees had different approaches regarding the use of literal and free translation in the translation of the Quran. Interviewee 2 was totally in favour of the use of literal translation in the translation of the Quran but with certain limitations. Interviewees 1 and 3 stressed the point that a translator translating the Quran can never be fully literal or fully free and according to interview 1 what you are translating will influence your choice of method because as a translator you will opt for the option that helps you in getting the meaning across to the target text reader. In addition interviewee 3 stated: *“I have to use both options depending on the situation”*. Interviewee 4 made it very clear that he was not in favour of the use of free translation in the translation of the Quran but instead he preferred the use of literal translation as this according to him

*"maintains the content"*. Interviewees 6, 7, and 8 all agreed on the interchangeable use of both methods depending on the concept being translated and since some concepts hold multiple meanings then both techniques should be used or in other words the use of communicative methods, as interviewee 7 pointed out. To the contrary, interviewee 5 was not in favour of both methods and he made it clear that both methods do not convey the meaning but if he was to use either of the two methods it would depend on the context being translated. Interviewees 9 and 10 said that the use of literal translation might affect the communicative meaning because there is a message behind the words of the Quran and they need to be conveyed in a communicative way. A better option is a balance between literal and free translation based on the term or expressions being translated.

In response to the question *'The translator aims to capture the Quran's exceptional euphemistic expression in English. What approach can be used to achieve euphemistic meanings in the Quran?'*, the interviewees suggested a number of approaches which can help the translator in conveying the euphemistic meaning in the target text. For instance, interviewee 1 emphasised the use of any approach that helps in conveying the meaning, and the choice of approach must depend on the context being translated. On the other hand interviewees 2 and 4 stressed the use of literal translation since the concepts are already euphemised in the source text, and if these concepts are translated literally the nearest meaning may be conveyed and this according to interviewee 4 should be used alongside parentheticals and glossing. Interviewee 6 made a significant comment regarding the translation of euphemism as he stated that the best approach is to translate the euphemism

explicitly as “*what needs to be euphemised in Arabic is different from what needs to be euphemised in English.*” This means that a euphemism should not be translated with another euphemism as some cultures are not sensitive in nature and therefore if the euphemism is translated implicitly the meaning might be lost in translation, hence it is better to translate the meaning of the euphemism clearly and not to use softer language or euphemistic language. Interviewees 5 and 8 were in favour of the use of transliterations followed by explanations. Interviewee 9 stated that the use of indirect expressions to replace direct ones which might be offensive can help in achieving euphemistic meanings in the Quran in English.

#### 6.5.4 Interviewees comments on a sample of translations of euphemisms

The interviewees were given a sample of euphemised expressions in the Quran and they were asked to comment on each translation and the different approaches adopted by the translators.

Sample 1: Q2:187

أُجِلْ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمْ  
البقرة آية ١٨٧

Abdel Haleem	Al-Hilali & Khan	Ali	Arberry	Pickthall
You [believers] are permitted to <u>lie with your wives</u> during the night of fast.	It is made lawful for you to <u>have sexual relations</u> with your wives on the night of As-Saum (the fast).	Permitted to you, on the night of the fasts, is the <u>approach to your wives.</u>	Permitted to you, upon the night of the Fast, is <u>to go in to your wives;</u>	It is made lawful for you to <u>go unto your wives</u> on the night of the fast.

The first example was from Q2:187 *rafath*. Some of the interviewees agreed on the point that the translated expression used by Abdel Haleem is euphemised in the translated text, such as interviewees 1 and 8. But interviewee 8 made it clear that the translator tried to explain the meaning of *rafath* but it seems as if there is something missing. Nonetheless in general he thought that it was a good translation. To the contrary, interviewees 2, 4, 5, and 6 all made it clear that the translation is vague, ambiguous and that it does not convey the meaning. They even added that it does not reflect the euphemistic point in the Quran and that the meaning of *rafath* is lost in the translated text.

With regards to Al-Hilali & Khan's translation, there was a total agreement between all the interviewees that the translation is explicit and explains the meaning of it *rafath* giving it the direct meaning. Interviewee 8 also commented on the translation by stating: "*good and accurate translation of the meaning*".

The third translation by Ali elicited a number of different opinions. Interviewees 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7 all stated that this translation is euphemised and delicate. They also were in favour of the choice of the word "*approach*" in this context. On the other hand interviewee 8 was critical of this translation as he made it clear that this translation does not mean anything and that it is incomplete since the word "*approach*" means nothing here and it is inaccurate. This reflects the difficulty regarding the translation of euphemistic expressions in the Quran as some expressions can mean something in the source language when they are euphemised but the meaning may be lost if the translator tries to euphemise that same expression in the target language.

Arberry's translation "to go into" according to the interviewees was unclear and not good despite the fact that he tried to euphemise the expression in the target text, interviewees 2 for instance commented on it by saying that it is "not a clear translation". The same comments were made on the translation of Pickthall "go unto" as it was deemed unclear and not a good choice of expression in the target text.

Sample 2: Q2:197

فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ  
البقرة آية ١٩٧

Abdel Haleem	Al-Hilali & Khan	Ali	Arberry	Pickthall
There should be no <u>indecent speech</u> .	Then he should not have <u>sexual relations</u> (with his wife).	Let there be <u>no obscenity</u> .	Shall not <u>go into his womenfolk</u> .	There is to be <u>no lewdness</u> .

The second sample was from Q2:197 *rafath*. Interviewees 2 and 8 commented on the first translation by Abdel Haleem by saying that the translation is good to some extent but not the whole meaning of *rafath* was conveyed. Interviewee 7 also agreed with the previous interviewees and she said that it could be noticed that Abdel Haleem adopted one possible meaning of the word *rafath* in Arabic and that is indecent speech. On the other hand interviewees 4 and 5 were of the view that the translation was inadequate and not good enough. The translation by Al-Hilali & Khan was considered to be a good translation by interviewee 5 but to the contrary, interviewees 2, 3, and 8 made it clear that this translation is not good, absolutely wrong and far from the meaning. According

to interviewees 5 and 6 Ali's translation of *rafath* is not good, as it does not convey the meaning in a correct manner. Interviewees 2, 3, 7, and 8 all agreed that it was a good translation despite the fact that it limits the broader sense of *rafath* and it does not convey the whole meaning.

Arberry's translation also received different comments and points of view regarding the translation chosen by the translator of the expression *rafath*. Some interviewees considered it to be a good translation such as interviewee 4 while others thought it to be completely wrong, such as interviewees 8, 6, and 5. Again the translation by Pickthall also received a number of contrasting comments as some considered it to be the most accurate translation out of all the five translations such as interviewees 3 and 4, while on the other hand interviewees 4, 5, 6, and 8 believed that the translation was not good enough as it did not transfer the whole meaning and it only conveyed one dimension of the word *rafath* into English.

### Sample 3: Q2:229

إِمْسَاكٌ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٌ بِإِحْسَانٍ  
البقرة آية ٢٢٩

<b>Abdel Haleem</b>	<b>Al-Hilali &amp; Khan</b>	<b>Ali</b>	<b>Arberry</b>	<b>Pickthall</b>
Wives either <u>be kept on in an acceptable manner or released in a good way.</u>	Either you <u>retain her on reasonable terms or release her with kindness.</u>	The parties should either <u>hold together on equitable terms, or separate with kindness.</u>	Then <u>honourable retention or setting free kindly.</u>	(a woman) must be <u>retained in honor or released in kindness.</u>

Sample number 3 was from Q2:229 *tasryh*. The translation used by Abdel Haleem, Al-Hilali and Khan, and Pickthall is “*release*”, and according to interviewees 2, 3, and 4 this translation is “*good*”. On the other hand interviewees 5, 6, and 8 were critical of this translation and they thought that the term (release) holds a negative meaning in this context and that this was not a good use of (release). The same comments were made on the translation by Arberry “*setting free*” as interviewees 5, 6, and 8 all stressed that the use of setting free is incorrect here and that it holds a negative connotation in this context. With regards to Ali’s translation “*separate*” there was an agreement among all of the interviewees that this translation is good, closest to the meaning and euphemistic.

**Table E 6.2 Themes and findings of the interviews**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Findings</b>
Interviewees’ responses regarding quality vs. quantity of the translations of the Quran in English.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having many translations of the Quran is a good thing.</li> <li>• It gives more than one interpretation of the Quran.</li> <li>• It allows the readers of the translated text a variety of options to choose from.</li> <li>• It helps in correcting the mistranslations in previous works.</li> <li>• Having different translations is useful for researchers in the field of translation studies.</li> <li>• Translating the Quran is different from any other genre or text.</li> <li>• The Quranic text should be dealt with differently.</li> <li>• It is a divine, sensitive and sacred text and it should be approached with care.</li> <li>• Translators should be extra careful in translating the Quran.</li> <li>• A translation can be authorised.</li> <li>• There is no final translation of the Quran.</li> <li>• The quality of the available translations varies.</li> <li>• The ideology of the translator may influence the translation.</li> <li>• A translation should be evaluated according to the time and place of the translation.</li> <li>• The use of old English is not preferable.</li> </ul>

<p>Interviewees' views regarding the accessibility and challenges of the Quran in translation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of para-textual elements makes the translation easier to understand.</li> <li>• Using communicative methods makes the translated text user friendly.</li> <li>• Making a version of the ST available for the TT readers.</li> <li>• Allows access for understanding the meaning of the Quran for non-Arabic speakers.</li> <li>• The translations help in overcoming the shortcomings in previous translations.</li> <li>• It helps in spreading the word of Allah.</li> <li>• Loss of the feeling of the ST is disadvantage.</li> <li>• The availability of many translations can confuse the readers of the translated text.</li> <li>• Concepts are difficult to translate.</li> <li>• Cultural specific items are untranslatable.</li> <li>• Words that have no equivalent are challenging to translate.</li> </ul>
<p>Interviewees' response regarding the challenges of translating figurative meaning in the Quran.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Euphemisms are usually mistranslated or rendered literally.</li> <li>▪ Language is socially and culturally related.</li> <li>▪ A euphemism should be translated explicitly.</li> <li>▪ Euphemism is an evident phenomenon.</li> <li>▪ The different interpretations available for the Quranic verses affect the translation.</li> <li>▪ Lack of Arabic language and insufficient religious background causes difficulties in the translation of euphemisms in the Quran.</li> <li>▪ A translator of the Quran and especially euphemisms should have good understanding of the following; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Target culture,</li> <li>▪ Target language,</li> <li>▪ Exegesis,</li> <li>▪ History,</li> <li>▪ Reasons of revelation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Translating the Quran could be the toughest job in the field of translation.</li> <li>• Translators of the Quran are generally competent.</li> <li>• The language of the Quran is complex in nature.</li> </ul>

## 6.6 Summary of interview data analysis

The themes broadly focused on the debate around the key issues facing the English translators of euphemism in the Quran, in line with the literature. The interviews produced varied and conflicting answers at times. The interviewees' responses are clear evidence of the interest generated by the challenges of translating euphemism from the Quran. Regarding the theme about the quality of English translations of the Quran, an efficient and sensitive translating

approach to translating the Quran from Arabic into English is needed for this important divine text.

While no one expects a perfect model or strategy for translating the Quran from Arabic into English, however, that the Quran in English says and means the same thing as the original is to be expected. At the moment, many translations fall short of achieving this purpose because they tend to focus on transferring explicit meanings of words rather than the implicit meaning. In addition, euphemistic expressions are often mistranslated due to the lack of knowledge of the Quran and the meanings behind the euphemistic expressions in the Quran and why they are used. This means that the translator needs to have a deep knowledge of the Quran in order to accomplish the meaning of the euphemistic expression in the target text. The translator should also be aware of when to use literal translation and free translation in order to render the correct meaning of the euphemistic expression in the translated text.

The interviews aimed to gauge the views and perceptions of some of the translators from the College of Languages and Translation at Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University towards the translation of the Quran in general and the translation of euphemistic expressions in particular. The themes that emerged from the interviews broadly revealed that the key issues regarding the translation of sensitive texts and in particular the Quran remain unresolved, debatable and often controversial. This is in line with Badawi (1996), Chesterman (1997), Tibawi (2004), El-Farran (2006), Pickthall (2006), and Irving (2010). The interviews produced varied and conflicting answers at times. While there is no single method or strategy that will address all the

translation challenges or fit all the text types and all the language features that emerge, there needs to be a move away from the current debate of should sensitive texts be translated word for word or sense for sense to a more dynamic approach. Translators must be extra careful. They need to adjust, to adapt, to modify, to manipulate or to accommodate as they see fit to transfer the overall meaning of the message, as long as the translation makes sense, and reflects and conveys the meaning of the original.

In addition, there is no such thing as a merely objective translation; the texts of the Quran and their interpretation and translation is no exception. English translations of the Quran are very valuable, especially for non-Arabic speakers. Translation of the Quran is necessary and unavoidable unless everyone who wants to read or understand the word of God learns Arabic, thus the various limitations need to be addressed. At times, translations in parts are influenced by the translators' personal interpretations of the text, according to Baker (2001), Murata and Chittick (2006), and Baker (2011).

Although the interviewees provided some useful insights and shared their perspectives regarding the existing translations of the Quran, it is difficult to reach a consensus and draw concrete conclusions. Each interviewee seems to put their own spin on the key issues of Quran in translation, giving it a fresh shade of meaning, but deep down the views reflect a range of recurrent and often overlapping, themes and similar explanations. Findings indicate that there is no single translation which is favoured by the participants, suggesting that readers can gain benefits from using a diverse number of translations. Every

translation has its flaws, and no one should be restricted to reading the Quran in translation in one English version. Although one of the main objectives of translating the Quran in English is to preserve God's word in its entirety, interviewees agreed that this is not always possible. Some translations of the Quran contain many disputed passages, while some offer extensive footnotes that will provide alternative wordings or explanations. As Roberts (1993) emphasises, since translations are a work of a human being, these translations will bear unavoidable mistakes as this is an issue which humans cannot avoid.

The interviewees' replies show that it is important to have a large number of different translations of the Quran based on different interpretations as this gives the readers of the translated version different understandings of the source text. Since there are many mistranslations in the current versions, therefore new translations are necessary in order to correct mistakes in the other translations. The interviewees also talked about the issue of untranslatability and whether the Quran should be translated or not. This issue has been discussed by a number of Muslim scholars such as Badawi (1996), El-Farran (2006), and Abdul-Raof (2010) and the majority of the scholars agreed that the Quran is untranslatable because it is a divine and sacred text but its meanings can be translated. Consequently, every translation of the Quran needs to be introduced as a translation of the meanings of the Quran or an interpretation of the meanings of the Quran. According to the interviewees, there can never be a final translation of the Quran but this does not mean that a translation cannot be authorised in a certain Islamic country or among a certain group. The use of archaic English in some of the translations was considered

by the interviewees to be negative as it may sometimes make it difficult for the readers of the translated text to understand some words and that the translation of the Quran should be made easier to understand.

According to the interviewees, the translation of the Quran helps in spreading the word of Allah and this means that it needs to be dealt with very carefully. Also, certain Islamic concepts and cultural specific items are untranslatable and therefore the translator should explain them with extra care and detail in order to convey the correct meaning as accurately as possible. This means using communicative translation methods and para-textual elements to make the translation more accessible for the readers. One of the disadvantages related to the translation of the Quran and which affects the readers of the target text is the loss of feeling of the sacredness of the target text in addition to the loss of some meanings which do not have exact equivalents in the target language.

The replies of the interviewees showed that language is socially and culturally related and therefore the target culture should be taken into consideration in the translation of the Quran and this is in line with the literature. This also leads to another issue of the use of literal and free translation. Euphemisms are mistranslated or rendered literally and this results in the loss of meaning in the target language. Therefore, euphemisms should be translated explicitly and clearly in order to convey the meaning as accurately as possible. In fact, the use of literal translation in the translation of the Quran, and especially euphemisms, makes the meaning incoherent in many situations. The use of exegetical books that give a detailed explanation of the meaning of the

euphemism being translated in addition to the use of books related to the reasons of revelation surrounding the verse in general and the euphemistic expression will eventually help in translating the euphemistic expression to the nearest and most accurate meaning possible.

Overall, the semi-structured interviews helped in achieving some of the research objectives and in answering some of the research questions. In addition, they supported the method adopted in this study for the content analysis of the data such as the use of exegetical books and books related to the reasons of revelation in the analysis of the euphemistic expressions of the Quran.

