Translating Proper Nouns in the Holy Quran into English: An Analytical Study

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Abstract

Translators often encounter many challenges in their task. Accurate translation of proper nouns from one language to another is one of the main challenges. The current study tries to shed the light on translating Arabic proper nouns into English. It is a kind of religious text translation, for all the procedures of translation are in general and translation of the Holy Quran in specific. The study consists of two parts. The first is the theoretical background concerning the nature of translation, difficulties, and strategies to solve them. The second part is the practical one which analyzes translated samples of Arabic proper nouns mentioned in the Holy Quran by four translators. The study ends with some conclusions.

Key words: Arabic, proper noun, translation.

1. Theoretical Perspective
1.1. Introduction

Historically the term translator arises from the Latin verb 'transfero', 'trandfer', 'translatum', which involves in the term transla-tare, translater in the Roman languages of the Middle Ages (hence the later English translate). Since decades the notion of translation still remains a matter of great controversy in the scientific community. Despite all discussions and investigations, there is no general definition of translation that is accepted by all or most researchers and scholars. This actually does not mean that linguists should stop their search, on the contrary, this should be a stimuli to encourage them for establishing common ground for the process of translation.

Indeed this process requires special skills, linguistic knowledge, cultural background, etc., this is simply because translation is not a mere a process of transferring things from one case into another. In other words, it is not an automatic process that can be performed by any person just because he speaks two or more languages. It is a creative process that demands experience, patience, exercises, and so on. These requirements are significant for in many cases the author who has written or the person who has said a saying may not have been entirely clear in what he has done. Thus, it is then the translator's task to endeavor to understand what others have wished to write or say and then express that clearly in the target language. Thus, the gradual working in this field is very important. In other words, the start should be with simple texts and short utterances as well as consulting the specialized in this concern. The use of he/ him/his in this paper is purely a practical consideration and does not imply any gender discrimination on the researcher's part.

To some people and families translation was and still considered as an craft for their living. Indeed, it is one of the oldest occupation or practices. Thus, there is no escape from cultural loads that represent certain ethnic, linguistic, and political groups which across violently or otherwise into other ethnic, linguistic or political groups.

In spite of the long history of translation, study of this field developed into an academic discipline only in the second half of the twentieth century. From that date upwards, a lot of researches, articles, investigations, and books have been written by linguists of different linguistic schools. All these were working hard to achieve an adequate translation theory that can be accepted and applied to various texts. The clear cut line between literary and non-literary texts is always there. Almost always all translators satisfied with this rough division.

Generally, the process of translation between two different written languages involves the translator changing an original written text (source text) into the original verbal language

(source language) into a written text (target text) in a different verbal language (target language).

1.2. Definition

Many consider translation as an art, craft, and occupation rather than a science due to the view that defining this term tends to be subjective and not objective. Linguists who define translation are affected by some linguistic, cultural, and ethnic factors. Generally translation, oral or written, often categorized by two dual extreme ends by using terms such as literal or idiomatic, formal or dynamic, etc., so, for example, literal (word-for word) translation seeks to follow closely the lexical and grammatical items of the source text, whereas idiomatic (sense-for-sense) translation seek to express the meaning of the source text in the most natural and communicative way in the target language.

Since this section is devoted to study translation theoretically, it would be helpful to have a look at some famous linguists' definitions to enrich the study. One of the earliest attempt at translation theory can be traced back over 2000 years to Cicero and Horace whether a translator should be faithful to the original text by adopting a 'literal' (word-for-word) approach, or whether a 'free' (sense-for -sense) approach should be taken. It seems, in fact, that this principle was the cornerstone that most translators who came later try to build their views upon. Nevertheless, some translator tried to have a neutral stand, claiming that many factors are guiding the translator to follow which approach, and the text type is the most important factor.

Examining some modern translators' definitions as Jacobson's (2000: 16) view seems to be a good start. In his famous article "On Linguistic Aspects of translation". Translation is classified into three categories:

1. Intralingual translation or rewording which is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language. For Jacobson, there should be a message that have to be decoded. Depending on Saussure's idea of the arbitrariness of the signifier (name) for the signified (object or concept), Jacobson claims that meaning is understood only when the signs are transferred into other –may be simplified- signs. Dialects and personal accents, for example, can play a role in understanding a message even within the same linguistic community.

2. Interlingual translation is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of sings of other language. Jacobson here, agrees most others who adopt the traditional concept of translation by shifting the meaning from one language to another. Two linguistic pillars are required in this process; meaning and equivalence.

