

Towards Feeding and Bleeding Filters in Communicative Translation Competence: a Case Study of the Quránic Sura of Al-Shams (the Sun)

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Abstract

This paper is a nonconventional endeavor that strictly attempts to systematize the process of translation in a solid fashion almost similar to other modern linguistic disciplines where such major disciplines such as phonology, syntax and semantics are oftentimes approached and investigated on competence-based criteria. Since professional translation should be meticulously oriented and objectively described as a multi-phase process that hinges upon deliberateness, any set of choices that a translator has to consider before picking up his/her final choice must undergo a strictly discreet process of elimination of all less successful candidates. Therefore, the researcher argues that such deliberate choices can be best analyzed and justified in light of implementing a set of rule ordering. This very idea of rule ordering has been borrowed from the field of phonology as introduced by Kiparsky (1968) and revisited by Kiparsky (1982.a. and 1982.b.), then more precisely implemented and extended some decades later by Mascaro (2011) also in phonology and by Nunes (2004) in Syntax. Such rule ordering and rule flipping can feed or bleed and thus counter-feed or counter-bleed our linguistic choices at the phoneme level, the syllable level, the morpheme level and the lexeme level. By and large, this logical process can be relatively and satisfactorily extended to the field of translation as an endeavor in the cause of neatly and cogently highlighting and justifying any possible grammatical, lexical and stylistic choices that professional translators may opt for as stable and productive filters based on their idealized translation competence which is rooted in the foundations of Dell Hymes' communicative competence (Hymes, 1976; Hymes, 2003).

Keywords: feeding, counter-feeding, bleeding, communicative competence, counter-bleeding, Hymes, Kiparsky, rule ordering, rule flipping, translation competence.

1. Introduction

For ages and ages, translation theory has been the target for philosophers, literary critics, linguists and translation practitioners. This multi-source oriented intervention and diversity among specialists from different backgrounds have led to a state of chaos and invisibility for trainees and learners in translation programs due to the fuzzy jelly-like conceptualization of the basic assumptions of translation theory as proposed by these scholars. Such a pitiful state and dilemma has impacted and weakened the status of translation among other disciplines of humanity. Most translation studies in the twentieth century focus on a couple of issues: problematic aspects of translation and major propositions and assumptions that tend to prescribe some pedantic rules and strategies that translators may opt for to face such potential problems.

Some great and acknowledged pioneers such as Nida (1965) and Newmark (1981) have diligently exerted substantial efforts in order to set solid foundations that can regulate the process of translation worldwide due to their multilingual and multicultural expertise. Such earnest attempts to set some kind of formalism in the field of translation were motivated by the need for systematic trends and approaches that can help specialists develop their career in a digital world where computational aspects of science have overwhelmed almost all fields of humanities and arts colleges and departments.

Rudimentary treatise can be found in the translation literature as Catford (1965) tried to confine translation to the scope of applied linguistics where the translator shows his best to mediate between a source text and a target text in an ultimate attempt to achieve a high degree of equivalence linguistically and cross-culturally (Hatim, 1997). Therefore, he merely deemed translation as a matter of replacement and a set of shifts that operate phonologically, morphologically, syntactically and lexically. Honestly, this argument sounds promising because it was initialized six decades ago, a time of structuralist dominance and the birth of the generativist advent.

In the same vein, Newmark (1981) ascribed the process of translation to the very domain of comparative linguistics in general and comparative semantics in particular.

Therefore, Newmark's approach was basically lexically oriented at the level of performance; yet he never ignored the role of the communicative aspects of translation, so he differentiated between semantic method and communicative method and suggested a long list of strategies that can be employed to achieve such goals without identifying or justifying why such strategies can be interacting at the level of translation competence (Hatim and Munday, 2002); this leaves each translator with a bundle of proposals and strategies that he/she might opt for based on their own and maybe personal preferences.