### **6.7 Analysis of the translation of euphemisms in the Quran**

The analysis will begin with a brief discussion of the reasons for revelation of the verse being investigated in order to give a concise history of the issues surrounding the formation and use of the euphemism. The references used are by alwahidy (1992) and al-skalany (1997). This will be followed by the use of *alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ* (2014), *muḳdam almaḳany* (2010), and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* (2016) dictionaries for the purpose of identifying the different dictionary meanings of the euphemism being analysed. This will be followed by *altafsyṛ almuyasar* (1999), *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* (2007), and *Tafsir ibn kathir* (2016) exegetical references for the purpose of establishing that the expression is euphemistic and to identify the exact meaning and the function of that euphemism in the Quran. The use of such steps is for the purpose of identifying the contextual and connotative meanings of the euphemism being analysed

prior to analysing the translated text. These steps have been adopted in line with Nord's (2005) text analysis approach. Finally, the five translations by Abdel Haleem (2010); Khan & Al-Hilali (2011); Ali (2013); Arberry (2008); and Pickthall (2006) will be assessed and evaluated in order to determine the degree of faithfulness or deviation in meaning from Arabic and to establish whether this is a result of an inadequate translating approach or lack of understanding of the meaning of the Quranic euphemism. There is no translating method on which everyone agrees, thus any evaluation is the individual's interpretation. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that not all translators adopt similar translating methods, therefore a TL text can be produced or achieved using different strategies. For the purpose of this study the following steps are followed:

- Evaluate the quality of an English translation of euphemistic expressions from the Quran
- Compare the TL text with the SL original text in order to determine the degree of faithfulness in terms of the overall message, which is being conveyed.
- Assess the gain or loss incurred in the translating process and consider the degree of the deviation of meaning from SL message if any.
- Identify the various linguistic difficulties faced by the translator in terms of linguistic, semantic and cultural.
- Describe the translating processes and techniques used by the translator to transfer euphemistic expressions for the purpose of fluency and accuracy.

The analysis follows five distinct steps based on the following:

- 1) Highlighting and underlining the expressions in Arabic script as a source language
- 2) Transliteration of the euphemistic phrase or expression
- 3) Translation of the euphemistic phrase or expression in TL English
- 4) Explaining and illustrating the different linguistic and historical features of the euphemism in the SL and its different connotative and contextual meanings in the ST.
- 5) Assessment and analysis of the euphemistic phrase or expression across the five selected translations of the Quran in English.

## 6.8 Verse 1: Q 2:187

أَجَلٌ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصَّيِّمِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمْ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ فَالآنَ بَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَبْغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّى يَبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ الْخَبِيثَ الْأَبْيَضَ مِنَ الْخَبِيثِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ثُمَّ أَتَمُوا الصَّيِّمَ إِلَى اللَّيْلِ وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرُبُوهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ  
البقرة آية ١٨٧

### 6.8.1 Euphemism 1: الرَّفَثُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمْ

**Transliteration:** Alrafathu ilā nisa'ikum

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan & Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
to lie with your wives	to have sexual relations with your wives.	the approach to your wives.	to go in to your wives;	to go unto your wives on the night of the fast.

This verse contains four euphemistic expressions relating to sexual intercourse. The euphemistic expressions examined here are *rafathu*, *libas*, *takhtanuwna*, and *bashiruhuna*. This swurhat (chapter) was revealed in Madinah. When Muslims were first commanded to fast during the month of Ramadan they were

prohibited from having food or sex while fasting through daytime until the next night. They were only allowed to eat, drink, and for married couples to have sexual relations from Maghrib (sunset prayer) until Isha prayer. However, some Muslims complained to the Prophet that this period was not long enough for them and that it led to some of the prophets' disciples breaching this command, so Allah revealed this verse which allowed them to eat, drink, and have sexual intercourse with their spouses from sunset until Fajr (dawn prayer) (alwaḥīdy 1992 and al-ṣkalany 1997).

According to *alḥamwūs almuḥyṭ* (2014), *muḥdam almaḥany* (2010), and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* (2016) the word *rafathu* is a noun which has a number of meanings based on its context and how it is used. It could mean 'indecent speech', lewdness, foreplay, 'sexual seduction' and 'sexual intercourse'. The use of the word *rafathu* in this verse and in this context means that it is permissible for married couples to have sexual intercourse during the indicated period during the month of Ramadan (*alṭafsy almuḥyasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsīr ibn kathīr* 2016).

Abdel Haleem in his translation (hereafter T1) adopts a sense-for-sense translation. He attempted a euphemistic translation and he used an expression that is used in the Bible "*lie with your wives*" which suggests sexual intercourse without the mention of the word 'sex'. Khan & Al-Hilali (hereafter T2) translated the euphemistic expression explicitly as they used the words "*sexual relations*". Despite the fact that they used the word "*relations*" after the term "*sexual*" in an attempt to avoid using the word 'intercourse' and in an attempt to produce a

euphemistic expression in the target language, according to Rawson (2002) the use of the expression 'relations' can act as a preface for the expression 'sexual' if this expression was delicately omitted. It can be noted that Ali (hereafter T3) translated the expression *rafathu* as "*approach*" and although he attempted to be euphemistic in his translation as he refrained from the use of the word 'sex' in his translation, this approach meant that the intended meaning of the euphemistic expression in English is somewhat ambiguous and it could go unnoticed by the readers of the translated text. To avoid this problem, it would have been preferable if T3 added an explanation or a reference to make it clear that the intended meaning of the euphemistic expression in Arabic is sexual intercourse to avoid any misinterpretations or misunderstandings that might result for the readers of the TT. Arberry (hereafter T4) attempted a free translation and he translated the term *rafathu* euphemistically as he rendered it as "*go into*". And according to Allan and Burridge (1991:91) the use of the combination of "*get + in to*" is classed as a euphemism for sexual intercourse. Pickthall (hereafter T5) translated the term *rafathu* euphemistically as he used the expression "*go unto*". He also added "*your wives*" after the translated expression in an attempt to indicate that the expression is related to husband and wife relations. Although T3 and T5 attempted to translate euphemistically, by using general expressions the intended meaning can be easily missed and the translation would have been clearer if they used a euphemism in addition to an explanation or annotation in order to clarify the intended meaning of the euphemistic expression.

It can be established that T3 and T5 have all attempted a euphemistic approach in their translations but it is the view of this research that they could have used expressions which are already established and recognised as euphemisms for sexual intercourse such as ‘copulation’, ‘make love’ ‘go to bed with’ ‘be intimate with’ etc. (Neaman and Silver 1991; Rawson 2002; Holder 2007; and Allan and Burrige 1991).

### 6.8.2 Euphemism 2: هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ

**Transliteration:** huna libas lakum wa antum libas lahun

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan& Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
they are (close) as garments to you, as you are to them.	They are <i>Libas</i> (i.e. body cover, or screen,) for you and you are the same for them.	They are your garments and ye are their garments.	They are a vestment for you, and you are a vestment for them.	They are raiment for you and you are raiment for them.

The term *libas* is derived from the verb ‘*labisa*’, and the term *libas* literally means a dress (*alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *muḵdam almaḳany* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016). This expression indicates the level of intimacy and closeness between married couples to the degree that they are like wearing the same dress. Some exegetical references suggest that this term is a metaphor showing their embraces or their need of each other; others indicate that in short, the wife and the husband are intimate and have sexual intercourse with each other (*altafsyṛ almuyasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016).

All of the five translators appear to have translated the expression literally. All of the translators used expressions which mean ‘libas’ ‘dress’ in Arabic if English-Arabic dictionaries are consulted. T1 added between brackets the word “close” in an attempt to make the target readers aware of the degree of intimacy and closeness between the husband and wife in this verse. T1 also used “as” before ‘garment’ as a simile to describe how close the husband-wife relationship should be. T2 attempted a literal translation in addition to the use of transliteration combined with the reference to a number of possible meanings to the term ‘libas’ in their translation. T3, T4, and T5 attempted a literal translation and they used the words “garments”, “vestment”, and “raiment” respectively without adding any words like T1 which meant that the translation lacked the beauty of the meaning of the expression in the ST and thus it could eventually result in the hidden meaning of the euphemistic expression being lost in the TT or not understood by the readers of the TT. The approach by T1 can be considered as the most successful attempt to render the euphemistic expression into the TT as he used implicit language in his translation with an addition in order to convey the image of the euphemistic expression to the TT readers.

### 6.8.3 Euphemism 3: تَحْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ

**Transliteration:** takhtanuwna anfusakum

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan & Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
God was aware that you were betraying yourselves. + footnote	Allah knows that you used to deceive yourselves.	Allah knoweth what ye used to do secretly among yourselves.	God knows that you have been betraying yourselves.	Allah is aware that you were deceiving yourselves.

The word *takhtanuwna* (*alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *muḵdam almaḳany* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016) is from the verb '*takhtan*', which is from the root verb '*khawana*', and it literally means to 'deceive' or betray'. *altafsyr almuyasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016 state that the above euphemistic expression is about Muslims betraying themselves by having sexual intercourse on the evening of the fast. This was because during the month of Ramadan after 'Isha, prayer Muslims were not allowed to have sexual intercourse or consume food or drink until the next night. This resulted in some Muslims having sex with their wives and eating and drinking after 'Isha, prayer and therefore this verse was revealed to tell Muslims that Allah forgave them for this action.

All of the translators except T3 adopted a literal translation method. T1 added to his literal translation a footnote which included extra explanation in order to clarify the exact meaning of the above euphemistic expression. T1's translation is in line with strategy number 4 proposed by Leppihalme (1997) on the translation of allusions and other figurative language like euphemisms. T2, T4, and T5 all made minimum changes to the expressions in their translations and they all translated the euphemistic expression literally without taking into account the connotative or contextual meaning of the euphemistic expression. T3 included the use of old English in his translation by using the words "*knoweth*" and "*ye*" and adopted a reduction of the euphemism by rephrasing it in the TT. All five translators attempted to translate the expression euphemistically as none made any mention of the word 'sex' but in doing so

they ignored the significance of the connotative meaning behind the euphemistic expression in the ST. Translation of allusion is a difficult task due to the fact that some terms have specific meanings in the source culture of the ST and any writer of a text expects the readers of that text to be familiar with the references which have been used. However, it can be noted that the effect of the euphemistic expression is lost in the above translation and only T1 tried to compensate for this loss by adding extra information in the form of a footnote.

#### 6.8.4 Euphemism 4: فَالآنَ بَاشِرُوهُمْ

**Transliteration:** falana bashiruhuna

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan & Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
now you can lie with them	so now have sexual relations with them	so now associate with them	So now lie with them	So hold intercourse with them

According to *alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *muḵdam almaḵany* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016, the term *bashiruhuna* is from the verb ‘*bashara*’ which means ‘to undertake or carry out’, which indicates that a person can begin or start something. Exegetical references interpret the expression as a permission to have sexual intercourse during the night of Ramadan as it was not permitted by Allah before the revelation of this verse (*alṭafsy almuḵasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016).

Again, T1 applied a sense-for-sense translation and he rendered the euphemistic expression as “*lie with them*” as this is consistent with his previous

translation of (euphemism 1). His translation is therefore a euphemistic translation, which meant that he retained the euphemism by using an equal euphemism in the TL. T2 attempted a sense-for-sense and an overt translation by mentioning the term “*sexual*” which T2 then attempted to euphemise in translation with the use of “*relations*.” The use of the word “*sexual*” is clearly not a euphemism and gives the reader an explicit image of the euphemism in the TT. T3 also attempted a euphemistic translation by using “*associate with*” and after consulting a number of English dictionaries the research was unable to find any relation between the phrase “*associate with*” and sexual intercourse. In fact the word “*associate*” according to Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2011) means “*to spend time with someone especially someone that other people disapprove of*” and this shows that it has no connection to the hidden meaning within the euphemistic expression in the ST. T4 attempted a euphemistic translation by using an established Biblical euphemistic expression in the TL “*lie with*”. It is worth mentioning here that in the previous expression (euphemism 1) by T4 he never used this expression “*lie with*” although the euphemistic expression (euphemism 1) is related to sexual intercourse. T5 made an attempt to translate the expression euphemistically by using “*intercourse*” without the mention of the word ‘sex’ in his translation. But the word “*intercourse*” has lost its euphemistic meaning due to the “euphemism treadmill” which means a word which has been introduced to substitute an offensive word and over time has itself become offensive (Pinker 2003). It can be suggested that the translators can use a well-known euphemistic expression in the TL as a replacement because it can be noted that there are a number of

recognised euphemistic expression in the TL such as 'lie with' and 'carnal' (Holder 2007).

## 6.9 Verse 2: Q 2:197

الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَاتٌ فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ وَمَا تَفَعَّلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ  
وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَى وَاتَّقُونِ يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ

البقرة آية ١٩٧

### 6.9.1 Euphemism 5: فَلَا رَفَثَ

**Transliteration:** falā rafathā

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan & Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
There should be no indecent speech	then he should not have sexual relations (with his wife).	let there be no obscenity	shall not go in to his womenfolk.	there is (to be) no lewdness.

This verse was revealed in Madinah and it contains one euphemistic expression rafath. This verse is discussing Haj (pilgrimage) and that it should be carried out during a specific period of time. Those who are performing Haj should make provisions for themselves during Haj and they should not beg from people. In addition, pilgrims are forbidden from having any kind of sexual relations verbally or physically, wrongdoing, and arguing (alwaḥidy 1992 and al-skalany 1997).

The euphemism assessed here is *rafath* which has been discussed earlier (euphemism 1) and it has been established that it could mean 'indecent speech', 'lewdness', 'foreplay', 'sexual seduction', and 'sexual intercourse'

(*alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *muḳdam almaḳany* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016). Exegetical references (such as *alṭafsyṛ almuyasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsīr ibn kathīr* 2016) have different interpretations for the word *rafath*. Some have explained that the meaning is 'lewdness' and that it means that whoever accepts Haj then they are required to avoid sexual intercourse. On the other hand other exegetical references said that whoever enters into the state of Haj then they should avoid lewdness.

It is clear that T1, T3, and T5 have all adopted the meaning which indicates that the word in this context is about foreplay and not the physical aspect of sexual intercourse. T1 translated the expression by using a reduction of the euphemism and by rephrasing the euphemism in the TT. On the other hand, T3's use of the term "*obscenity*" which means sexual offensive language or behaviour according to Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2011) meant that the translator added a negative meaning which was not mentioned or referred to in the ST as according to interpretations the word 'rafath' is not offensive in any way. T5 translated the word euphemistically in an acceptable way as the word lewdness means to use words or movement that make you think of sex according to Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2011). T2 adopted the second interpretation regarding this verse which is sexual intercourse and this is consistent with his previous translation regarding the same term in (euphemism 1). T4 also adopted the other interpretation and his translation was euphemistic and consistent with his previous translation (in euphemism 1).

### 6.10 Verse 3: Q 2:222

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيضِ قُلْ هُوَ أَذَى فَأَعْتَزِلُوا النِّسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّى يَطْهُرْنَ فَإِذَا تَطَهَّرْنَ فَأْتُوهُنَّ  
مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

البقرة آية ٢٢٢

#### 6.10.1 Euphemism 6: فَاعْتَزِلُوا النِّسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ

**Transliteration:** fa·tazilū alnisa, fy almahid

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan & Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
so keep away from women during it + footnote	Therefore, keep away from women during menses	so keep away from women in their courses	so go apart from women during the monthly course	so keep away from women at such time

This verse includes three euphemistic expressions relating to sexual intercourse. The three expressions are fa·tazilū, *takrabwhuna*, *fa'atwhuna*. This verse was revealed to address a number of issues. Arabs before Islam used to refrain from eating, drinking, and also from staying in the same house as their wives during their wives' period of menstruation and this was also a habit of the Magians. Other references state that Jews in Madinah used to banish women in their menstruation period out of the house and abstain from eating, drinking, and having sex with them. When the prophet was asked regarding this issue, this verse was revealed to explain that only sexual intercourse was forbidden with women during their menstruation period and that sexual intercourse is only allowed after they are cleansed (alwahidy 1992 and al·sḳalany 1997).

The euphemism fa·tazilū is derived from the verb 'i·tazala' which is derived from the verb '·azala' and it means: 'to keep something apart', 'to separate', 'to

isolate' and some other meanings (*alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *muḵdam almaḵany* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016). According to exegetical references, Muslims are prohibited from sexual intercourse with their wives during their monthly period and therefore *faḵtazilw* in this context means 'no sexual intercourse' (*altafsyṛ almuyasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016).

T1, T2, T3, and T5 all used the same technique in their translation as they all used "keep away". T1 was the only translator to use a footnote in which he added extra explicit explanations not supplied in the text but he explicitly mentioned in the footnote that this expression clearly means, "do not have sexual intercourse with them". T2, T3, T4, and T5 all used literal translation without taking into account the contextual meaning of the euphemistic expression in the ST. In fact, the use of "keep away from women" and "go apart from women" without adding extra explanation or without translating the euphemistic expression explicitly might lead to the euphemistic expression being understood in a way different to what it actually means. With this being said, all of the five translations are euphemistic but only T1 made an addition in order to give the exact meaning of the euphemistic expression in the ST.

### 6.10.2 Euphemism 7: وَلَا تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّىٰ يَطْهُرْنَ

**Transliteration:** walā taḳrabūhuna ḥta yaḥṭurn

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan & Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
Do not approach them until they are	And go not into them till they are purified (from menses and	and do not approach them until they are	and do not approach them till they are clean.	and go not into them till they are cleansed.

cleansed.	have taken a bath).	clean		
-----------	---------------------	-------	--	--

The word *‘taḳrabūhuna* is derived from the verb ‘ḳaruba’ which literally means ‘to approach’, to come close to’ (*alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *muḳdam almaḳany* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016). Exegetical reference stated that this term is describing how husbands should keep away from their wives sexually during their monthly period and that they should not approach them for sexual intercourse until they finish their monthly periods (*altafsyr almuyasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016).

