

The Rhetorical Features on Some of the Ayahs of Marriage in the Qur'an (A Contrastive Study)

Dr. Amira Wasfy
Canadian International College (CIC)

Abstract— The Ever-Glorious Qur'an is obviously distinguished in form and style from any other form- whether poetry, rhythmic or non-rhythmic prose. What distinguishes the language of the Qur'an is mainly the precise choice of words and expressions. The power of the Qur'anic expressions lies in the subtle grammatical devices as the syntactic structures, (itnab) the long exposition, (hadhf) ellipsis and (taqdeem w ta'kheer) word order which are precisely put without any defect in meaning. As the language of the Qur'an is poetic, yet it is not poetry; it is prosaic, but not exactly prose. Its style and language surpass any literary style for its rhetorical grandeur. All these have a divinity in style and language which makes the Qur'an a miracle impossible to be imitated. The Qur'an, was revealed in the Arabic language and not in any other language. Its translation into any other language cannot render the grand expressions and the profound meanings of the original text; yet, most translators just tried as much as possible to convey its message. One of the major problems of rendering the Qur'an is the difficulty in transferring the rhetorical features of the Qur'an, for example, metaphoric language, rhyme, rhythm, music and tone etc., for it is a miraculous style in Arabic; however, in translation, it loses its original effect.

This paper deals with some of the rhetorical features of the Ayahs of marriage in the Qur'an and how various translators (five translators) have rendered them, to discover how far they have succeeded in trying to transfer the Arabic rhetoric into English. The five translators are: Abdullah Yusuf Ali (1934), an Indian Muslim scholar; Mohammad Marmaduke Pickthall (1930) an English Muslim scholar; T. B. Irving (Al Hajj Ta' Lim' Ali), an American Muslim scholar of Arabic; Arthur John Arberry (1955) a British Orientalist; and Muhammad Mahmud Ghali (1964), an Egyptian Professor in the Faculty of languages and Translation, Al Azhar University.

This paper will elucidate the rhetorical features in the Arabic language, as they are divided into three categories:

Ilim el Ma'ani: Itnab (long exposition), Hadhf (ellipsis), El Taqdeem wa El Ta'kheer (inversion) and Istifham (rhetorical question)

Ilim El Bayahn: Tashbih (simile), Isti'ara (metaphor), Kinayah (metonymy)

Ilim El Badi: El Tibaq (antithesis), El Mobalagha (verbal irony), El Nazm (rhythm), El Fawasil (rhyme) and El Tikrar (repetition).

Index Terms— Contrastive Translation, ellipsis, Ilim El Bayahn, Ilim El Badi, Ilim el Ma'ani, inversion, long exposition, metaphor, metonymy, repetition, rhetorical question, rhyme, rhythm, simile

Prophethood is supported by miracles to confirm that the prophet concerned is not pretending. Those miracles were bestowed by Allah to each prophet according to the time he was living in. They were demonstrated obviously by the three prophets of the great world religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. During the era of Prophet Muhammad (prayers and peace of God upon Him), Arabs master the Arabic language with its eloquence and its magnificent poetry. Hence, Prophet Muhammad's (prayers and peace of God upon Him) astounded them with the miracle of the Ever-Glorious Qur'an. The whole legion of the Arab poets and orators could not produce anything that could approach the equality of the Ever-Glorious Qur'an, despite the repeated challenge of the Qur'an itself.

قال تعالى: "قل لنن اجتمعن الانس والجن على أن يأتوا بمثل هذا القرآن لا يأتوا بمثله ولو كان بعضهم لبعض ظهيرا."
(سورة الإسراء: 88)

Say: If the whole of mankind and jinns

Were to gather together

To produce the like

Of this Qur'an they

Could not produce

The like thereof, even if

They backed up each other

(Yusuf Ali, Q 17:88)

قال تعالى: "وإن كنتم في ريب مما نزلنا على عبدنا فاتوا بسورة من مثله وأدعوا شهودكم من دون الله إن كنتم صادقين."

(سورة البقرة: 23)

And if you are in doubt

As to what we have revealed

From time to time to our servant,

Then produce a Surah

Like there unto;

And call your witnesses or helpers

(If there are any) besides Allah,

If your doubts are true.

(Yusuf Ali, Q 2:23)

The challenge in the above Ayah was to produce a whole book or even a solitary 'Surahs' which can be remotely comparable to the Qur'an. But to this day, no one has succeeded in meeting this challenge of Allah the Almighty even those who criticize the Qur'an.

