

# The Translation of Euphemistic Expressions in Surat Al-Nur

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Received date: 31/08/2019

Revised date: 16/10/2019

Publication date: 30/10/2019

## Abstract

Translating euphemistic expressions in the Quran from Arabic into English is accompanied by some linguistic and cultural challenges. This study compares and evaluates the translation of euphemistic expressions in Surat Al-Nur by three popular interpretations of the meanings of the Qur'an namely; Abdel Haleem, Palmer and King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Qur'an. The sample of the study includes 16 euphemistic expressions from different verses of Surat Al-Nur. The study relies on popular exegeses of the Quran such as Tafsir Alqur'an al-'Adhim by Ibn Kathir. The study finds that there are some inadequacies in translation these expressions into English and these euphemistic expressions should be interpreted based on contexts, interpretive meaning, and well-known exegesis of the Qur'an.

**Keywords:** The Qur'an, Surat Al-Nur, Translation, Equivalent and Euphemistic expressions.

## ترجمة عبارات التلطف في سورة النور

### مخلص

إن ترجمة تعابير التلطف في القرآن من العربية إلى الإنجليزية ترافقها بعض التحديات اللغوية والثقافية. حيث تقارن وتقيم هذه الدراسة ترجمة عبارات التلطف في سورة النور في ثلاثة تفسيرات مشهورة لمعاني القرآن، وهي: عبد الحليم، وبالممر ومجمع الملك فهد لطباعة القرآن. وتتضمن عينة الدراسة 16 تعبيراً تلطيفياً من آيات سورة النور. وتعتمد الدراسة على التفسيرات المشهورة لمعاني القرآن مثل تفسير القرآن العظيم لابن كثير. وجدت الدراسة أن هناك بعض القصور في ترجمة هذه التعبيرات إلى اللغة الإنجليزية ويجب تفسير هذه التعبيرات على أساس السياق، والمعنى التفسيري، والتفسير المشهورة للقرآن.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** القرآن الكريم؛ سورة النور؛ ترجمة؛ تعبيرات وتعابير تلطيفية.

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## 1. Introduction

The Quran is the word of Allah revealed to Prophet Mohammad by Gabriel and it is the final message to all mankind. It is also considered as the main source of Islamic principles, constitution, and it is a miraculous Book that mentions the history and stories of the previous nations. As it is directed to all human being, a great responsibility is placed on Arab translator's shoulders to render the meanings of the Qur'an into other languages to make it understandable and clear for people all over the world. But still, translating the Quran is not an easy task because of its miraculous language and style *"that surpass man's faculty to reproduce the Qur'an in a translated form. A crude approximation of the language, meanings and style of the Qur'an is possible to enable non-speakers of Arabic to understand the message of the Qur'an"* (Abdul-Raof, 2001:2). However, there is no identical or perfect translation for the Qur'an no matter how accurate or professional the translator tends to be. The translation, however, should not be considered as a replacement of the original language of the Qur'an into the target language. The translation of the Qur'an remains limited to the word of Allah and cannot be reproduced by the word of man. *"The Qur'an could be considered untranslatable, because each time one returns to the Arabic text, he finds new meanings and fresh ways of interpreting"* (Irving, 1985: 27).

The Quran is rich in euphemistic expressions that deal with sensitive topics such as death, sex, divorce, etc.; they need to be conveyed equivalently and accurately. Therefore, the adequate translation of the euphemistic expressions is problematic and challenging for translators of the Quran due to the lack of cultural knowledge of Arabic and English. Euphemism is a *"kind of linguistic elevation or amelioration specifically directed toward finding socially acceptable words for concepts that many people cannot easily speak of, and originated from Greek which means 'to speak' favorably"* (Williams, 1975:198).