All of the translators attempted to render the euphemistic expressions in the TL euphemistically. T1, T3, and T4 all rendered the expression literally using a word for word translation and they used the same word for translating the euphemistic expression as they used “*approach*”. T2 and T5 attempted a sense-for-sense and a euphemistic translation as they both retained the euphemism and they used an equivalent euphemism in the TL, “*go not into,*” and according to Allan and Burridge (1991:91) the use of the combination of “*get + in to*” is classed as a euphemism for sexual intercourse. Therefore, according to this research all of the five translations conveyed the euphemistic function with T2 and T5 being the best translation due to the use of an equivalent euphemistic expression in the TL.

### 6.10.3 Euphemism 8: فَاتُّوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكَمُ اللَّهُ

**Transliteration:** *fa’atwhuna min ḥayth amarakum Allah*

**Translation:**

<b>Abdel Haleem (T1)</b>	<b>Khan &amp; Al-Hilali (T2)</b>	<b>Ali (T3)</b>	<b>Arberry (T4)</b>	<b>Pickthall (T5)</b>
You may approach them as God has directed you.	Then go into them as Allah has ordained for you (go into them in any manner as long as it is in their vagina).	Ye may approach them in any manner, time, or place ordained for you by Allah.	Then come unto them as God has commanded you.	Then go in unto them as Allah has enjoined upon you.

The word *fa'atwhuna* is from the verb 'ata' which literally means 'to do, make, perform and give' (*alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *mu'jdam alma'any* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016). Exegetical references indicate that the contextual meaning here is about how men are not allowed to have sexual intercourse with their wives unless after the women has taken a bath after the monthly period ends (*altafsyr almuyasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016).

All of the five translations attempted a sense-for-sense translation. Nonetheless, this sense-for-sense translation conveyed the euphemistic function in the SL as they all used similar terms like the ST and neutral terms. T2 added extra information within the text to give extra details and information regarding the euphemistic expression and therefore according to this research this extra information changed the translation from a euphemistic translation into an overt one.

#### **6.11 Verse 4: Q 2:223**

نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ فَأْتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّى شِئْتُمْ وَقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ مُلَاقُوهُ وَبَشِّرِ  
 الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

## 6.11.1 Euphemism 9 and 10: نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ فَآتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّى شِئْتُمْ

**Transliteration:** nisā,wkum ḥarḥ lakum fa'tū ḥarḥakum anā shi,tum

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan& Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
Your wives are (like) your fields, so go into your fields whichever way you like. + footnote	Your wives are a tilth for you, so go to your tilth, when or how you will, + footnote	Your wives are as tilth unto you; so approach your tilth when or how ye will	Your women are a tillage for you; so come unto your tillage as you wish,	Your women are a tilth for you (to cultivate) so go to your tilth as you will,

This verse includes two euphemistic expressions ḥarḥ and fa'tū. References on reasons of revelation state that this verse was revealed concerning sexual intercourse. When Muslim emigrants first settled in Madinah, they mentioned having sexual intercourse with their wives from different positions and this was not the case for the local people of Madinah. The Muslims spoke to the prophet about this and Allah revealed this verse to show Muslims that they can have sexual intercourse with their wives any way they liked as long as it is in the vagina (alwaḥidy 1992 and al-sḵalany 1997).

The word ḥarḥ means 'to plough, to till, cultivate'. The word fa'tū is derived from the verb 'atā' which means 'to do, make, perform and give' (*alḵamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *muḵdam almaḵany* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016). This verse and the euphemistic expression discussed are linked to the expressions in the previous verse. Exegetical references state that the verse is discussing the way sexual intercourse should be between married couples. The euphemistic expression means that the female vagina is the place of pregnancy or where you sow your seeds meaning your children and therefore you can

perform sexual intercourse whenever and however as long as it is not during the monthly period and it is in the female sexual organ (*altafsy almuwasar* 1999, Tafsīr al-Jalālayn 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016).

T1 used “(like) your fields” as equivalent expressions for the expression in the ST “ḥarth” thus adopting a literal translation method. T2, T3, and T5 all rendered the euphemistic expression literally since they all used “tith” and only T2 added a footnote to give explicit additional information which was not included in the text. In T4, the word “tillage” was used as an equivalent term for the expression in the ST thus adopting a literal translation. The word “ḥarth” is a metonym for having sexual intercourse, which eventually leads to pregnancy but will readers of the TT understand the purpose of that metonym in English? A related point to consider here is that Shakespeare in his play Antony and Cleopatra in Act 2, Scene 2, mentioned the expression “He ploughed her, and she cropped” as a euphemism for ‘he had sexual intercourse with her and she bore his child’ and therefore since this expression is a euphemistic expression then it can be considered as a suitable expression to be used in future translations for the word “ḥarth”.

Euphemism 9 “fa’tū” was rendered as “go into” by T1, “go to” by T2, “so approach your” by T3, “so come unto” by T4, and “so go to” by T5. All of the five translations adopted a euphemistic translation and a literal translation in their attempt to translate the euphemistic expression from the ST into the TT.

#### **6.12 Verse 5: Q2:226**

لِلَّذِينَ يُؤَلُّونَ مِنْ نِسَائِهِمْ تَرَبُّصُ أَرْبَعَةِ أَشْهُرٍ فَإِنْ فَاءُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

**6.12.1 Euphemism 11 and 12:** لِلَّذِينَ يُؤْلُونَ مِنْ نِسَائِهِمْ تَرَبُّصُ أَرْبَعَةِ أَشْهُرٍ فَإِنْ فَاءُوا

**Transliteration:** liladhyna yūluna min nisa,ihim tarabuṣ arba·ati ashhur fain fa,ū.

**Translation:**

<b>Abdel Haleem (T1)</b>	<b>Khan &amp; Al-Hilali (T2)</b>	<b>Ali (T3)</b>	<b>Arberry (T4)</b>	<b>Pickthall (T5)</b>
For those who <u>swear that they will not approach their wives</u> , there shall be a waiting period of four months: <u>if they go back</u> , +footnote	Those who <u>take an oath not to have sexual relations with their wives</u> must wait for four months, then <u>if they return (change their mind in this period)</u> +footnote	For those who <u>take an oath for abstention from their wives</u> , awaiting for four months is ordained; <u>if then they return</u> .	For those who <u>forswear their women a wait of four months; if they revert</u> ,	Those who <u>forswear their wives may wait up to four months; then, if they change their mind</u> ,

The euphemistic expressions discussed in this verse are *yūluna* and *fa,ū*. According to references on reasons of revelation, this verse was revealed because the people of the pre-Islamic period used to swear oaths that they will not perform sexual intercourse with their wives for periods of one year, two years, and sometimes more. This was one of the harms imposed on women during the pre-Islamic period meaning that when a man did not want a woman and disliked for her to marry any other man he would simply swear to never have sexual intercourse with her. This meant that she would be left neither divorced nor married. Therefore Allah set a restricted period of four months and after the end of this period it becomes clear whether the man is still the spouse or not (alwaḥidy 1992 and al·sḳalany 1997).

The expression *yūluna* is derived from the verb ‘*āla*’ which means to swear on doing something. The word *fa,ū* is from the verb ‘*fa’a*’ ‘to return, come back, take back’ (*alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *muḵdam almaḳany* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016). According to exegetical references, this verse is regarding those who swear that they will not have sexual intercourse with their wives and that they must wait for a period of four months after which they must return to a normal relationship with their wives or divorce them (*altafsyr almuyasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016).

T1 used an established euphemism in his translation of euphemism 11 “*approach*”. According to Drazin and Wagner (2008) the term *approach* is a euphemism for sexual intercourse and it is widely used in the Bible; therefore his translation is a euphemistic translation and he adopted a sense-for-sense approach. T2 also attempted a euphemistic translation but failed in fulfilling their attempt as they used the word “*sexual*” which clearly is an explicit expression and in addition they used “*relations*” which has been discussed earlier (euphemism 1) and it has been established that it has lost its euphemistic functions as a result of the euphemism treadmill. T3 attempted a sense-for-sense translation and succeeded in doing so by using the word “*abstention*” and refraining from mentioning anything related to sexual intercourse. T4 and T5 both used the same method in their translation of the euphemistic expression in the ST “*forswear*” and they both succeeded in maintaining the euphemistic function in the ST. Euphemism 12 has been rendered literally by all five translators. T1 and T2 both added a footnote in order to compensate for any misunderstanding that may result of the expressions “*go back*” and “*return*”. The

literal translations by T3, T4, and T5 can be ambiguous to the readers of the TT as they may only recognise the literal meaning of the words “return”, “revert”, and “change their mind”. T1 and T2 have achieved a euphemistic translation, which in addition maintains the intended meaning of ST.

### 6.13 Verse 6: Q2:230

فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ حَتَّى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يَتَرَاجَعَا  
إِنْ ظَنَّا أَنْ يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ يُبَيِّنُهَا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ

البقرة آية ٢٣٠

#### 6.13.1 Euphemism 13: حَتَّى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ

**Transliteration:** ḥtā tankiḥ zawdj gḥayrah

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan& Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
If a husband re-divorces his wife after the second divorce, she will not be lawful for him <u>until she has taken another husband</u> ;	And if he has divorced her (the third time), then she is not lawful to him thereafter <u>until she has married another husband</u> .	So if a husband divorces his wife (irrevocably), he cannot, after that, remarry her <u>until after she has married another husband and he has divorced her</u> .	If he divorces her finally, she shall not be lawful to him after that, <u>until she marries another husband</u> .	And if he has divorced her (the third time), then she is not lawful unto him thereafter <u>until she has wedded another husband</u> .

This verse includes one euphemistic expression tankiḥ. This verse discusses the issue of divorce, irreversible divorce in particular. If a husband has already divorced his wife twice then they cannot get back together as husband and wife unless the wife has been remarried again to someone else. Only after she gets

divorced from the second husband is she allowed to remarry the first husband. Sexual intercourse must have happened between the wife and her second husband before she is able to get divorced and remarry her previous husband (alwaḥīdy 1992 and al-ṣkalany 1997).

The verb *tankiḥ* is from the verb 'nakaḥ' and in other verses of the Quran it literally means to 'marry or wed' but in this context it means sexual intercourse (alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ 2014, muḥdam almaḥany 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016). According to exegetical references, this verse states that if a man divorces his wife for the third time after he divorced her twice, then she is no longer allowed to marry him until she marries another man first (*altafsyr almuyasar* 1999, Tafsīr al-Jalālayn 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016).

T2, T3, T4, and T5 all rendered the verb *tankiḥa* with its dictionary equivalent 'to marry or wed'. On the other hand, T1 attempted an idiomatic translation by avoiding the use of 'marry or wed'. This research is of the view that all five translations have not accomplished the transfer of the intended meaning as they only touched upon the clear meaning of the verb *tankiḥ*. In other words, they all attempted a literal translation method without paying any regard to the connotative or contextual meaning of that verb in this context. It is recommended that for the translation to fully convey the intended meaning of this euphemism, the expression 'to consummate the marriage' could have been used.

#### 6.14 Verse 7 and 8: Q2:236 and 237

لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ مَا لَمْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ أَوْ تَفْرِضُوا لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً وَمَتَّعُوهُنَّ عَلَى الْمَوْسِعِ قَدْرُهُ وَعَلَى الْمُقْتِرِ قَدْرُهُ مَتَاعًا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ (236) وَإِنْ طَلَّقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ وَقَدْ فَرَضْتُمْ لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً فَنَصَفُ مَا فَرَضْتُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ يَعْفُونَ أَوْ يَعْفُوَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ عُقْدَةُ النِّكَاحِ وَأَنْ تَعْفُوا أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى وَلَا تَنْسُوا الْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

البقرة آية ٢٣٦ و ٢٣٧

##### 6.14.1 Euphemism 14 and 15: مَا لَمْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ

مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ

**Transliteration:** ma lam tamasuhun

Min kabli an tamasuhun

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan & Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
There is no obligation on you if you divorce women when you have not consummated the marriage. (E14). If you divorce wives before consummating the marriage. (E15)	There is no sin on you, if you divorce women while yet you have not touched (had sexual relation with them). (E14). And if you divorce them before you have touched (had a sexual relation with) (E15).	There is no blame on you if ye divorce women <u>before consummating</u> . (E14). And if ye divorce them <u>before consummating</u> . (E15).	There is no fault in you, if you divorce women while as yet you have not touched them. (E14). And if you divorce them before you have touched them, (E15).	There is no blame on you if you divorce women while yet you have not touched them, (E14). And if you divorce them before you have touched them, (E15).

These two verses are linked to the previous verse (verse 6) and the reasons of revelation are the same and it includes two euphemistic expressions. The word *tamasuhun* is derived from the verb 'masa' which literally means 'to touch, feel'

(*alkamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *muḥdam almaḥany* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016). These two verses are regarding the act of divorce before consummating the marriage. If a man divorces his wife before they have sexual intercourse and he has not appointed the dowry for her then he is not at fault. But if he divorces her before having sexual intercourse with her and he has appointed her the dowry, then half of that dowry will be given to the wife and half of it returned unless the woman makes remission and returns it all or the husband leaves it all to her (*altafsyr almuyasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016).

T1 and T3 both opted for a sense-for-sense and a euphemistic translation, as “*consummating*” is a euphemism for sexual intercourse and it fulfills the intended meaning of the euphemisms in the ST. T2 selected a literal translation in addition to the use of extra explanation added in the text which therefore makes it an overt translation and not a euphemised one. T4 and T5 rendered the euphemistic expression literally without taking into account the connotative or contextual meaning of the euphemistic expression in the ST and this could result into the euphemistic expression not being understood by the readers of the TT.

### **6.15 Verse 9: Q3:47**

قَالَتْ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِي بَشَرٌ قَالَ كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

آل عمران آية ٤٧

#### **6.15.1 Euphemism 16: وَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِي**

**Transliteration:** wa lam yamsasny

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan & Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
When no man has touched me?	When no man has touched me.	When no man hath touched me?	How shall I have a son seeing no mortal has touched me?	How can I have a child when no mortal has touched me?

This verse was revealed in Madinah and it includes one euphemistic expression. This verse is about Maryam and her astonishment about conceiving a child without having sexual relations with a man (alwaḥidy 1992 and al-ṣkalany 1997).

The word *yamsasny* is derived from the verb ‘masa’ which literally means ‘to touch, feel’ (alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ 2014, muḵdam almaḵany 2010, and Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb 2016). All five translators have adopted literal and euphemistic translation and they all adopted a formal equivalence method to translate the euphemism. Considering the context and the supporting words used by the translators it is the view of this research that they all attempted a covert translation but their translations might result in the connotative meaning of the euphemism in the ST being misunderstood.

## 6.16 Verse 10: Q4:15

وَاللّٰتِي يَأْتِيْنَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مِنْ نِسَائِكُمْ فَاَسْتَشْهَدُوْنَ عَلَيْهِنَّ اَرْبَعَةً مِنْكُمْ فَاِنْ شَهِدُوْا فَاَمْسِكُوْهُنَّ فِي الْبُيُوْتِ  
حَتّٰى يَتَوَقَّاهُنَّ الْمَوْتُ اَوْ يَجْعَلَ اللّٰهُ لَهُنَّ سَبِيْلًا

النساء آية ١٥

### 6.16.1 Euphemism 17: الْفَاحِشَةَ

**Transliteration:** alfaḥishta

**Translation:**

<b>Abdel Haleem (T1)</b>	<b>Khan &amp; Al-Hilali (T2)</b>	<b>Ali (T3)</b>	<b>Arberry (T4)</b>	<b>Pickthall (T5)</b>
If any of your women commit a lewd act,	And those of your women who commit illegal sexual intercourse	If any of your women are guilty of lewdness,	Such of your women as commit indecency,	As for those of your women who are guilty of lewdness,

This verse was revealed in Madinah and it contains one euphemistic expression. It deals with the issue of illegitimate sexual intercourse outside the bond of marriage. The word *alfahishta* is derived from the verb ‘fuḥsh’ which means ‘obscene, vulgar’ (*alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *muḳdam almaḳany* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016). Exegetical references state that this verse discusses the issue of those women who have illegal sexual intercourse and that evidence should be taken from four witnesses and then they should be detained in their houses and prevented from mixing with people (*altafsyralmuyasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016).

T1, T3, T4, and T5 adopted a literal translation approach in rendering this euphemistic expression. This approach meant that some of the meanings of the euphemistic expression in the ST have been missed and not conveyed as the use of ‘lewdness’ and ‘indecency’ only, does not convey the whole meaning of the euphemism in the ST and that is illegal sexual intercourse. On the other hand T2 adopted an overt translation and thus omitted the euphemism in the translation and opted for adding further information within the text in order to draw the attention of the TT reader towards the actual meaning of the expression.

## 6.17 Verse 11: Q4:21

وَكَيْفَ تَأْخُذُونَهُ وَقَدْ أَفْضَى بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ وَأَخَذْنَ مِنْكُمْ مِيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا

النساء آية ٢١

### 6.17.1 Euphemism 18: أَفْضَى بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ

**Transliteration:** afdā ba·duḡum ilā ba·ḡ

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan & Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
When you have lain with each other	While you have gone in to each other	When ye have gone in unto each other	When each of you has been privily with the other	After one of you has gone in unto the other

This verse includes one euphemism *afdā*. According to alwaḡidy 1992 and al·sḡalany 1997, it is related to Q4:19 and Q4:20 which forbids men from inheriting women forcibly as used to happen before Islam. It also discusses the issue of divorce and it prohibits the husbands from taking back the dowry which they have paid to their wives. This verse begins with ‘*kayfa*’ which means ‘How?’ or ‘In what way?’ thus illustrating how such action is shameful and not manly.