Likewise, Nida (1964) extrapolated the foundations of his peers and his predecessors and refined the filtering process so that it can encapsulate some rigid principles that would make translation more systematic. Thus, he proposed dynamic equivalence to work hand in hand with formal equivalence while translating religious texts (cf. Newmark, 1988). This polarization can reshape specify the role and the target of the translators based on their presupposed objectives, yet such endeavors still operate within the structural domain of language and culture away from any generative and cognitive scope of language processing and language perception. Thus the clash between form and content has remained unsolved and unsettled except in prosaic realizations.

Vinay and Darbelnet (1976) proposed seven procedures that resemble Newmark's strategies, but they are still confined to the traditional paradigm of problem solving, so they prescribed these procedures without suggesting any robust linguistic argument for translators to follow in order to justify their choices; and here are the procedures that they reintroduced: transliteration, loan translation, literal translation, transposition, modulation, equivalence and adaptation. As a syntactician and a morphologist, Nida (1965) tried to adapt generative transformational grammar to fit his aims, so he suggested eight model kernel sentences that sum up the syntactic behavior of language while mediating between the source language and the target language structures. He, furthermore, attempted to apply his treatise of factorial analysis in order to logical relations among words; this approach can be so conducive to any computer-based or machine-based translation enterprise.

2. Methodology and Data Analysis

This paper addresses the basic assumptions of competence-based filters in translation; therefore, the researcher tries to borrow and implement some solid qualitative procedures that show systematic reliability while generating linguistic choices as such. Feeding and bleeding as a pair of rule-ordering and filtering approach has been used in various linguistic fields, but this is the first time to use it while analyzing optimal translation choices vis-à-vis the data and the texts that the researcher has closely examined. The data in question represent a sample of three famous Qura'nic renditions of one short Sura in the Holy Qurán, namely, AlShams (the Sun). This short Sura has been translated several times by several professional translators and translation foundations. The sura consists of fifteen verses; only the first ten verses will be considered and analyzed because they are thematically, semantically and syntactically related; and the data encapsulated in these ten verses meet the objectives and the limitations of this very study. The researcher examined three well-acknowledged renditions, mainly, Yusuf Ali's, Marmaduke Pikhthall's and M. Khan and T. AlHelali; then he compared the output of these renditions to understand the systematic procedures that each translator has adopted, on the one hand, and to rationalize their choices in light of and as far as rule-ordering is concerned in a way that can manifest how translation competence operates in such cases of divergence and convergence. More than fifty renditions have been carried out from Arabic into English; admittedly, Ali's Pikhthall's AlHelali's are well-recognized among the best professional translators in this field. That's why these three have been exclusively considered by the researcher.

3. Theoretical Background

Translation movement in the world, in general, and in the Arab World, in particular, has witnessed strong waves of ebb and flow of prosperity for some times and regression some other times. Baker (2005), argues that "the Arabs are credited with initiating the first organized, large-scale translation activity in history. This activity started during the reign of the Umayyads (661- 750) and reached its zenith under the Abbasids (750-1258)" (p.318). Objectively, that era was the true beginning of institutionalized translation movement in the world. Thousands and thousands of papers and theses have been written about the linguistic and the cultural problems that translators do face when they translate the Holy Qurán. The Holy Qur'an has been translated into English dozens of times. The first records reveal that some renditions were carried out when the Qurán was translated into European languages in the twelfth century; and since then attempts have never stopped, (Baker, 2001).

The researcher can claim that all these studies have handled these issue in a very traditional and classical way by highlighting those problems, categorizing them and explaining the meanings of the verses in question in order to show how such renditions can be judged successful or unsuccessful and to mention or describe the strategies used while translating those verses. Eugene Nida (1965) postulates that there that translating religious or biblical texts constitutes a dilemma for translators because of the technicality of the jargon and because of the formality of the text and the lexical gaps that surface every now and then between the source text and the target text denotatively or connotatively, (see Munday, 2008). Therefore, Dickins, Hervey, and Higgins (2002) assume the following: “The subject matter of religious texts implies the existence of a spiritual world that is not fictive, but has its own external realities and truths.”(p.178). Jakobson (1959) was one of the most exemplary theoreticians who set the cornerstones for translation modes and genres as he clearly introduced intralingual translation, interlingual translation and Intersemiotic translation. Hence, the focus of most so-called linguistic approaches to translation tend to be hinging upon interlingual translation by describing the existence or the absence of equivalence between the SL and the TL. This obsession and this quest for equivalence can be best seen in Catford (1965) and his perception of translation in terms of correspondence and replacement as he argues that translation is “the replacement of textual material in one language by equivalent textual material in another language”(p.20). This lexical hunt is due to the very premise that envisages translation as a matter of exchanging linguistically and culturally encoded components of communication, (Hatim and Mason, 1990).