3. Intersemiotic translation or transmutation, that is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of non-verbal sign system. In this process, a written text is transferred into other form as an art, dance, music, etc. since this is not our concern in this study, we are not going to search for its details.

Douglas Robinson sees that the entire process of translation is by achieving equivalence. In other words, the target text must match the source text as full as possible. It seems that Robison is aware of impossibility of a complete translation when he mentions 'as possible'. This is simply because it is not a matter of finding equivalent linguistic terms, but it involves other cultural, textual and situational aspects.

Another linguist, A. Lilova (1985:66) thinks that three important elements should be taken in consideration through the translation activity. To him translation is " a specific oral or written activity aimed at the recreation of oral or written text (utterance) existing in one language into a text in another language, accompanied by the invariance of content, qualities of the original and author's authenticity. Lilova in his definition does not differentiate between the oral and the written translation. Simply, he does not care about the time

permitted to the translator in both types of translation. Emphasizing that translation as an activity implies the translator's influential role in this process. In other words, he tends to the subjectivity from the translator's side.

Catford (1965: 112) hints that there is always an equivalent for any linguistic expression in one language in another language. His definition that translation is the replacement of textual material in one language by equivalent textual material in another language emphasizes the concept of equivalence and meaning in two or more languages.

Solodub (2005:78) agrees Lilova that translation is an activity when he defines translation as "a creative intellectual activity, denoting the transmitting of information from a source language into a target language." He also implicitly emphasizes the translator's skills required in this process. This can be read from the word ' intellectual'. To Solodub the text content 'information' should be the main aim that translators should convey.

Fedorov's (2002:90) definition has a little vagueness though he uses items of definiteness as 'precisely' and 'completely'. Fedorov uses 'things' referring to the text content and text linguistic expressions. Thus, to him, to translate means to precisely and completely express by means of one language the things that had been expressed earlier by the means of another language. It seems that Fedorov wants to stand in between the ' word-for-word' and ' sense-for-sense' translation concepts.

1.3. Types of Translation

Though the primary goal of the translation process is to transfer the meaning of a text or an utterance from one language into another language translators sometimes follow various approaches to achieve this goal. They also have their own classification. Moreover, different terminologies are adopted for this purpose in spite of the shared similarities in their task. It is worth mentioning that language, like every living creature in the world, undergoes change development sometimes to its detriment, unfortunately. This can easily e noticed in the dialects and slangs. As a result, the good translator should aware of these changes in both the source language and the target one. According to Pym (1989:22) translation is essential to the "living on "of text and without translation and its close kin, interpretation the original will die.

Vinay and Darbelnet (1958:51) in their comparison between two languages identify two translation approaches: literal and free. The former means either to translate word-for-word or to borrow some words from the target language. In the latter (free), they follow four strategies. First is the transposition. Here is to interchange parts of speech that do not influence the meaning. For example, changing a verb phrase into a noun phrase. Second is modulation, that is the reversal of point of view, for example, ' he is brave' into ' he is not coward'. Third is equivalence, where the same meaning is conveyed by a different expression. This can be very effective in translating figurative language such as idiomatic expressions and proverbs. Fourth is adaptation, where the cultural references may need to be altered to become relevant.

Catford's (1965:29) systematic approach of translation considers the relationship between textual equivalence and formal correspondence. To him, textual equivalence is where the target text is equivalent to the source text, while formal correspondence is where the target text is as close as possible to the source text.

House (1997:88) distinguishes between overt and covert translation. To her, an overt translation is the one that clearly centres on the source language, in no way trying to adopt the socio-cultural function to suit the target audience. A covert translation is one in which the target text is perceived to be an original source text in the target culture.

Nida and Taber (1982:50) set two types of translation. First is formal equivalence or formal correspondence where the emphasis is on the message itself, in both form and content. They try hard to represent the closest equivalent of the source language words or

phrases. They confess that there is not always formal equivalents between languages. Accordingly, they suggest certain techniques to overcome this difficulty. Second is dynamic equivalence which is based on ' the principle of equivalent effect'. In more detail, dynamic equivalence can be defined as a translation principle according to which a translator seeks to translate the meaning on the original in such a way that the target language wording will trigger the same impact on the target language audience as the original wording did upon the source language audience. It seems that Nida and Taber follow up the text effect even after translation. To them, faithful translation text should have the same influence on audience whenever translated into any language.