The word *afda* literally means ‘to lead to or to contribute to’ (*alḡamwūs almuḡyṡ* 2014, *mu·jdam alma·any* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016). Exegetical references suggest that this verse is about those men who want to take back the dowry from their wives with whom they have had sexual intercourse (*altafsy almuḡasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016). All five translations have translated this euphemistically and they have all adopted a sense-for-sense translation. T1 used an established Biblical

euphemism “*lain with*” from lie with which has been used in the Bible as a euphemism for sexual intercourse. T2, T3, and T5 have all used the same expression which is also an established euphemism for sexual intercourse as has already been discussed in euphemism 1 in verse Q2:187. On the other hand, T4 used “*privily*”, which means to share something secret and private and it is the view of this research that this translation does not convey the meaning of the euphemism in the ST which according to exegetical references is sexual intercourse. The use of ‘been intimate with each other’ or ‘making love to each other’ would have been a suggestion for translating this euphemism.

### 6.18 Verse 12: Q4:23

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أُمَّهَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُكُمْ وَأَخَوَاتُكُمْ وَعَمَّاتُكُمْ وَخَالَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُ الْأَخِ وَبَنَاتُ الْأُخْتِ وَأُمَّهَاتُكُمُ اللَّاتِي أَرْضَعْنَكُمْ وَأَخَوَاتُكُم مِّنَ الرَّضَاعَةِ وَأُمَّهَاتُ نِسَائِكُمْ وَرَبَائِبُكُمُ اللَّاتِي فِي حُجُورِكُمْ مِّن نِّسَائِكُمُ اللَّاتِي دَخَلْتُمْ بِهِنَّ فَإِن لَّمْ تَكُونُوا دَخَلْتُمْ بِهِنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَحَلَائِلُ أَبْنَائِكُمُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ أَصْلَابِكُمْ وَأَنْ تَجْمَعُوا بَيْنَ الْأُخْتَيْنِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

النساء آية ٢٣

#### 6.18.1 Euphemism 19: دَخَلْتُمْ بِهِنَّ

**Transliteration:** dakhltum bihin

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan & Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
With whom you have consummated marriage,	To whom you have gone in	To whom ye have gone in,	If you have not yet been in to them	If you have not gone in unto them,

This verse contains one euphemistic expression *dakhltum bihin*. It is related to the previous four verses and it discusses a number of issues such as inheritance, marriage, divorce etc. (alwahidy 1992 and al-skalany 1997). The word *dakhltum* is derived from the verb ‘dakhla’ which literally means ‘to enter or to go into’ (*alḵamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *muḵdam almaḵany* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016). According to exegetical references, this verse discusses the women who are forbidden for marriage and it provides a list of the women to whom marriage is forbidden in Islam. These are the mothers, daughters, sisters, paternal aunts, maternal aunts, nieces, etc. (*altafsy almuḡasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016). T1 attempted a sense-for-sense translation and he managed to retain the euphemism by using an equivalent euphemism in the TL “*consummate*”. The use of “*gone in*” by T2, T3, and T5 and “*been in*” by T4 reflects a word for word translation but it also illustrates how the use of established euphemisms in the ST helps in rendering euphemisms and in transferring connotative meanings.

### 6.19 Verse 13: Q4:24

وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأُحِلَّ لَكُمْ مَا وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ مُحْصِنِينَ  
 غَيْرَ مُسَافِحِينَ فَمَا اسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْهُنَّ فَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا تَرَضَيْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْفَرِيضَةِ  
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا

النساء آية ٢٤

#### 6.19.1 Euphemism 20: فَمَا اسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْهُنَّ

**Transliteration:** fama istamtatum bihi minhun

**Translation:**

<b>Abdel Haleem (T1)</b>	<b>Khan &amp; Al-Hilali (T2)</b>	<b>Ali (T3)</b>	<b>Arberry (T4)</b>	<b>Pickthall (T5)</b>
If you wish to enjoy women {through marriage}	So with those of whom you have enjoyed sexual relations,	Seeing that ye derived benefit from them.	Such wives as you enjoy thereby	And those of whom you seek content (by marrying them),

This verse contains one euphemistic expression and it is connected to verse number 12 and the reasons of revelation are the same. The word *istamta* is derived from the verb ‘mata,a’ which literally means ‘to enjoy’ (*alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *muḳdam almaḳany* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016). Exegetical references suggest that this verse is linked to the previous verse (Q2:23) and it continues to mention the women forbidden for marriage. The expression being discussed and analysed means to enjoy women sexually and in return give them their rightful dowry (*altafsyr almuḳasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016).

T1, T2, and T4 adopted a literal translation method with some differences in the choice of expressions by the translators. T1 adopted a literal method in rendering the euphemistic expression into English in addition to translating the euphemism covertly and euphemistically through the use of additions technique within the text, “*through marriage*,” thus resulting in a successful translation of the euphemism into the TT. T2 also adopted a literal translation but not a euphemistic translation since they used the expression “*sexual relations*” which is an overt translation. T3 also rendered the euphemistic expression literally without applying any extra translation techniques or paying any regard to the connotative meaning or contextual meaning. Thus the meaning of the euphemistic expression in the ST is not conveyed in a comprehensive matter in the TT. T4 adopted a word for word translation rendering the expression as

“enjoy”. T5 adopted a sense-for-sense translation method and the same technique as T1 by adding additional euphemism guidance within the text. It is the view of this research that T1, T2 and T5 succeeded in rendering the euphemistic expression while on the other hand T3 and T4 fell short in translating the euphemistic expression into the TT due to the translation approach applied.

## 6.20 Verse 14: Q4:25

وَمَنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ مِنْكُمْ طَوْلًا أَنْ يَنْكِحَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ فَمَنْ مَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ مِنْ قَتَبَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ  
بِإِيمَانِكُمْ بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ فَانْكِحُوهُنَّ بِإِذْنِ أَهْلِهِنَّ وَآتُوهُنَّ أَجُورَهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ مُحْصَنَاتٍ غَيْرَ مُسَافِحَاتٍ وَلَا  
مُتَّخِذَاتِ أَخْدَانٍ فَإِذَا أُحْصِنَ فَإِنَّ أَنْثَىٰ بِفَاحِشَةٍ فَعَلَيْهِنَّ نِصْفٌ مَّا عَلَى الْمُحْصَنَاتِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ الْعَنَتَ  
مِنْكُمْ وَأَنْ تَصْبِرُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

النساء آية ٢٥

### 6.20.1 Euphemism 21 and 22: and مُتَّخِذَاتِ أَخْدَانٍ

ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ الْعَنَتَ مِنْكُمْ

**Transliteration:** wa lā mutakhidhati akhdan

Liman khashiya al ‘anata

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan & Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
Not adulteresses or lovers (E21) Who fear that they will sin (E22).	nor taking boyfriends (E21) Who is afraid of being harmed in his religion or in his body (E22).	nor taking paramours (E21) For those among you who fear sin (E22).	or taking lovers (E21) For those of you who fear fornication (E22).	nor of loose conduct (E21). Who fear to commit sin (E22).

The verse being analysed contains two euphemisms and it is linked to the previous verse as it deals with the issue of marriage and it makes suggestions to those who do not have the means or the wealth to be able to marry believing women (alwaḥīdy 1992 and al-ṣkalany 1997).

Euphemism 21 is derived from the noun '*khidn*' which literally means 'to have a secret friend or companion'. Euphemism 22 is a noun and it literally means 'to make a mistake, or hardships' (*alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *muḵdam almaḵany* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016). According to exegetical references, the meaning of the euphemistic expressions in this context are: (21) not taking boyfriends and having sexual intercourse outside wedlock. Euphemism 22 means fornication or having sex with someone who you are not married to (*altafsyṛ almuyasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016).

T1 translated the euphemistic expression 21 through adopting a sense-for-sense translation method by rendering *akhdan* as lovers. T1 omitted *mutakhidhati* 'taking'. T2 opted for a literal translation but it is the view of this research that the use of 'boyfriend' may not convey the exact meaning of the euphemist expression in the ST as it means 'boyfriends for sexual purposes'. T3 approached the text literally and euphemistically and his translation managed to convey the connotative and contextual meaning of the euphemistic expression in the ST. T4 attempted a literal translation method and his translation was euphemistic. The choice of 'loose conduct' by T5 seems not to have conveyed the whole meaning of the euphemistic expression, as the expression chosen by T5 is described as 'behaving in a way which is

considered to be sexually immoral' according to Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2011). All five translations are considered to be euphemistic with T1 and T3 giving the most successful translations out of the five according to this research.

T1, T3, and T5 all translated euphemism 22 literally and euphemistically by using the word 'sin' for *anata* thus opting for a broad expression which conveys the whole meaning. T2 used a sense-for-sense method and they reduced the euphemism sense through rephrasing it. T4 selected a dysphemism '*fornication*' by using a word with offensive connotations to render the euphemistic expression into the TT thus retaining the euphemistic function of the expression in the ST but using a different method.

## 6.21 Verse 15: Q4:43

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَى حَتَّى تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ حَتَّى تَغْتَسِلُوا  
وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَى أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُم مِّنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا  
فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُورًا غَفُورًا

النساء آية ٤٣

### 6.21.1 Euphemism 23: أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ

**Transliteration:** aw lāmastum alnisa,

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan & Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
Or had intercourse	Or you have been in contact with women (by sexual relations)	Or you have been in contact with women	Or you have touched women	Or you have touched women

This verse includes two euphemistic expressions. This verse was revealed as some of the companions of the prophet used to consume wine and then go to pray while still drunk. As a result of this they used to lose count of how many units of prayer they had performed and what they said in their prayers. Therefore, this verse was revealed to inform Muslims of the conditions in which prayer should not be performed (alwaḥīdy 1992 and al-ṣkalany 1997).

The word *lāmastum* is derived from the verb 'lāmasa' which literally means 'to touch or to feel' (*alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *muḳdam almaḳany* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016). Exegetical references indicate that the expression *lamastum* refers to sexual intercourse in this context (*altafsyir almuyasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016).

T1 uses a sense-for-sense translation to render the euphemistic expression into English. In addition, he successfully applies a euphemistic expression by using an established English euphemistic expression for sexual intercourse which is "*intercourse*". T2 and T3 both attempted a literal translation and they both agreed on the use of "*contact*" as an equivalent to 'lamastum' despite the fact that the chosen word was not close in meaning even out of this context. However, T2 was aware of the loss of meaning which may arise as a result of the use of "*contact*" and he made up for that loss by adding extra euphemism guidance within the text and by applying the additions techniques "*by sexual relations*". T4 and T5 both used "*touched*" thus making minimum change and rendering the euphemistic expression literally without taking into account the connotative or contextual meaning of that expression. It can be suggested that

T4 and T5 could have added the word ‘physically’ or ‘intimately’ before “*touched*” in order to draw the attention of the reader towards the actual meaning of the euphemism in the ST.

## 6.22 Verse 16: Q7:189

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا فَلَمَّا تَغَشَّاهَا حَمَلَتْ حَمْلًا خَفِيًّا فَمَرَّتْ بِهِ فَلَمَّا أَتَتْ  
دَعَا اللَّهَ رَبَّهُمَا لَئِنْ آتَيْنَا صَالِحًا لَنُكَونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ

الأعراف آية ١٨٩

### 6.22.1 Euphemism 24: فَلَمَّا تَغَشَّاهَا

**Transliteration:** falma taghshaha

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan & Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
When one (of them) lies with his wife	When he had sexual relation with her	When they are united	Then, when he covered her,	And when he covered her

This chapter was revealed in Makkah and it contains one euphemistic expression. This verse is about Adam and Eve and how Allah created them from a single soul (alwaḥidy 1992 and al-sḳalany 1997).

The word *taghshaha* is from the verb ‘*ghasha*’ which literally means ‘to cover’ (alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ 2014, muḳdam almaḳany 2010, and Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb 2016). The meaning of ‘*taghshaha*’ is sexual intercourse according to exegetical references (altafsy almuḳasar 1999, Tafsīr al-Jalālayn 2007, and Tafsir ibn kathir 2016).

T1 approached the expression euphemistically and he adopted a sense-for-sense translation. As has been discussed earlier, “*lie with*” is an established

Biblical euphemism for sexual intercourse. T2 also adopted a sense-for-sense translation but they omitted the euphemism and replaced it with an explicit expression “*sexual relation*”. It is the view of the researcher that the T3 translation seems to be a mistranslation, as the word “*united*” has no relevance to the meaning of the euphemistic expression in the ST. T4 and T5 both rendered the expression adopting a word for word translation and using the dictionary equivalent of the euphemism in the ST. This might result in the hidden meaning of the expression being misunderstood by readers of the TT.

### 6.23 Verse 17: Q12:23

وَرَاوَدْنَهُ الَّتِي هُوَ فِي بَيْتِهَا عَنْ نَفْسِهِ وَعَلَقَتِ الْأَبْوَابَ وَقَالَتْ هَيْتَ لَكَ قَالَ مَعَاذَ اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ رَبِّي أَحْسَنَ مَثْوَايَ إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الظَّالِمُونَ

يوسف آية ٢٣

#### 6.23.1 Euphemism 25 and 26: هَيْتَ لَكَ and وَرَاوَدْنَهُ

**Transliteration:** wa rawadathu and hayta lak

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan & Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
The woman in whose house he was living <u>tried to seduce him</u> E(25). She bolted the doors and said, ‘ <u>come to me</u> , E(26)	And she, in whose house he was, <u>sought to seduce him (to do an evil act)</u> E(25). She closed the doors and said: “ <u>come on O you</u> ”. E (26).	But she in whose house he was, <u>sought to seduce him</u> E(25). She fastened the doors, and said: <u>come, thou (dear one</u> E(26).	Now the woman in whose house he was <u>solicited him</u> , E(25) and closed the doors on them ‘ <u>come</u> ’, she said, ‘ <u>take me!</u> ’ E(26).	And she, in whose house he was, <u>asked of him an evil act</u> E(25). She bolted the doors and said: <u>I am ready (for you)!</u> E(26).

This chapter was revealed in Makkah and it includes two euphemistic expressions. The *surah* (chapter) is about the story of Yusuf (Joseph). This verse and the following 3 verses deal with seduction that Yusuf encountered from the wife of the Minister.

The word *rawadathu* is from the verb '*rawada*' which literally means 'to seduce or to be tempted'. Euphemism 26 (*hayta lak*) means 'come, come on, and lets go' (*alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *muḳdam almaḳany* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016). Exegetical references reveal that this verse is about how the wife of the Minister attempted to seduce Yusuf and that she closed the doors and tried to call him to her saying that she was ready sexually for him (*altafsyir almuyasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016).

T1, T2, and T3 translated the verb *rawadathu* as 'seduced' thus opting for a literal translation. The word 'seduce' suggests that the other person is in a weaker position or is unwilling and therefore the seducer is trying to persuade that person to commit this act with them. With this being said T1 added "*tried*" before "*seduced*" and T2 and T3 added "*sought*" to imply that this seduction did not succeed. T4 opted for "*solicited*" which implies that there was something offered in exchange for sexual intercourse and this is not the case in this verse. T5 made the choice of using "*asked of him an evil act*" and the use of 'asked' gives the impression that the seducer is giving the second party a choice or asking for permission. In addition, the use of 'evil act' can suggest any inappropriate act or action and this does not convey the exact meaning of

seduction in the ST. T1, and T3 both managed to convey the euphemistic meaning of the word in the ST and it may be suggested that they add between brackets the exact meaning of the euphemism. On the other hand T3 managed to translate the accurate meaning of the term 'rawadathu' in addition to the euphemistic expression through the addition of "to do an evil act" within the text. Both T4 and T5 did not convey the exact meaning or the euphemistic function of the expression.

All five translators euphemistically rendered Euphemism 26. Nevertheless, none of the five translations managed to convey the connotative meaning of 'hayta lak' except for T2 as they used "come on you" and according to Holder (2007) "come on you" is a euphemism which means an invitation to another to make a sexual approach. It may be suggested that the use of the expression 'I am all yours' can also convey the connotative and contextual meaning of the expression *hayta lak*.

## 6.24 Verse 18: 12:24

وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهِ وَهَمَّ بِهَا لَوْلَا أَنْ رَأَى بُرْهَانَ رَبِّهِ كَذَلِكَ لِنَصْرِفَ عَنْهُ السُّوءَ وَالْفَحْشَاءَ إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُخْلَصِينَ

يوسف آية ٢٤

### 6.24.1 Euphemism 27: وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهِ وَهَمَّ بِهَا

**Transliteration:** walakd hamt bihi wahma biha

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan & Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
She made for him, and he would have succumbed to	And indeed she did desire him, and he would have	And (with passion) did she desire him, and he	For she desired him; and he would have taken	She verily desired him, and he would have desired

her	inclined to her desire,	would have desired her,	her,	her
-----	----------------------------	----------------------------	------	-----

This verse continues to explain the story of Yusuf and the Minister’s wife and what happened after she tried to seduce him. This verse contains one euphemistic expression.

