

The Impact of Grammatical Shifts on the Quranic Rhetorical Questions Translated into English: A Comparative Study

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Abstract

This comparative study aimed at finding out the types of grammatical shifts which have occurred in two English translations of the Quranic rhetorical questions, and the impact of such shifts on the said rhetorical questions. For these purposes, the study firstly analyzed the Arabic and English texts syntactically using the x-bar theory for Haegeman (2006) and then classified the grammatical shifts according to Catford's (1965) kinds of shifts. The X theory has been applied as a tree diagram and liner structure. Where necessary "al-Gadwal fi i'arab al-Quran"/the Quran grammatical analysis" of Safi published in (1995) has been used. The two English translations used in the study were "the Koran Interpreted" by Arberry (1955) and "the Noble Quran: English translation of the meanings and commentary" (1996) by al-Hilali and Khan. According to the analysis, different types of grammatical shifts, e.g. class, unit, structural and level shifts have occurred in the two translations. Further, another kind of shift has appeared in the two translations. This refers to the syntactic shift where a question has been changed into a statement. With respect to the impact of such shifts on the meanings of the Quranic rhetorical questions, sometimes the entire meaning of the ST rhetorical questions is distorted like in al-Hilali and Khan's translation. In addition, the intended reason of the function is changed like in Arberry's translation. By and large, it can be argued that the shifts committed by Arberry affected the ST rhetorical questions more than those made by al-Hilali and Khan.

Keywords: Grammar, rhetorical question, shifts, syntax, translation, the Quran

Introduction

Translation is the transference of the form and function of the source language to their equivalents in the target language. In translation, the form might sometimes be sacrificed for the sake of meaning of the ST. In fact, translators might sometimes resort to some shifts, e.g. grammatical shifts in order to keep the content of the ST consent in the TT. Shift is a change which translators produce in translation. According to Catford (1965, p. 141), shift is "the change of formal structure of the source language into the target language" But sometimes, the shifts committed by translators affect the meaning of the source text. This is applied to the translation of Quranic rhetorical questions into English. Rhetorical questions are those question which are used for purposes other than seeking information. Ilie (1994, p. 130) stated that rhetorical questions are "heard as questions and understood as statements." In Arabic, the rhetorical question is "*al-Istifham al-balaghi*" which means the question that deviates its meaning and gives

another one. Rhetorical questions are used to donate some functions, e.g. exclamation, negation, assert and others. Arab scholars have taken rhetorical questions into account due to their heavily occurrence in the Holy Quran. Likewise, scholars in other languages also noted the important role of rhetorical questions. According to Siemund (2001, p.1015), “arguably, rhetorical questions can be found in all languages of the world, and they also appear to be functioning in a comparable manner.” Hackstein (2004) considered rhetorical questions to be across-linguistic phenomenon in both written and oral discourse.

In *ilmu alma'ani* (semantics), speech in Arabic is divided into (*al-Insha*) /non-declarative/ and (*al-Khabar*) /declarative/. The declarative, according to al-Zawba'i (1997), is the false or true utterance while the non-declarative is the utterance which is neither true nor false. The non-declarative or “*al-Insha*” has then been divided into two main parts that are “request”/ *Talabi*/ and “non-request”/ *Gayr Talabi*/. The request is based on request and non-request while the non-request is not based on request. Furthermore, the part of non-declarative request has been divided into order, vocative, prohibition, wish and interrogation. Interrogation is then divided into real and rhetorical questions. In this context, Ibn Fares (1997) mentioned that interrogation is of two kinds, one is real i.e. asking for information and, the second is rhetorical i.e. used to give a certain function.

Literature Review

Generally, rhetorical questions are non-seeking information questions. Larson (1984) mentions that “the label, rhetorical questions, has often been used to indicate interrogative grammatical forms which are used with a non-question meaning”. Further, Larson states that the speaker makes use of a grammatical form which its basic use indicates that it's a question, but the speaker's purpose is not seeking information. Rather, he/she might want to command, request, emphasize and etc. Larson (1984, p.257) concludes that when such a grammatical skewing occurs, the form, the question form, is called a rhetorical question. In the same context, Abioye (2011, p.291) writes that a rhetorical question is a kind of figure of speech that comes in the form of a question used for its persuasive effect and no answer is expected.

