Translating the Rhetoric of the Holy Quran

between Source Identity and Target Culture

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A Model for the Translation of Conditional Structures in the Holy Quran

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Abstract

Language is a multi layered structured set of phonological and semantic systems wielded together by logical sets of syntactic constructs expressed in terms of a set of operators, traditionally referred to as “rules” of grammar. The latter not only translate a certain linguistic competence but also and at the same time do reflect the sociolinguistic, psychological and intellectual constructs of a given society.

Our first aim in this paper is to discuss the different patterns of Arabic conditional structures in the Holy Quran and the way these underlie different modes of thinking the world and its relations. Such an intellectual projection, will, in turn, impact on the translation possibilities between any two languages and between Arabic and English in particular. The second objective of this paper is to discuss the condition particles in Arabic and their distribution in the Holy Quran with regard to some logical or scientific criteria induced by the idiosyncratic colligations. This will entail the elaboration of a model for the translation of the conditional structure.

Key words: Back transformation, conditional structure, deontic modality, epistemic modality, kernels, model, pragmatics, reconstructing, rhetorical structure, source text, target text, transfer, and translation.

Introduction

The condition structure in Arabic can be conveyed through a wide spectrum of particles, syntagms and colligational patterns. This article, however, will consider only three variables among this large inventory. Emphasis will be put on the three particles ['in], [law] and ['idhaa].
The analysis of the particles will be distributed over four condition structures which compose the open data of this paper. In order to do so, we shall adopt Nida’s translation theory as the foundation of our analysis. However, the nature of the sacred translated text requires some theoretical and practical modifications and amendments of Nida’s proposals. We will, thus endeavour to provide a more viable model of translation that can be applicable to the Holy Quran. In doing so, we will concentrate our analysis on the translatability of four condition structures; namely the explicit conditional structure, the incomplete explicit conditional structure, the implicit conditional structure and finally the rhetorical conditional structure. In order to achieve this goal, a methodological foundation consisting of an overview of Nida’s was necessary. This allowed the generation of a three stage condition model, the components of which are, the input, the back-transformation and the output.

The Condition Structure of Arabic

The Arabic condition structure (henceforth CS) is formed by three components which include the particle, the primary verb (henceforth V1) and the secondary verb (henceforth V2). The primary verb relates to the condition particle (henceforth CP) - a prerequisite to the conditional clause- whereas the secondary verb relates to the condition response which is the complementary part necessary for a complete condition formulation. In other words, this can be expressed by the following formula:

None of the previous studies conducted by such authors as Sibawaih, Ibn Hishaam and so forth investigated the CS in its own right; rather the latter was always analyzed concomitantly and in conjunction with the negation structure.

Contrary to the modern approach which considers the CS as one complex sentence, traditional grammar, on the other hand, always viewed CS as a structure composed of two different sentences. It is, indeed, a well known truth that one of the characteristics of the CS is to convey conciseness. In that respect Arromanii states: “The CS conveys meaning in a concise and straightforward way” (1) What is, indeed, interesting in this quotation is the nature of the semantic load

(1) Annukatu fii ‘icjaaz alqor’aan :p. 71
versus the lexical density ratio. Thus, what we can, objectively, observe is the fact that, in spite of a very small set of lexical items, the CS does, nonetheless, offer a very large semantic spectrum.

**Types of Condition Structure**

Contrary to what is generally expected in, say, English in which the condition formulation can be perceived in terms of either a global or a dichotomous binary relation, in Arabic, the CS is comprehended in terms of a bilateral relation between V1 and V2. As a result of the latter perspective, in Arabic the CS is logically divided into two categories; namely the REAL and the UNREAL CSs. On that account Arromaanii adds:

The real condition is that in which the relationship between V1 and V2 is consequentially based. Thus, if V1 is implemented or fulfilled, as a result V2 is also implemented or fulfilled... the unreal CS, however, is that in which the relationship between V1 and V2 is hypothetically based, thus if V1 is fulfilled V2 might not be so\(^{(1)}\)

\[^{(1)}\] Al’itqaanu fii ‘annahwi wa ‘icraabi alqor’aan :pp 410-411.