Some interpretations of the meanings of the Qur'an have not rendered euphemistic expressions adequately into English. This study investigates and evaluates the problems of translating

euphemistic expressions of Surat Al-Nurin three well-known translations: King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Qur'an (Henceforth K.F.C) and Palmer and Abdel-Haleem. Surat Al-Nur is full of euphemistic expressions; therefore, this study attempts to examine incongruities encountered by translators when translating euphemistic expressions into English. Moreover, it aims to compare and validate the accuracy of the translations of euphemistic expressions based on contexts, and interpretive meaning of well-known Tafsirs (Exegeses) such as Tafsir Alqur'an Al-'Adhim by Ibn Kathir, Abu Alfida' Al-Dimashgi. Since the major purpose of this study is to focus on the challenges and deficiencies in translating Quranic euphemisms into English, 16 examples of euphemistic expressions were collected from Surat al-Nur.

Surat al-Nur was revealed to Prophet Mohammad after the hypocrites and disbelievers made the slander on the honor of the Prophet's wife A'isha. This incident called "Ifik"; it was severe on the Prophet and His wife. Therefore, this surat was descended to defend the reputation of A'isha. In addition, this surah prescribes laws and regulations that regulate the morals of the Muslim community.

### **2. Euphemisms in the Qur'an**

The literature on euphemism in the Quran are a few but none of these studies focus on a certain surah in the Quran, they tackled euphemism in general. Al-Taa'i (2010) compares some aspects of euphemism in English and Arabic. She indicates that English translations of Quranic euphemistic expressions are wrongly translated due to linguistic and cultural differences between Arabic and English. She compares the translation of four verse by Zidan and Pickthall. However, she based her conclusions on four examples from the Quran; her analysis was superficial as she does not consult exegeses.

Also, Al-Hamad and Salman (2013) analyze and compare the inconsistencies of translating 23 Quranic euphemistic expressions into English in the works of Ali, Hilali and Khan, Pickthal and Arberry. These expressions were selected from different verses in the Quran. They concluded that

the translation of euphemistic expressions in the Quran into English is problematic because of linguistic and cultural differences. They suggested two strategies to overcome such challenges namely; linguistic approximation such as *وباشروهن* which indicates to "sex with them" should be substituted by "touch." Cultural approximation such as *يتوفى* "pass a way" should be substituted by "the call of nature." Al-Hamad and Salman's (2013) analysis did not rely on popular exegeses (Tafsirs) of the Quran. However, this could be risky as content analysis approach alone cannot be effective in studying Holy texts such as the Quran.

Furthermore, Al-Barakati (2013) studies the translations of 29 Quran verses that included 43 sex-related expressions into English. These verses were translated by Abdel Haleem, Saheeh International and Bewley. His study focused on textual and contextual analysis of the data. He designed a questionnaire which had the three translations of the 43 sex-related expressions, he concluded that most of the respondents vote for Abdel Haleem's translation, as Abdel Haleem's native language is Arabic; therefore, Abdel Haleem was very successful in using euphemism when rendering these verses into English. While other translators tended to translate these verses literally.

In addition, Taghian (2014) studies the difficulties of translating euphemism of sexual taboos in three translations of the Quran: Ali, Pickthall and Ghali. He classified the sexual taboos into three categories: First, sexual relations (legitimate and illegitimate) "*Legitimate sexual relations include marriage and sexual intercourse within wedlock, the illegitimate sexual relations include adultery, sodomy, and lesbianism*" Taghian (2014:3-4). Secondly, the private parts of the human body. Thirdly, the sexual habits such as menstruation, post-menstrual discharge, wet-dreams and ejaculation. He evaluated three translations and provided a suggested translation. He concluded that the three translations tend to convey the literal meaning at the expense of euphemism.

Moreover, Alqaryouti and Sadeq (2016) investigate the translatability of euphemism from Arabic into English in Surat

al-Nisa'a in the Quran. Moreover, they try to describe some inconsistencies and difficulties encountered by Pickthall when rendering Quranic euphemism into English. They found that Pickthall sacrifices euphemism to convey the literal meaning. Therefore, they agree with Al-Hamad and Salman's (2013) suggestion that the translation of euphemism depends on:

- a) Linguistic approximation was implemented when no specific lexical equivalence was found. The Arabic unique word was translated into a word of the closest meaning thus does not harm euphemism.
- b) Cultural approximation was used instead of literal translation when a cultural equivalent is available.

