

Translating the Qur'an from Arabic into English: A Semantic Examination of Some Lexical Equivalents

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Abstract: The Holy Qur'an was originally revealed and compiled in the Arabic language. It employs many linguistic, stylistic and rhetorical features to convey its intended meanings. The use of those features poses serious challenges to the translators of the Holy Qur'an, who are to naturally be agents of conveying the understanding of its messages. Here, this paper makes a semantic examination of English translations of some lexical items in the Holy Qur'an using, intermittently, Marmaduke Pickthall's (1930) and Yusuf Ali's (1975) translation versions of the Qur'an as references. This study traces the selected lexemes to their etymological origins in order to reveal their original meanings and juxtapose them with the sample translations, so as to understand the possible loss during translations. The paper finds out that there are semantic losses in the selected lexemes during translation and thus suggests, among others, that translators must be mindful of the etymology of the Arabic lexical items and cultural context of the target audience before their equivalents are chosen.

Keywords: Equivalent; Lexeme; Semantics; the Qur'an; Translation

Introduction

The Holy Qur'an is the word of Allah revealed in the Arabic language. It contains devotions and instructions that are composed

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in both literal and figurative styles. Because of the spread of Islam to different parts of the world, the need to understand the religion became necessary; hence, the translation of its divine book, the Qur'an, into various languages of the world. While the language of the Qur'an remains untouched, its words and terms, during translation, seem to lose some meanings they beautifully conveyed in the original Arabic (Abdelwali) to the extent that some Qur'anic/ Islamic terms were sometimes coloured with other erroneous philosophies prevalent in some cultures and they became accepted even to the Arabs. This unfortunate incidence may explain why, how and where the Muslims, non-Muslims and even the Arabic-speaking people lose the actual meaning of the Qur'an.

Even though language plays fundamental role in the practical understanding, expression, presentation, interpretation and furtherance of any set of religious beliefs with particular reference to Islam here, there are no perfect two synonymous words in a language, just as there is no perfect translation of a word or text in two different languages. This paper therefore explores the semantic issues in the translation of some lexical items in the Holy Qur'an from Arabic into English in order to reveal the possible loss or otherwise in the core content of the words. This is because the mutual intelligibility and proper understanding of the religious teachings and injunctions as propounded in the Qur'an is the essence of the near perfect translation of the book from its original language to any other target language.

Translating the Qur'an

i. The Glorious Qur'an

The Glorious Qur'an is the holy book of Islam which was originally revealed by Allah in the Arabic language to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) through angel Gabriel. The term *Qur'an*, which means "recitation", appears several times in the Qur'an itself. It either refers to a fragment of the revelation or the entire collection (Poonawala 2008). Its revelation came in fragments to the Prophet from age 40. He received the revelations in Makka for 13 years and later in Madina for 10 years subsequent to his migration in 622 CE until he died in 632 CE. The fragmentary nature of the revelations makes the Qur'an different from other sacred texts which tell a coherent history or story (Poonawala, 2008).

The Qur'an holds a pride of place at the very centre of Muslim religious life and practice. Muslims usually make efforts to internalise the scripture by memorising it in its entirety and several short chapters are recited daily by a Muslim who observes the five daily prayers. The Qur'an is divided into 114 chapters or *suras*, each of which is further divided into a number of *āyāt* (verses) on many diverse subject-matters. The titles of the chapters were taken from images or events contained in the Chapters and each of them is customarily classified as either Makkan or Madinan, in reference to the two cities in which Muhammad (S.A.W.) lived and reportedly received the revelations. The Qur'anic Arabic is marvellous in its style, eloquence and choice of words. It is today translated into many languages of the world including English.

ii. Translation of the Qur'an

Islam has spread to every part of the globe beyond Arabia and the vast majority of Muslims in the world do not speak Arabic, so the Qur'an in its original language is not accessible to them for understanding. Therefore, the move for the translation of the Qur'an into languages of the new converts began even though there is traditional objection to its translation on the grounds that it is the word of Allah (God) and its contents cannot be copied. However, the advocates of translation argued that the Qur'anic message is universal despite that it was sent to an Arabic speaker. So, this implies an obligation to translate and transmit its message to non-Arabs and hence its translation into other languages, for the express purpose of making the meaning of the text available to all. Its translation began as early as the 9th century AD (Poonawala, 2008). The literary and linguistic characteristics of the Qur'an, such as its choice of lexemes, use of language and dramatic images remain challenging during translation. As a sacred book, the Qur'an has a value beyond that of literature. Moreover, it has also been judged by literary critics of the Arabic language to be artistically unequalled in its beauty.