The Ever-Glorious Qur'an's miracle, moreover, has something unique in its own difference from any previous miracles, as these previous miracles were restricted by time and place or are confined to certain people at a specific time. However, the Ever-Glorious Qur'an is different; it is universal and everlasting. In fact, it is simple, easy to understand, embodies the body of knowledge that is of permanent value to human beings. This is observed by its marvelous nature in terms of its style, content and spiritual uplifting. Accordingly, this is the ultimate proof of the Divine origin of the Qur'an.

The Ever-Glorious Qur'an is clearly distinguished in form and style from any other form- whether poetry, rhythmic or non-rhythmic prose. Even the words of the Prophet himself (prayers and peace of God upon Him), in other words the "Hadith" were not divine words, but instructions and passages said by the Prophet (prayers and peace of God upon Him). They could never be compared to the revealed message of the Qur'an, since the Qur'an is a divine message while the "Hadith" are the words of our Prophet Muhammad (prayers and peace of God upon Him), who was mortal.

In spite of the grand style and sublimity of The Ever-Glorious Qur'an, its language is simple to understand, and accessible. It embodies a form of knowledge, which is universal and of permanent value. The Arabs regard the language of the Qur'an as a perfect and unequal model of style and literary excellence.

What distinguishes the language of the Qur'an is mainly the precise choice of words and expressions. The power of the Qur'anic expressions lies in the subtle grammatical devices as the syntactic structures, (itnab) the long exposition, (hathf) ellipsis and (taqdeem w ta'kheer) word order which are precisely put without any defect in meaning. As the language of the Qur'an is poetic, yet it is

not poetry; it is prosaic, but not exactly prose. Its style and language surpass any literary style for its rhetorical grandeur, its perfection in rhythm, rhyme, metaphor, simile, metonymy, antithesis, assonance, narration, coordination etc. All these have a divinity in style and language which makes the Qur'an a miracle which is impossible to be imitated.

This special miracle, The Ever-Glorious Qur'an, was revealed in an Arabic language and not in any other language. Its translation, however, into any other language can not render the grand expressions and the profound meanings of the original text. Yet, most translators have tried as much as possible just to convey its message. For even the most excellent translators would never be able to impart the Divine impression of the style and structure of the Ever-Glorious Qur'an for its style is generally beautiful, fluent, sublime, magnificent and inimitable. Because of the depth as well as sublimity of the Qur'anic text, a faithful translation of it into any other language is virtually impossible.

One of the major problems of rendering the Ever-Glorious Qur'an is the difficulty in transferring the rhetorical features of the Qur'an, for example, metaphoric language, rhyme, rhythm, music and tone etc., for it is a miraculous style in Arabic; however, in translation, it loses its original effect. Even if different translations of the Qur'an are accurate, they can never be designated as the Qur'an because they can never be able to imitate either the style or the diction or the eloquence of the Ever-Glorious Qur'an (divine words of Allah). They can only render the meanings of the Qur'an.

This paper deals with some of the rhetorical features of the Ayahs of marriage in the Qur'an and how various translators (five translators) have rendered them, to discover how far they have succeeded in trying to transfer the Arabic rhetoric into English. The five translators are: Abdullah Yusuf Ali (1934), an Indian Muslim scholar; Mohammad Marmaduke Pickthall (1930) an English Muslim scholar; T. B. Irving (Al Hajj Ta' Lim' Ali), an American Muslim scholar of Arabic; Arthur John Arberry (1955) a British Orientalist; and Muhammad Mahmud Ghali (1964), an Egyptian Professor in the Faculty of languages and Translation, Al Azhar University.

This paper will elucidate the rhetorical features in the Arabic language, as they are divided into three categories:

- I. Ilim el Ma'ani: Itnab (long exposition), Hathf (ellipsis), El Taqdeem wa El Ta'kheer (inversion) and Istifham (rhetorical question)

II. Ilim El Bayahn: Tashbih (simile), Isti'ara (metaphor), Kinayah (metonymy)

III. Ilim El Badi: El Tibaq (antithesis), El Mobalagha (verbal irony), El Nazm (rhythm), El Fawasil (rhyme) and El Tikrar (repetition).

I. Ilim el Ma'ani:

"Ilim el Ma'ani" is concerned with meanings "semantics meanings." Its features are embodied in the "Itnab" which means (long exposition), "hadhf" which means (ellipsis) and "Ta'qdim W Ta'khir" which means (inversion). Consequently, the meaning of a given passage in Arabic can be conveyed easily into English. Nevertheless, some translators have not succeeded in rendering these features, either because of the lack of an appropriate equivalent, or because of misunderstanding the meanings, or for the purpose of using the meaning in translation (instead of using the rhetorical figure), or for any other purpose. "Ilim el Ma'ani" may be found in:

A. Itnab (long exposition):

Itnab (long exposition) is to say something in more words than necessary mostly for emphasis. However, sometimes Itnab is used to strengthen the meaning, emphasize (the meaning) or clarify it. Sometimes, itnab is used to repeat the sentence or phrase but with different structure. One of the best examples of Itnab is very obvious in Surah Taha, Ayahs 17 & 18.