1.4. Translatable and Untranslatable

From the first sight, translation as it seems to many people is transferring what is found in one language into another. They believe that everything in the source language has an equivalent in the target language. Theoretically, this view, to a great extent, is right but practically, the matter is totally different. Translation must make sense and convey the spirit and manner of the original, being sensitive to style of the original and should have the same effect upon the receiving audience as the original had on its audience. This ultimate goal contradicts Anderman and Rogers (2003:14) who think that translation is partly a science and partly an art. To be a science means about things, facts, objects and impersonal. To be an art concerns beauty, taste, personal, and imagination. If all people believe in facts and realities, they do not all agree about unrealities due to their different attitudes and backgrounds. Thus, for translation to be an art, activity or a craft is what makes people differ in their satisfactions. As a result, they do not agree all on a sample translated message.

This controversial issue dos not stop at difficulty to translate all texts. It extends beyond this, Rubel and Rosman (2003:18) claims that there are expressions or ' things' are dangerous to translate. The untranslatable list includes sacred words, rituals, spells, and taboo expressions. Many culture believe that these must be kept secret and untranslatable in the eyes of a particular group. Some believe that if those translated, they might have deleterious effect. Others go further and consider translating them can be considered an act of betraying and unbelieving.

1.5. Translation and Culture

All believe the fact that language is the best means of human communication. People of any nation can mostly easily communicate with each other, despite the differences among dialects within the same language. For example, Iraqis understand Egyptians, Americans understand the British, and Spain understand Chilis. Though people live in different countries with sometimes a long distance separate them they understand each other, simply because they speak the same language, regardless the difference among their dialects. The matter will be difficult when the languages are different even when they live in the same country. In this case, translation is necessary and considered as the best means of communication, if we excluded the bilingual people. So, translation bridges boundaries and enables understanding across boundaries. Therefore, the more accurate translation, the more understanding will be among people of two or more communities.

We have mentioned earlier that the primary purpose of translation is to enable cooperative functionally adequate communication to take place across cultural barriers. For this reason translation requires attention to cultural values, to economic and political inequalities, to individual choices and overlaps most obviously to otherness in its linguistic and cultural peculiarities.

Indeed, linguistic properties have some problems and may be solved in a way or another. The more problematic issues are the ideology and poetics. They are often as cultural elements not clear and sometimes 'completely' misplaced in what would be the target culture version of the text to be translated. For instance, translating the word 'camel' from an Arabic

text into another language will not carry all the poetic and cultural images that implied in this animal as understood in the Arab environment. This may also applicable to the image implied in the ice in Eskimo, kangaroo in Australia, etc.

Then, linguistic properties and cultural aspects should both be taken into account in translating any text to another language. This is simply because one purpose of translational text operation is to establish whether the content and form components of the source text are functionally suitable for the target text. In making this decision, the translator cannot be guided by the source text alone, but must search, in addition, the target culture's conception of the subject matter of the text class of genres.

Different culture means different conventions, verbally and non-verbally. So, transcultural text production may require some procedures that bring the text in both languages close to each other. Procedures such as omission, expansion, updating of elements of the source text by elements judged more appropriate to the function of the target text is to serve. This function is determined by the purpose of the communicative action in which the text is to play a part as a message transmitter.

1.6. Proper Nouns

After introducing detail about translation definition, types, relations, etc., it is the time to devote a section about the proper noun which is the main topic of this study. We are going to analyse some proper nouns translation from Arabic as a source language into English as a target language. These sample nouns are taken from the Holy Quran for they represent a pure source for the standard Arabic. So, it is better to have an essential idea about the proper noun before indulging in the process of translation.

When classifying parts of speech of any language, the noun comes as one member of the main group alongside with verb, adjective, and adverb. Among this group, the noun is considered the most important element and more powerful. So, this element is a universal and common among all languages all over the world. A noun can be defined as the name of classes of persons (farmer, student), place (room, court), and a thing (pen, house). Phonologically, noun do not have special endings to show that they are nouns; but there are a number of endings used to form nouns from other words such as move*ment*, inten*tion*, differ*ence*, kind*ness*, secur*ity*, land*ing*. In English, mostly we can decide that *famous* is an adjective, *helped* is a verb, *rapidly* is an adverb due to their forms (suffixes). The same case in Arabic, for example, all present tense verbs start with the letter (ي), and most female adjectives end with (ة). Syntactically, in English, we know the noun according to its position in the sentence while in Arabic according to the diacritics or marks over the noun. In fact this is what distinguishes Arabic as inflected language from English as constructed language.