Furthermore, al-Dulaimi and Aubed (2016) tackle the translations of some euphemistic expressions used in the Qur'an and investigate how some translators of the Quran deal with the euphemistic expressions to achieve a better understanding for the English readers. Their study investigates how far the translators are adequate when rendering euphemism based on the context and the interpretive meaning. The study emphasizes on the importance of being aware of euphemistic expressions to render adequate translation of the SL.

Finally, Ghaeb (2016) evaluates three common translations (Pickthall, Arberry and Hilali Khan) of 12 euphemistic expressions in nine verses of Surat al-Bakrah in the Qur'an. These expressions deal with touchy topics related to marital relationship, disbelief and deviation from the right path. The study found that paraphrasing, literal translation, and couplet were the most three translation strategies used but paraphrasing was the most frequent one. In addition, his study concluded that all translations failed to render the euphemistic expressions adequately.

#### 4. Discussion and Analysis

##### Example (1)

1 K.F.C "And those who accuse chaste women" (Qur'an, 24:2)

2. Palmer "But those who cast (imputations) on chaste women" (Qur'an, 24:2)

### 3. Abdel Haleem "And those who accuse chaste women of fornication" (Qur'an, 24:2)

*Rami al-muḥṣanāt* or *al-qadhfu* (slander) is "a false spoken statement intended to damage the good opinion people have of somebody; the legal offence of making this kind of statement" (Oxford Learners Dictionary). *Rami al-muḥṣanāt* refers to false accusations against chaste women of fornication if there must be four witnesses, as a prerequisite to validate such accusations (Taghian, 2014). *Chaste* is a classical word which means "not having sex with anyone; only having sex with a person that he/she is married to" (Oxford Learners Dictionary). Therefore, chaste women can be single or married, if they are single, that means they are virgin, but they are married they have sex only with their husbands; this is also applicable to men but, 'slander' against women is considered a more awful act (Taghian, 2014).

The three translations sacrifice the meaning at the expense of the euphemistic expressions '*Rami / qadhfu*' '*muḥṣanāt*'. *Rami al-muḥṣanāt* in the K.F.C and Palmer was rendered as "accuse/cast (imputations)," this interpretation is so general as it could include different kinds of accusations such as theft, lying, forgery and so on. While Abdel Haleem's translation indicates the intended meaning by determining the intended kind of accusation (accusation of fornication).

The term *chaste women* is referred to A'isha (Prophet's wife) which is acceptable for married women only (women in wedlock). It would be better to mention the euphemistic expression '*muḥṣanāt*', using "the strategy of foreignization, in parentheses or annotations", to help the target reader to understand the intended meaning and avoid ambiguity (Taghian, 2014:16). Therefore, the following can be a suggested translation for this verse:

‘And those who accuse *mūḥṣanāt* {chaste or virgin women of fornication i.e. the wife of the Prophet Mohammad}’.

**Example (2)**

1. **K.F.C** "Verily those who brought **forth the slander** (against 'Aishah the wife of the Prophet) are a group among you" (Qur'an, 24:11)

2. **Palmer** "Verily, those who bring forward **the lie**, a band of you" (Qur'an, 24:11)

3. **Abdel Haleem** "it was a group for among you who brought **the false accusation**" (Qur'an, 24:11).

This verse and the next verses were revealed to preserve the reputation of A'isha, and to announce her innocence which was descended from the heaven. Palmer's translation fails to transfer comprehensible meaning into the target language because he used the word '*lie*' which is a very broad term that indicates wide range of potential lies. Therefore, using the term '*lie*' fails to convey the intended meaning and fundamental message to the target audience.