**['in], ['idhaa], and [law] particles**

Although the Arabic CS, can, indeed, be conveyed through quite a wide range of particles, syntagms and colligations, only ['in], ['idhaa], and [law] will be of relevance in our discussion. The main reason for their selection is that they have a very high probability of occurrence as condition slots in the Quran. In the forthcoming paragraphs, we will shed light on the use of the afore-mentioned particles in terms of the differences that hold between them. Hence, whereas the particle ['in], expresses doubt in the implementation of the verb, ['idhaa] designates certitude of the verb implementation and, finally, [law] translates a pure impossibility of the verb implementation.

In order to illustrate the above variables, let us consider the following examples:
In this verse, we can notice a dichotomic use of the particles in terms of both naturalness and exceptionality. Thus the particle ['idhaa] is used in such a context where the event is naturally expected, whereas ['in] is used in a particularly exceptional context. This natural versus exceptional parameter can be correlated to the natural, usual and frequent well being and good health of a person versus the less frequent, rare and exceptional cases of hardship and sickness.

In this respect Haaddii Nahr explores the binary usage of ['in] and ['Idhaa] in the Holy Quran in the following terms:

whereas ['in] is used in both the context of doubt and that of incertitude of the verb implementation, ['Idhaa], on the other hand, is used in the contexts of the certitude of the verb implementation, of the temporal knowledge of the event implementation and, finally, of an asserted event. The Quran has, therefore, integrated all these parameters and realized them in terms of a differential usage and a diversity of semantic fields\(^{(1)}\).

Whereas in this verse, Allah almighty used ['idhaa] to convey the meaning of a doomed event, that of death, ['in] is used, instead, to convey the meaning of incertitude as, it is clear that not all mortals would afford to leave some wealth for inheritance.

In this verse, [law] is used to convey the meaning of the verb un-implementation. In this respect, Sibawaihi claims that [law] “…is

\(^{(1)}\) Ibid: p 411.
used for what might have been fulfilled if the prerequisite verb had been fulfilled" (1)

As in our discussion the use of the star in conjunction with the verb (*V) translates the un-fulfilment of an action, we can, therefore, formulate the logical relation of un-fulfilment that holds between V1 and V2 in terms of the following If / then rule:

If *V1 then *V2

It is important to mention that the nature of the syntagmatic relations holding between the various components of the conditional structure depend on the choice of one of the particles standing in a paradigmatic relation. It is, thus, only when, at a very abstract level, the whole set of the paradigms underlie, yet, another abstract particle and a particular V1/V2 colligation, that we would obtain a deep abstraction syntagm, that of the conditional structure.

To summarize what has been described and discussed above, we propose the following schema:

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(1) Alkitaab: V 4:224

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The Condition Structure in the Holy Quran

It is important to mention that these CSs raise numerous challenges related to all of the syntactic, semantic, stylistic and pragmatic levels of the translation process. Therefore we must understand that it is not enough for a translator to transfer a CS into the target language (henceforth TL) in terms of a superficial meaning, but most importantly, he must consider its various types, as each hold a particular and idiosyncratic meaning. This is necessary in order to transfer the deep meaning of the CS in the source language (henceforth SL) into the TL.

Before analyzing the various types of condition structures in the Holy Quran, it is fitting to mention that these proposed types are the output of a minute and detailed research on a large corpus describing the use of condition patterns in the Holy Book. These types include:

The Explicit CS

It is worth mentioning that the explicit condition structure can be broken into two types: a type in which the three components of the CS are present and a second type in which one or more components are omitted. The former is henceforth labelled Explicit Conditional Structure (henceforth ECS) and the latter as the Incomplete Explicit Condition Structure (henceforth IECS). An ECS is that in which all of particle, V1 and V2 are present in its structure. In most cases, the ECS does not create any major syntactic problem as all three components are available and explicit. Consider the following example:

(4) وَإِنَّ أَحْسَسْتُ أَحْسَسْتُ لأَنَّكُمْ لَأَنفَسُكُمْ (الإِسْرَائِيلَ) [الإسراء: 7]

If ye did well, ye did well for yourselves

Concerning the verse, Al Biqaaqii states: “By following the tenants of the Holy Book, believers do well for themselves. And for the same reasons Allah Almighty also rewards them in both this life and the thereafter” (1). In this verse the three components of the CS are
explicit in both the source text (henceforth ST) and the target text (henceforth TT). This explicitness does facilitate the task of the translator who will, therefore, keep the same components in the TL.

(5)

وإذًا مَا غَضَبُوا هُمُ ٱلْغَفِرُونَ [الشورى: 37]

When they are angry, even then forgive.

Attabaari explains that: “Even when the believers are angry as the result of an aggression, they still forgive and do not retaliate”\(^1\)

We can also notice in this verse that the three components of the CS are explicitly available in both the ST and the TT.

In view of the data presented above and, if we consider that the CS is structured in terms of the three components, namely,

\[ X1 = \text{particle}, \]
\[ X2 = V1 \text{ and} \]
\[ X3 = V2 \]

then we can logically formulate the following rule that governs the ECS:

RULE1:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{If} & \quad \text{ST (CS)} = X1 + X2 + X3, \\
\text{Then} & \quad \text{ST (CS)} = \text{TT (CS)} = X1 + X2 + X3
\end{align*}
\]

The Incomplete Explicit Conditional Structure

In the language of the Quran, the three components of the CS are not always present in the condition formulation. Therefore, in some cases, some of these components can simply be deleted. In spite of such a deletion the conditional meaning, still, remains fully comprehensible.

A- Particle and V1 deletion

Concerning this type of deletion, Alʿashmuunii states that: “V1 deletion is less frequent than that of a dual deletion of the particle and V1.”\(^2\)

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\(^1\) Tafsir jaamici albayaan fii tafsiri alqurʿaan: T23:581.

This can be illustrated by the following example:

(6)

\[\text{\textquoteleft\textquoteleft} \text{Thou wouldst have deemed them awake whilst they were asleep\textquoteright\textquoteright} \]  

In this verse, both the particle and \textit{V1} are omitted in the ST. As for the translation of this verse, we can notice that the conditional meaning which is obvious in the Arabic version, is somehow, missed in the English one. The evident formulation of the conditional form is explained by Arraazii in terms of a reconstruction and reordering of the clause components. Thus, he states that the verse means:

\[\text{\textquoteleft\textquoteleft} \text{If you saw them, you would think they are awake\textquoteright\textquoteright}  \]

We, therefore, suggest that the translation of the verse be:

\[\text{\textquoteleft\textquoteleft} \text{If you had seen them asleep, you would have believed they were awake\textquoteright\textquoteright} \]

For this pattern, we can, therefore, formulate the following relation: Though we might have the structure of ST (CS) as:

We should, nonetheless, render this pattern in terms of the original structure which is:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\emptyset + \emptyset + X3 \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
TT (CS) = X1 + X2 + X3
\]

**B- V2 deletion**

In the Arabic grammar literature, it is, indeed, a well known fact that V2 deletion is used to express, for example, emphasis and glorification. In this respect Alfarraa\' states: “V2 is deleted to express conciseness or (in the case of) reference to previous knowledge”\(^2\)

This can be illustrated by the following verse:

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If they had kept their faith and guarded themselves from evil, far better had been the reward from their Lord, if they but knew.