Noun itself can be classified into categories. These categories differ from language into another, due to purpose, concept, principle of classification. It could be, for instance, divided into animate and inanimate, countable and non-countable, masculine and feminine, concrete and abstract, proper and common. English and Arabic both share proper nouns category. So, let us have an idea about proper noun since it is the focus of the current study as well as it is one of the challenges that encounter translators.

Merriam Webster's Dictionary defines proper noun as "a noun that designates a particular being or thing- does not take a limiting modifier, and is usually capitalized in English. In other words, proper noun refers to a specific referent serving to distinguish a particular from another. This category includes names of countries, states, seas, oceans, mountains, organizations, streets, building, personal names, etc. Indeed, translating proper nouns is not an easy task- as many thinks- from the translator's side. On the contrary, it requires blood, sweat, and tears as well as a sensitive decision-making lest it may cause misunderstanding or sometimes a trouble. However, what distinguishes English proper nouns from common nouns are these distinctive features:

a. It will be capitalized, no matter where it occurs in a sentence.

b. It is a mono-referential name, such as a person, place, things, etc.

c. It is not regularly preceded by a definite or indefinite article.

d. It is not used with limiting modifiers like a little or many.

Vermes (2003:68) describes translating proper noun saying:

"the translation of proper names has often been considered as a simple automatic

process of transference from one language into another, due to the view that proper

names are more labels used to identify a person or a thing. Contrary to popular views,

the translation of proper names is a non-trivial issue, closely related to the problem of

the meaning of the proper name."

2. Practical part
2.1. Arabic as a Source language and English as Target Language

The current part of the study is devoted to analyze and compare samples of translated proper nouns from Arabic as a source language into English as a target language. These samples are translated by four translators with different times. So, it is considered as religious text translation, in particular Arabic Islamic expressions (proper nouns). However, translation of Islamic text or discourse is critical due to its prevalence and importance, as well as it poses problems theoretically and practically. Many regard Islamic texts, especially those written in Arabic, bring specific troubles to translators. These troubles often arise because of several reasons. The phonological system of Arabic differs from the English one. In other words, more than eight Arabic sounds are not found in English such as (ق , ع , غ , ظ, ط, خ , ح , ص , ض). And at the same time more than five English sounds are not found in Arabic like (/g/, /v/, / p/, / ʧ/, ʒ /ŋ /). This is in addition to the difference between Arabic and English in the phonological distribution in the vowel consonant combination. Semantically, Arabic rhetorical devices are unfamiliar to most English speaking readers and listeners. Moreover, the connotative and affected aspects of Islamic terminology require knowledge and linguistic background by English native speakers. These reasons and some others make the translator's task is difficult. This task calls for special type of translators. They have to have the following features:

a. They need to have a feeling for Arabic Language and fascination with it.

b. They must have an intimate knowledge of Arabic as a source language.

c. They should, if possible, be familiar with the Quranic texts.

d. Quranic texts varies in their style. So the translator should always be capable of moving from one

style into another.

e. They must be skillful and creative in English as a target language, as if they are native English

speakers to make the translation influential on their readers, as the Arabic version influence

Arabic native speakers.

From the above mentioned features, and some others, the translator's job seems really not as simple as many thinks. Consulting experienced and listening to their comments and suggestions is very necessary for the translator. They should resort to best kind of dictionaries, as well. This is a good means to overcome ambiguities and mistakes that they may unintentionally commit.

2.2. Quranic language

No man whatever skills and experience acquired can encompass all peculiarities of the Quranic style and meaning, simply because it is a divine holy book. That is why said, Quranic texts are elegantly written: language thoughts and the content are all neat, plain, nice, and accurate. This peculiarity led many religious scholars to disagree translating the holy Quran, while others agreed. For example, Abu Hanifa, the Iraqi scholar and theologian (c.700-67) believed that it was legitimate to translate all the verses of the Quran into a foreign tongue but ' it was not lawful to put the whole together in one volume unless the Arabic text was placed opposite the translation, Pickthall (1931:422).So, any interpretation, parsing, explaining, and translating to its texts cannot be perfect. This seems clear, if we compare between two or among more works in this field. We all know that only Allah could give the total perfect translation of the Quranic texts, for many original discourses were in languages other than Arabic. Allah himself emphasizes this fact when he mentions that every messenger was sent by the tongue (language) of his community (We have sent no Messenger except in the tongue of his own nation, 14:4).Thousands of messengers were sent to their people. This refers to the number of the languages implied in the Quran and then translated into Arabic. This is actually, another evidence of Allah's unbounded power. Anyway, comparing and analyzing some Quranic translations does not mean that we lower or reduce values of such works. On the contrary, people who are working with the religious discourses are brave enough to challenge such a risky task. Indeed, there are many of such people with high qualifications who translated the holy Quran in tens languages all over the world. Sometimes more than one version of the same language, as we are going to deal with in this study. Roughly speaking, Quranic language and standard Arabic are two sides of one coin.