The verb *hama* according to (*alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *muḵdam almaḳany* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016) means ‘to intend or to plan something’. Exegetical references clearly explain that this expression is about how the Minister’s wife wanted Yusuf and she desired to have sexual intercourse with him and that he would have desired her but Allah protected him from committing this evil sin (*altafsy almuḳasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016).

All of the five translations are euphemistic. In addition, they all have clearly managed to identify the difference between ‘hama’ and ‘hamt’, consequently applying the additions technique by using (would) before the second expression to emphasise how she desired him and in return he almost desired her. T1, T2, T3, and T4 adopted a sense-for-sense method in rendering the euphemistic expression. On the other hand, T4 and T5 adopted a literal method to render the euphemism.

### 6.25 Verse 19: 58:3

وَالَّذِينَ يُظَاهِرُونَ مِنْ نِسَائِهِمْ ثُمَّ يَعُودُونَ لِمَا قَالُوا فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَتَمَاسَا ذَلِكُمْ تُوَعُّظُونَ بِهِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

**6.25.1 Euphemism 28:** يَتَمَّاسًا

**Transliteration:** yatamāsa

**Translation:**

<b>Abdel Haleem (T1)</b>	<b>Khan &amp; Al-Hilali (T2)</b>	<b>Ali (T3)</b>	<b>Arberry (T4)</b>	<b>Pickthall (T5)</b>
Before the couple may touch one another again	Before they touch each other	Before they touch each other	Before the two of them touch one another	Before they touch one another

This chapter was revealed in Madinah. This chapter is about the woman who came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) to complain about how her husband treated her and how he said to her ‘you are like my mother’s back on me’ which means that she is not his wife any more (alwaḥidy 1992 and al-ṣkalany 1997). The meaning of the word *yatamāsa* is derived from the verb ‘*msa*’ which literally means ‘to touch or to feel’ (*alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *muḳdam almaḳany* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016). Exegetical references state that touching in this context refers to sexual intercourse (*altafsyr almuyasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016). It is evident here that all of the five translators attempted a literal translation for the word *yatamāsa* without giving any explanation of the hidden meanings of the euphemism in the ST. This might result in the connotative meaning of the euphemism, which is ‘sexual intercourse,’ being lost or misunderstood. It is recommended that the translators either apply extra euphemism guidance within the text or a word such as ‘consummate’ or an explicit expression such as ‘sexual relations’.

## 6.26 Verse 20: Q4:43

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرُبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ حَتَّىٰ تَغْتَسِلُوا  
وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُم مِّنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا  
فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُورًا غَفُورًا

النساء آية ٤٣

### 6.26.1 Euphemism 29: مِنَ الْغَائِطِ

**Transliteration:** min algha,iṭ

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan & Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
Have relieved yourselves	Or one of you comes from the <i>Ghait</i> ( <i>toilet</i> )	Or one of you cometh from offices of nature	Or if any of you comes from the privy	Or one of you comes from the closet

This verse includes two euphemistic expressions *algha,iṭ* and *lamastum*, the second euphemism was previously analysed in verse 15 euphemism 23. This verse was revealed to inform Muslims of the conditions in which prayer should not be performed (alwaḥidy 1992 and al-ṣkalany 1997). The meaning of the noun *gha,iṭ* is ‘flat low ground’ (*alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *mu·jdam alma·any* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016). Exegetical references mention that the term in this context means ‘going to the toilet to urinate and produce faeces’ (*altafsy almuḥyṭ* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsīr ibn kathir* 2016).

T1 attempted a sense-for-sense translation and he opted for an equivalent euphemism in English “*relieved yourselves*” which according to Holder (2007) means to urinate and this shows that T1 only managed to convey one part of the meaning of the euphemism and did not include the whole intended meaning

of the euphemism. T2 opted for a sense-for-sense translation and they also transliterated the expression in addition to adding between brackets a hint of the euphemism “*toilet*” without mentioning the act itself. The translation attempted by T3 is a dynamic equivalence method and also a euphemistic translation which sought to give an insinuation relating to the act of urinating and producing faeces. T4 and T5 approached the text freely and euphemistically and they reduced the euphemism by replacing it with a TL item “*privy*” and “*closet*” which means a lavatory. It can be established that T2, T3, T4, and T5 all used general expressions to compensate for the loss of meaning that has happened as a result of not using an equivalent euphemism for ‘*gahit*’. It is also evident that finding an accurate literal equivalent for this term is a hard task to achieve and this reflects the relationship between the usage of certain term during specific eras and in certain places as the use of this word which means ‘flat low ground’ was associated with human excretory functions by Arabs during the revelation of the Quran.

## 6.27 Verse 21: Q5:75

مَا الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ وَأُمُّهُ صِدِّيقَةٌ كَانَا يَأْكُلَانِ الطَّعَامَ انظُرْ كَيْفَ نُبَيِّنُ لَهُمُ الْآيَاتِ  
ثُمَّ انظُرْ أَنَّى يُؤفَكُونَ

المائدة آية ٧٥

### 6.27.1 Euphemism 30: يَأْكُلَانِ الطَّعَامَ

**Transliteration:** kana ya,kulani alṭ·am

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan & Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
Both ate food (like other	They both used to eat	They had both to eat their	They both ate food.	And they both used to eat

mortals)	food (as any other human being, while Allah does not eat).	(daily) food.		(earthly) food.
----------	--	---------------	--	-----------------

This chapter was revealed in Madinah and the verse being analysed contains one euphemistic expression *kana ya, kulani alṭam*. This verse and the previous verse deal with the claims that Jesus is a god and it disproves this claim by stating that Jesus and his mother used to eat food just like any other human beings. Therefore who ever consumes food like any other human being will definitely produce urine and faeces and consequently cannot be a god (*altafsyr almuyasar* 1999, Tafsīr al-Jalālayn 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016).

All five translations adopted a literal translation and non-euphemistic ones with slight variations between four of them in the form of additions. T1 added between brackets an expression in an attempt to emphasise the idea that they were similar to other human beings. T2 made the same addition but added an expression “*while Allah does not eat*” to make the intended meaning behind this euphemistic expression much clearer to the readers of the TT. T3 and T5 also followed the same technique of addition adding “*daily and earthly*” respectively. But this addition does not add any extra information to the readers of the translated text as according to Dickins et al (2002) addition in translation is when something is added to the TT and it is not already present in the ST. T4 opted for a literal translation without applying any additions which might make the meaning of the expression clearer. It is evident that all of the five translations have not been successful in rendering the connotative and contextual meaning of the euphemism into the TT.

## 6.28 Verse 22: Q7:26

يَا بَنِي آدَمَ قَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُؤَارِي سَوْآتِكُمْ وَرِيشًا وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ

الأعراف آية ٢٦

### 6.28.1 Euphemism 31: لِبَاسًا يُؤَارِي سَوْآتِكُمْ

**Transliteration:** libas yuwary saw,atikum

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan & Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
Garments to cover your nakedness	Raiment upon you to cover your private parts,	Raiment upon you to cover your shame,	A garment to cover your shameful parts	Raiment to conceal your shame,

This chapter was revealed in Makkah and the verse includes one euphemistic expression. The word *saw,atikum* is a noun which means ‘private parts’ (*alḵamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *muʿjdam almaʿany* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016). According to exegetical references, the noun *sawatikum* is a covert indication to human private parts. Since the mention of human parts is somewhat sensitive the Quran used a euphemistic expression to refer to that sensitive word (*alṭafsyr almuyasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016).

All of the five translations agreed on the use of sense-for-sense translation to render this euphemistic expression. Such a method according to this research is a successful attempt which managed to render the connotative meaning of the euphemism in the ST with a euphemistic translation.

## 6.29 Verse 23: Q24:30

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَلِكَ أَزْكَى لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ

النور آية ٣٠

### 6.29.1 Euphemism 32: فُرُوجَهُمْ

**Transliteration:** furwdjahum

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan & Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
And guard their private parts	And protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts)	And guard their modesty	And guard their private parts	And be modest

This chapter was revealed in Madinah. The verse includes one euphemistic expression *furwdjahum*. Arabic dictionaries have stated that the word *furwdjahum* is derived from the noun '*fardj*' which can either mean a 'gap or private parts' (*alḵamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *muḵdam almaḵany* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016). Exegetical references stated that this verse is instructing Muslims not to look at what is forbidden for them and to also protect themselves for committing illegal sexual relations (*alṭafsyṛ almuyasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016).

T1, T2, and T4 all used the same expression "*private parts*" thus adopting a word for word translation. T2 add extra euphemism guidance between brackets in order to draw the attention of the reader that the euphemism is discussing sexual relations. On the other hand T3 and T5 both used the word "*modest*" which according to this research does not convey the meaning of 'sexual relations' as being modest only includes covering the private parts and therefore an important part of the meaning of the euphemism has been omitted

in the TT. It can be suggest that the translators use additional euphemism guidance such as ‘protect yourselves from illegal affairs’ or any other information which suggests illegal sexual relation.

### 6.30 Verse 24: Q24:58

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِيَسْتَأْذِنَكُمْ الَّذِينَ مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَبْلُغُوا الْحُلُمَ مِنْكُمْ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ صَلَاةِ الْفَجْرِ وَحِينَ تَضَعُونَ ثِيَابَكُمْ مِنَ الظَّهِيرَةِ وَمِنْ بَعْدِ صَلَاةِ الْعِشَاءِ ثَلَاثُ عَوْرَاتٍ لَكُمْ لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا عَلَيْهِمْ جُنَاحٌ بَعْدَهُنَّ طَوَّافُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ بَعْضُكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

النور آية ٥٨

#### 6.30.1 Euphemism 33: ثَلَاثُ عَوْرَاتٍ لَكُمْ

**Transliteration:** ‘awrat

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan & Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
These are your three times for privacy	(These) three times are of privacy for you	These are your three times of undress	Three times of nakedness for you	Three times of privacy for you

This verse was revealed in order to organise the times when people living within the same house are allowed to enter each other’s rooms and that they must first obtain permission before entering (alwahīdy 1992 and al-ṣkalany 1997). The word ‘awratin is derived from the noun ‘awrah’ which means ‘private parts or genitals’ (alḳamwūs almuḥyṭ 2014, mu·jdam alma·any 2010, and Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb 2016). Exegetical references have stated that this means that these are the periods when clothes are usually taken off and private parts are revealed (altafsyr almuyasar 1999, Tafsīr al-Jalālayn 2007, and Tafsir ibn kathir 2016).

It is quite evident that all five translators opted for a sense-for-sense translation with slight differences in the expressions used. T1, T2, and T5 all used “*privacy*” to illustrate that this time is when people are alone without mentioning anything related to being undressed, which is the meaning of the euphemism in the ST. T3 and T4 both used expressions which help draw the attention of the reader that the euphemism in the ST is related to private parts. It can be seen that T3 and T4 were more successful in rendering the euphemistic expression than T1, T2, and T5.

### 6.31 Verse 25: Q23:13

تُمْ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ

#### 6.31.1 Euphemism 34: قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ

**Transliteration:** *qarar makyn*

**Translation:**

Abdel Haleem (T1)	Khan & Al-Hilali (T2)	Ali (T3)	Arberry (T4)	Pickthall (T5)
In a safe place	In a safe lodging (womb of the woman)	In a place of rest, firmly fixed	In a receptacle secure	In a safe lodging.

This chapter was revealed in Makkah and the verse contains one euphemistic expression. The expression is a combined one and it consists of a noun and an adjective. *qarar* is a noun which means a stable and firm place. *makyn* is an adjective which means strong or important (*alqamwūs almuḥyṭ* 2014, *muḥdam almaḥany* 2010, and *Al-Mawrid Al-Qareeb* 2016). According to (*altafsyr almuyasar* 1999, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* 2007, and *Tafsir ibn kathir* 2016), these two euphemistic expressions are covert references to the womb of a female. It is quite clear that T1 adopted a literal translation for *qarar* and a sense-for-sense translation for *makyn*. T2 adopted a literal translation and they took a different

approach by adding between brackets “*womb of the woman*” to give extra guidance to make the meaning of the euphemism clearer for the readers of the TT and to compensate for any loss in meaning which might occur. It may be argued that the use of “*lodging*” on its own might be a distortion of the expression *makyn* if it was used on its own without the brackets and this was the approach adopted by T5. T3 adopted a sense-for-sense translation method in translating the euphemistic expression into the TT and he tried to follow the word order of the ST. T4 adopted a sense-for-sense translation and his translation was a euphemistic one. T2 and T4 translations can be considered successful as they managed to retain the euphemistic function of the expression in the ST and they managed to convey the meaning into the TT.

### **6.32 Summary**

The conclusion that can be drawn from the above evaluation of the five widely used English translations of the Quran, focusing mainly on euphemistic expressions, is that the proliferation and the growing number of translations of the Quran in English does not mean better quality. Although the availability of so many modern English translations of the Quran is positive, it can also be a source of confusion to non-Arabic speakers as most versions of the Quran in English are inconsistent in their use of language or their interpretations of meaning. The above five translations have their merits and strengths but they also have their weaknesses and limitations. This suggests that there is room for improvement. Appraising and evaluating the versions of the Quran in translation is certainly not intended to downgrade their value; many passages remain clear

enough for most people to understand. Overall the translations of the Quran are useful.

The Quran translations in English tend to be influenced by “formal-equivalence,” “literal,” or “word-for-word” translation. In the main the translators stayed close and rendered each word of the original language into English. There were few attempts at translating the message and providing the gist of what was said in Arabic, seeking to preserve the sense as much as possible in translation; in other words a “thought for thought” translation would be the best choice to accurately convey what the original says.

The above sample of Quranic euphemistic expressions in English serves to illustrate how translators sometimes find it difficult to render accurately and fluently the word of God. The majority of the translators tried to translate and not interpret, which often resulted in vague and erroneous rendering. The rationale behind this approach, some argue, is that it is not the job of translators to explain or give their views about what the euphemistic expressions mean. It is their duty to give the best possible translation and leave the interpretation to the readers. Almost all translations should be produced by a team of translators rather than an individual and the translation should be a collective effort as this could be the key for successful translations. The English translations of the Quran vary in their accuracy and fluency. Over the last three decades the established and popular translations still dominate despite the fact that they have been open to criticism and showing the same weaknesses; very few of them provide innovative insights.

## Chapter Seven

### Conclusion and Recommendations

#### 7.1 Introduction

This chapter draws conclusions and interprets the findings obtained from the qualitative interview themes in line with the research objectives. It will link such findings to the literature and the research objectives and questions, underlining the key strands and themes of relevant literature and demonstrating the extent to which these findings are consistent or inconsistent with the findings of this study. It is worth reiterating at this stage that this study investigated accuracy and quality across five different translations of the Quran from Arabic into English focusing on euphemism as a rhetorical device. It assessed the perceptions and perspectives of professional translators who have first-hand experience in dealing with Islamic texts in English translation and who have expertise in the field of translation studies and especially the translation of sensitive texts.

This chapter also provides the contribution to knowledge, highlights the limitations of this study and suggests areas for future research. It makes recommendations regarding the strategies that can be used to minimise loss of meaning in translating euphemistic expression from Arabic into English.

## **7.2 Linking key literature to the findings of this study**

It is particularly pertinent to ascertain where the current study sits within the broad debate around translating the Quran from Arabic into English focusing on euphemistic expressions. It is also pertinent to demonstrate the extent to which the findings of the present study are consistent and relate to those of similar studies in the literature, whether they support or challenge existing key literature on translation.

The literature on the subject of translation shows that extensive research has been conducted on the topic. Despite the broad appeal and interest that translation generates as a research area for both academics and practitioners, it does not yet have a strong theoretical base. There is also a knowledge gap in terms of the applicability of the existing theoretical base. The common theme that emerges from the review is that there is no single theory or approach that defines or explains translation. There is a lack of consensus and a degree of inconsistency in the way translation is defined and explained, and so it is difficult to find a universal model. Admittedly, research on translation studies is on the increase, producing many useful and fresh insights and perspectives, but how translation is viewed and practiced remains a matter of individual interpretation. Therefore, there are almost as many different definitions and interpretations given to translation as there are authors who conducted research on the subject. Thus, translation is an ambivalent term meaning different things to different people. In short, translation is still a fertile research area but despite its long history, it is fragmented and lacks strong theoretical underpinning. Translation techniques, methods and approaches are often based on rule of

thumb and tend to differ from one pair of languages to another e.g. English/French or Arabic/French.

The findings revealed the main themes that emerged from the research. The literature clearly indicated that translating the Quran is a challenge that does not require just a bilingual translator, someone who knows the functions of the linguistic system of the source language and target language, but the translator must be able to convey the same meaning, create the same impact and maintain the same context within the translated text. Scholars tend to agree that translating thoughts from one language into another is often complicated, as thought processes and mind-sets are unique to individual people who speak that language. Moreover, variation in word meanings between languages is considerable. Yet, meaning is said to be universal i.e. whatever is expressed in Arabic, can be said Chinese, in English or French using different linguistic devices. One of the key themes that transpires from the literature on translation studies is that meaning across languages is slippery, particularly in translating the Quran, and there is a tendency to leave out significant information; there is always more to say as a word has multiple senses or as Menacere, (1999, 353) put it "*Words have a galaxy of meanings and these are not static or frozen.*"

The majority of translations of the Quran falls within a spectrum of two extremes, word for word and free translation. A word for word translation tends to give priority to form above meaning. The translator seeks to follow a procedure of translation that is word-based rather than meaning-based. For instance, many translators have tried, in one way or another, to translate the Quran in English as faithfully as possible. The translator seeks to preserve all

the shades of meaning of the Arabic source text. However, English bears little resemblance to the classical Arabic of the Quran. Thus, several of today's translators of the Quran are keen in their efforts to put the Quran in the English language of Shakespeare (thou, thee etc.). Some translations of the Quran have not always considered the distance between classical and modern languages in use. This translation should be using modern English, current speech forms, and not use archaic English such as formal pronouns: thou, thy, thine, thee.