Interestingly, Wilss (1996) was one of the pioneers to use the term ‘translation competence’, though less technically, as he argues that “the notion of translation competence, is aptly assessed in transfer situations that require at least some degree of adaptation to new and challenging textual demands ... which need structural adjustment”(p.95). His perception of competence is nothing but to describe the translator’s qualifications and training linguistically, unlike what Shiyab (2006) proposes when he considers translation as “the transference of a message communicated from one text into a message communicated in another, with a high degree of attaining equivalence of context of the message, components of the original text, and the semiotic elements of the text” (p.22). This argument looks at the first glance more comprehensive, yet it is loose, vague and even contradictory because ‘semiotic elements’ entail the components of the ST as well as other contextual factors in addition to stylistic factors, (cf. Nida and Taber, 1969; Bell, 1992; Hatim and Munday, 2004, *et al*).

Most researchers do concentrate on underpinning and sorting the linguistic aspects of the text where phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics pose some serious problems for translators, (Nida, 1964; Lefevere, 1992; Dickins, *et al*, 2002). Yet, cultural aspects have been also among the priorities of most professional translators, (Nida and Taber, 1969; Lefevere, 1992). Therefore, linguistic and cultural losses are always inevitable as far as translating authoritative texts is in display, (Bassnett, 2002; Baker, 2005; Toury 1995 *et al*). Such translation are always possible as long as a huge gap between semantic translation and communicative translation is at play (cf. Newmark, 1981).

Translation studies unlike most linguistic studied have been immensely if not completely directed and motivated by performance-based hypotheses and models While in fact competence-based studies have been ignored (cf. Gilbert, 2007). Such conventional approaches to translation achieve the research goals of descriptive adequacy but can never achieve a satisfactory degree of analytic adequacy that can be fruitfully exploited in the cause of explaining how lexical choice and lexical creativity can be incorporated in any future computerized theory (Kenny, 2011).

This major concern was one of the most compelling factors in various fields of linguistics since the mid of the twentieth century as a result of the tug-war between the Chomskeans and the skinnerean scholars (cf. Seuren 1998). It was Noam Chomsky who initiated that war against behavior psychological assumptions that failed to cater for language productivity and language creativity (see Chomsky, 1957; Chomsky, 1965; Chomsky, 1972; Chomsky, 1995) The Chomskean school is based primarily on some nativists’ assumptions that polarize the distinctions between performance and competence and show dogmatic kinship to competence-based linguistics that can be responsible for generative grammars and linguistic universal (Lehmann, 1982; Koemer, 1983; Terrace, 1987).

Stemming from such endeavors that aim at substantiating the role of grammatical competence as proposed by Noam Chomsky, Kiparsky (1968) tried to devise some technical terms that can precisely rationalize the correspondence between the underlying and the surface structure of phonological processing. Therefore he introduced feeding and bleeding as two distinct operations that describe the linguistic operations that take place before any phonological spell-out. This cogent argument developed by Kiparsky (1982) and some of his advisees to incorporate some intermediate phonological stages that can intervene as counterfeeding and counterbleeding as revisited by Mascaro (2011). Moreover, such a competence-based approach was borrowed and implemented in the field of generative syntax by Nunes (2004) to explore how some phrase movements may take place when a suitable environment exists, i.e. feeding or how such movements can be obstructed on certain circumstances, i.e. bleeding.