Impossibility of total perfect translation should not be understood as a defect of the translation theory. Instead, it asks us to respect the fact that the semantic and syntactic field of two languages are not the same, or exactly reducible the one to the other. Thus connotation, context, and cultural characteristics will always exceed any rule of neat equations between tongues. Let us take some examples to clarify these factors. In Arabic, the bird 'owl' is a symbol of pessimism, while it is a symbol of optimism to other cultures, contextually, in Arabic, calling a disrespected or mistaken person with 'your excellency' is to lower him/ her down, but this expression has a reverse meaning if it is said to a boss or a person in charge. That is to high them up. Culturally, in English, one can normally call men of a high position or of social prestige by their names only, for example, 'Jack could you come tomorrow?'; but this is not acceptable in Arabic, that is, the name is either preceded by a title such as ' haj' or by his elder male son like ' father of Ali'. And for those who have no male children, it is also possible to call them by their elder daughter, such as 'father of Zainab'.

2.3 Arabic Proper nouns

In some cases, proper nouns can reveal some information by themselves. As in the Western world, London is the city of fog, Paris is the city of lights, Casanova is a symbol of love and romance, etc., Arabic proper nouns have their own symbols. The personal names ' Antar' is a symbol of power, ' Hatem Al Taee' is a symbol of generosity and hospitality, places are also have symbols and connotation, for example, 'Well of Zamzam' is represents purity, Mecca is a symbol of worshiping and sacredness. Thus all languages have particular proper nouns, some of which are deeply rooted in the culture of the speakers of the specific language. Therefore, the skillful translator can reflect what meaning and attributes are behind the proper noun. Our concern is on the challenges facing translators in comprehending and translating Arabic proper nouns into English. Nevertheless, there would be a reference to some suggested strategies for translating persona nouns. Peculiarity to this group is due to their high frequency in the Holy Quran, as well as, using these names in the daily life and

by many non-Arabic cultures and religions such as Christianity, Jewish, and Sabeans. However, the main challenge with the Arabic proper personal names, when translating into English, arises from the unshared letters (sounds) between Arabic as a source language and English as a target language.

In the current study, three categories of Arabic proper noun are going to be analyzed. These are the personal names, places names, and time names. The personal names, in turn, will be subclassified. Selecting only these groups is due to their frequent mentioning in the Holy Quran. The personal names can be divided into subclasses as a single noun 'Mohammad', descriptive name (Thul karnein), members of family names (Al Yaqoub), and plural collective names (Magians, disciples). Places nouns are either of state names or holy places. Time place noun usually refer to days or month time. There will be tables that include each group separately. There would also be a reference to some other Arabic proper nouns that are not included in the above groups. Translation of these proper names will be investigated through four different translated versions of the Holy Quran by four Scholars. So, it is better to list the four translated versions which adopted in this study. Firs version is by Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din Al-Hilali and Muhammad Muhsin Khan, second version is by Hasan Qaribullah and Ahmad Darwish. Third version is by Muhammad S. Shakir. Fourth version is by Ali Quli Qara'i. In fact, we are not about criticizing or evaluating their translation, simply because their task is really great. In addition, not all translators have the bravery and ability to approach such a risk. It should also be mentioned that this paper does not intend to prescribe any special rules for translation, neither it recommend or prefer one translation on the others.