Rhetorical questions were discussed by Arab grammarians when they tried to clarify and explain the different faces and uses of interrogation in Arabic. Briefly, an interrogative is the grammatical classification of a sentence type that is used for the sake of getting an answer. Thus, grammatically, questions are usually referred to as interrogatives in form. With regard to this, the Arabic word for interrogation is “*al-Istifham*”. Etymologically speaking, the word “*al-Istifham* /interrogation” is not only a verbal noun that is derived from the verb “*Istafhama*/ interrogated”, which means “asking for understanding” (Bofama, 2014), but is also related to the noun “*al-Fihim* /understanding/ that denotes “understanding things by heart” (al-Fayroz Abadi, 2001). For this reason, Arab grammarians defined interrogation as interrogating the listener of things that the interrogator does not know.

The grammarians noticed the deviation of the Arabic question, whether in the form of yes/no question or wh/ question, from its original meaning, where it gave rise to another meaning. In this context, al-Mubarak (1997, p. 277) stated that “the question in Arabic is not always real; sometimes you might notice that it carries a rhetorical purpose”. Likewise, Sibawayh acknowledged that the Arabic question might sometime skew its normal meaning and give another one. To explain this, he talked about the rebuke function (1998, p.52).

Furthermore, al-Fara'a (1983) mentioned that Arabic questions are sometimes rhetorically used to give certain functions such as testing, glorification, exclamation and rebuke. He remarked that sometimes the question particle “*هل*” (*hal*) leads to have a rhetorical question. This

is in contrast with Sibawayh who had claimed that “هل” (*hal*) is only used for real questions. But other grammarians confirmed that “هل” (*hal*) can be rhetorically used. They stated that it sometimes means “verily or certainly”.

In the same way as Arab grammarians, Arab rhetoricians paid great attention to rhetorical questions. In fact, the rhetoricians adopted some of the progress made by the grammarians. Generally, the rhetoricians defined the question as asking to get information from the hearer. However, they also noticed that it is not always used for this purpose. In relation to this, Sa'ad al-Deen al-Taftazani was the first rhetorician who noticed the deviation of Arabic questions, from their original meanings, where they gave rise to other meanings. He said that “these questions are sometimes used with non-interrogative purposes” (Aida, 2012, p.62). By the same way, al-Subbki (1992) in his book “*A'ros al-afrah*” stated that interrogation is a kind of request which might not be used for this purpose.

Thus, the rhetoricians such as al-Gurgani considered the question in Arabic to be real and also rhetorical to serve some meanings. These rhetorical meanings or functions are not arbitrarily generated. However, there are some factors which form the basis for them. The context of the question, the speaker's intention, the relationship between the speaker and the hearer and also the structure of the question can be good indicators to show such functions (al-Balakhi, 2007, p.54).

Arab scholars have mentioned lots of functions for RQs. The functions of rhetorical questions are varied from a scholar to other. Some considered 4 functions for rhetorical questions like Ibn Khalawiyh (1996, p.326) which are order, rebuke, equalization and affirmation. Foda (1953) provides different functions for such questions. He divides the functions into primary ones which are eleven and secondary ones which are fourteen. As he suggests, the differences between the primary and the secondary functions are due to some elements in the context as the speaker, the addressee, and addressee's state.

Functions of Rhetorical Questions in Arabic

As mentioned, there are different functions denoted by rhetorical questions in Arabic. The current study focuses on the following functions.

Exclamation. al-Balakhi (2007) stated that exclamation is related to the emotions of Man due to something new or not known. al-Bderat and al-Bataynah (2015, p.29) mentioned that the linguistic meaning of exclamation is connected with “العجب والتعجب” */alugab and alagab/* which mean denying what one sees or told as he/she is not accustomed to.

Denial. Denying means the refusal of admitting or acknowledging something that had actually happened. According to al-Balakhi (2007:101), denial is a means that is used by a speaker for creating awareness in the listener and the realisation that he/she had committed a mistake, lied or on the pretext of performing a task. Denial is of two kinds that are:

Denial that indicates rebuke. To rebuke someone about a thing happened in the past. In other words, the thing which happened must not had happened. Further, this kind of denial is also used to rebuke someone because of something that happens at the current moment, or expected to be in future (al-Balakhi, 2007, p.103).