Abdel Haleem provides an acceptable euphemistic expression for the word *Ifk*, but he sacrifices the intended meaning of euphemism as the intended meaning here is vague and it is not understood comprehensibility and completely. However, the translation of the K.F.C successfully renders an acceptable euphemistic expression for the term *Ifk* that saves the reader's face and conveys comprehensibly the intending meaning by referring to the concerned person in the verse by using a parenthetical statement. Therefore, among the previous three translations, K.F.C's translation is the most adequate one as it took into consideration both the euphemistic and intended meaning.

**Example (3)**

1. **K.F.C** "Verily, those who like that **(the crime of) illegal sexual intercourse** should be propagated among those who believe, they will have a painful torment" (Qur'an, 24:19)

2. **Palmer** "Verily, those who love that **scandal** should go abroad amongst those who believe, for them is grievous woe" (Qur'an, 24:19)

**3. Abdel Haleem**"A painful torment waits in this world and the next for those who like indecenty to spread among the believers" (Qur'an, 24:19)

The term *fahshā* is a euphemistic concept that denotes "any kind of abominable actions, sayings or sins, such as adultery" (Taghian, 2014:31). This expression is used in different places in the Quran to indicate the offensive actions and sayings. In this qur'anic context, it euphemistically denotes adultery. Palmer used the word *scandal*, which is "a behavior or an event that people think is morally or legally wrong and causes public feelings of shock or anger" (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries). While Abdel Haleem used the word *indecenty*, which is "a behavior that is thought to be morally or sexually offensive" (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries).

Palmer's and Abdel Haleem's translations provide acceptable euphemistic translation for the word *fahshā*, but they sacrifice the intended meaning of euphemism to preserve the positive face of the target audience. The intended meaning here is vague as the two euphemistic terms '*scandal*' and '*indecenty*' are broad terms that might fail to convey the intended message to the target audience. The translators could achieve more comprehensibility through paraphrasing the intended meaning in parentheses or in annotation.

However, K.F.C's translation renders clearly and comprehensibly the intended meaning of the euphemistic expression *fāḥsha* by using a parenthetical statement that explains the intended meaning of the selected euphemistic term comprehensibly to the target audience. But still, the K.F.C's translation fails in providing the euphemistic term for *fāḥsha* as it directly conveys the intended meaning in a parenthetical statement without mentioning a euphemistic term either by transliterating it '*fāḥsha*' followed by a parenthetical statement or by finding an equivalent or semi-equivalent term in the target language. So the suggested translation for the above mentioned verse could be:



'A painful torment waits in this world and the next for those who like indecentcy (the crime of illegal sexual intercourse) to spread among the believers'

**Example (4)**

1. K.F.C "Bad statements are for bad people (or bad women for bad men)" (Qur'an, 24:26)

2. Palmer "The vile women to the vile men"(Qur'an, 24:26)

3. Abdel Haleem "corrupt women are for corrupt men"(Qur'an, 24:26)

Ibin `Abbas said, "*evil words are for evil men, and evil men are for evil words; good words are for good men and good men are for good words. This was revealed concerning `A'ishah and the people of the slander*" (Ibn-khathīr, 2000: 266). To illustrate, the circulation of I'fk is as an evil act produced by the evil hypocrites who spread it; this act was reflected to them.

*Khabithat* is an Arabic euphemistic expression which means impure or evil; the immoral "*thoughts or feelings, morally bad, especially because they are connected with sex*" (Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary). The three translations convey the euphemistic expressions of *bad, evil*, or *corrupt*, (i.e. prostitute) at the expense of producing the essence or intended meaning. These euphemistic words are considered ambiguous for non-Arab readers; it is too difficult to anticipate the meaning of prostitute from these euphemistic terms because they are too general and may carry multiple interpretations. Therefore, it is better to use euphemism followed by a paraphrase in a parenthetical statement or to use a footnote. Therefore, Abdel Haleem's translation is the most adequate one as he took into consideration the euphemistic meaning:

'corrupt women are for corrupt men (prostitute women are for prostitute men)'.