قال تعالى: "وما تلك بيمينك يا موسى (17). قال هي عصاي أتوكأ عليها وأهش بها على غنمي ولي فيها منازب أخرى (18)."

(سورة طه: 17-18)

In this, Ayah (Q 20: 17 & 18), "Allah asked Moses, "What is that you hold in your right hand O Moses?" Moses answered, "It is my staff", on which I lean and with which I beat the smaller bushes or shrubs and trees to furnish my sheep with food and I use it for other purposes. (*Al Montakhab* 470)

In this Ayah, Prophet Musa (Moses) could have simply answered by "it is my staff" and stopped. But starting from "on which I lean . . . etc" until the end of the Ayah is an example of Itnab, for Prophet Musa was talking to Allah and was trying as much as he could to prolong the conversation. These two Ayahs are rendered as:

Yusuf Ali: "And what is that

In thy right hand,

O Moses?" (17)

He said, "It is

My rod: on it

I lean; with it

I beat down fodder

For my flocks; and

In it find

Other uses." (18)

M. Pickthall: "And what is that in the right hand, O Moses?" (17) He said, "It is my staff whereon I lean and wherewith I beat down branches for my sheep, and wherein I find other uses." (18)

T. B. Irving: "What do you have in your right hand, Moses?" (17) He said, "It is my staff. I lean on it, and beat down fodder for my sheep and goats with it; and I have still other uses for it." (18)

A. J. Arberry: "... What is that,

Moses, thou hast in thy right hand?" (17)

'Why, it is my staff,' said Moses

I lean upon it, and with it I beat down leaves to

Feed my sheep other uses also I find in it.' (18)

Dr. M.M. Ghali: "And what is that in your right hand, O Musa?" (17)

He said, "It is my staff. I lean upon it, and with it I beat down (leaves) for my sheep; and I also have other purposes for it." (18)

Accordingly, it is included that the Itnab above was easily rendered by all the above translators. They could have said, "It is my staff (or rod)" and stopped, but they have completed the "Itnab" and not a word was deleted. To conclude, all translators above successfully rendered the right equivalent of the "Itnab". For as long as the rhetorical figures do not alter or affect the meanings of the translation

of the Qur'an, they should be rendered as a word for word translation.

Concerning the Ayahs of marriage in the Ever-Glorious Qur'an, an example of "Itnab" may be found in Q Al Baqarah, 2:223,

قال تعالى: "فأتوا حرثكم أني شئتم وقدموا لأنفسكم واتقوا الله."
(سورة البقرة: 223)

This Ayah is interpreted in *Al Montakhab* as:

Your wives are your tilth wherein you cultivate your crop of posterity; they are your field in which you cultivate your mutual affection and the emotion which is directed to attainment of the purpose from which pleasure or satisfaction is expected, therefore till your tilth virtuously I as you will and advance piety toward future security and revere God and entertain the profound reverence dutiful to Him. (51)

In the above interpretation "وقدموا لأنفسكم" (W gademu le anfosikom) is what man "advances" to himself from doing what is right and avoiding what is wrong. It is to "advance" piety and to "advance" obedience. Moreover, "و اتقوا الله" (wataqu Ellah) gives the same meaning of fearing Allah and doing what He orders and avoiding what He forbids. Both sentences mean that you must do the things that will be of benefit to man on the day of judgement and fear Allah in doing anything wrong. Therefore, "و اتقوا الله" (wataqu Ellah) is an example of "Itnab" for emphasizing and strengthening the meaning of "وقدموا لأنفسكم" (W gademu le anfosikom). The aim of the "Itnab" here is that men should give special care to their relationship with their wives. This sentence was rendered by the following translator as follows:

Yusuf Ali: "But do some good act

For your souls before hands;

And Fear Allah. . ."

M. Pickthall: ". . . and send (good deeds) before you for your souls, and fear Allah . . ."

T. B. Irving: "Send things on ahead for yourselves, and heed God: . . ."

Arberry: ".and forward

For your souls, and fear God. . ."

Dr.M.M. Ghali: ". . . and forward (good deeds) for yourselves; and be pious to Allah."

