TRANSLATING SELECTED POLYSEMOUS WORDS IN THE HOLY QURĀN INTO ENGLISH: AN ANALYSIS OF STRATEGIES AND PROCEDURES

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Abstrak


Kata kunci: Terjemahan, Al-Quran, Perkataan polisemi, Literal, Makna sebenar
Abstract

Polysemy refers to those words that have multiple related meanings. In the Qurān, there are numerous polysemous words; therefore, in translating this holy book, the translator will encounter problems in identifying and rendering the intended meaning of the polysemous words. Previous literature has revealed that limited studies have been done to examine how polysemy is translated in the Qurān, namely into English. To bridge this gap, the current study seeks to clarify the governing factors, which help to identify the intended meaning of the polysemous words, in order to propose a logical procedure to transfer the polysemous words in the Qurān. Drawing upon Nida’s and Newmark’s theories in translation, the study examines the translations of 24 ambiguous senses from 12 selected polysemous words in the Qurān. The samples were selected from four selected translation of the Qurān. Descriptive, interpretive and comparative analyses were carried out in order to achieve its aims. The study reveals that understanding the context, reasons for revelation, perception of the verses surrounding the polysemy, consultation of numerous authentic commentaries and comprehension of the syntactic and grammatical features of the verse are crucial factors in identifying the intended meaning of the polysemous words in the Qurān. Through the analysis, the study found that the selected translators employed literal and semantic renditions; paraphrasing, descriptive information, communicative translation and transliteration strategies to transfer the meaning of the polysemy. Moreover, the results revealed that the explication, communicative and interpretive strategies are appropriate to convey the intended meaning of the polysemous words in the Qurān. The current study enhances the field of Qurānic translation by proposing concrete procedures to overcome the difficulties in rendering the deep sense of the polysemy in the Holy Qurān.

Keywords: Translating, Holy Qurān, Polysemous words, Literal, Intended meaning
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**Abbreviations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KFCPQ</td>
<td>King Fahd’s Complex for the Printing of the Qurān</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBUH</td>
<td>Peace Be Upon Him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL</td>
<td>Source Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLT</td>
<td>Source Language Text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST</td>
<td>Source Text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TL</td>
<td>Target Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLT</td>
<td>Target Language Text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TT</td>
<td>Target Text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transliteration

Consonants:

| ً | ٍ | ر | ُ | غ | غ
|---|---|---|---|---|---
| b | z | ِ | f | q | k
| t | s | َ | ٞ | m | h
| th | sh | ُ | َ | n |
| j | ُ | ُ | ٓ | w | y
| h | ḥ | ُ | َ | ِ | ِ |
| kh | ḍ | ُ | َ | ُ | ِ |
| d | ž | c | َ | ِ |
| dh | َ | ِ |
| َ | ِ |

Vowels:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a</th>
<th>Long vowel</th>
<th>َ</th>
<th>ِ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ā</td>
<td>Long vowel</td>
<td>َ</td>
<td>ِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(kasra)</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>َ</td>
<td>ِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(dhamma)</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>َ</td>
<td>ِ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(fatha)</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>َ</td>
<td>ِ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This transliteration is extracted from *Dictionary of Islamic Terms* (Al-Khaḍrawy, 2004, p. 13) and from *Journal of Qurānic Studies*, which is published by School of African and Oriental Studies, University of London. In addition, the symbols of (ỹ) - (ĩ) were taken from *the International Organisation for Standardisation*. This transliteration will be adopted in the course of this study.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTORY

1.1 Background

Translation plays a crucial and significant role in the dissemination of knowledge and culture among different peoples who speak various languages. Numerous books, journals, articles, and technical texts are translated every year in order to transmit knowledge and information throughout the world. One of the most influential books in the history of mankind, which has been translated into many languages, is the Holy Qurān. It is a sacred book for Muslims in which both the message and the words expressing the message are all sacrosanct. Adopted by 1.5 billion people, Islam is considered as the fastest growing religion in the world. Considering the multiplicity of languages in the world, it becomes necessary to translate this important religious text from Arabic into other languages so that a great segment of mankind may benefit from it (Qadhi, 1999, p. 348).

The need for translating the Qurān stemmed from those historical circumstances where a large number of non-Arabic-speaking people had embraced Islam, and gave new linguistic perspectives to the contents of the revelation (Kidwai, 1987, p. 1). The Qurān has been translated into many languages, including English, French, German, Italian, Chinese, Spanish, Hausa, Indonesian, Malay, Tamil, Urdu, among others (Elimam, 2009, p. 11). Translating the Qurān is a controversial issue that has always raised pressing and recurring questions such as: Is the Qurān translatable? Is it translatable in whole or in part? Is the translation a substitute for the original Arabic
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References