**Example (5)**

1. K.F.C "Tell the believing men to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts)" (Qur'an, 24:30).

2. **Palmer** "Say to the believers that they cast down their looks and guard **their private parts**" (Qur'an, 24:30).

3. **Abdel Haleem**"{prophet}, tell believing men to lower their eyes and guard **their private parts**" (Qur'an, 24:30).

Sexual organs or private parts should be euphemized in the qur'anic discourse and they should not be expressed overtly. The three translators convey distinctly the intended meaning of the euphemistic expression '*frujahom*' (private *parts*) without paying attention to the euphemism in the selected verse. The rendered meaning is very clear and understandable to the receiver, but it "*causes the unfitting of the dignity of the qur'anic diction and style*" (Kidwai, 1998:8). Therefore, it is preferred to keep the euphemism and mention the intended meaning through paraphrasing or annotation and not ignoring one at the expense of the other. The suggested translation for the above verse could be:

‘{O’ prophet}, tell believing men to lower their eyes and guard **their shame (private parts or sexual organs)**’.

#### Example(6)

1. **K.F.C** "And to draw their veils all over **Juyubihinna (i.e. their bodies, faces, necks and bosoms)** and not to reveal **their adornment** except to their husbands, or their fathers, or their husband's fathers, or their sons or their husband's sons, or their brothers or their brother's sons, or their sister's sons, or their (Muslim) women (i.e. their sisters in Islam), or the (female) slaves whom their right hands possess, or **old male servants who lack vigour**, or small children who have no sense of **feminine sex**." (Qur'an, 24:31)

2. **Palmer** "and let them pull their kerchiefs over **their bosoms** and not display their **ornaments** save to their husbands and fathers, or the fathers of their husbands, or their sons, or the sons of their husbands, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women, or what their right hands possess, or **their male attendants who are incapable**, or to children who do not note **women's nakedness**."(Qur'an, 24:31)

**3. Abdel Haleem**" they should draw their coverings over their necklines and not reveal their charms except to their husbands and fathers, or the fathers of their husbands, or their sons, or the sons of their husbands, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women folk, their slaves, such men as attend them who have no desire, or children who have no desire, or children who are not aware of women's nakedness."(Qur'an, 24:31).

The word *khumur* is the plural form of *khimar*. It literary means "veil" or "scarf" to Muslims, it means to hide the woman's hair, her bosom and her neck. In pre-Islamic era, a woman used to uncover her neck and a part of her bosoms. Therefore, when Islam came, it ordered women to wear their scarf in a way that to cover part of their necks and bosoms (*juyūbihinna*). The word *juyub* is the plural form of the word *jayb* that means the "scarf" or "veil" which is rendered to the neck and applied to the upper part of the breast.

Palmer has rendered the intended meaning of the euphemistic word *juyūbihinna* distinctly without paying attention to the euphemism in the selected verse causing a face-threatening to the target audience. Abdel Haleem has rendered the euphemism of the expression *juyūbihinna* at the expense of the intended meaning. As mentioned before, *juyūbihinna* means their necks and bosoms while necklines do not include bosoms. Therefore, the meaning of *juyūbihinna* will not be completely conveyed to the target audience.

K.F.C has succeeded in picking up the correct strategy in rendering the euphemism of the mentioned euphemistic expression *juyūbihinna*, but has failed in rendering the intended meaning accurately because as said above, *juyūbihinna* does not include their faces and bodies. Therefore, the suggested translation could be:

'They should draw their coverings over their Juyubihinna (i.e. their necks and bosoms)'

In the pre-Islamic period, "women used to wear a shirt with a slit in the front that partly remained open exposing the

*front of the neck and the upper part of the bosom and nothing covers the breasts except the shirt. Also, the hair was not covered well as it was worn in a couple or two of plaits hanging behind like tails*" (Ibn Kathir, Vol. III, pp. 283-284). Islam urged women cover their bodies except the hand and the face and cover their ornaments and adornments to foreigner's men, except that which is uncovered by itself and is beyond their control. Adornment is "*something that you wear to make yourself look more attractive; something used to decorate a place or an object*" (Oxford Learners Dictionary). While ornament is an "*object that is used as decoration in a room, garden/yard, etc. rather than for a particular purpose*" (Oxford Learners Dictionary). Charm "*a feature or quality that is pleasing or attractive her physical charms (her beauty)*" (Oxford Learners Dictionary).