Translation of the Qur'an has always been an issue of discourse in Islamic theology. Since Muslims revere the Qur'an as miraculous and inimitable, it is argued that the Qur'an should only be recited in the Arabic language and the Arabic text should not be isolated from the translated text. Translations into other languages are considered necessarily to be the work of humans and so the uniquely sacred character of the original Arabic is lost. Ruthven (90) opines that since these translations often subtly change the meaning of the Qur'an, they

are often called “interpretations” or “translations of the meanings” because of the ambiguity between the meanings of the various passages and the multiple possible meanings with which each word used in isolation can be interpreted. Furthermore, the latter connotation amounts to an acknowledgement that the so-called translation is but one possible interpretation and is not the full equivalent of the original. For instance, Pickthall called his translation *The Meaning of The Glorious Koran* rather than simply *The Koran*. This is because an Arabic word, like any word in other languages, may have a range of meanings depending on the context, thereby making an accurate translation even more difficult (Fatani 657–669).

The task of translating Qur’anic passages is not an easy one considering some inherent difficulties in any translation where a single word can have a variety of meanings. There is always an element of human judgment involved in understanding and translating a text. This factor is made more complex by the fact that changes sometimes occur to the usage of words between classical and modern Arabic. As a result, even native speakers who are accustomed to modern vocabulary and usage may not represent the original meaning of a verse in the course of its translation. Sometimes, the original meaning of a Qur’anic passage may depend on the historical circumstances behind its revelation. Investigating such a context will usually require a detailed knowledge of *Ḥadīth* (the reported sayings and practices of the Prophet) and *Sīrah* (the life history of the Prophet), which are themselves vast and complex texts thereby introducing an additional element of uncertainty which cannot be determined by any linguistic rules of translation.

The history of the translation of the Qur’an is as old as Islam. For instance, it has been contended that the first translation effort was performed by Salman the Persian, who translated Sūrat al-Fātiḥah into the Persian language during the early 7th century A.H. (An-Nawawi 380). It is asserted elsewhere that the first fully attested complete translations of the Qur’an were done between the 10th and 12th centuries in Persian language and that as at 1936, translations of the Qur’an into 102 languages had been carried out (Fatani 657-669).

iii. English Translation of the Qur’an

The earliest known direct translation of the Qur’an from Arabic into English was in 1734 by George Sale. Since then, there have been English translations by the clergyman John Medows Rodwell in 1861

and Edward Henry Palmer in 1880 irrespective of theological lacunae in their works. These were followed by Richard Bell's translation in 1937. The first English translation along with the original Arabic text by a Muslim was that of Dr. Mirza Abul Fazl (1865–1956) named *The Qur'an* (1910).

With the increasing population of English-speaking Muslims around the world, three Muslim translations of the Qur'an into English came into being. The first was Muhammad Ali's translation in 1917, which is said to have been done from an Ahmadiyya perspective. This was followed in 1930 by that of an English convert to Islam, Marmaduke Pickthall's translation, which is literal and therefore regarded as the most accurate. Soon afterwards, in 1934, Abdullahi Yusuf Ali published his translation, featuring copious explanatory annotation of over 6000 notes, generally being around 95% of the text on a given page to supplement the main text of the translation. This translation has gone through over 30 editions by several different publishing houses and is one of the popular versions, alongside the Pickthall's and Muhammad Ali's, among English-speaking Muslims.

After the few English translations over the 1950–1980 periods, these three Muslim translations remained flourishing and cemented a reputation which ensured their survival till the 21st century, having been favoured among readers, often in newly revised editions. Following those translations were the orientalist Arthur Arberry's translation in 1955 and native Iraqi Jew N. J. Dawood's unorthodox translation in 1956. There is the effort of a Jewish convert to Islam, Muhammad Asad, whose monumental work, *the Message of the Qur'an* appeared for the first time in 1980, while in 1984, Professor Ahmed Ali debuted *Al-Qur'an: A Contemporary Translation*.