This brilliant notion has triggered major aspects of optimality theory, and this is exactly how McCarthy puts the linear interaction between segments in their possible environments and relations. Thus all candidates are quite predictable as long as such linguistic environments are quite stable:

1. *X feeds Y if and only if X furnishes additional inputs to Y.*
2. *X bleeds Y if and only if X terminates potential inputs to Y.*
3. *Y counterfeeds X if and only if Y furnishes additional inputs to X.*
4. *Y counterbleeds X if and only if Y terminates potential inputs to X.*

Unfortunately, translation literature and research on competence-oriented theory can be almost irrelevant to such systematic mechanism and perception of competence-based linguistics. Most endeavors that refer to translation and competence use such terms to refer to the skills that the translators must possess, or the talents they must enjoy, or the training they may receive or the education/the degree they may earn. In fact, such factors have nothing to do with competence; rather they exhibit how translation operates in terms of performance. This can be of little benefit for future digital translation projects, computational translation and technical translation programs (cf. Bell, 1991; Kiraly, 1995; Toury, 1995; Shreve, 1997; Kelly, 2000, *et al*).

In conclusion, such proposals concerning translation competence, translator's competence or translational competence are nothing but performance-oriented assumptions that explain the role of translators' professional expertise while rendering any text (see Dimitrova, 2005). Therefore, Chomsky's grammatical competence and Hymes' communicative competence (Hymes, 1961; Hymes, 1967; Hymes, 1972; Hymes, 1974) will be integrated to cope with a widely comprehensive view of rule ordering while discussing the data in question so that both linguistic and cultural constraints can be more elaborately investigated towards a satisfactory analytic adequacy of the research.

4. Analysis and Discussion

This section mainly handles how the verses of the Sun Sura (Al-Shams) have been translated by the three translators in an attempt to explore how systematic the translation constraints can operate and how such linguistic and cultural constraints may communicatively interact in a way that may reflect rule implementation and rule ordering when applicable.

4.1. Pronominal Agreement and Feeding Filter:

Gender agreement in Arabic plays a vital role that show keen morpho-syntactic interaction at the inflectional and the derivational levels. Therefore, translating such gender-related occurrences can engender problematic aspects of translation. The following example (4.1.a) can show how this agreement may feed or bleed some translation choices:

(4.1.a.)

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا (6) وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا طَحَنَةً (5) وَالسَّمَاءِ وَمَا بَنَى (4) وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَى (3) وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا تَجَلَّى (2) وَالْقَمَرَ إِذَا تَلَّى (1) وَالشَّمْسِ وَضُحًى (7) سُوْرِيهَا

It is obvious that each of these seven verses end with the feminine pronoun "ها". This pronoun can be attached to both nouns and verbs, so it is attached one time to the noun as in the first verse and six times to verbs as in the other verses (2-7). This pronoun serves an important phonological and poetic effect at the level of prosody and rhyming endings in the Arabic text. However, such a device is inevitably lost when these verses are translated into English by the three translators because the pronominal form and function in English is substantially different. Ali and Khan & AlHelali completely ignored this issue while Pikhall tried to maintain a pseudo sound effect as he used the pronouns "him" and "it" repetitively and successively in (2-4) and (5-7), respectively.

(1) By the sun and his brightness, (2) And the moon when she followeth **him**, (3) And the day when it revealeth **him**, (4) And the night when it enshroudeth **him**, (5) And the heaven and **him** Who built **it**, (6) And the earth and Him Who spread **it**, (7) And a soul and Him Who perfected **it**. **Pikhall**

Therefore, mismatching pronominal distribution between the ST and the TT cannot be attained; Moreover, the distribution of him and it in English looks awkward and fuzzy in these instances where as it is well-formed and naturally perceived in these Arabic verses simply because the pronouns and their antecedents in Arabic are fully coherent unlike their English counterparts in these renditions.

Furthermore, the mismatching gender distinctions between the Arabic ST and the English TT aggravates the communicative value of the output. This can be evidently seen as each pronoun in each verse refers to an inanimate antecedent within the same verse.

This anaphoric representation is consistent and systematic in the ST where the pronoun "ها" is used all through these seven verses, but concordance and consistency in the target texts (by all translators) is minimal. All these grammatically inanimate antecedents, i.e. the sun, the moon, the day, the night, the heaven, the earth and the soul have two pronominal representation of their grammatical gender in Arabic (masculine or feminine) while in English there are three: (feminine, masculine and neuter: he/him, she/her, it/it in their nominative and accusative cases).