K.F.C's and Palmer's translations of *zeinatahun* 'adornment and ornament' render the euphemism successfully, but the intended meaning is not completely rendered to the target audience. Both words adornment and ornament do not indicate the charming parts of women's bodies that are considered more attractive than the outer adornments such as attractive clothes and other decorations of the head, face, hand, feet, etc.

Abdel Haleem's translation renders acceptable euphemistic expressions for the euphemistic word *zeinatahun* and conveys the intending meaning comprehensively as well. The euphemistic words 'their charms' indicate both, the physical attractive parts of women's body as well as adornment and ornament. Therefore, Abdel Haleem's translation is considered the most adequate one.

*Ghairoli al-erbata* are those who have no interest or sexual desire for women or impotent. `A'ishah narrated that there was a 'hermaphrodite' who has no desire for women and used to enter to the Prophet's house to get food. However, the Prophet (PBUH) heard him once describing a woman's body, the Prophet (PBUH) said, "*I think this person knows what is they*

*are; he should never enter upon you"* (Ibn-khathīr, Tafsīr: 2000).

Both K.F.C's and Palmer's translation take into consideration the euphemistic meaning. On the other hand, they sacrifice the intended meaning. 'Incapable' means not able to do something (Oxford Learners Dictionary) and 'lack vigor' means 'energy, force or enthusiasm' (Oxford Learners Dictionary). The two words are ambiguous and do not indicate the intending meaning (having no sexual desire for women) comprehensively. But Abdel Haleem's translation 'who have no desire' renders both, the euphemistic meaning and the intended meaning without causing a face-treating to the target audience.

It is obvious that the intended meaning of his translation '**such men as attend them who have no desire**' indicates the sexual desire for women. Therefore, Abdel Haleem's translation is considered the most adequate one. For a clearer and more accurate interpretation, a suggested translation could be as:

**'such men as attend them who have no (sexual) desire.'**

The euphemistic word 'A'wra' refers to women private parts (Tafsir *ibn Kathir*). Palmer and Abdel Haleem have used neutral and vague euphemism (*women nakedness*) which is incomprehensible to the target readers who are absent of commentaries (Kidwai, 1998:6 and Khaleel, 2005:54). Therefore, they render the euphemistic meaning at the expense of the intended meaning whereas K.F.C's translation declares frankly what A'wra' means by using *feminine sex* that refers to women's private parts without paying attention to the euphemistic meaning. Therefore, the intended meaning is understandable to the receiver, but it "*causes the unfitting of the dignity of the qur'anic diction and style*"(Kidwai, 1998:8).

The following can be a suggested translation for this verse, that agrees with Mohammed's suggestion to keep the euphemism and mention the intended meaning through explication, paraphrase or annotation and not ignore one at the

expense of the other (Mohammed, 2007:2). Therefore, the suggested translation could be:

**'Women's nakedness (their private parts)'**

**Example (7)**

1. **K.F.C** "And let those who find not the financial means for **marriage** keep themselves chaste" (Qur'an, 24:33).

2. **Palmer** "And let those who cannot find a **match**, until God enriches them of His grace, keep chaste." (Qur'an, 24:33).

3. **Abdel Haleem** "Those who are unable **to marry** should keep chaste until God gives them enough out of His bounty" (Qur'an, 24:33).