Regarding this verse Attabaari states: “The verbal deletion process is compensated by a nominalisation one”\(^{(1)}\) In this respect ‘Alhalabi adds: “V2 is deleted and could be re-established in terms of what it originally referred to. In the case in point, it refers to [la ‘utiibuu]\(^{(2)}\)

This can be reformulated by the following rule:

**Rule 2:**

\[
\text{If } ST (CS) = X1 + X2 + \emptyset, \\
\text{Then } ST (CS) = TT (CS) = X1 + X2 + X3
\]

It is, then, worth mentioning that the verbal form of X3 in the ST can be rendered in terms of a nominalised clause expressed by the following logical relation:

\[
V2 \rightarrow \text{Noun}
\]

\[\text{e.g. } \text{la ‘utiibuu} \rightarrow \text{reward}\]

### The Implicit Conditional Structure: Swap Function

In the implicit conditional structure (henceforth ICS) all of the three components are absent. In spite of their absence at the surface structure, the conditional meaning is, however, present at the deep structure. The absence of these three components is justified by various swap functions related to the pragmatic context. In such a case, the translator has no other choice but to take these swap functions into account in the translation process. What makes the translation of the ICS rather complex is its multi-patterned structure compared to the afore-mentioned mono-patterned structures. These patterns include:

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\((1)\) Jaamicu albayaan V2:458.

\((2)\) Addorro almasuun fiu uluumi Ikitaabi almasuun:V 2:49.

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A- The swap function

1- The Order Shaped Condition

The ICS is characterized by the absence of the three components of the CS. The Order Condition (henceforth O) being a sub-category of the ICS, on the one hand, shows the absence of the three components and conveys the conditional meaning, on the other hand. This feature can be illustrated by the following verse:

(8)

{قَدْ كَرَوْنَ ۖ أَذْكُرُ كُنُومٍ} [البقرة: 152]

Then do ye remember, I will remember you

Annahaas comments on this verse in the following terms: "[fadkuruunii] is an order shaped condition conveying the very essence of that condition" (1) In this respect, Alqurtubii adds: "This verse carries complementary meanings and relational aspects between two verbs; namely the Order verb and its implementation verb" (2)

The surface structure of this verse does fully reflect both the order and its response. As for the deep structure, it reflects the conditional meaning carried by both the covert conditional particle and the V1/V2 relation. The original structure of this verse is:

\[\text{\textquoteleft\textquoteleft in tadhkurunii 'adhkurkum\textquoteleft\textquoteleft} \]

Thus, contrary to Ali Yussef translated version in which he remained faithful to the surface structure, we propose a translation that rather targets the deep structure and which would be rendered as follows:

If you remember me, I will remember you

This translation process can, thus, be expressed in terms of the following rule:

Rule 3

\[
\text{ICS (ST) / O} = (X_1 + X_2 + X_3) \times O \quad \Rightarrow \quad \text{ECS (TT)} = X_1 + X_2 + X_3
\]

---

(1) ʿicraabu alqur’aani:V1:85.
(2) Aljaamicu li’ahkaami alqur’aan:V1:572.
2-Relativity Shaped Condition

The second sub-category illustrating the swap function is the relativity shaped condition (henceforth R) expressed in terms of a relative pronoun conveying the conditional meaning. This sub-category can be illustrated by the following verse:

(9)

[verse]

And those who launch a charge against chaste women and produced not four witnesses (to support their allegation), flog them with eighty stripes.

Quoting Abu haniifa, Azzamakhsharii states that the former considers the three clauses of the verse as a reflection of the conditional meaning which is expressed by the following structure: Whoever accuses chaste women, flog them\(^{(1)}\).

At the surface structure, this verse is totally devoid of any conditional component. The relative pronoun [alladiina] functions as a substitute of the conditional meaning which can be illustrated by the following structure:

\[
\text{man yaarmi fajliduuhum}
\]

Here, we can see that the three components of the CS are explicit. Any transfer attempt has to take these kernels as platforms for the translation process. In contrast to Ali Yusuf's translation, we propose the following version in which the conditional meaning is more explicit:

And if those who launch a charge against chaste women do not produce four witnesses, then flog them with eighty stripes.

This can be illustrated by a similar rule as that of the order shaped condition. We, thus, postulate the following:

\[
\text{ICS (ST) / R} = (X1 + X2 + X3) \emptyset \quad \Rightarrow \quad \text{ECS (TT)} = X1 + X2 + X3
\]

The Rhetorical Condition Structure

In the rhetorical condition structure (henceforth RCS), the conditional meaning is decoded from the surface structure.