In 1996, the Saudi government financed a new translation "the Hilali-Khan Qur'an" which was distributed gratis worldwide by the Saudi government as it was in line with its particular interpretation. In 2007, Laleh Bakhtiar, an American woman, came out with *The Sublime Qur'an* which was the first translation of the Qur'an by a woman. In 2009, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan translated the Qur'an into English, which was published by Goodword Books entitled, *The Quran: Translation and Commentary with Parallel Arabic Text*. The pocket size version of this translation with only English text is widely distributed as part of *da'wah* (proselytisation work). More English translation versions of the Qur'an, not mentioned here, still abound all over the world for specific purposes.

Semantic Examination of Some Lexical Items

Translating the Holy Qur'an from Arabic into other languages is accompanied by many linguistic problems. This is because no two languages are identical either in the meaning given to the corresponding symbols or in the ways in which such symbols are arranged in phrases and sentences. The major problem encountered by translators of the Qur'an is the difficulty in rendering some lexical items into another language in an attempt to unveil the intended liturgical and theological meanings. Consensus is seldom found among translators on the choice of English lexical equivalents to Arabic words in the Qur'an.

The first verse: "بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ" is differently translated by the scores of scholars of different leanings whose works appear on the Internet site named <http://islamawakened.com/> let alone the whole of the over 6000 noble verses. The words: "الرحمن" and "الرحيم" are severally translated as "gracious"; "merciful"; "compassionate" etc. Let us consider the translations of both Pickthall and Yusuf Ali on the verse as: "In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful" by Pickthall, while Yusuf Ali renders it as: "In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful."

The two words: "الرحمن" and "الرحيم" have their roots from "رحم" *rahīma* meaning "he had mercy"; "have compassion" (Wehr 331). They are both rendered by Wehr (332) as "the merciful" and "compassionate" respectively. However, Lane in his *Lexicon*, informs that the word "رحيم" "has an intensive signification of mercy; or having much mercy" (Lane 224).

Going by this literal translation, one is encouraged to agree with Yusuf Ali's introduction of "most" in order to convey the intensity of God's mercy beyond human comprehension. His further commentary (Ali 19) on the verse explains all the nuances of meaning which *al-rahīm* and even *al-rahmān* liturgically convey to the English audience. Otherwise the superlative degree in English is not enough to adequately denote the intensity of the meanings of the lexemes.

The words "قَوَّامُونَ" and "وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ" which appear in Qur'an 4:34: "الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ... وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ" are examined here. Pickthall translates the verse as: "Men are in charge of women... and scourge them...", while Yusuf Ali renders it as: "Men are the protectors and maintainers of women... (And last) beat them (lightly)...". The two translators render the two words of interest here "*qawwāmūna* and

waḍribūhunna” differently. The respected scholars leave us to compare the phrases “in charge” and “protectors and maintainers” as synonymous in denoting the meaning of “*qawwāmūna*”. What seems sensational is Yusuf Ali’s translation of an Arabic word into two English words by choosing “protectors and maintainers” as equivalent to the Arabic word “*qawwāmūna*”. This might have been guided by the context in which the word occurs and absence of its equivalent in English. Hence, he resorted to interpreting the word with two words “protectors and maintainers”.

The word “قَوَّامُونَ” *qawwāmūna* however is etymologically from the trilateral weak verb “قام” *qāma* which means “he stood still in his place; he stood up, or erect; he rose from sitting” (Lane 249). It is a plural of the superlative word form قوام which means “One who rises up often, in the night to pray (Lane 250). Thus in this context, especially with the introduction of the preposition “على” as against others, it may be better translated as “men are the ones who frequently stand up in support or protection of women”. It may be inferred here that the translations of the two scholars fall short of the religious connotation intended by the verse. Yusuf Ali seems to realize this; hence, his commentary.

To further appreciate the nuances of Qur’anic discourse on the lexical level, let us consider the composition of the words in the sentence “واضربوهن”. It can be traced to the root word “ضرب” translated by Lane as “he beat, struck, smote, or hit him, it signifies the making a thing to fall upon another thing or the making it to fall with violence, or vehemence” (Lane 62). “واضربوهن” is a combination of “و”, a conjunction, “اضربوا”, the imperative plural tense of “ضرب” and “هن”, the 3rd person feminine plural pronoun. So the translation of the phrase “واضربوهن” as “scourge them” by Pickthall and “beat them (lightly)” by Yusuf Ali call for a closer look if we consider the root meanings of the word itself. The present writers are not unaware of the several nuances of meaning which the word “ضرب” denotes in Arabic; Yusuf Ali, in his commentary, claims that the word conveys about 17 meanings in the Qur’an (547).