Denial that indicates refutation. It involves refuting what is not the truth and legitimate. As mentioned by Abbas (1997, p.194), this kind of denial is used to refute false opinions, thoughts or sayings from both the past and present.

Assertion. To force the listener to confess on things that he/she has knowledge of (al-Ameri, et al. 2012, p. 86 & Sagir 2015). Thus, assertion comes to make the hearer confess on something by way of asking and this is more emphatic (Abbas, 1997, p.190). Moreover, it also comes to affirm and recognize what the speaker wants.

Wish. Sagir (2015, p. 294) states that wishing is a desire to get or have something which seems or seemed difficult to have. Thus, wishing is related to the state of the speaker who tries to get something which seems difficult or impossible to gain.

Showing Abundance. to show a number or plenty of things. Linguistically, the word “التكثير” (*al-takthir*) comes from the verb “كَثَّرَ” (*kathara*) which means “جعله كثيراً”, made it too many. Sagir (2015, p.293) says that the event occurs more than once.

Thus, the syntactic structure of the rhetorical and the seeking-information question is the same; however, their functions are different. Hence, translators must be careful in the process of translation. They must, therefore, understand whether the question they translate is real or rhetorical. This study tries to find out the types of grammatical shifts which have occurred in the Quranic rhetorical questions’ translation into English and what implication such shifts have on the said rhetorical questions’ functions.

Research Questions

To achieve the aims of the present study, the following two research questions were addressed:

Q1: what are the types of grammatical shifts which have occurred in the two English translations of the Quranic rhetorical Questions?

Q1: What impact do these shifts have on the functions of the translated rhetorical questions?

Methodology

X- Bar Theory

The X theory which works to constitute a possible phrase in a natural language. In a nutshell, the X theory is a theory of phrase structure which concerns the hierarchical and left-to-right relationship between syntactic categories (Culicover 1997). According to Haegeman (2006) the concept of substitution is the core principle which this theory is based upon. According to this concept, every sentence consists of strings of constituents that can be replaced by a pronoun. These constituents have core heads that name the syntactic category of the sentence. So, the head controls its categories, thus, we have different categories like NP, VP, AP, PP etc. Moreover, Haegeman (2006) talks about the state of finite auxiliary and labels it as a head in (X). As a result, the VP is treated as a complement of the finite auxiliary and the subject is placed under the specifier category. See the following diagram:

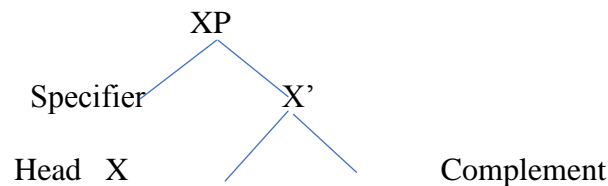


Figure 1. Haegeman (2006)

By this way, merging verbs’ tenses and verb phrases is somehow possible. The following diagram (2) shows also that the auxiliary can be inflected for a tense.

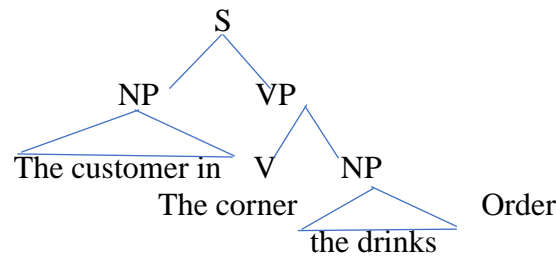


Figure 2. Haegeman (2006)

In addition, Haegeman also talks about the IP and mentions that the IP head position can take either inflected auxiliary or just inflectional ending of the verb as is shown in the following representation:

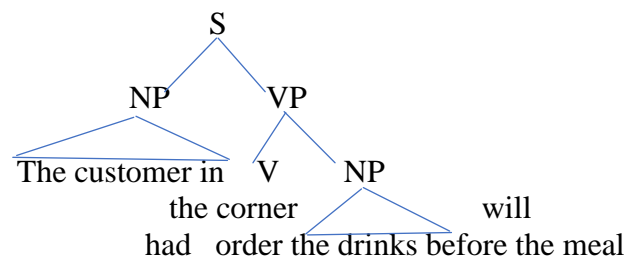


Figure 3. Haegeman (2006)