*Nikah* literally means "to marry," it indicates marriage contract or sexual intercourse that takes place between a wife and her husband. *Nikah* in this verse is a euphemism for sexual intercourse rather than only signing the marriage contract. Regarding this, al-Farisi recognizes that when Arabs use the expression 'nakaha fulanun fulanatah' i.e. 'a man married a woman', they mean the marriage contract; but if they say "nakaha 'imra'atahu" i.e. 'someone "nakah" his wife', they then mean intercourse (Cited in al-Biqā'in.d: 314).

The three translations, marriage, to marry and match (a marriage or a marriage partner) fail to convey the intended meaning, since they reflect only the superficial meaning of the phrase, thus causing misunderstanding to the target reader. This arises due to the inaccurate rendering. Therefore, translators should add marginal explanations to clarify the intended meaning. The suggested translation for the above verse could be:

"Those who are unable **to marry** (having legal sexual intercourse by getting married) should keep chaste until Allah gives them enough out of His bounty'

**Example (8)**

1. **K.F.C** "And force not your maids to **prostitution**" (Qur'an, 24:33)

2. **Palmer** "And do not compel your slave girls to prostitution" (Qur'an, 24:33)

3. **Abdel Haleem** "Don't force your slave-girls into prostitution" (Qur'an, 24:33)

In this verse, Allah urges people to avoid prostitution and ban them to compel their maids (slave girls) to commit prostitution. In the pre-Islamic period, the *Jāhilyia*, people compelled their slave girls to commit prostitution for earning money. The occasion of revelation of this verse is that some slaves girl came to the Prophet complaining about Abdullah Ibn'Ubayy who compelled them to commit prostitution for earning money and for having a greater number of sons which would empower his status in the society (Ibn-khathīr, 2000: 266).

The three translators used the word prostitution in rendering the word *albigħa*. Prostitution is a dysphemistic word which may threaten the target reader's face while *albigħa* is an Arabic euphemistic term which means to adopt prostitution for earning money. The word prostitution may render the right meaning, but not the right style of the original since euphemism here is lost. The three translators rendered the intended meaning at the expense of producing a rhetorical effect in the mind of a hearer, thus causing a face-threatening to the target audience. The translators may use a euphemistic expression followed by the intended meaning written in parenthesis or paraphrasing the intended meaning in a marginal footnote or annotation.

Rather, it is better to render the euphemistic term as it is and render the intended meaning by paraphrasing strategy it in a parenthetical statement or to use an annotation or footnotes as shown in the suggested translation:

'Do not force your slave-girls to sinful commerce (prostitution)'

#### Example (9)

1. **K.F.C** "O you who believe! Let your slaves and slave-girls, and those who among you who have not come to the age of

**puberty** ask your permission (before they come to your presence on three occasions" (Qur'an, 24:58)

2. Palmer "O ye who believe! Let **those whom your right hands possess,** and **those amongst you who have not reached puberty,** ask leave of you three times." (Qur'an, 24:58)

3. Abdel Haleem "Believers, your **slaves** and **any who have not yet reached puberty** should ask your permission to come in at three times of day" (Qur'an, 24:58)

In this verse, Allah commanded the believers to ensure that their servants and their children who have not yet reached puberty to take permission at three times. It is a matter of public chastity and righting against any sexual deviation.

*Mulk Al yamin* literally means "*slaves men or women who are owned by the right hand.*" In his translation, Palmer fails to transfer this comprehensible meaning into the target language because he both translates the original text literally and does not tackle the cultural elements. The literally rendered element which is culture-specific as well is your right hand possess that's considered culturally foreign and meaningless to non-Muslim readers. Slavery was considered a common practice in the pre-Islamic era as people used to buy male servants for carrying out hard jobs, while female servants were used for sexual enjoyment. Also, Palmer fails to render the euphemism of the word *Malkat Ayamanokom* as he translates it as right hand possess. When Islam came, it proclaimed of equity and respect and tried to stop this inhuman phenomenon. Therefore, it urges Muslims to stop calling them slaves and called them respectfully *Mulk Al yamin*.