Despite the translators' good intentions, they often impose a level of complexity that is incompatible with the source text. It is important that translations of the Quran should aim at readability, understandability and fluency. The translation of the Quran must reflect God's intended meaning of his message. It has to be said that no modern language exactly conveys the depth and breadth of meaning, so a word-for-word translation of the Quran could be unclear or at times could even be misleading.

This study mainly examined the translation of euphemism with reference to the Quran. The use of euphemism in language is not new; it dates back to Ancient Greece. It refers to 'good speech as opposed to evil'. It is a widespread way of speaking by softening and masking taboo words. People resort to euphemisms to deal with difficult, sensitive, frowned upon or potentially embarrassing situations. It is a phenomenon which is deeply rooted in every known culture as a means of talking about taboo subjects or emotionally laden or distasteful things. Euphemism demonstrates that, in language, a word has multiple senses,

not only a linguistic denotative meaning but also connotative meaning. It also illustrates the differences in the way languages perceive reality.

### **7.3 Common flaws of the five assessed translations**

The majority of scholars agree that translations of the Quran are necessary to enable the word of God to reach as many people as possible without ambiguity or double talk, particularly in today's world troubled by extreme actions and reactions. Some English translations of the Quran are neither well-received nor free of criticism. In principle, successive translations of the Quran are produced in an attempt to enhance the quality and address the shortcomings of the previous ones. However, translations and revisions are always needed for continuous improvement. The lack of a consistent and standardised approach to translating the Quran has led to deviations, distortions and sometimes mistranslations of euphemistic expressions. The translators tried to keep the word order and linguistic aspects of Arabic as close as possible in the English. Such methods resulted in the tendency by many translators to transfer the explicit and literal meaning of the euphemism rather than convey the implicit and connotative meaning of the euphemism. It should be borne in mind that languages function and interpret reality differently. Some translators whimsically and individually decided on the meaning of euphemistic expressions without evidence from reliable sources. The following highlights some of the common flaws:

- Several translators have taken the unwarranted liberty of rewording the text. They have freely paraphrased according to their own interpretation.

The impression is sometimes given that the translator is saying quietly

*“This is what I think it means”* instead of *“This is what it says.”*

- Use of complex language instead of a natural, accessible and understandable language that encourages reading. In other words, the use of common, everyday language of a lay person should be encouraged.
- Holding to the argument that the Quran is divine, it is complex, ambiguous and incomprehensible to the human mind, and some translators seem to believe that therefore a translation should be equally obscure and even mystifying.
- Not conveying the correct sense for sense when a literal rendering distorts or obscures the meaning.
- Some of the English translations are characterised by over translation or under translation as many words were added or omitted.
- Failure to consult scholars’ sources of how euphemistic expressions should be understood/interpreted.

It has to be said that despite the criticisms levelled at many of the English translations of the Quran, people who do not speak or read Arabic seem unaware of these shortcomings. The variations between the English translations of the Quran are small so that while each version has the translators’ individual finger prints, they do not differ considerably. Obviously, each translation of the Quran has its own strengths and weaknesses.

Despite their shortcomings, translations of the Quran are generally useful and fit for purpose: they make the Quran accessible to non-speakers of Arabic. The Quran in translation enables those who do not understand or read Arabic to

gain access to the word of God. Clarity and plainness of language, however, does not mean stripping the words of their subtle and inherent, mysterious meaning.

#### **7.4 Key findings from the qualitative survey**

The findings of the semi-structured interviews combined with the analysis of the sample euphemisms taken from the Quran revealed that the translatability and untranslatability of the Quran and sensitive texts remains a debatable issue. On the whole, the results of the interviews were similar to the findings from the broad literature and there is no conflict between the interviews and the literature findings. It was found that the majority of interviewees are aware of the importance of the English translations of the Quran and feel deeply concerned about the many flaws that some versions contain. Qualitative findings from the experts' perspectives appear to suggest that some translations are distant from the readers, especially the challenge of accessing a plain, readable and meaningful translation of the Quran in English. It was also accepted by the interviewees and the literature that the translator will never be able to say the exact same thing in two languages. However, there is room for improving the quality of translation of Quranic euphemistic expressions, especially by adopting a more functional approach to translating that can help them successfully tackle the difficulties inherent in this type of language.

The semi-structured interviews revealed that the use, for instance, of archaic English, is challenging and does not quite communicate the message of the Quran. This often results in some difficulties for the readers of the English text

and leads to ambiguities which might result in the meaning of the euphemism not being understood by the readers of the TT. The five translations chosen in this research have showed many advantages and strengths but they have also revealed some weaknesses and limitations. These weaknesses and limitations were present in their inconsistency in the use of certain terms and in their interpretation of meaning. The improvement and enhancement of the translation of euphemism of the Quran is not an individual but a joint and continuous effort.

The emphasis on sense-for-sense as an effective approach for translating euphemisms to tone down taboo words or expressions employed is supported by the participants in semi-structured interviews regarding the euphemisms of the Quran. This can be seen in the responses by the interviewees regarding which approach is better, word for word or sense for sense translation. They had different opinions and points of views as some were in favour of the use of literal translation while others favoured the use of free translation. This research takes the view that no approach is better than the other but it depends on the text, expression being translated and whether the approach chosen is able to convey the meaning accurately. An example from Verse 1 Euphemism 2 (*Libas* لِيَّاسُ ) can be used to illustrate how both approaches can achieve the most accurate rendering of the expression of the ST into the TT. Although Abdel Haleem adopted a literal translation, he managed to convey the euphemistic expression into English. In this same verse, ‘invisibility, domestication and foreignisation’, which determines the role of the translator in the text and whether the translator should be visible or invisible, is illustrated in the visibility of Abdel Haleem in the version of the translation. He added the word “*close as*”

for the purpose of bringing the readers of the TT closer to the level of intimacy and affection found in the Arabic expression in the Quran. The use of the functional theories of translation and especially the text analysis approach made it possible to cover many of the textual and contextual elements related to the euphemism being analysed. This was accomplished through the use of books of reasons of revelations, dictionaries and exegetical references. Many interviewees believe that the English translations of the Quran are generally acceptable. Proliferation of the Quran in translation and variations, are unexpectedly not a major concern for the interviewees. The more the merrier as one interviewee put it.

### **7.5 Key findings based on the study objectives**

The findings of this study show that they are closely related to the research objectives regarding the challenges of translating euphemism from Arabic into English with reference to the Quran. The premise that translators of the Quran faced difficulties in comprehending and transferring euphemistic expressions was demonstrated by the sample analysed across the five translated versions selected by this study. This study argues that the onus is on the translators of euphemism in the Quran to find an appropriate strategy to ensure that the intended meaning and effect of these euphemistic expressions are rendered meaningfully. The findings revealed that the translators' decision-making and their choice of equivalent and strategy when dealing with euphemistic expressions often fell short of meeting the requirements of accuracy and fluency.

- 1) When translating texts from unrelated cultures, the translator is bound to come across language items that require sensitivity and awareness about their acceptance when transferred in T.L. especially when reference is made to euphemistic expressions of the Quran.
- 2) The study also shows that insufficient knowledge of the Quran and the implicit meanings of the euphemisms in the Quran resulted in mistranslations and loss of meaning in some of the translations.
- 3) One of the key findings of the study confirms that no method will address all of the translation challenges and no strategy will fit all the text types.
- 4) There is no preferred translation and every translation can bring benefit to its readers.
- 5) Findings indicated that the translators who carried out the five translations of the Quran selected for this study did not have consistent and conscious strategies for dealing with the euphemistic expressions, nor did they have a clear framework of translation.
- 6) The use of archaic English and complex words, or translating the euphemism without paying attention or consideration to the contextual meaning, make it difficult for the TT readers to understand.
- 7) A key finding of the study shows that some Islamic concepts and cultural specific items are untranslatable and this means that footnotes in the form of extra explanations should be added in order to convey the correct meaning.

- 8) The findings of this study reached the conclusion that many of the translations of euphemisms in the Quran are inconsistent in their use of language or their interpretation of meaning.
- 9) Euphemistic expressions of the Quran have generally been rendered literally.
- 10) Based on whether the translator was a native or non-native speaker of Arabic, the findings of this study revealed the following:
  - a) The translators who were native speakers of Arabic paid extra attention to the implicit, connotative meaning, and contextual meaning of the euphemism.
  - b) The non-native speakers of Arabic translators generally adopted a word-for-word translation.
  - c) This study found that if the translator fell short of conveying the connotative and implicit meaning of the euphemism then the readers will not be able to understand the correct meaning of the translated euphemism.
  - d) The proliferation of translations of the meaning of Quran available on the market today plays an important role in bridging the linguistic and cultural gaps between languages because having different translations allows more research in the field of translation studies. The translation of the Quran, in general, and the translation of euphemisms of the Quran, are still in need of more in-depth research.

- e) The interview findings show that the translation practitioners were generally satisfied with the current translations of the Quran available despite their weaknesses.
- f) Findings from the content analysis showed that linguistic knowledge alone is not sufficient for translators of the Quran; any translator needs a comprehensive knowledge of the religious, rhetorical, and cultural background in order to produce a readable, meaningful, and effective translation.

To conclude, to translate euphemistic expressions accurately, it is important to examine how speakers are subject to social constraints, norms, and appropriateness. Every society in the world prohibits certain kinds of behaviour and certain taboo words. Speakers of a language conform to the norms and adapt to unwritten conventions. Some languages are more tolerant of some colourful and infinitely expressive nature of taboos, while others are more conservative and reserved. Euphemism is part of culture and every culture is unique. Language and culture are inseparable, this makes the task of translating not just a matter of language transfer from A to B, but translation is a cross-cultural transfer (Menacere 1999)

## **7.6 Recommendations**

The aim of this study is to examine and assess the quality and accuracy of the translation of euphemism related to moral decency as a rhetorical device across five different translations. Assessing and evaluating the five translations is not intended to downgrade their value or to diminish their importance as most are

clear enough for the majority of people to understand. The intention of this study was to add to the literature and to suggest that there is still room for improvement with regards to the translation of euphemism in the Quran. In the case of translating euphemism in the Quran, however, the issue lies in the sophistication, creativeness and impact of euphemistic expressions being lost in TL. This results in a different evocation of imagery to the original. The meaning of euphemisms can be conveyed accurately if they are understood within the context in which they are produced. In order to translate euphemisms efficiently it is important to be aware that transferring and conveying euphemism from one language into another goes beyond matching language items from SL to TL.

This study presents the following recommendations to the translators of euphemism in the Quran:

1. The Quran is different from any other type of text as it is divine, sacred, and sensitive and therefore it should be approached with due care. Having many English translations of the Quran in English is helpful for non-speakers of Arabic as it provides them with different options and interpretations of the Quran. Therefore, the translators of the Quran and especially its euphemisms should give extra thought to the readers of the translated text and should ensure that they translate the text using non-complex language to communicate accurately the meaning, preserving the essence of the source text and transferring the contextual meaning.
2. In order to fully understand the connotative and contextual meaning of the euphemisms in the Quran the translators should follow these steps

adopted from the text analysis approach for the purpose of translating the euphemism as accurately as possible:

- Consulting references related to the reasons of revelation for the purpose of covering the historical background of each euphemism.
  - Referring to a number of dictionaries in order to adequately grasp the different nuances of meaning of the euphemism being translated.
  - Exegetical references are of utmost importance for the translators of euphemism in the Quran as these references provide the translators with the comprehensive meaning of the euphemism.
  - The translators of euphemism in the Quran should aim at translating meanings and concepts rather than giving a literal rendering of euphemisms.
3. A team of experts which includes specialists in Arabic language, Quran related Islamic studies, and professional translators should translate the Quran and not just individual translators.
  4. A Skopos or purpose should be set out and identified by each translator prior to translation in order to justify some of the decisions and methods adopted and applied in the translation.
  5. Finally, any obscurity, ambiguity or inaccuracy that exists in the translations of the Quran, should be highlighted and an effort should be made to address them. Translators, as mediators and facilitators of communication are aware of the cultural discrepancy between

languages. The translator's knowledge and expertise and experience determines the way they should approach euphemism in terms of identifying the level of implicitness and explicitness of the sensitive language utterances. The translator of the euphemistic expressions of the Quran should show sensitivity and awareness, but above all they should work as part of a team.

6. The word-for-word translation of euphemisms should be used sparingly as the literal approach often obscures or confuses the reader's understanding, resulting in the original meaning being lost as the euphemism becomes alien or unacceptable in T.L.
7. The meaning of euphemistic expressions is often obtained from the wider area beyond the scope of context under consideration. There is no simple one for one correspondence between languages. In other words, linguistic competence alone is not sufficient for translating; translation competence depends on cultural and general and background knowledge of the source text to be translated.

### **7.7 Contribution to knowledge**

The translation of euphemisms and especially euphemisms of the Quran has not received adequate theoretical and practical research in translation studies. Therefore, the process of translating Quranic euphemisms is beset with difficulties and prone to mistranslations.

This study has made contribution to knowledge in several ways. It has made an original contribution by addressing the gaps and by extending the literature

within the under-researched area of translation studies in general, and the translation of euphemism in the Quran in particular. It makes recommendations on how to translate the euphemisms of the Quran. Another contribution is made by identifying the practical implications that arise in the translation of euphemism in the Quran. This is accomplished through the identification of the techniques used, so the limitations in the translations being analysed can be addressed. Another contribution is the suggestion of a practical framework for translating euphemisms in the Quran. The suggested method assists in the production of a more enhanced and improved translation of euphemisms in the Quran, thus allowing a clearer and more accurate rendering in the target language. This study makes also a practical contribution to knowledge as the key findings of this research add to the body of knowledge on translation studies.

### **7.8 Limitations of the study**

Every research has limitations and this study is no exception. However, this research has achieved the purpose and objectives set by this study, which mainly focused on evaluating and assessing the quality and degree of faithfulness when translating euphemistic expressions in the Quran focusing on five key versions of translation of the Quran in English. It would be beyond the scope of this study to evaluate all the existing translations of the Quran in English. Secondly, the extent of the research conducted is limited, as it is confined to semi-structured interviews gauging the views and perceptions of professional translators and it did not include native speakers of English. The

results are prone to bias and future research that removes this element is recommended.

Finally, another limitation was time constraints. This is a common limitation for many research students. With greater time available it would have been possible to collect and analyse larger sets of data. A more expanded scope of the data involving users of translations of the Quran in English such as non-native speakers of Arabic and imams would potentially provide deeper and broader insights into the issue of euphemistic expressions of the Quran in translation.

### **7.9 Areas for future research**

Despite the useful insights and practical implications provided by this study, further research is necessary to gain a better and in depth understanding of the translating of euphemism in the Quran

- 1) Additional research can be undertaken to cover other types of euphemisms such as euphemisms of hardships.
- 2) Further studies can focus on the perceptions and understanding of native speakers of English regarding euphemisms of the Quran with reference to the five selected translations for this study.
- 3) Another translating area that has received little attention is how the majority of Muslims who are non-native Arabic speakers feel and cope with the Quran in their native language. This, too, is a worthwhile research topic.

## References

- Abdel Haleem, M. A. 2010. *The Qur'an*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Abdel Haleem, M, A. 2011. *Euphemism in the Quran: A Case study of Marital Relations as Depicted in Q. 2:222-3*. Journal of Quranic studies. Vol. 13. No. 1. Pp. 125-131.
- Abdul-Raof, H. 2010. *Qur'an translation: discourse, texture and exegesis*. London: Routledge.
- Abdul-Raof, H. 2011. *Arabic Rhetoric: A Pragmatic Analysis*. United Kingdom: Routledge.
- Abu Libdeh, A. 2011. *Metaphor in Arabic Rhetoric: Call for Innovation*. Jordan Journal of Applied Science "Humanities Series, V. 13. No.1. Pp.227-242.
- Abu-Risha, M. 2010. *Nazariyat altakāfu, fy altardjamah*. <https://aburisha.wordpress.com/2010/11/>. Accessed October 2015.
- Al-Azzam, B. 2009. *Translating structural pause in the Qur'an*. Translation and Interpreting Studies. V. 4. No. 1.
- Al-Barakati, M. 2013. *Translation of the sex-related Quranic euphemism into English*. Leeds, The University of Leeds, UK.
- Al-Barakati, M. 2014. *Tracing a Model for Euphemism, a Functional Approach* New Orleans. USA. WEI International Academic Conference Proceedings. Pp. 146-150.
- Al-fayrwzabady, M, Y, S. 2014. *Alḳamws almuḥyṭ*. Syda, Lebanon. Almatbaḥ al·sryah.
- Al-Hamad, M. & Salman, A. 2013. *The Translatability of Euphemism in the Holy Quran*. European Scientific Journal. Vol.9, No.2. Pp. 190-214.
- Alhammad, S. 2011. *Usage of Domestication and Foreignization in Arabic Translation of China Achebe's Things Fall Apart*. Manchester. The University of Salford, UK.
- AL-Harrasi, A. 2001. *Metaphors in (Arabic-into-English) Translation with specific reference to metaphorical concepts and expressions in political discourse*. Aston University, UK.