The diagram above explains that (I) is combined with the VP to have I' that is labelled as (intermediate projection). Further, the I' will be combined with the subject to form the (Inflectional Projection) abbreviated as IP; it is the phrase that is headed by an inflection. The sentence according to Haegeman is centered around the I. Thus, (I) seen to work as a linker that connects the VP with the subject. This (I) is moved from its place to form a question. In other words, the subject-verb inversion takes place where the I which is the verb, the auxiliary, moves to C, complementizer. This (C) merges with the IP to form the C'. Haegeman (2006, p. 313) explains this as:

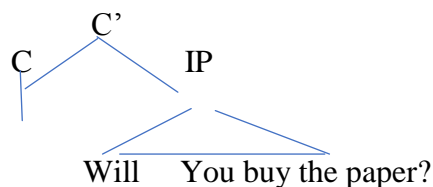


Figure 4. Haegeman (2006)

This C' (c-bar) needs a specifier to have the CP, complementizer phrase. In case of yes/no questions, the specifier is usually empty. In the WH-questions, the specifier is the wh-word which specifies the focus or the scope of the question. Thus, if we complete the above example using a Wh-word i.e. when, we will have the following form:

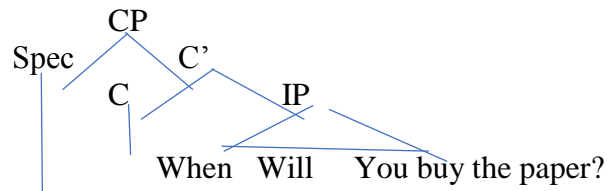


Figure 5. *wh-question tree diagram*

This theory is merely adopted here to find out the grammatical shifts that occur in the two English translations.

Catford's (1965) Translation Shifts

Catford talked about formal and textual equivalence. According to him, formal equivalence means any TL category (unit, class, structure, etc.) which can be said to occupy, as nearly as possible, the 'same' place in the 'economy' of the TL as the given SL category occupies in the SL" (1965 p. 27). In the case the formal equivalence is not achieved, the textual equivalence is required which is achieved through "shifts". Catford (1965) sees textual equivalence as textual items with "a greater overlap of situational range" stating that situations are not the same across cultures. To put this in in more contemporary systemic functional terms, Shore (2001) mentions that texts or parts of texts are equivalent if they function the same in the SL and the TL. Thus, textual equivalence is defined as "any TL text or portion of text which is observed on a particular occasion, to be the equivalent of a given SL text or portion of text" (1965, p.159). Catford (1965) put two kinds of shift that might occur in the process of translation. The two kinds are:

Level shift. this shift indicates that the grammatical item in the SL is shifted into a lexical one in the TL.

Category shift. *it consists of:*

structural shift. structural shift can be found at "all levels of language and it occurs because the ST structure is different from that of TT".

class shift. one part of speech is changed into another; i.e. a verb to a noun.

unit shift. "such a shift occurs when the TL translation equivalence has a different rank compared to the SL". "Rank here refers to the hierarchical linguistic units of sentence, clause, group, word, and morpheme."

Intra-system shift. "This shift occurs when the SL and TL "possess approximately corresponding systems" but where "the translation involves selection of a non-corresponding term in the TL system".

Data Type and Collection

Our data consist of Quranic rhetorical questions that give assertion, denial, exclamation, showing abundance and wish functions. They have been randomly collected from the Quran. They have been supplied with two English translations which are "the Koran Interpreted" by Arberry (1955) and "the Noble Quran: English translation of the meanings and commentary" (1996) by Hilali and Khan.

Procedures

The data were syntactically analyzed by adopting the X-bar theory of Hageman (2006). It

is important to find out the structural differences between the Quranic rhetorical questions and their English translations. Such structural differences lead to have grammatical shifts which will be classified according to Catford (1965). Where necessary “al-Gadwal fi i’arab al-Quran”/the Quran grammatical analysis” of Safi published in (1995) will be used.

Results

Syntactic Analysis and Grammatical Shifts due to Wish Function

ST and TT1

ST: هَلْ نَحْنُ مُنْظَرُونَ؟

Trans: hal nahnu munzaruna?

[CP [C hal] [NP [N nahnu [N munzaruna?]]]]