\(^{(1)}\) Alkashshaaf: V4:269.
Furthermore, both the SCS and the RCS do explicitly convey the conditional meaning. However, whereas in the former, the CS resides at the surface structure level, in the latter, for some rhetorical purposes, the CS resides at the level of the deep structure. We can, thus, see that the RCS poses some challenges which the translator must take into account in the translation process. Failure to integrate these rhetorical criteria, which are integral part of the message, will result into a mere and simplistic translation of the surface structure. These rhetorical meanings are evoked by Ibnu Yaciish when he stated that: “[‘in] may be used as a substitution of [‘idhaa] and vice versa”\(^1\)

For pragmatic-rhetorical purposes, in the Holy Quran, [‘idhaa], which generally expresses certitude, can be substituted by [‘in] which conveys incertitude. This function swap also applies between [‘in] and [‘idhaa]. In such a case, [‘in] will convey several meanings, among which, that of drawing attention, of preference, of ambiguity and of disdain.

\[\text{[‘in] versus [‘idhaa]}\]

1- Overpowering

We have seen that whereas [‘in] expresses incertitude, [‘idhaa] expresses certitude. However, for some pragmatic-rhetorical purposes, a function swap is, also, a possible characteristic of the Quranic style.

(10)

\[\text{وَإِنَّ سُوْيَتْمُ فِي رَبِّي بَيْنَا كُرِّلْتَنَا عَلَيْ عَبْدِنَا }\] (البقرة: 23)

And if ye are in doubt as to what We revealed from time to time to Our servant

According to Alqurtubii, the message of this verse “is destined for the defeated unbelievers who after hearing the Quran said: This is not the Word of God and we do not believe in it”\(^2\)

We can observe a correlation between the pragmatic context and the particle use for that particular context. Thus, [‘in] is used instead of [‘idhaa] in order to convey the meaning of the unbeliever’s

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\(^1\) Sharhu almufassal: V4:9.
\(^2\) Aljaamicu li’ahkaami ‘alqur’aani: V1:223.
overpowering over the believers. In this vein, Abdelfattaah Lashiin states that: “[‘in] which is, normally used in the context of incertitude is, instead, used in this verse in relation to a revealed truth”\(^1\)

As the message addressees both the believers and the unbelievers, this revealed truth is expressed in this verse by the use of [‘in] instead of [‘idhaa]. This is done in order to overpower the unbelievers over the believers.

One of the translator’s most pertinent tasks targeted in this verse relates to the means of finding a way of preserving the condition rhetorical meaning in the target text. In order to achieve such a purpose, we propose to adopt the epistemic versus deontic dichotomy terminology related to all of modal auxiliaries, adjectives and adverbs of English and extend it to the Condition form of Arabic. We, therefore, propose to apply this dichotomy to the condition structure which will be compartmentalised into two categories; namely the epistemic conditional form which expresses a degree of likelihood, possibility, probability, certitude or incertitude and a deontic conditional modality which relates to an attitudinal or relational stance of the participants, or in other words, it relates to the pragmatic and rhetorical meaning of the condition.

In the light of this, we propose the following translation:

**While overpowering the unbelievers**, Allah says: And if you are in doubt as to what We have revealed from time to time to Our servant.

As a result of this deontic conditional modality present in the Arabic version, it has been necessary to include, in the English version an additional lexical item, namely “overpowering”, in order to render this rhetorical meaning. This procedure can be formulated and generalized in terms of the following logical rule:

**Rule 4**

\[
\text{RCS (ST)} = (X_1 + X_2 + X_3) \quad \Rightarrow \quad \text{RCS (TT)} = ((X_1 + X_2 + X_3) + Y)
\]

Where \(Y = \text{Deontic modality / rhetorical meaning}\)