K.F.C and Abdel Haleem convey frankly the intended meaning of the euphemistic expression '*Mulk Al yamin*' (slaves) without paying attention to the euphemism. The conveyed meaning is obvious and understandable to the target receiver, but it does not maintain the maxims of politeness, particularly tact and sympathy to save face and self-respect or dignity of the qur'anic diction and style.



The three translations fail to convey the euphemism of this word '*Mulk Al yamin*'. Translators may overcome this problem by transliterating the euphemistic expression followed by a parenthetical statement as shown in the following suggested translation:

'Believers, *Mulk Ayaminkum* (your slaves) and any who have not yet reached puberty should ask your permission to come in at three times of day'

'*Wallatheen lam yablughu al hulm*' is a euphemistic expression that literally means: until they have reached [the age of] puberty). **Puberty** is the period of a person's life during which their sexual organs develop, and they become capable of having children. The 'age of puberty' is reached when the young can have sexual relations. It can also be assessed by signs such as wet dreaming (al-Zamakhshari 1998; al-Tabari 1973). Logically, the relation between wet dreams and marriage is that once someone has already had a wet dream, it means he or she is physiologically ready to have sexual intercourse. This euphemistic expression requires a logical analysis to be applied to the expression to fulfill its euphemistic meaning.

All the three translations have rendered the euphemism with the phrase: "age of puberty" and the intended meaning as well. In their translations, there is no clear indication concerning sexual potency as it implicitly understood that 'age of puberty' indicates the sexual potency.

"وَالْفَوَاعِدُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ اللَّاتِي لَا يَرْجُونَ نِكَاحًا" (10)(24:60)

1. K.F.C "And as for women past child-bearing who don't expect wed-lock"(Qur'an, 24:60)

2. Palmer"And those women who have stopped (child-bearing), who do not hope for a match."(Qur'an, 24:60)

3. Abdel Haleem" No blame will be attached to elderly women who no longer have any desire""(Qur'an, 24:60)

The pragmatic meaning of elderly here is that they are already old women and they are too weak and have no desire to have sex with their husbands and they have reached an age in

which there is usually no hope of marriage in them and they have lost any sexual attraction. Some interpreters interpreted '*Alkawae'd min annisa'*' as old women. And some of them interpreted it as women retirement from marriage. Whereas others believe that '*Alkawae'd min annisa'*' are women who reached the age of the end of menstruation or the age of barrenness and men are reluctant to marry them. Apparently, these meanings indicate the fact that women have got so old that they no longer have any desire for marriage and no one would like to marry them, although some of such women may rarely get married.

For women, beauty and attraction are very sensitive issues and hence speakers make use of euphemism in relation to them. The qur'anic style as well takes care of this sensitive issue; therefore, it has utilized the euphemistic expression '*Alkawae'd min annisa'*' that does not cause a face-threatening to the target audience especially for women.

Both K.F.C's and Palmer's translation succeed in rendering the intended meaning of the euphemistic expression '*Alkawae'd min annisa'*' without paying attention to the euphemism that could cause a face-threatening to the target audience, especially for women, whereas Abdel Haleem's translation succeeds in rendering the intending meaning and the euphemism as well. His translation has not exposed the euphemized meaning, at the same time; the intended meaning can still be elicited from their rendering. Therefore, Abdel Haleem's translation considered the most adequate one.

### Conclusions

The study shows that Palmer's translation is the least adequate translation as he fails to render the intended meaning of the verses because he relies on literal translation which is considered the least reliable method. Hence, target receivers who are from a different culture will fail to recognize the verse comprehensively. While Abdel Haleem's translation is the most adequate translation as he succeeded in translating most of the selected euphemistic expressions comprehensively taking into consideration the euphemistic meaning and the intended

meaning. The translators of the Quran should rely on the strategies of linguistic and cultural approximation. Also, they should resort to authorized and rightful exegeses to comprehend the interpretations of the euphemistic words in the Quran.

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