The translation filters, in addition, can be working harder as the pronominal realizations of sun and the moon in Arabic have been translated in more problematic fashion. It is unanimously agreed upon that the sun is feminine and the moon is masculine in Arabic, so the pronominal distinction is clear in the ST (4.1.b):

(4.1.b)

(4) وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَىٰهَا (3) وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا جَلَّىٰهَا (2) وَالْقَمَرَ إِذَا تَلَّىٰهَا (1) وَالشَّمْسَ وَضُحًىٰهَا

One can easily identify the existence of the Arabic pronoun “ها” attached in red to the last word in each verse; this clearly shows that all these pronouns refer directly to the sun because it is feminine as the pronoun surfaces in all these words: (1) ضُحًىٰهَا (2) تَلَّىٰهَا (3) جَلَّىٰهَا (4) يَغْشَىٰهَا). However, this neat linguistic and smooth communicative distinction in Arabic is almost lost or relatively less conspicuously used in the English versions. Khan and AlHelali opted for the neuter pronoun “it” to refer to all previous instances to show a good deal consistency and to avoid vagueness. However, Pikthall and Ali used this neuter pronoun to refer to the earth, the day, the night, the soul; but for the sun and the moon they committed a fatal mistake as they opted for the reverse gender-marked pronominal choices, i.e. he/him for the sun and she/her for the moon although in English the sun is typically feminine and the moon is typically masculine, exactly similar to what we have in Arabic. They, simply opted for the marked choice in English which has been borrowed from French in used in English for poetic and formal causes. The faithfulness filter in these two instances has been violated so counterfeeding comes into effect; the result of such unsolicited sacrifice is a mismatch between the ST and the TT and a misleading message that normal bilinguals may encounter as it can be seen in Ali’s which is not different from Pikthall’s in this regard:

- (1) By the Sun And **his** (glorious) splendor;
- (2) By the Moon As **she** follows **him**;
- (3) By the Day as **it** Shows up (the Sun’s) glory;
- (4) By the Night as **it** Conceals **it**; Ali

4.2. Swearing Formula and Bleeding Filter

Swearing formulas are quite common in religious texts. The Holy Quran is no exception in this connection. However, there are many Suras that are noticeably introduced with such swearing forms using the Arabic swearing particle “و”; this particle is similar to the English swearing particle “by”; yet it syntactically serves as an operator that leads the following adjacent noun to be morpho-syntactically inflected with a dative-like case marker “كسرة”. The same morphological homonymous form of this “و” exists in Arabic to serve various grammatical and communicative functions, most common of which is coordination at the lexical, phrasal and sentential levels; this “و” is very similar to the English coordinator “and” as it can be seen in (4.2.a.) where the swearing particle is underlined in red:

(4.2.a.)

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا طَحَّهَا (6) وَالسَّمَاءِ وَمَا بَنَّاها (5) وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَىٰهَا (4) وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا جَلَّىٰهَا (3) وَالقَمَرَ إِذَا تَلَّىٰهَا (2) وَالشَّمْسَ وَضُحًىٰهَا (1) وَسَوَّيْنَاها (7)

As one can obviously realize, the swearing formula “noun+و” has been repeated as an initial phrase in the first seven verses in the Arabic version: (وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا طَحَّهَا، وَالسَّمَاءِ وَمَا بَنَّاها، وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَىٰهَا، وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا جَلَّىٰهَا، وَالقَمَرَ إِذَا تَلَّىٰهَا، وَالشَّمْسَ وَضُحًىٰهَا، وَسَوَّيْنَاها). This explicit swearing formula has been rendered explicitly and equally by Ali (By the Sun, By the Moon, By the Day, By the Night; By the Firmament, By the Earth, By the soul), as well as Khan and Helali (By the Sun, By the Moon, By the Day, By the Night; By the heaven, By the Earth, By Nafs/soul). Nonetheless, Pikthall shows a strange translation behavior as he implemented a sort of implicit swearing formula; he used the particle “by” in the first instance “By the sun” and then he opted for using the coordinator “and” in English to convey the elliptical function of “I swear by” six times instead (By the Sun, And the Moon, And the Day, And the Night; And the Firmament, And the Earth, And the soul). Bearing in mind that both the swearing particle and the coordinator in Arabic have the same form “و”, Pikthall’s strategy seems awkward and misleading; any good reader may assume that Pikthall is violating Opacity condition for no valid reason. Thus, the elliptical choice that Pikthall has preferred and implemented bleeds the optimal choice that can achieve both naturalness and faithfulness.