Pickthall’s translation of the word “scourge them” is in contrast to the introduction of “lightly” by Yusuf Ali in parenthesis which might have been informed by other religious provisions relating to women.

Another verse that attracts the attention of this study is the Qur’an 5: 38: “والسارق والسارقة فاقطعوا أيديهما” translated by Yusuf Ali as: “As to the thief, male or female, cut off his or her hands...”, while Pickthall translates it as: “As for the thief, both male and female, cut off their hands...”.

The partly rendered verse here is one of the reference points for capital punishments in Islamic jurisprudence. The phrase “أَيْدِيهِمَا” is better translated literally in line with Pickthall’s “their hands” while the Yusuf Ali’s translation reminds one of the notion of “interpretation” while considering the context. A better explanation in support of Yusuf Ali’s translation would be in reference to the context, if the first two words of male and female thieves are considered. Yusuf Ali might have considered that any of them would have his or her hands cut off. But the further question is: “is it both hands or one of them?” The phrase is the combination of plural of “يَد” hand and 3rd person dual pronoun “هُمَا”; hence, the translation “their hands”. Neither of the two translations seems to convey the religious connotation intended by the verse.

One of the problems in translating the Holy Qur’an is the lack of or absence of equivalent words to some Qur’anic-Islamic terms. These terms have no direct counterparts in English thereby compelling the translator to convey them in a communicative manner. Some of them are pregnant with specific emotive overtones, which in turn create semantic voids in translation and sometimes lead to misunderstanding of Islam.

For instance, a term like “تَقْوَى” *taqwā*, is given approximate translation in English. It does not seem to convey the full semantic and liturgical scope of the Qur’anic intention of the term (Elimam 40). It is severally translated as righteousness, goodness, avoiding evil, God-consciousness, warding off evil, piety, fearing God, etc. Qur’an 2:2 reads: “ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ” Same is translated by Yusuf Ali as: “This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah”; while Pickthall translates it as: “This is the Scripture whereof there is no doubt, a guidance to those who are pious”.

The word “لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ” is a prepositional phrase consisting of the preposition “لِ” and plural of “مُتَّقٍ”. It is etymologically from the word “وَقِيَ” which means “he was cautious of a thing; guarded, or was on his guard, against it; prepared himself, or was in a state of preparation against it” (Lane 346). While the word “تَقْوَى” *taqwā* signifies fear; caution and particularly reverential or pious of God or guarding of oneself from acts of disobedience (Lane 346).

Considering this verse, the etymology of the word “وَقِيَ” itself may come to focus. The meaning of the word in the Quraish dialect is “walking in security, like someone who strolls through a garden but watches his garment against getting entangled in bushes and thorns”. انقوا “a perfect plural verb” and المتقون “the plural active participle” are

all of the root verb “وقى” which means “to preserve, guard, take good care, safeguard, protect etc. (Wehr 1094).

Going by this, it seems the phrase “للمتقين”, as translated, has lost its full semantic and liturgical scope and thus the verse may capture more liturgical sense if translated as, “This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who wish to guard against offending Allah or those who wish to journey through life in honor and security or those who are conscious of Allah.”

Moreover, the word “الجهاد” as in Qur'an 9:24 “أحبَّ إليكم من الله...” “أحبَّ إليكم من الله...” is translated by Yusuf Ali as “...are dearer to you than Allah, or His Messenger, or the striving in His cause...”

The word “جهاد” is from the root verb “جهد” jahada meaning He strove, laboured, or toiled; exerted himself or his power or efforts or endeavours or ability; employed himself vigorously, diligently (Lane 109). The word “جهاد” therefore properly signifies the using, or exerting one's utmost power, efforts, endeavours, or ability to do something. “Striving” as translation equivalent may not be enough to convey the theological meaning intended. It is however noteworthy to point out here that the word “جهاد” is one of the most controversial, misunderstood and dreaded Islamic terms because of its association with violence.