TT1 :Can we be respited?

[CP [C can] [IP [N we [V be [V respited?]]]]]

Clear differences are located between the ST and TT1. The question particle “هل” (*hal*) functions as a D in the ST. It is transposed to the auxiliary “can”. Definitely, the translators made a class shift. The subject pronoun “نَحْنُ” *nahnu/* is saved as a subject pronoun “we.” In the ST, “مُنْظَرُونَ” */munzaruna/* is a nominative masculine plural passive participle. In translation, as it looks, it is changed into the VP “be respited”. Thus, a unit shift is applied. With respect to the meaning, the changes made by the translators leads to distort the wish function of the ST totally. The ST question particle “هل” (*hal*) is used to wish (Ibn Ashur, 1984) while auxiliary verb “can” leads to have a real question.

ST and TT2

ST: هَلْ نَحْنُ مُنْظَرُونَ؟

Trans: hal nahnu munzaruna?

[CP [C hal] [NP [N nahnu [N munzaruna?]]]]

TT2 :Shall we be respited?

[CP [C shall] [IP [N we [V be [V respited?]]]]]

As we noted, the question particle “هل” (*hal*) functions as a D. It is changed in translation into the auxiliary “shall.” In this case, the translator presented a class shift. As for the subject pronoun/ “نَحْنُ” *nahnu/*, it is saved as a subject pronoun “we.” */مُنْظَرُونَ* (*munzaruna*) / is a nominative masculine plural passive participle. In translation, it is changed into the VP “be respited.” Thus, a unit shift is applied. As for the meaning, although the question particle “هل” (*hal*) functions is changed into the auxiliary “shall”, however, its function, i.e. showing function is maintained. But the change of the N */مُنْظَرُونَ* (*munzaruna*)/ into the VP “be respited” distorts its meaning. The N */مُنْظَرُونَ* (*munzaruna*)/ is the long time the speakers wished to have (Ibn Ashur, 1984). This long time is made a short one when the VP “be respited”.

Syntactic Analysis and Grammatical Shifts due to Exclamation

ST and TT1

ST: مالِهَذَا الرَّسُولِ يَأْكُلُ الطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشِي فِي الْأَسْوَاقِ؟

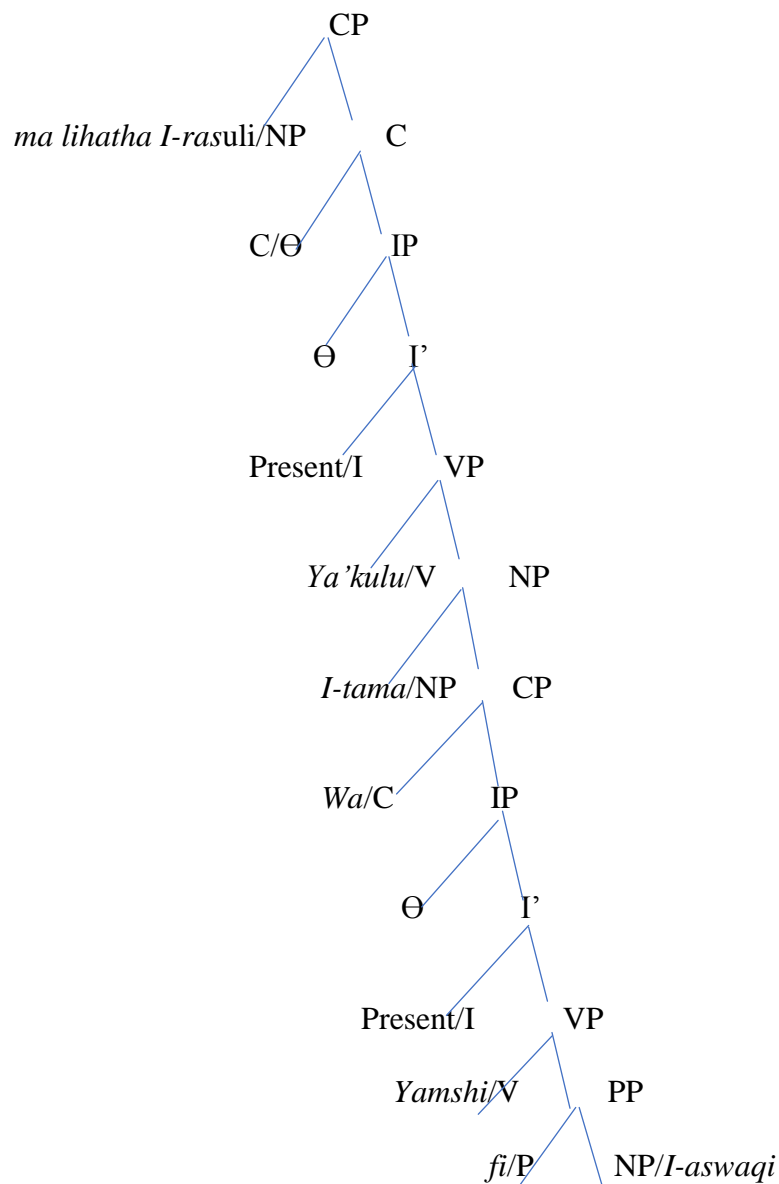
Trans: *ma lihatha I-rasuli Ya kulu I-tama wa yamshi fi I-aswaqi?*