2.4. Personal Names

One major subclass of proper nouns is the personal names. The field that specialized in studying names of human beings, which encompasses personal names and group names is called anthroponymy. Sometimes, in literary works, personal names are given to personified animals and fictitious creatures. Wikipedia categorizes the former as non-human personal names, Fornalczyk (2007:29). In some cases, also the name of pets and sporting animals are often the same as human names. According to Wikipedia, personal names is "the proper name identifying individual person, and usually comprises a given name bestowed at birth or at a young age. It is nearly universal for a human to have a name; the rare exceptions occur in the cases of mentally disturbed parents, or feral children growing up in isolation". This can in some cultures be offensive and disrespectful to the person of the same name. The reverse may happen, that is, animals names are given to human being. In Arabic culture, for example, this has either a positive meaning when a male person name matches name of brave, strong, and intelligent animals such as 'Serhan' (wolf), and Fehad (tiger), or a female personal name of beautiful meek animal or bird like 'Reem' (deer) and 'Nowras' (gull). It may have a negative meaning when the name accords stupid and ugly animals such as ' Ijheish' (young donkey) or 'Iskheil' (young goat).

Practically everyone since the beginning of history has had a name. Almost all names have meanings. Early people often, bestowed a name with a definite consciousness of its meaning. But today, people give little thought to the meanings. Many people do not know the meaning of their names. Some people had a story behind their names before their delivery. Generally, personal names are categorized into given names, first names, family names, nick names, pet names, etc.

2.5. How to translate Proper nouns

We have mentioned before that personal names often causes troubles to translators; this is why number of linguists suggested strategies for translating personal names. In this respect, we are going to shed the light on two linguists' views. First by Hervey and Higgins (1986:42) who recommend these three strategies:

a.Exotism, in this method, the personal name should remain itself unchanged from the source language to the target language. This means no influence for the linguistic and cultural differences between any two languages. As a result, the Arabic state (مصر), for example, would be (Mesr), where all agree it is translated into 'Egypt' in English.

b. Transliteration where the name is shifted to conform to the phonic rules of the target language.

c. Cultural transplantation, in this case the source language name is replaced by the target language name that has the same cultural connotation as the original one, as the Netherland city ' Hague' to be '(هولندا) in Arabic, or ' Plato', to be 'افلاطون'

The second is Fernandes (2006:89) who thinks in ten strategies of translating personal names. For brevity, we will focus on the most familiar ones. These are as the following:

a. Copy, here the personal name of the source language is exactly replicated in the target language without any orthographic adjustment. This does not always seem possible due to the differences between the phonological system between any two languages.

b. Transcription, the name is transcribed in the equivalent characters of the target language, in order to keep the readability of the target language. This may be accompanied by some changes such as addition or shift in the position of the letters.

c. Re-creation, a newly-created name in the source language is recreated in the target language so that it reproduces the similar effect in the target language

d. Substitution, in this case the target language name replaces the source language name, although they are formally and/or semantically unrelated.

e. Addition, extra information is added to the source language name, so that it can be more understandable and desirable to the target readers. This method in fact, may also be used to remove ambiguity in the target language.

f. Phonological replacement, in this method the phonological features of the source language name are initiated in the target language. In other words, a target language name, which has a similar sound to the source language name, replaces the original name.

g. Conventionality, which means the acceptance of a typical translation of a name in the source language. In view of this case, it is interesting to know that conventionality is often used with historical or literary individuals, as well as geographical names.

It is explicit that there are some shared strategies between the two, and sometimes with different terminology. However, it is a personal view and not a matter for establishing rules. The more similarity and understanding between the source language name and the target language name, the more acceptance and satisfaction is expected from the target language readers.

2.6. Translating Quranic proper nouns into English

Having widely discussed some of translation procedures, it is necessary to tackle some Arabic proper nouns mentioned in the Holy Quran. To be more systematic, these nouns are classified into fifth groups. These are personal names, personal group or collective names, personal descriptive names, time nouns, and place nouns. Each group has specific table where the four translations of the four already mentioned scholars are shown, in addition to the surah name and ayah (verse) name. The first group is the personal names according to the following table:

No.	Arabic personal name	Surah no., Ayah no.	Al-Hilali and Khan	Qaribulla	Shakir	Quli Qara'i
1.	يونس	6:85	Jonah	Jonah	Yunus	Jonah
2.	اسماعيل	4:163	Ishmael	Ishmael	Ismail	Ishmael
3.	قارون	29:39	Korah	Korah	Qaroun	Korah
4.	ايوب	38:41	Job	Job	Ayub	Job
5.	جبرائيل	2:98	Gabriel	Gabriel	Jibreel	Gabriel
6.	داود	38:17	David	David	Daood	David

All translators except Shakir, follow the cultural transplantation style by replacing the Arabic name by English name that has the same cultural connotation as it is in Arabic. Shakir from his side adopts the transliteration style by shifting the Arabic names to conform to the phonic rules of English. Translating the Arabic personal name ' قارون ' into 'Qaroun' by Shakir have little doubt. According to English phonological distribution 'Q' is followed by 'u' when it comes initially or in the middle. 'لقمان' is another Arabic name is also translated in a way differs from the English transliteration.