\(^{1}\) Min ‘asraari attacbiir ‘alqu’aani: p67.
2- Disdain

Disdain is one of the outputs of the deontic modality of the conditional particles and of the pragmatic rhetorical function of the swap between ['in] and ['idhaa]. Such a function can be illustrated by the following verse:

(11)

قُلْ إِنِّي كَانَ لِلَّهِ وَلِلَّهِ أَوَلُ الْعَبْدِينَ [الزَّرَعٌ: 81]

Say: if (God) most gracious had a son, I would be the first to worship

In this verse ['in] which is usually used to express incertitude, is rather used here in order to express Oneness of Allah. This function swap is necessitated by the context in which and the participants to which the message is addressed. Any dialogue is, indeed, futile and useless as these addressees are stubborn. It follows that the rhetorical meaning of the condition structure of this verse expresses ignorance and despite.

In his exegesis of this verse, Attabarri states: “if Allah had a son, I would be the first to worship, but He does not”\(^1\)

The superficial conditional meaning of this verse reflects the probability that Allah might have a son. This meaning is conveyed by the epistemic modality use of the particle ['in]. Hence, the rhetorical condition meaning is, somehow, enrobed in a soft linguistic structure. Such a use is made of in order to let go the stubborn thoughts as well to express ignorance and disdain of the unbelievers.

As a logical conclusion of what has been described above, we suggest the following translation:

Even if Allah Most Gracious (disdainfully) made you think he had a son, I would still be the first to worship

In this translation, we notice that the deontic modality of the particle ['in] translates an underlying rhetorical meaning which is compensated by the adverbial form “disdainfully” in the target text. In this respect rule four applies.

\(^1\) Jami'ul 'alba'ani fi tafsir alqur'aani: V3:726.
3- Exhortation

Among the various rhetorical conditional meanings for which ['in] is used, exhortation is yet another output of the deontic conditional modality of this particle. This can be illustrated by the following verse:

(12)

O ye who believe, eat of the good things that We have provided for you, and be grateful to God, if it is Him you worship.

In this verse, Allah Almighty compels the believers to praise and thank Him for all the good things He provides. In his exegesis of this verse, Arraazii states: “If it is true that you worship none but Allah, you have to thank Him for what he provides” (1) In the same vein, Abdelfattaah Lashiin adds that: “...the use of ['in] in this verse is to exhort believers to worship Allah and none but Allah”. (2)

Theoretical foundations

The theoretical foundations of our model rest on those proposed by Nida which, in turn, were inspired by Chomsky’s universal approach to language. Instead of integrating fully Chomsky’s model in his approach, Nida has rather adapted it for the needs of the translation process. Such a process is explained by Mundey (2001) in the following terms:

Nida incorporates key features of Chomsky’s model into his ‘science of translation’. In particular, Nida sees that it provides the translator with a technique for decoding the ST and a procedure for encoding the TT (Nida 1964 p60), although he reverses Chomsky’s model when analysing the ST(3).

Thus, whereas Chomsky focuses on the generation of the surface structure through the process of transformation, Nida, on the

(2) Min asraa’i attaebiiri ‘alqur’aani: p166.
other hand, aims at analyzing the ST surface structure by a reductive process of back-transformation. Mundey (2001) explains this when he states:

The surface structure of the ST is analyzed into the basic elements of the deep structure; these are ‘transferred’ in the translation process and then reconstructed semantically and stylistically into the surface structure of the TT\(^{(1)}\).

It must be mentioned that if the stylistic reconstruction can, indeed, be implemented in relation to the human language, it certainly cannot be so in relation to the Divine Language, that of the Quran. Such a difficulty is sustained within the very language of Arabic, let alone between Arabic and any other target language.

The concept of both surface structure and deep structure are of paramount importance in the translation theory as both comprise the key elements of a sentence meaning. Thus, scholars adopting this view see the deep structure as the main determination of sentence meaning and the surface structure as the phonological and morphological representation of deep structure.