(*yamshi*) /walk/ is seen rendered into the phrasal verb “walk about” in the TT1. As a result, a unit shift has been made by the translators. The prepositional phrase “*في الأسواق* (*fi I-aswaqi*)” saved its grammatical category as a prepositional phrase “in the markets.” With respect to the meaning sustenance, the change of the question noun “*ما* (*ma*) /what/ which shows exclamation (al-Zamakhshri, 2009) into the question adverb “why” is a problem. It is true that both question tools can affect an exclamatory function. However, the exact reason for the exclamation differs. The TT1 “why” leads the reader or hearer to conclude that the speakers wonder why the messenger eats food and walks like them in the markets. However, the ST is about the surprise of the speakers that the one who calls himself a Prophet, Prophet Muhammad, walks and eats like human beings

ST and TT2

ST: *مالهذأ الرسول يأكل الطعم ويمشي في الأسواق؟*

Trans: *ma lihatha I-rasuli Ya kulu I-tama wa yamshi fi I-aswaqi?*



learned men”. The adjective “كثيرون” (*kathirun*) has also been shifted in translation into the adjective phrase “large bands of”. Then, two unit shifts have been applied. Note, the ST is a question while the TT1 is a statement. Thus, a syntactic shift is recorded. Although some changes on the grammatical level have occurred, but the meaning of the ST is sustained in the TT1.

ST and TT2

ST : وَكَأَيِّن مِّن نَّبِيِّ قَاتَلَ مَعَهُ رَبِّيُونَ كَثِيرٌ ؟

Trans: wa kaayyin min nabiyyin qatala ma’ahu ribyyuna kathirun ?

[Co-or wa [CP [Adv.P kaayyin min nabiyyin [IP [I’ [V qatala [PP ma’ahu [NP ribyyuna kathirun?]]]]]]]]

TT2 :Many a Prophet there has been, with whom thousands manifold have fought.

[IP [Adj. P many a Prophet [Adv. there [I’ has [V been [PP with whom [IP [Adj.P thousands manifold [I have [V fought]]]]]]]]]]

Contrary to the TT1, the TT2 deletes the coordinator “وَ” (*wa*) in his translation. Further, the ST “كَأَيِّن مِّن نَّبِيِّ” (*kaayyin min nabiyyin*) /how many prophets/ is a question phrase consisting of the lexical item “كَأَيِّن” (*kaayyin*) /how many/ and the PP “مِّن نَّبِيِّ” (*min nabiyyin*) /prophets/. The lexical item “كَأَيِّن” (*kaayyin*) /how many/ is a compound one that is composed of the interrogative adverb “أَيُّ” (*ayy*) to which the “كَ” (*ka*) is prefixed and the emphatic “ن” (*n*) is affixed. In translation, it is transposed into the noun phrase “many a prophet”. Then, a class shift is performed. The simple past verb “قَاتَلَ” (*qatala*) /fought/ is transposed into the VP “have fought” in TT2 which makes a unit shift. Further, it got a structural shift since it is changed from its order in the ST. Moreover, the PP “مَعَهُ” (*ma’ahu*) /with him/ is also preserved in translation as “with whom”. The ST “رَبِّيُونَ” (*ribyyuna*) is a noun which has been rendered into the adjective “manifold”. The adjective “كثيرون” (*kathirun*) has also been shifted in translation into the adjective “thousands”. Then, two class shifts have been applied. In the same way as TT1, the RQ in TT2 has been changed from a question into a statement. Thus, a syntactic shift is recorded. In translation, the change of the noun “رَبِّيُونَ” (*ribyyuna*) into the adjective “manifold” is a problem, although the function of the ST, i.e. showing abundance is sustained. In fact, the ST “رَبِّيُونَ” (*ribyyuna*) talks about the people of God or the religious ones. On the other hand, the adjective “manifold” implies religious and non-religious ones.