Al-Hilali and Khan. 2011. *Interpretation of The Meaning of The Noble Quran*. Al Madinah Al –Munawwarah, Saudi Arabia. Maktaba Dar-us-Salam.

Al-Husseini, H. 2007. *Euphemism in English and Arabic: A Contrastive Study*.  
Al-hyany, 2014 A. *Aslwb alknayh,t fy al Qurān al krym mwd ,atha w dlalatha alblaghyh,t*. Amman: dar ghyda, llnshr w altwzy.

Ali, A. Y. 2013. *The meaning of the Holy Qurān*. United States: Create space.  
Al-Jahiz, *Kitab Al-Hayawan*. Cairo. Abdel-Salam Muhammad Harun, Matba al Habibi.

AlKaf, M. 2014. *Equivalence In Translation*. Research Articles In Interpretation And Translation. KSU-Colt;s Rait.

Allan, K, and Burrige, K, 1991. *Euphemism and Dysphemism: Language used as shield and weapon*. New York. Oxford University Press.

Allan, K, and Burrige, K, 2009. *Forbidden words: Taboo and the Censoring of language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Al-maḥly, Jalal al Dyn and al-ṣuywṭy, Jalal al-Din, 2007. *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*. Amman, Jordan. Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought.

Alqaryouti, M. & Sadeq, A. 2016. *Euphemism in the Translation of Surah Al Nisa'a in the Holy Quran*. Journal of Literature, Languages and Linguistics. Vol. 23. Pp. 44-50.

Al-Salem, R. 2008. *Translation of Metonymy in the Holy Qur'an: A Comparative, Analytical Study*. King Saud University, Department of English at the College of Arts.

Al-shnkhkh, R. 2011. *uslwb al kinayat fy alquran*. madjlat alwaḥa. Volume 60 Year 16.

Al-Turky, A, A. Etal. 1999. *altafsyr almuyasar*. Almadinah almunawarah. Mujama' almalik Fahad liṭiba'at almuṣḥaf alsharyf.

Al-Waḥidy, A, A. 1992. *Asbab nuzwl al Quran*. Beirut, Lebanon. Dar alkitab al'ilmiyah.

Alzadjali, N. 2011. *Advantages and disadvantages of Content Analysis*. The treasure, Just.

Amaratunga, D., Baldry, D., Sarshar, M. & Newton, R. (2002) '*Quantitative and qualitative research in the built environment: Application of "mixed" research approach*', *Work Study*, Vol. 51.No. 1. pp. 17–31.

Anani, M. 2003. *Modern Translation Theory*. Cairo: Egypt, The Egyptian International Publishing Company-Longman.

Arberry, J. A. 2008. *The Koran Interpreted: a translation*. New York. Simons and Schuster Adult publishing Group.

Al-Qarni, A, and Rabab'ah, G. 2012. *Euphemism in Saudi Arabic and British English*. *Journal of Pragmatics*. V.44. No. 6-7. Pp. 730-743.

al-ṣkalany, S, A. 1997. *al-ujab fy asbab nuzul al Quran*. Dar Ibn Hazm.

Aubed, M, M. 2011. *A study of English Death Euhphemisms with Reference to their Translation into Arabic- A Case Study-*. *Tikrit University Journal for Humanities*. Vol. 18, No. 2.

Awad, A. (2005) *Translating Arabic into English with special reference to Quranic Discourse*. Thesis. School of Middle Eastern studies. University of Manchester.

Ayad, H, M. & Muna, H. 2011. *Sensitive Profanities in the Translation of the Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an in English*. *Majlat diyala*. Vol. 51. Pp. 710-729.

Badawi, J. A. 1995. *Gender equity in Islam: basic principles*, Plainfield, Ind., American Trust Publications.

Ba'labakki, M. R. & Ba'labakki, R. 2009. *Al-Mawrid al-ḥadīth : qāmūs Inkilīzī-'Arabī = Al-Mawrid al-hadeeth : a modern English-Arabic dictionary*.

Ba'labaki, R, H, I. 2016. *Al-Mawrid Al Qareeb Arabic-English-Arabic Dictionary*. Dar el ilm lilmalayin.

Baker, M. 1998. *Translation Studies*. Encyclopedia of translation studies. London and New York. Routledge.

Baker, M. 2010. *Critical readings in translation studies*, Abingdon, Oxon. New York. Routledge.

Baker, M. 2011. *In other words: a course book on translation*, Abingdon, Oxon. New York. Routledge.

- Baker, M. 2001. *Routledge encyclopedia of translation studies*, London, Routledge.
- Baker, M. & Saldanha, G. 2011. *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, London, Routledge.
- Barbe, K, 1996. *The Dichotomy Free and Literal Translation*. *Meta*, XLI, (3).
- Bassnett, S. 2002. *Translation studies*, New York. Routledge.
- Bell, J. 2014. *Doing your Research Project*. Buckingham. Philadelphia. Open University Press.
- Berdoll, L. 2009. *Very nice ways to say very bad things: An unusual book of euphemisms*. Naperville, IL. Sourcebooks.
- Bermann, S. and Porter, C. 2014. *A Companion to Translation Studies*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Bernard, R. 2005. *Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. 4<sup>th</sup> edn. United States: AltaMira Press, US.
- Birley, R.T & Moreland, N. 2013. *A practical Guide to Academic Research*. London. Kogan Page limited.
- Blanche, M.T. 2007. *Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. South Africa. Juta Legal and Academic Publisher.
- Boudelaa, S, & Marslen-Wilson, W. D. *Aralex: A lexical database for Modern Standard Arabic*. *Behavior Research Methods*. Vol. 42. Pp. 481-487.
- Brannen, J. 2005. *Mixed Methods Research: A discussion paper*. ESRC National Centre for Research Methods. NCRM/005. Pp. 1-30.
- Breuer, F. & Reichertz, J. 2001. *Standards of Social Research*. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*. Vol. 2. No. 3.
- Bryman, A. 2012. *Social research methods*. 4edn. New York. Oxford University Press.
- Bryman, A & Bell, E. 2007. *Business research methods*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Oxford, USA. Oxford University press.

- Burns, R.B. 2000. *Introduction to research methods..* London. Sage publications.
- Catford, J. C. 1978. *A linguistic theory of translation: An essay in Applied Linguistics*, London. Oxford University Press.
- Cassel,C. 2012. *Qualitative organizational research: Core methods and current challenges*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Cassell, C. & Symon, G. 2015. *Qualitative research in organizations and management*. An International Journal. Vol. 10. Issue. 4.
- Chemorion, D. 2008. *Translating Jonah's Narration and Poetry Into Sabaot, Towards a Participatory Approach to Bible Translation*. Stellenbosch University.
- Cheung, A. 2011. *Functionalism and Foreignisation: Applying Skopos Theory to Bible Translation*. University of Birmingham.
- Chukovskii, K. 1984. *The art of translation*. London., Oxford University Press.
- Cleary, T. F. 2004. *The Qur'an, A new Translation*. USA, Starlatch press.
- Clough, P. and Nutbrown, C. 2002. *A Student's Guide to methodology*. London. Thousand Oaks. Sage Publication Inc.
- Coelho, L. Undated. *Textual Genres on Discourse Analysis and Translation Functionalism*. Universidad Federal do Parana Lyon.
- Collis, J. & Hussey, R. 2009. *Business research: A practical guide for undergraduate and postgraduate students*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. Basingstoke, Hampshire. UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Connell, A. & Nord, R. 1996. *The bloodless coup: The infiltration of organization science by uncertainty and values*. Journal of applied behavioral science. Vol. 32. No. 4. Pp407-427.
- Cooper, D. Atlantic, F. & Schindler, P. 2013. *Business research methods*. 12<sup>th</sup> edn. New York. McGraw Hill Higher Education.
- Corbetta, P. 2003. *Social Research Theory, Methods and Techniques*. London: Routledge Falmer.
- Corbin, J & Strauss, A. 2008. *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Cornin, M. 2013. *Translation in the Digital Age*. Routledge (Taylor and Francis).
- Creswell, J. & Miller, D. 2000. *Determining Validity in Qualitative Inquiry: Theory into Practice*. Vol. 39. No.3. Pp. 124-130
- Cresswell, J. 2009. *Research Design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Crotty, M. 1998. *The Foundations of social Research: Meaning and perspective in research process*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.
- Crotty, M. 2003. *The Foundations of social Research: Meaning and perspective in research process*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. London: Sage Publications.
- Daniel, B, Wallace. 2012. *Fifteen Myths about Bible Translation*. Dallas Theological Seminary. Dallas, USA.
- Dash, N. 2005. *Selection of the Research Paradigm and Methodology*. Manchester Metropolitan University. Online Research Methods Resource for Teachers and Trainers.
- Davies, M. and Nathan, H. 2014. *Doing a successful research project: using qualitative or quantitative methods*. Basingstoke. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Dawson, C. & Dawson. 2009. *Introduction to research methods A practical guide for anyone undertaking a research project*. 4<sup>th</sup> edn. Oxford.
- Deneffer. Ahmad Von, 1989. *Ulum al Quran*. London, The Islamic Foundation.
- Denicolo, P. & Becker, L. 2012. *Developing research proposals*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.
- Denscombe, M. 2003. *The Good Research Guide: for small-scale social research projects*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Maidhead. Open University Press.
- Denzin, K. & Lincoln, S. 2008. *Strategies of qualitative inquiry*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dickins, J., Hervey, S. N. & Higgins, I. 2002. *Thinking Arabic translation: a course in translation method : Arabic to English*, London, Routledge.
- Dudovskiy, J. 2011. *The Ultimate Guide to Writing a Dissertation in Business Studies: A Step-by-Step Assistance*. Research methodology.net.

- Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R. & Lowe, A. 2012. *Management Research*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. London: Sage Publication.
- Elewa, A, 2014. *Features of Translating Religious Texts*. Journal of Translation, Vol.10. No.1.
- Elewa, A, 2015. *A Textbook of Islamic Translation*. Dar Al-Bayan& Qalam for Translation and publication.
- El-Farran, S. 2006. *The problem in translating the noble Quran*. [http://www.ahl-alquran.com/English/show\\_article.php?main\\_id=733](http://www.ahl-alquran.com/English/show_article.php?main_id=733). Accessed May 2015.
- Elsayed, M. O. 1988. *Islam, the Qur'an and the Arabic literature*. Al-Islam.org. <http://www.al-islam.org>. Accessed 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2015.
- Farghal, M. 2012. *Advanced issues in Arabic-English Translation Studies*. Kuwait, Kuwait University Press.
- Farghal, M. 1995. *Euphemism in Arabic: A Gricean Interpretation*. Anthropological Linguistics. Vol. 37, No. 3. Pp. 366-378.
- Fakhry, M. 2009. *An Interpretation of the Quran*. New York. New York University press.
- Fernandez, E, C. 2014. *Euphemism and Political Discourse In The British Regional Press*. Brno Studies in English. Vol. 40. No. 1. Pp. 5-26.
- Fieser, J & Dowden, B. 2003. *Inductive and deductive arguments*. Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. <http://www.iep.utm.edu/ded-ind/>.
- Gabriel, D. 2013. *Methods and methodology*. <http://deborahgabriel.com/2013/03/17/inductive-and-deductive-approaches-to-research/>. Accessed 14 June 2016.
- Gentzler, E. 2001. *Contemporary translation theories*. Clevedon, England; Buffalo, N.Y. Multilingual Matters.
- Ghauri, N. & Gronhaug, K. 2010. *Research methods in business*. 4<sup>th</sup> edn. Harlow, England: Financial Times Prentice Hall.
- Ghazala, H. S. 2008. *Translation as problems and solutions: a course book for university students and trainee translators*, Beirut, Dar el-ilm Lilmalayin
- Gilbert, N. 2008. *Researching social life*. Edited by Nigel Gilbert. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. London: Sage Publications.

- Gile, D. 2010. *Why Translation Studies Matters*. Jon Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Gillespie, S. 2011. *English translation and classical reception: towards a new literary history*. Classical receptions. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Gomez, M. 2009. *Towards a new approach to the linguistic definition of euphemism*. Language Sciences. Vol. 31. Pp. 725-739.
- Gonzalez, F. 1992. *Euphemism and political language*. UEA papers in Linguistics, Vol. 33. Pp. 36-49.
- Gray, D.E. 2004. *Doing research in the real world*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication.
- Grix, J. 2004. *The foundations of research*. Houndmills. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Guba, E. & Lincoln, Y. 1994. *Choosing the appropriate methodology: Understanding research philosophy*. The Marketing Review. Vol.4. Pp. 397-409.
- Hair, F. Black, C. Babin, J. & Anderson E. 2007. *Multivariate data analysis*. United States: Prentice Hall.
- Hakim, C. 1992. *Research design: Strategies and choices in the design of social research*. London: Allen and Unwin.
- Halmari, H. 2011. *Political correctness, euphemism, and language change: The case of 'people first'*. Journal of Pragmatics. Vol. 43. No. 3. Pp. 828-840.
- Hatim, B. 1997. *Communication across cultures: translation theory and contrastive text linguistics*, Exeter, University of Exeter Press.
- Hatim, B. 2000. *English-Arabic/Arabic-English translation: a practical guide*.
- Hatim, B. & Mason, I. 1990. *Discourse and the translator*, London, Longman.
- Hatim, B. & Mason, I. 1997. *The translator as communicator*, London, Routledge.
- Hatim, B. & Munday, J. 2004. *Translation: an advanced resource book*, London, Routledge
- Hayajneh, L. 2010. The Translation of English Euphemistic Expressions into Arabic in D.H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and Jane Austen's *Emma*, Manchester, University of Salford, UK.

Healy, M & Perry, C. 2000. *Comprehensive criteria to judge validity and reliability of qualitative research within the realism paradigm*. Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal. Vol. 3. No 3. Pp. 118-126.

Holden, M. T. and Lurch, P. 2004. *Choosing the Appropriate Methodology: Understanding Research Philosophy*. The Marketing Review. Vo.14. Pp. 397-409.

Holder, R. W. 2007. *How not to say what you mean: A dictionary of euphemisms*. 4<sup>th</sup> edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

House, J. 1977. *A model for translation quality assessment*, Tübingen, TBL-Verlag Narr.

Hsieh, H & Shannon, S. 2005. *Three approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis*. Qualitative Health Research. Vol. 15. No. 9. Pp. 1277-1288.

Huang, Y. 2005. *A Brief Study of the Origin, Forms and Change of English Euphemisms*. US-China Foreign Language. Vol. 3. No. 9. Serial No.24. Pp. 46-48.

Hughes, J. & Sharrock, W. 1997. *The philosophy of social research*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. New York: Longman.

Husni, R. & Newman, D. 2010. *A practical manual in Arabic translation*, London, Routledge.

Husni, R. & Newman, D. L. 2013. *A to Z of Arabic-English-Arabic translation*, London, Saqi.

Ibn Kathir, H. 2016. *Tafsir Ibn Kathir in The English Language with Arabic verses*. Darussalam.

Irving, T. 2010. *The Qur'an Basic Teaching*. The Islamic foundation. Leicester. UK. Markfield Dawah Centre.

Jankowicz, D. 2004. *Business research projects*. 4<sup>th</sup> edn. London: Int. Cengage Business press.

Jennings, PL, Perren,L & Carter, S. 2005. *Alternative perspectives on entrepreneurship research: Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*. Vol.29.

No.2. Pp. 145-152.

Johnson, R.B. & onwuegbuzie, A.J. 2004. *Mixed Methods Research: A Research Paradigm Whose Time Has Come*. Educational Researcher Journal. Vol. 33. No. 7. Pp. 14-26.

Kashgari, A. 2010. *The paradox of translating the untranslatable: Equivalence vs. non-equivalence in translating from Arabic into English*. Journal of King Saud University - Languages and Translation. Vol. 23. Pp. 47-57.

Khan, M. M., Hilali, T. A.-D., Bukhari, M. I. I., Ṭabari, Qurtubi, M. I. A. & Ibn Kathir, I. I. . 2007. *Tafsīr ma ‘ānī al-Qur’ān al-kaīm : bi-al-lughah al-Injilīziyah : muqtabas min tafsīr al-Ṭabarī wa-al-Qurṭubī wa-Ibn Kathīr wa-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Darussalam.

Kincheloe, J. 2004. *Introduction: The power of the bricolage: Expanding research methods*. Rigour and complexity in educational research: Conceptualizing the bricolage. Maidenhead: Open University. Pp. 1-22.

Kohlbacher, F. 2006. *The use of Qualitative Content Analysis in Case Study Research*. Forum: Qualitative Social Research. Vol.7. No. 1.

Kothari, C, R. 2009. *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. New Delhi. New Age International ltd publishers.

Kuhiwczak, P. & Littau, K. 2007. *A companion to translation studies*, Clevedon, Multilingual Matters.