Concerning the second group of proper nouns, samples of Arabic group or collective personal names are clarified in the following table:

No.	Arabic personal group name	Surah no., Ayah no.	Al-Hilali and Khan	Qaribulla	Shakir	Quli Qara'i
1.	ال عمران	3:33	The family of Imran	The House of Imran	The descendants of Imran	The progeny of Imran
2.	النقباء	5:12	The Chieftains	The Chieftains	The Chieftains	The chiefs
3.	الصابئين	22:17	Sabaeans	Sabaeans	Sabeans	Sabaeans
4.	ال يعقوب	19:6	The House of Jacob	The House of Jacob	The children of Yaqoub	The House of Jacob
5.	اصحاب الفيل	105:1	The owners of the Elephant	The companions of the Elephant	The possessors of the Elephant	The men of the Elephant

As it is shown in the above table, no agreement among all translators in translating the first proper noun ' ال عمران ' and the last ' اصحاب الفيل '. This may be due to their understanding to the Arabic name or for their dependence on some scholars in interpretation these names. Again, out of four, Shakir agrees with others in translating only one or two names. The Arabic name ' النقباء ' has the same translation into English by all except Quli Qara'i. Surprisingly, the similar Arabic names ' ال عمران ' and ' ال يعقوب ' translated differently by Al-Hilali and Khan, Shakir, and Quli Qara'I, they may have their own reasons for such translation.

Third group includes descriptive names. All the adjective names except the first have real names. These descriptive names are fashionable among people for their implication of a story, tyranny, and power. Three of these names belong to prophets; 1,4, and 5. Generally all these name are shown in the following table:

No.	Arabic personal descriptive name	Surah no., Ayah no.	Al-Hilali and Khan	Qaribulla	Shakir	Quli Qara'i
1.	المسيح عيسى بن مريم	3:45	The messiah, Jesus son of Mary	The messiah, Jesus son of Mary	The messiah Isa son of Marium	messiah, Jesus, son of Mary
2.	ذي القرنين	18:83	Dhul-Qarneyn	Thul Karnein	Zul qarnain	Dhul Qarnayn
3.	ابو لهب	111:1	Abu Lahab	Abi Lahab	Abu Lahab	Abu Lahab
4.	ذي النون	21:87	Dhul- Nun	Thul Nun	Yunus	The man of the Fish
5.	ذي الكفل	38:48	Dhul- Kifl	Thul Kifl	Zul Kifl	Dhul- Kifl
6.	فرعون	29:39	Pharaoh	Pharaoh	Firon	Pharaoh

This time Shakir almost agrees with others in translating three names out of six. These are the second, third, and the fifth. Concerning the first Arabic name 'المسيح عيسى ابن مريم' Shakir uses the exotism method, while others use the cultural transplantation method. For the fourth Arabic name 'ذي النون', Al-Hilali and Qaribulla use the transliteration method with a little difference between them. Shakir uses exotism method for the same name, Quli Qara'i

uses a descriptive noun phrase (possessive) by giving more information for the Arabic name
ذو ' and ' ذي الكفل " but he does not use this style with other similar names such as " ذي النون'
القرنين '. Concerning the Arabic name ' ابو لهب ' which comes in the nominative case, all except
Qaribulla translated as it is. Qaribulla translated it with the dative case.

Time names represent the fourth group of the Arabic proper nouns. Samples of these names
are mentioned in the following table:

No.	Arabic time noun	Surah no., Ayah no.	Al-Hilali and Khan	Qaribulla	Shakir	Quli Qara'i
1.	رمضان	2:185	Ramadan	Ramadan	Ramazan	Ramadan
2.	الجمعة	62:9	Day of congregation	Day of congregation	Friday	Friday
3.	السبت	2:65	The Sabbath	The Sabbath	The Sabbath	The Sabbath
4.	يوم حنين	9:25	The day of Huneyn	The Battle of Hunain	The day of Hunain	The day of Hunayn
5.	ليلة القدر	97:1	The night of power	The night of Al-Qadr (Decree)	The grand night	The night of Ordainment