The word “تيمم” *tayammum* is another Islamic lexical term whose core senses are impenetrable and unexplainable with any single word of translation in English. Liturgically, it is an alternative spiritual wash (ablution) done with sand instead of water under prescribed conditions. It can be described as placing the palms on the sand/earth, passing the palm of each hand at the back of the other, blowing off the dust from them and rubbing them on the face. The Holy Qur'an 4: 43 reads: “...فلم تجدوا ماءً فتيمموا صعيداً”. Yusuf Ali renders it as: “...and ye find no water, then take for yourselves clean sand or earth...”

Going by Catford's opinion about translation in general, that it becomes virtually impossible to achieve equivalence when the lexical substitutes are unavailable in the target language, the translators of this Islamic term “تيمم” and the like may have to resort to explanation or commentary. Even the various translations of the word in the Qur'an 4: 43 & Q5: 6 by Yusuf Ali fall short of conveying the actual sense of *tayammum*; the closest he has done is to refer to it as “sand or earth ablution”.

Qur'anic translators seem to restrict the sense of the lexical words as they transfer them from Arabic into English (Abdelwali). They transfer

Qur'anic words according to their referents in the real world rather than according to the core sense they possess within the language system. For example, the translation of the word "استوى" in Qur'an 20: 5 falls short of its generic sense. It does not particularly refer to going up or ascending as some may want to translate it. The verse: "الرحمن على العرش استوى" translated as: "(Allah) Most Gracious is firmly established on the throne (of authority)" by Yusuf Ali and "the Beneficent One, Who is established on the Throne" by Pickthall do not capture the whole sense intended in the root meaning of the word in Arabic. The word "استوى" etymologically relates to the word سوي *sawiya* "to be equivalent", "equal", (Wehr 444). while "استواء" means equality, regularity, steadiness (Wehr 445). By introducing the preposition "على", it imports the meaning of "steadily having authority over all equally". Thus, the verse may be rendered as "The Most Gracious steadily ascends on His throne as to have everything in the universe equally within his grasp" (Lane 202).

Some Arabic lexemes cannot even be paraphrased. For example, the lexical item "دون" *dūn* which co-occurs with the word "الله" God has the closest approximation given by all Qur'an translators as beside, or instead (Abdelwali). Qur'an 34:22 reads: "قل ادعوا الذين زعمتم من دون الله". It is translated: "Say (O Muhammad): call upon those whom you set up beside God" by Pickthall and "Say: Call upon other (gods) whom ye fancy, besides Allah" by Yusuf Ali.

That translation falls short of the semantic complexity of the word "دون" which literally signifies dignity, might and monotheism, meaning there is nothing "above" God or equal to him. Only an explanatory note as provided by Yusuf Ali (3822) can best convey these aspects of meaning.

Perfection in translation is naturally beyond human capacity, so approximation becomes the prevailing idea in the translational art (Al-Azab and Al-Misned 42). A Qur'anic word may embrace a large number of multidimensional sense-components and to resolve this problem of multiplicity is not easy for translators.

Let's consider the translation of "صريم" in Qur'an 68: 20: "فأصبحت" translated by Pickthall as: "And in the morning it was as if plucked", while Yusuf Ali renders it as: "So the (garden) became, by the morning, like a dark and desolate spot, (whose fruit had been gathered)."

The word "صريم" is from the root verb صرم *ṣaruma* "to be sharp or to be hard (Wehr 514). According to Lane, "صريم means cut through or cut off or severed and having the fruit cut off (Lane 408). Discussing the

same word, Ghoneim (2010) reveals that commentators of the Qur'an differ in their interpretations of the word "صريم" as follows:

- a) pitch dark night (Al-Fara')
- b) black ashes (Ibn Abbass)
- c) the morning when it is stripped from night (Al-Akhfash)
- d) cut-down crop (Al-Thawry and Ibn Quttaiba)

An exegetical point of view is suspected in the various translations of this noble verse. The differences in the interpretation of the word may be as a result of the multifaceted nature of the lexeme. Fatani (661) points out that "the basic problem with the majority of translations is that translators tend to simplify the enormous problems involved in defining the exact referential and denotational meanings of complex words by restricting their range of selection to a narrow domain". This continues to pose a challenge to translators; a literal translation may be a kind of illusion here.