Syntactic Analysis and Grammatical Shifts due to Assertion

ST and TT1

ST : أَوْلَمْ نَنْهَكَ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ ؟

Trans: a wa lam nanhaka ani I-alamina?

[CP [C a] [Conj wa [IP [Adv. lam [VP nanhaka [PP ani I-alamina?]]]]]]

TT1 :Did we not forbid you from entertaining (or protecting) any of the Alamin (people, foreigners and strangers from us)?

[CP [C did] [IP [NP we [Adv. not [VP forbid you [PP from entertaining (or protecting) any of the Alamin?]]]]]]

In translating the current RQ, significant grammatical shifts can be detected. In this respect, the question particle “أ” (*a/hamza*) which functions as a D is transposed into the past auxiliary verb “did.” Then, a class shift is applied. Talking about the conjunction “وَ” (*wa*) /and/,

it is deleted in translation. The negative particle ”لم“ (*lam*) which functions as a D is obligatory changed to the adverb “not” which also leads to a class shift. With respect to the VP ”تَنْهَكَ“ (*nanhaka*), it consists of the simple past verb ”تَنَّهُ“ (*nanha*) /forbid/ and the object pronoun ”كَ“ (*ka*) /you/. On the part of translation, it is saved as a VP “forbid you” but with a level shift since the past verb is changed into present. Clearly, the PP ”عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ“ (*ani I-alamin*) /human beings/ in the ST is changed into the DP “any of the Alamin” in the TT1. Therefore, a class shift is performed by the translators. As for the meaning maintenance, the shifts made by the translators have not posed any problem in this case.

ST and TT2

ST: أَوَلَمْ تَنْهَكَ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ؟

Trans: a wa lam nanhaka ani I-alamin?

[CP [C a] [Conj wa [IP [Adv. lam [VP nanhaka [PP ani I-alamin?]]]]]]

TT2 :Have we not forbidden thee all beings?

[CP [C have] [IP [NP we [Adv. not [VP forbidden thee [NP all beings?]]]]]]

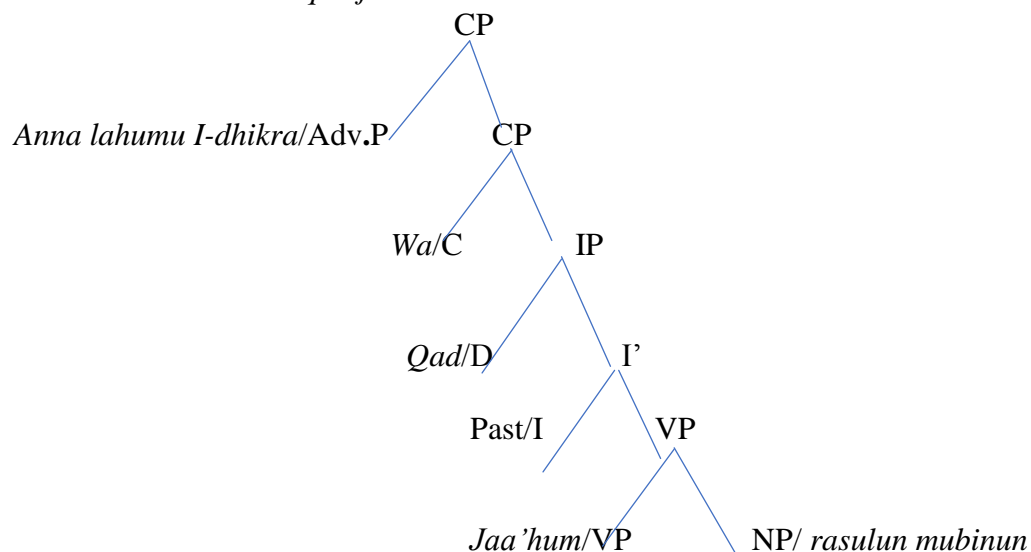
As observed, the question particle ”أ“ (*a/hamza*) which functions as a D is changed in translation into the V “have.” This therefore makes a class shift. Similar to the TT1, the conjunction ”و“ (*wa*) /and/ in the ST is deleted in the TT2. The negative particle ”لم“ (*lam*) which functions as a D is transposed into the negative aspect “not” being an adverb. That is, a class shift is made by the translator. A major difference is noted between the VP ”تَنْهَكَ“ (*nanhaka*) and that of TT2. The VP ”تَنْهَكَ“ (*nanhaka*) is composed of the simple past verb ”تَنَّهُ“ (*nanha*) /forbid/ and the object pronoun ”كَ“ (*ka*) /you/. In the process of translation, the translator changed it into a different tense. It is rendered into “forbidden thee” which is present perfect. Therefore, a level shift is made. The PP ”عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ“ (*ani I-alamin*) is changed into the NP “all beings.” Then, a class shift is located. This change of the ST PP ”عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ“ (*ani I-alamin*) /human beings/ into the NP “all beings” to distort its meaning entirely. The ST ”عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ“ (*ani I-alamin*) talks about human beings (Ibn Ashur, 1984) and not other beings, i.e. as understood by the NP “all beings.”