These nouns include month, day, and night time. All adopt the transliteration in
translating name of the Quranic month 'رمضان' with a little difference from Shakir' side.
Though all agree in translating the proper name day ' السبت', they differ in translating another
proper name day ' الجمعة'. Al-Hilali and Khan, and Qaribulla have similar translation where
they give a descriptive name; while Shakir and Quli Qara'I have their own translation which
is accord with the English calendar week. Concerning the fourth noun 'يوم حنين' all except
Qaribulla have the same translation with different spelling of the word place ' حنين'. Qaribulla
thinks that what is intended by 'حنين ' is the battle that took place at that time and not the day
itself, Fernandes (2006:89) calls this method substitution. Last proper name in the list is 'ليلة
القدر '. Again, this noun is translated differently by all. Nevertheless, all translations try to
show the importance and dignity of this night. Only Qaraibulla uses the transliteration as
well as trying to give an equivalent meaning- though the last was between two brackets.

Finally, we have the Arabic proper place nouns. Among many of such nouns mentioned
in the Holy Quran, the following five were selected. These are mentioned in the following
table:

No.	Arabic place noun	Surah no., Ayah no.	Al-Hilali and Khan	Qaribulla	Shakir	Quli Qara'i
1.	بابل	2:102	Babel	Babylon	Babel	Babylon
2.	المسجد الحرام	17:1	The Inviolable place of worship	The sacred Mosque	The sacred Mosque	The sacred Mosque
3.	المسجد الاقصى	17:1	The far Distant place of worship	The Furthest Mosque	The remote Mosque	The furthest Mosque
4.	الوادي المقدس	12:20	The holy valley of Tuwa	Towa the sacred valley	The sacred valley, Tuwa	The sacred valley of Tuwa
5.	الكعبة	5:97	Ka'bah	Ka'bah	Kaaba	Ka'bah

The first proper noun is ' بابل ' which is an ancient city in the middle of Iraq. Al-Hilali and
Khan, and Shakir have the same translation, and Qaribulla and Quli Qara'I have their own
translation. In fact, out of this religious translation both forms are used nowadays. The
second proper noun ' المسجد الحرام ' is translated similarly by all except Al-Hilali and Khan
tried to add information to the place. The same thing occurred in translation the third proper
name ' المسجد الاقصى' almost all except Al-Hilali and Khan have the same translation. No big

difference is found in translating the fourth proper noun ' الوادي المقدس ', this difference is represented by using synonyms for the Arabic noun ' المقدس ' ''holy' and ' sacred', as well as a spelling difference in the place noun ' طوى', that is ' Tuwa' and ' Towa'. This may belong to the different seven readings of the Holy Quran. Lastly, the proper noun ' الكعبة'' is also translated in a similar form by all with a bit difference from Shakir's side.

It is worth mentioning that other types of proper nouns translated differently. In (21:96) the Arabic proper noun (ياجوج وماجوج) mentioned as city (Babylon), but in (18:94) the same noun mentioned as people (Babel). Nevertheless, no translation states this difference, for the first translated into (till Gog and Magog are let loose and slide down out …..), while the second into ('Thul Karnain' they said 'Look, Gog and Magog are corrupting the earth ….).

Another proper noun is (الكوثر) in (108:1) some translated it into a river in the Paradise while Shakir who depends on books of interpretation (Tafsir) translated into the Lady Fatima al-Zehraa (Prophet Mohammad's daughter).

The last Arabic proper noun is ' اسفار ' (4:163). All translators use the English equivalent ' the Psalms' except Shakir who avoided translating this noun.

Conclusion

In the light of the theoretical information and practical analysis of translating Arabic proper nouns into English. The following points can be drawn:

1. Accurate translation should fulfill the same purpose in the target language as the original did in the source language, a condition which can hardly be achieved in translating religious texts in general and proper nouns in particular. This is, in fact, the main reason for losing much in the process of translation.

2. Some translators adopt explaining or paraphrasing the Arabic proper nouns for there are no equivalent synonyms in English. This is not a shortage in translation as it is language-specific characteristics.

3. Differences among translators in translating Arabic proper nouns are due to their reliance on certain Quranic interpreters. Indeed, translating such texts demands consulting specialized scholars, for many texts imply rules, instructions, orders, etc.

4. Most translators prefer the cultural transplantation in translating Arabic proper nouns (those figure names mentioned in Quran). With the Arabic modern nouns the transliteration method is preferable.

5. Some translators use footnote to give more detail and explanation to the Arabic vague proper nouns (to the foreigners), for the linguistic and cultural factors have great role in clarifying the intended meaning.

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