4.3. Clause-Relations and Counter-bleeding

Different types of clauses can be used in both Arabic and English; syntactically and semantically, clauses exhibit close interaction between parts of the same clause and in relation to one another, so such relations can show various aspects of meanings such as *temporal, locative, causal, resultative, instrumental, agentive, additive, etc.* Clause filters are very sensitive, because such intricate relations among clauses can be often misunderstood or interpreted in more than one way depending on the textual clues and keys in addition to some contextual clues in some cases. This clause-relation structure is evident in the first eight verses of the Sun Sura as each verse comprises a certain aspect of time relation or cause-effect relation as it can be seen in (4.3.a.):

(4.3.a.)

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا (6) وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا طَحْنَهَا (5) وَالسَّمَاءِ وَمَا بَنَاهَا (4) وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَاهَا (3) وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا تَجَلَّىٰهَا (2) وَالْقَمَرَ إِذَا تَلَّهَا (1) وَالشَّمْسِ وَضُحَاهَا (7) سَوَّيَهَا

Again and again, such clausal relations have been realized somehow differently among the three renditions at hand as it can be seen underneath.

- | | |
|---|---|
| (1) By the Sun And his (glorious) splendor; | (1) By the sun and its brightness. |
| (2) By the Moon as she follows him; | (2) By the moon as it follows it (the sun). |
| (3) By the Day as it Shows up (the Sun's) glory; | (3) By the day as it shows up brightness. |
| (4) By the Night as it Conceals it; K & H | (4) By the night as it conceals it. Ali |

Of course, Ali as well as Khan and Helali seem in harmony as their competence clause filter applies time and cause relations simultaneously to the internal relationship between the first and the second clausal parts of each verse in (2-4). Therefore, both of them translated the particle “إِذَا” into “as” to capture the internal meaning of time-wise and cause-wise. This dual communicative function makes the meaning of the whole verse more effective and more comprehensive since the swearing formula in each verse becomes more expressive and more miraculous; i.e. God is swearing by the moon when immediately follows the sun and as an inevitable result of the sun's movement in its orbit while the moon also is rotating within the spatio-temporal limitations of its orbit too. This also applies to the subtle simultaneous tempo-causal relations encapsulated in the day and the sun and the night and the sun as well. Thus, time filter feeds causality in these two renditions. In this case, time filter rule optionally counterbleeds cause filter rule.

On the other hand, Piktall's competence filters work in a relatively different manner as it can be seen in the following rendition of his:

- (1) By the sun **and** his brightness,
- (2) **And** the moon **when** she followeth him,
- (3) **And** the day **when** it revealeth him,
- (4) **And** the night **when** it enshroudeth him,

Unlike the two previous renditions, Piktall translated the Arabic particle “إِذَا” into “when”. Logically, the subordinator “when” expresses a sense relation of time adverbiality. Therefore, Piktall seems more inclined to interpret the clause relation as a kind of unidirectional temporal kinship between the sun and the other natural objects and phenomenon cited in the following verses (2-4). This level of understanding and logical relation can be valid to some extent, but it does not express the sophisticated clausal relations conveyed in Ali's rendition and Khan & AlHelali's. This, inadequate and less appropriate rendition is not necessarily due to Piktall's incompetence to capture part of that double-folded meaning; rather it can be due to the clash that has resulted from rule ordering; i.e. he preferred to avoid any ambiguous interpretation by his audience, so he opted for the explicit meaning of the time adverbial “when” as such. Thus, time filters do bleed causality.