Syntactic Analysis and Grammatical Shifts due to Denial

ST and TT1

ST: أَنَّى لَهُمُ الذِّكْرَى وَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مُبِينٌ؟

Trans :anna lahumu I-dhikra wa qad jaahum rasulun mubinun?



translation shifts. The researcher found some kinds of tense shift in the three translations, where some differences are seen between the three translations. The study revealed that Shakir performed these shifts more than Ali and Pickthall. The shifts occurred were “from past to present, from present to past, from past to future forms, and from present to future forms.”

With respect to question two of the study, the impact of grammatical shifts on the translated rhetorical questions is of concern. Under this situation, it should be said that both translators have employed grammatical shifts for the sake of meaning. Yet, shifts do not always work as translators hope. Thus, it is noted that the shifts made by the translators resulted sometimes in distorting the entire meaning of the ST rhetorical questions like in al-Hilali and Khan’s translation. In addition to that, the shifts made by the translators changed the intended reason of the function like in Arberry’s translation. By and large, between the two translators, it can be argued that the shifts committed by Arberry have affected the ST rhetorical questions more than those made by al-Hilali and Khan.

The study of Mohammadpour and Nikoopour (2017) provided some interesting results. The researchers focused on the issue of Topicalization when translated from the Quran into English. They compared between three English translations by Arberry, Shakir and Nikayin using Catford’s (1965) shifts. The results revealed that the translators favored Category shift over level shift. Thus, this has a relation with what is mentioned above the near grammatical shifts produced by Arberry and al-Hilali and Khan. Yet, in the case of meaning influence, Mohammadpour and Nikoopour (2017) concluded that the translators did (un)intentionally preserve the Quranic topicalization.

Farghal and Bloushi (2012) studied the coherence shifts which occurred when translating the Quran into English, where they focused on reader-focused and text-focused coherence shifts to find out the impact of such shifts on the Quranic discourse. As mentioned, the coherence shifts formed a problem in Quran translation.

Furthermore, in translation of a bilingual history (Indonesian-English) text, Sipayung (2018) concluded that shifts showed clear impact on the meaning of the source text, where unite and structural shifts showed great impact.

Conclusion

In accordance with what is presented in relation to the translation of Quranic rhetorical questions into English, translators in general and religious translators in particular need to take the text in hand very seriously. Thus, translators of the Quran need to consider some interpretations before they translate. Further, they may consider Arabic grammar as well. This will help them understand the text and its structure.

The results of the study prove that translators do use translation shifts or changes in the process of translation. Thus, as we mentioned above, most of Catford’s translation shifts are reported and located in the two English translations of Quranic rhetorical questions. However, as the results reveal, the shifts made by the translators are mostly against the source text since the entire meaning of the source text’s data has been distorted or changed.

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