Three main stages characterize the translation process proposed by Nida; these are analysis, transfer and restructuring. These components are part of a model which are related and function as shown by the following diagram:

(1) Analysis in which the surface structure, i.e. the message as given in language (A) is analyzed in terms of (a) the grammatical relationships and (b) the meaning of the words and combinations of words, (2) transfer, in which the analyzed material is transferred in the mind of the translator from language A to language B and (3) restructuring, in which the transferred material is restructured in order

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\(^{(1)}\) Ibid P39.
to make the final message fully acceptable in the receptor language.” (Nida and Taber 1982) (1)

Just as we pointed out the difficulty of a stylistic reconstruction between Arabic and other languages, we believe it is erroneous to postulate any full acceptability of the restructuring of the Quranic language, in view of its divine idiosyncrasies.

Another key term of Nida’s model is that of ‘kernel sentence’ which is composed of: “...the basic structural elements out of which the language builds its elaborate surface structure” (Nida and Taber 1982) (2)

Furthermore, Mundey (2001) considers that: “...the kernels are the level at which the message is transferred into the receptor language before being transformed into the surface structure.” (3)

The process of back-transformation involves an analysis using the generative transformational grammar’s four types of functional class. These are objects, events, abstracts and relationals. Nida, on the other hand, considers back transformation as a form of paraphrase. He, thus, states:

Paraphrase, as we are using at this point in referring to back-transformation, is a technical term from linguistics and related disciplines, and is characterized by three specific features (1) it is intra-lingual rather than inter-lingual, i.e. it is ‘another way of saying the same thing’; (2) it is rigorous, in that there are no changes in the semantic components: no addition, no deletion, no skewing of relationships, only a different marking of the same relations between the same elements; (3) specifically as it relates to back-transformation, it is aimed at restatement at a particular level, that of the kernels” (Nida and Taber 1982) (4)

After obtaining the kernels through the back-transformation process, the translator faces the most challenging stage of the model which consists of restructuring the kernels in terms of the target language surface structure. At this stage, the translator must preserve

(2) Ibid p39.
(3) Introducing Translation Studies p40.
(4) Ibid p47.
the semantic and stylistic features of the source text in the surface structure of the target text. The ultimate goal of the whole model is to achieve what Nida labels "dynamic equivalence" where "...the relationship between receptor and message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message" (1)

We do believe, on the other hand, that this ideal sameness and naturalness proposed by Nida, is beyond the competence of any Quran translator and can, therefore, never be reached.

In this paper, we will adopt Nida's model with the proviso that the ultimate goal is different from the one we propose. Thus, If Nida's model targets the dynamic equivalence as an outcome of the three stages of the translation process (namely, analysis, transfer and restructuring) our purpose, however, aims at preserving the various semantic layers of the Holy Quran among others, as well as demonstrating the fact that the stylistic features of the Holy Quran are simply untranslatable. In order to taste the flavour of the aforementioned features, the target reader has no other recourse but to go to the original version.

A Model for the Translation of Condition in the Holy Quran

The model we propose though inspired by the afore-mentioned theoretical constructs rests on and is an outcome of our own cogitation on the conditional structure subtleties of the Holy Quran. The present model is structured along three complementary stages which include all of the following components: an input, a back-transformation (kernels) and an output.

A- INPUT

The input relates to all potential condition structures of the Holy Quran and represents the surface structure of the Source Text. In view of the limitations of the present paper, we have focussed only on four condition structures of the Holy Quran, which in no way entails that the concept of CS is limited to these four types only. We, therefore, invite future researchers to widen the scope of this domain with further condition investigations for a more exhaustive account.

(1) Introducing translation studies: p42
For the moment, the input is composed of four categories. (1) the explicit condition structure expressed in terms of $\text{ST(CS)} = X1+X2+X3$, (2) the incomplete condition structure expressed in terms of $\text{ST(CS)} = X1+X2+ \emptyset$, (3) the implicit condition structure expressed in terms of $\text{ICS(ST)}/\text{O}$, $R = (X1+X2+X3) \emptyset$ and (4) the rhetorical condition structure $\text{RCS(ST)} = X1+X2+X3+ (Y)$.