4.4. Lexical Filters

Lexical choices are among the most controversial issues in translation studies. In fact, most of the approaches and theories are lexical-oriented. Therefore, it is evident in the literature review that most of the argument of most scholars handle translation as a matter of looking for appropriate choices because translation as a craft and as a skill requires the translator's ability to match lexical equivalents between the ST and the TT. This quest cannot be left to translators' personal preferences; rather strict lexical filters of feeding and bleeding must be activated accordingly. Both of the semantic content and the communicative effect of such lexical choice must be compromised and balanced while such filters do operate.

The three renditions at hand exhibit a number of case where discrepancy among the these translators obviously emerge; the goal is not to discuss all these case one by one but to explain how such filters can help us understand the motivations behind such lexical filtering. From the very beginning of the first verse the Arabic word “ضُحَى” can reveal some aspects of the process as in (4.4.a.)

(4.4.a.)

وَالشَّمْسُ وَضُحَاهَا

The word “ضُحَى” in Arabic refers to the state of the sun around the hour following the sunrise. This state is when the sun rays do radiate gently in abundance during the early hours of the morning; i.e. before noon. Also the word refers to the time itself. Therefore, Ali translated it into “glorious splendor” which almost has an explicit affiliation to both the this very state of the sun. His choice is very formal and poetic too. However, the modification he used, i.e. the adjective “glorious” is redundant because “splendor” itself according to English dictionaries such as Webster and Oxford mean “great brightness”, so glorious would be useless. Moreover, Ali’s rendition failed to reflect the exact time associated with this phenomenon of brightness; which is a serious problem. On the other hand, the other two versions by Khan & AlHelali and Pikhall simply rendered it as “brightness”, which is an example of poor translation because it lacks faithfulness; it lacks accuracy; it lacks commensurate formality and it lacks poeticity. Such lexical choices by the three translators can manifest a bleeding rule, i.e. how the appearance-wise meaning filter has subdued the time-wise content and all its associations.

Another instance of ambivalence among the translators at the level of formality and more importantly at the level of parallel formality as it can be seen in (4.4.b.):

(4.4.b.)

(4) وَاللَّيْلُ إِذَا يَغْشَاهَا (3) وَالنَّهَارُ إِذَا جَلَّاهَا

The Arabic words “جَلَّاهَا” and “يَغْشَاهَا” are antonyms and both of them are very formal. Therefore, any professional translation should consider such semantic and stylistic dimensions. Unfortunately, Both Ali and Khan & AlHelai paid no heed to the demand, so the rendered “جَلَّاهَا” into “show up” and “يَغْشَاهَا” into conceal where they maintained the antonymous relation but failed to convey the stylistic relation in terms of formality correspondence between the two English antonyms. On the other hand, Pikhall, was more successful in conveying this stylistic variable in tandem with a high a degree of faithfulness to the semantic content as he impressively translated “جَلَّاهَا” and “يَغْشَاهَا” into “revealth” and “enshroudeth”, respectively.. This example also is another instance of clashing filters that can be seen at the level of literal meaning vs. metaphorical meaning, which in turn affects the poetic value of lexical choices, so the counterbleeding filter wins in Pikhall’s.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, the researcher found that professional translation can be more systematized as translation filters can be duly and appropriately set. Such filters demonstrate how translation competence regularly operates in these translation endeavors by implementing and following feeding and bleeding filters that guarantee a systematic output and spell-out as the translator is fully aware of the linguistic and the communicative components of the ST while maneuvering to transfer the pronominal, the lexical and the clausal components into the TL. Therefore, the researcher tried to adopt a non-conventional approach that can trigger new horizons for modern translation studies that would shift away from the deeply rooted philosophical and subjective limitations of structural and pseudo functional theories of equivalence-oriented enterprises. Therefore, this research tips the scale of priorities; instead of investigating translation as a craft, future studies can more drastically address issues of more significance in light of competence-based models. Such models should incorporate both linguistic and communicative pillars of translation competence in an attempt to generate sets of rules based on translation universals instead of the dominant focus and trends that do prioritize a considerable portion of the current research which is essentially dedicated to incidental occurrences of linguistic differences and performance-based rules.

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Bio

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