The metaphorical usage of lexical items is a feature of the Qur'anic text. Therefore, translators cannot ignore that in their efforts. Name of an object is sometimes transferred to take the place of something else with which it is associated. This substitution is usually premised on the existence of a close relation between the literal and figurative denotations and an implicit clue indicating that the literal meaning is not intended (Newmark 125). Let's consider the use of "سماء" in Qur'an 6: 6: "وأرسلنا السماء عليهم مدرارا" translated by Pickthall as: "We shed on them abundant showers from the sky" and "For whom we poured out rain from the skies in abundance" by Yusuf Ali.

In this verse, the word "السماء" is used to refer to the intended meaning "rain", which serves as an indication of the heaviness of the rain. If we go literal in the translation of this kind of figurative usage, we will have it as "and we sent the sky on them in abundant". The two translations above do not seem to convey the extent and enormity of the connotation. It's actually neither mere drops of rain nor heavy rain but really a gushing out of rain as if the sky would fall.

Another example here is the figurative use of the word "القرية" *al-qaryah* in the following verse: "واسأل القرية التي كنا فيها" (Qur'an 12: 82) which is translated by Pickthall as: "Ask the township where we were...", While Yusuf Ali's is "Ask at the town where we have been...".

In this verse, the use of town to mean the people of the town could be aimed at conveying a deeper meaning not conveyed by translation.

Yusuf Ali's translation seems to be nearer by the introduction of *at* in his own translation. A claim of deletion or ellipsis of the word (people) here may suffice, but that itself may be for a purpose. The complete sentence can be formed as: "واسأل أهل القرية" "ask the people in the town", but the word people is deleted, as its deletion will not affect or change the meaning of the verse. Literal translation or word-for-word translation may not be applicable here.

Conclusion

After investigating the semantic standard of the chosen lexical equivalents employed by translators of the Qur'an to render its meaning into the English language, it may be inferred that no human being can comprehend and convey appropriately the style, expressiveness and inimitability of the divine words as ALLAH, the Exalted Himself. The claimed Translations of The Holy Qur'an are indeed the translations of the meanings of The Qur'an, as understood and rendered by individual translators to the best of their understandings, ability and possible sectarian or intellectual bias. It can also be said that the Qur'anic discourse has semantic intention which determines the choice of words and their organisation. While the language of the Qur'an remained untouched, its words and terms had lost the deep meanings they convey in the original Arabic to the extent that the Qur'anic/Islamic terms are sometimes dressed up with erroneous connotations which lead to misleading meanings and concepts.

This study contends that semantic loss remains in some lexical items either because of the cultural gap that cannot be bridged easily or language difference. As any translation process requires the translator to be fully aware of the contextual factors that contribute to the overall meaning and impact of the given text. It is expected that translators compensate when an inevitable loss of meaning occurs especially when dealing with religious texts like the Qur'an. The compensation may be either on the linguistic level or in the cultural level. In order to achieve a well comprehensive product of translation, translators should consider their audience and their cultural background so as to establish interaction with the addressees bearing in mind that the audience has less knowledge of the subject than the translator. A translator who has a good knowledge of the Arabic language and competence in the target language can, to some extent, bridge the semantic gap he may encounter while translating the Qur'an. So, translators should always try to be

accurate and choose the appropriate equivalence in order to compensate the loss of meaning and effect that might occur. Yusuf Ali seems to realise this; hence, his commentaries on not only a whole verse but also on lexical items on which he could not find English equivalents.

The following suggestions may suffice if the translators of the Holy Qur'an wish to overcome challenges while struggling to convey the intended meaning of the Qur'an:

1. The semantic decomposition of the lexical items must be attempted first by tracing their etymologies;
2. The translator must depend on a number of dictionaries in both Arabic and English to determine the specific meaning of the words;
3. The translator must also consult various commentaries on the Qur'an to obtain the appropriate interpretation of the Qur'anic verses;
4. The translation of the Holy Qur'an should be conducted by a committee that includes experts in the language, culture, history and science of the Qur'an and Ḥadīth ;
5. Periphrastic or communicative translation approach is advisable.

Lastly, going by the assertion of James Dickens et al (21) that the term "translation loss" is the inevitable loss of textually and culturally relevant features of the source text in the target text, one is quick to suggest that fear of semantic loss in general translation efforts should not be a barrier; rather, efforts should be concentrated on the realistic aim of reducing the loss than the unrealistic search for ultimate perfect target text.

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