We notice, in this input, a quite diversified array of structures some of which are, still, to be discovered. The components of these structures present quite a complex and heterogeneous set of both overt and covert patterns. Thus, the content of these structures varies because any of its components may or may not be available, depending on the semantic and rhetorical criteria we have discussed above.

**B- BACK-TRANSFORMATION**

At this stage, our focus is the extraction of the kernels which underlie the surface structure, i.e. the input. In other words, our purpose is to re-write the surface structure in terms of its original form through the process of back-transformation. It is a well known postulate in chomsky’s and Nida’s models, that all languages share the same universal kernels. Thus, Nida states that:

Back-transformation, then, is the analytic process of reducing the surface structure to its underlying kernels. From the standpoint of the translator, however, what is even more important than the existence of kernels in all languages is the fact the languages agree far more on the levels of the kernels than on the level of the more elaborate structures. This means if one can reduce grammatical structures to the kernel level, they can be transferred more readily and with a minimum distortion. Nida 1982)\(^{(1)}\)

In this paper, we advance that the kernels of the Quran condition structures are of two types; namely, the variable and the invariable ones. The variable kernel of the condition structures of the Holy Quran conveys the rhetorical meaning which might not always be explicit from the surface structure. It is, however, understood from the context of the verse as expressed by Rule four. In this respect, it is worth mentioning that not all the Quran condition structures are

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\(^{(1)}\) Theory and Practice of Translation p 39
characterized by such a kernel which is rewritten in this model by the symbol Y.

The invariable kernels of the Quran condition structures are constituted by the particle, V1 and V2. Though they may or may not be physically present at the surface structure, they still remain prerequisites without which the translator would be at a loss. These invariable kernels include X1, X2 and X3 as expressed by rules one two and three.

The invariable kernels of the condition structures are expressed in terms of a lexical meaning conveyed by the particle (X1), the condition verb (X2) and the response verb (X3).

The variable kernels, on the other hand, convey the rhetorical meaning generated by the context.

C- OUTPUT

The output relates to the surface structure of the target text. Such a surface structure is the final stage of a series of back-transformations and re-structuring. It is worth mentioning, in this vein, that the invariable kernels must be explicitly formulated in the TT in spite of the fact that the three components of the ST surface structure may or may not be available. In view of what has been advanced above, it is fitting to mention that no stylistic prerequisite features are needed in this model as such a condition cannot be fulfilled and is beyond the means and competence of the Quran translator.

The model that we propose generates a constant structure of the type X1+X2+X3 which facilitates the task of the translator, preserves the original meaning and establishes a communicative channel with the target reader. This, with a view to conveying the core meaning of the ST and suggesting the original text as an inescapable reference. This model can be schematized as follows:
A MODEL FOR THE CS TRANSLATION

INPUT: SS (ST)

RULE1
If ST(CS) = X1 + X2 + X3,
Then ST(CS) = TT (CS)
= X1 + X2 + X3

RULE2
If ST(CS) = X1 + X2 + 0,
Then ST(CS) = TT (CS)
= X1 + X2 + X3

RULE3
If ECS (ST) = 0 Then
ECS (TT) = X1 + X2 + X3

RULE4
RCS (ST) = (X1 + X2 + X3)

BACK-TRANSFORMATION

KERNEL

K1 + K2 + K3 + (K4)

X1 + X2 + X3 + (Y)

OUTPUT
CONCLUSION

The methodological procedure followed in this paper as well as the nature of the data analyzed have allowed us to conclude certain logical rules that govern the condition structure of the Holy Quran.

The surface structure of the analyzed data has revealed four rules of the conditional structure of the Holy Quran. These four rules have been deconstructed through the process of back transformation and reconstructed in terms of semantic and rhetorical kernels. However, it must, again, be mentioned that further research may unveil the manifold nature of this condition structure. This, will, in turn, give birth to further rules which will integrate the proposed model in order to generate the same output: X1+X2+X3.

Transliteration symbols

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