Kuhn, T. 1970. *The Structure of Scientific Revolution*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. Chicago, Il. University of Chicago press.

Kumar, R. 2011. *Research Methodology a step-by-step guide for beginners*. London. Sage publication.

Kvale, S. & Brinkmann, S. 2014. *Interviews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Lambert, J. 2006. *Functional Approaches to Culture And Translation: Selected Papers by Jose Lambert*. Philadelphia: Benjamins, John Publishing Company.

Lather, P. 2006. *Paradigm proliferation as a good thing to think with: Teaching research in education as a wild profusion*. International journal of Consumer

Studies. Vol. 34. No. 4. Pp. 35-37.

Leppihalme, R. 1997. *Culture bumps: An empirical approach to the translation of allusions*. Philadelphia. Multilingual Matters.

Linfoot-Ham, K. 2005. *The Linguistic of Euphemism: A Diachronic Study of Euphemism Formation*. Journal of Languages and Linguistics. Vol.4 No.2.

Mack, N. Woodsong, C. MacQueen, K. Guest, G. & Namey, E. 2005. *Qualitative research methods a data collector's field guide*. NC. Family Health International. Research Triangle Park.

Mansour, M. 2006. *Al Tardjma bayn alnazaryah wa altaṭbiq*. Cairo, Dar-al-Kamal.

Marshall, C. & Rossman, G. 2010. *Designing qualitative research*. 5<sup>th</sup> edn. Los Angeles: Sage publication.

Mason, J. 2002. *Qualitative researching*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage Publications.

Mariam, H. M. 2014. *Domestication and foreignization in Translating Culture-Specific References of an English Text into Arabic*. International Journal of English Language & Translation Studies. 2(2), 23-36.

Mason, J. 2002. *Qualitative researching*. London. Sage publications.

Maynard, M. 1994. *Methods, practice and epistemology: the debate about feminism and research*. In Mary Maynard & Jane Purvis. London: Taylor and Francis. Pp. 10-27.

Mayring, P. 2000. *Qualitative Content Analysis*. Forum: Qualitative Social Research. Vol.1. No. 2.

McNiff, J. & Whithead, J. 2002. *Action Research: Principles and Practice*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. London: Routledge Falmer.

Menacere, K. 2015. *Translation studies lectures*. Liverpool JMU. UK.

Menacere, K. 2016. *When more does not mean better. Selecting a research methodology and methods*. Devon, United Kingdom: Routledge.

Mertens, D.M. 2010. *Research and evaluation in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage publications.

Mir, M. 1989. *Dictionary of Quranic Terms + Coherence + Verbal Idioms*. Center for Near Eastern and North African Studies. The University of Michigan.

Mofarrej, O. 2015. *A Sociolinguistic Study of Euphemistic Death Expression in Jordanian Arabic*. Arab World English Journal. Vol.6. No. 2. Pp110-130.

Munday, J. 2012. *Introducing translation studies: theories and applications*, London, Routledge.

Murata, S and Chittick, W. 2006. *The vision of Islam*. London. I.B. Tauris.

Myers, M.D. 2008. *Qualitative research in business and management*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

Najjar, S. 2012. *Metaphors in Translation: An investigation of a sample of Quran metaphors with reference to three English versions of the Quran*. Liverpool. LJMU.

Narasimham, R. 2013. *Translation as a touchstone*. Sage Publications.

Neaman, J. S. and Sliver, C, G. 1991. *Kind words: A thesaurus of euphemisms*. New York: Avon Books.

Neuman, W. 2013. *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. 7<sup>th</sup> edn. Harlow: Pearson Education.

Newmark, P. 1988. *A textbook of translation*, New York, London. Prentice-Hall International.

Newmark, P. 1991. *About translation*, Philadelphia. Multilingual Matters.

Nichol, M. 2011. *7 Types of Euphemism*. Retrieved from <http://www.dailywritingtips.com/7-types-of-euphemism/>.

Nida, E. A. 1964. *Toward a science of translating, with special reference to principles and procedures involved in Bible translating*, Leiden, E.J. Brill.

Nida, E. A. & Taber, C. R. 1969. *The theory and practice of translation*, Leiden, Published for the United Bible Societies, E.J. Brill.

Nilwati, H, A. 2012. *Types of Euphemism Used By Male And Female Kerinciness Speaker*. English Language and Literature E-Journal. Vol.1. No. 1.

Pp. 51-60.

Nord, C. 1997, *Translating as a Purposeful Activity. Functionalist Approach Explained*. Manchester, UK: St Jerome Publishing.

Nord, C. 1995, *Text-Functions in Translation: Titles and Headings as a case in point*. International Journal of Translation Studies, 7,2,pp. 261-284. Viewed 9 December 2015.

Nord, C. 2005, *Text Analysis in Translation: Theory, Methodology, and Didactic Application of a Model for Translation-Oriented Text Analysis*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi B.V.

Nunan, D. & Swan, M. 1992. *Research methods in language learning*. 15<sup>th</sup> edn. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

O'leary, Z. 2004. *The Essential Guide to Doing research*. London. Sage Publications.

Parker, R, H. 2010. *Translation: theory and practice in dialogue*. Continuum studies in translation.

Patton, M. 2002. *Qualitative research & evaluation methods*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Pickthall, M. M. 2006. *The meaning of the glorious Quran: Text and Explanatory Translation*, United States: Amana Publications.

Pinker, S. 2003. *The blank Slate: The modern denial of human nature*. 11<sup>th</sup> edn. London, England: Penguin Books.

Polit, D. & Beck, C. 2006. *Essentials of nursing research: Methods, appraisal, and utilization*. 6<sup>th</sup> edn. Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams and Wilkins.

Proctor, S. 1998. *Linking philosophy and method in the research process, the case of realism*. Nurse Researcher. Vol.5. No.4. Pp. 73-90.

Pring, R. 2014. *Philosophy of educational research*. London, United Kingdom: Bloomsbury Academic.

Punch, F. *Developing effective research proposals*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. London: Sage publications.

- PYM, A. 2010. *Exploring translation theories*. New York, USA. Routledge.
- Rahimi, A. & Sahragard, R. 2006. *A Critical Discourse Analysis of Euphemization and Derogation in Emails of the Late Pope*, *The Linguistic Journal*, June 2006, Vol.1. No. 2.
- Rajasekar, S. 2013. *Research Methodology*. School of physics, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirapalli.
- Rawson, H. 2002. *Rawson's dictionary of euphemisms and other doubletalk: Being a compilation of linguistic fig leaves and verbal flourishes for artful users of the English language*. Edison, NJ: Castle Books.
- Reiss, K. 1976. *Text type and translation method: the operative text*. Germany, Scriptor Verlag Kronberg/TS.
- Remenyi, D. Williams, B. Money, A. & Swartz, E. 1998 *Doing Research in Business and Management. An Introduction to Process and Method*. London: Sage.
- Remenyi, D. Williams, B. Money, A. & Swartz, E. 2002 *Doing Research in Business and Management. An Introduction to Process and Method*. London: Sage.
- Resche, C. 1999. *Equivocal Economic Terms or Terminology Revisited*. *Translator's Journal*, Vol. 44. No. 4. Pp. 617-632.
- Roberts, J, J, M. 1993. *An Evaluation of the NRSV: Demystifying Bible Translation*. *From Insights: A Journal of the Faculty of Austin Seminary*. 108/2. Pp. 25-36.
- Robson, C. & Robson, P. 2002. *Real world research: A resource for social scientists and practitioner-researchers*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Oxford, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Rowley, J. 2012. *Conducting research interviews*. *Management Research Review*. Vol. 35. Pp. 260-271.
- Rubbin, A. & Babbie, R. 2009. *Research methods for social works*. 7<sup>th</sup> edn. Boston, MA, United States: Wadsworth Publishing Co.
- Sami Boudelaa and William D. Marslen-Wilson. 2010. *Aralex: A lexical database for Modern Standard Arabic*. Cambridge. England.

- Sanchez, M. T. 2009. *The problems of literary translation: a study of the theory and practice of translation from English into Spanish*, Oxford ; New York, Peter Lang.
- Saunders, M. Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. 2007. *Research Methods for business students*. 4<sup>th</sup> edn. Harlow, England: Financial Times Prentice Hall.
- Saunders, M. Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. 2009. *Research Methods for business students*. 5<sup>th</sup> edn. Harlow, England: Financial Times Prentice Hall.
- Saunders, M. Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. 2012. *Research Methods for business students*. 6<sup>th</sup> edn. Harlow, England: Financial Times Prentice Hall.
- Sharp, J., Peters, J. and Howard, K. 2002. *The Management of Student Research Project*. Gower publishing limited. UK.
- Shuttleworth, M. & Cowie, M. 2014. *Dictionary of Translation Studies*. Manchester, UK: St Jerome Publishing.
- Sigfusdottir, T, A. 2015. *Euphemism and Gender: A Study of the Relationship Between Gender and Euphemisms*. University of Iceland.
- Smith, J. 1998. *Social science in question: Towards a Post disciplinary framework*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications in association with the Open University.
- Snell-Hornby, M. 1995. *Translation Studies An Integrated Approach*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co.
- Snell-Hornby, M. 2006. *The Turns of Translation Studies: New paradigms or shifting viewpoints?*. Philadelphia, PA. John Benjamins Publishing Co.
- Sommer Harrits, G. 2011. *More than method? A discussion of paradigm differences within mixed method research*. Journal of mixed methods research. Vol. 5. No. 2. Pp.150-166.
- Stausberg, M. and Engler, S. 2013. *The Routledge handbook of research methods in the study of religion*. United Kingdom. Routledge.
- Taghian, M, A. 2014. *Translating Euphemisms of Sexual Taboos in the Quran. United States: LAP Lambert Academic Publishing*.
- Tashakkori, A. & Teddlie, C. 1998. *Mixed methodology: Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches (applied social research methods series 46)*.

Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Taylor, S. & Bogdan, R. 1984. *Introduction to qualitative research methods: the research of meanings*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Teddlie, C. & Tashakkori, A. 2009. *Foundations of Mixed Methods Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Terre Blanche, M. Durrheim, K. & Painter, D. 2007. *Research in Practice: Applied Methods for the Social Sciences*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Cape Town: Juta Legal and Academic Publishers.

Thomas, P.Y. 2010. *Towards developing a web-based blended learning environment at the University of Botswana*. Doctoral dissertation.

Thomas, G. 2013. *How to do your research project: A guide for students in education and applied social sciences*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. United Kingdom. Sage Publications.

Tibawi, A.L. 2004. *Is the Quran Translatable? Early Muslim Opinion*. In *The Koran: Critical Concepts In Islamic Studies*. Turner, C. (ed). Routledge Curzon, USA and Canada. <http://www.answering-islam.org>. Accessed May 2015.

Trochim, W. 2000. *The Research Methods Knowledge Base*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Atomic Dog Publishing. Cincinnati, OH.

Venuti. 1998. *The scandals of translation: towards an ethics of difference*, London. Routledge.

Venuti, L. 2008. *The translator's invisibility: a history of translation*, London. Routledge.

Venuti, L. 2012. *The translation studies reader*, London. New York, Routledge.

Venuti, L. 2013. *Translation changes everything: theory and practice*, London. New York, Routledge.

Vinay, J. P., Darblnet, J., Sager, J. C. & Hamel, M. J. 1995. *Comparative stylistics of French and English: a methodology for translation*, Amsterdam, John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Wallace, D. 2012. *Fifteen Myths about Bible Translation*. Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, USA.

- Walsham, G. 1995. *The Emergence of Interpretivism in IS Research*. Information Systems Research. Vol. 6. No 4. Pp. 376-394
- Walsham, G. 1993. *Interpretive case Studies in IS research: nature and method*. European Journal of Information Systems. Vol. 4. Pp. 74-81.
- Wardhaugh, R. 2006. *An introduction to sociolinguistics: 5<sup>th</sup> edn.*, Malden, MA, USA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Warren, B. 1992. *What Euphemisms Tell us about the Interpretation of words*. Studia Linguista, Vol. 46(2). Pp. 128-172
- Whitelaw, P. 2001. *Reliability and Validity: The Terrible Twins of Good Research*. MLQ Network Newsletter '360 degree Feedback'.
- Williams, J. & Chesterman, A. 2002. *The map: a beginner's guide to doing research in translation studies*, Northampton, MA, St Jerome Publishing.
- Willis, J., Jost, M. And Nilakanta, R. 2008. *Qualitative research methods in education and educational technology (pb)*. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing Inc. USA.
- Wright, C. 2013. *Literary translation*. Typeset in Sabon, Sunrise Setting Ltd, Paignton UK.
- Zethsen, K, K. 2009. *Intralingual Translation: An Attempt at Description*. Meta: Translators' Journal. Vol. 54. No. 4. Pp. 795-812.
- Zaixi, T, 1997. *Reflections on the science of Translation*. Babel, 43 (4).
- Zikmund, G. & Babin, J. 2009. *Business research methods*. United States: South-Western, Div of Thomson Learning.
- Zohre, O. 2013 *Translation Strategies: A Review and Comparison of Theories*. Vol.17. No. 1. Translation Journal.

## Appendix 1: Interview themes

### **Theme One Quantity vs quality of the translations of the Quran in English**

- 1) There is a proliferation of so many English translations of the Quran on the market today. Is this good or bad?
- 2) Is the process of translating Quranic text different from translating other topics?
- 3) Is there such a thing as a perfect translation of the Quran? Can we speak of a final, 'authorised' translation?
- 4) Many people know that the sacred text of the Quran is beyond dispute but the translation of the Quran is a matter of interpretation, rather than the text. What is your overall view of the existing English translations of the Quran?
- 5) As the Quran is viewed as a unique discourse, does a translation of it diminish its relevance?
- 6) What do you think of the use of old English in the translation of the Quran?
- 7) Are all possible translations of the Quran in English equally reliable, or are some 'better' than others?

### **Theme Two Authority and Belief of the Quran in translation**

- 1) The Quran in Arabic is already regarded by many to be a challenging book to read and understand in Arabic. How can translators make the Quran in translation more accessible and user friendly?
- 2) What are the advantages or disadvantages of translating the Quran in English?
- 3) In your view, which is the most readable of the contemporary translations of the Quran in English?
- 4) Which words, terms or passages in the Quran cannot possibly be translated into English in such a way as to capture their full meaning? How should a translator deal with that?

### Theme Three The challenges of translating figurative meaning in the Quran

- 1) Metaphors and euphemisms are widely used in the Quran and are often mistranslated or rendered literally, without taking into account that language items are unfamiliar in English. To what extent is this true?
- 2) Is euphemism an evident phenomenon in the Holy Quran?
- 3) Euphemisms of the Quran are often lost in translation. What causes the difficulties in translating Quranic euphemism into English?
- 4) In your opinion, are the flaws in these translations due to the translators' incompetence or the complex nature of the Quranic language?
- 5) How would you translate euphemistic words from the Quran which do not have a direct equivalent into English, or any other concepts which are particularly deeply rooted in Islamic culture?
- 6) If translation is a mediation between literal and free, the translators of the Quran are always making choices that emphasise one at the expense of another. In your view which is the better option?
- 7) The translator aims to capture the Quran's exceptional euphemistic expression in English. What approach can be used to achieve euphemistic meanings in the Quran in English?
- 8) What is your overall view of the following translations of euphemistic expressions in the Quran:

أَجَلٌ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمْ  
البقرة آية ١٨٧  
Q:2:187

Abdel Haleem	Al-Hilali&Khan	Ali	Arberry	Pickthall
You [believers] are permitted to <u>lie with your wives</u> during the night of fast.	It is made lawful for you to <u>have sexual relations with your wives</u> on the night of As-Saum (the fast).	Permitted to you, on the night of the fasts, is the <u>approach to your wives.</u>	Permitted to you, upon the night of the Fast, is <u>to go in to your wives;</u>	It is made lawful for you to <u>go unto your wives</u> on the night of the fast.

فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ

البقرة آية ١٩٧

Q2:197

Abdel Haleem	Al-Hilali&Khan	Ali	Arberry	Pickthall
There should be no <u>indecent speech</u> .	Then he should not have sexual relations (with his wife).	Let there be <u>no obscenity</u> .	Shall not <u>go into his womenfolk</u> .	There is to be <u>no lewdness</u> .

إِمْسَاكَ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٍ بِإِحْسَانٍ

البقرة آية ٢٢٩

Q2:229

Abdel Haleem	Al-Hilali&Khan	Ali	Arberry	Pickthall
Wives either <u>be kept on in an acceptable manner or released in a good way</u> .	Either you <u>retain her on reasonable terms or release her with kindness</u> .	The parties should either <u>hold together on equitable terms, or separate with kindness</u> .	Then <u>honourable retention or setting free kindly</u> .	(a woman) must be <u>retained in honor or released in kindness</u> .

وَاعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَكَ الْيَقِينُ

الحجر آية ٩٩

Q15:99

Abdel Haleem	Al-Hilali&Khan	Ali	Arberry	Pickthall
Worship your Lord <u>until what is certain comes to you</u> .	And worship you Lord until <u>there comes to you the certainty (i.e. death)</u> .	And serve thy lord <u>until there come unto thee the hour that is certain</u> .	And serve thy Lord, <u>until the certain comes to thee</u> .	And worship your Lord <u>till the inevitable comes unto you</u> .