Surveying the above translators, it is noticed that all translators above have realized the importance of "Itnab" and they have rendered it as:

Yusuf Ali and Pickthall: "fear Allah"

Irving: "heed God"

Arberry: "fear God"

Ghali: "be pious to Allah,"

However, as any rhetorical features in the Qur'an, it loses its strong effect in rendering it, because "التقوي" (altaqwa) has more than one implication; on the one hand, it means "piety", "obedience", . . . etc.; and on the other hand, it means "fear", "heed", "veneration."

B. Another feature of "Ilim el Ma'ani" is "Hadhf" (omission):

The Qur'an is very precise; there are no wasted words in it. All through The Ever-Glorious Qur'an, omission is one of the features of the style, which frequently recurs. Each omission has its special purpose. However, "hadhf" is sometimes difficult for the translator to render, and this is obvious in the following examples:

In Surah "Al Dhareyat," Ayah 49:

قال تعالى: "ومن كل شيء خلقنا زوجين لعلكم تذكرون." (سورة الذاريات: 49)

In *Al Montakhab the Interpretation of the Holy Qur'an*, this Ayah is interpreted as follows:

And of everything, spiritual, animate and inanimate, did we create pairs complementing each other: night and day, positive and negative, love and aversion, rest and fatigue, mercy and punishment, sea and land, light and darkness, belief and disbelief, life and death, happiness and misery, heaven and hell, male and female and so on. And when we come to the uni-Ayah as a whole, there is He who complements it and sustains it; whereas, He is One and He does not need anything to complement Him, that you people may hopefully ponder. (817)

The lexical item "تذكرون" (tadhakarun) at the end of the Ayah is divided into the verb "تذكر" (tadhakar) and the subject "و" (w). However, the object which is "to remember what?" namely Allah's ability, Almighty, Greatness, etc." has been deleted. The object here is deleted for the reader to imagine all what we must remember of Allah's Greatness which is not easily defined. The phrase "لعلكم تذكرون" (la'alakum tadhakarun) was rendered as follows:

Yusuf Ali: "That ye may receive

Then believe in vain things,

Instruction "

M. Pickthall: ". . . that haply ye may reflect."

M. Pickthall: "Is it then in vanity that they believe".

T.B. Irving: ". . . so that you may be reminded."

T.B. Irving: "So will they still believe in falsehood..."

A. J. Arberry: ". . . haply you will remember."

A. J. Arberry: ". . . What do they believe

M.M. Ghali: ". . . that possibly you would be mindful."

In vanity. "

Surveying the above translators, it is obvious that all translators were honest in rendering the original text. They succeeded in rendering the rhetorical figure of the "hadhf" "تذكرون" (tadhakarun) as "remember", "reminded", "reflect", "receive instruction" and "mindful"; they have deleted the object, leaving the foreign reader to imagine (as said before) Allah's power, ability, might, greatness, superiority, etc.

M.M.Ghali: ". . . Is it then that they believe in untruth."

From the above translations, we notice that M. Pickthall is the only one who has succeeded in rendering the appropriate equivalent of the Arabic "Taqdeem wa Ta'kheer" (inversion) as "Is it then in vanity that they believe". On the contrary, Yusuf Ali, Irving, Arberry and Ghali did not understand the beauty and aim of "Taqdeem wa Ta'kheer" and they have reAyah the sentence to SVO (subject, verb, object).

C. A third feature of "Ilim el Ma'ani" is "Al Taqdeem wa Al Ta'kheer" (inversion):

One of the beauties of the rhetorical features in the Arabic language is "Al Taqdeem wa Al Ta'kheer" (inversion) "التقديم والتأخير". It is to change the word order of a sentence, which is equivalent in English rhetorics to "inversion"; in other words, to reAyah the subject and the verb or the subject and the object. Usually, it is done for emphasis: for example, "محمد في البيت" (Muhammad felbayt) "Mohammad is at home" will be changed to "في البيت محمد" (felbayt Muhammad) "At home is Mohammad".

D. A fifth feature of "Ilim El Ma'ani" is "Istifham" (Rhetorical Question):

The rhetorical question is "one asked for the sake of effect or to impress people, but no answer is needed or expected." i.e. How could he do that! What has he done!

In the Ayahs of marriage, the "Istifham" (Rhetorical Question) is clear in Surah "Al Nisa' " Ayah 21 (Q 4:21):

"Al Taqdeem wa Al Ta'kheer" is obviously revealed in Surah "Al Nahl" Ayah 72 (Q 16:72)

قال تعالى: "وكيف تأخذونه وقد أفضى بعضكم إلى بعض . . ."

(سورة النساء: 21)

قال تعالى: "والله جعل لكم من أنفسكم أزواجا وجعل لكم من أزواجكم بنين وحفدة ورزقكم من الطيبات أفالباطل يؤمنون وبنعت الله يَكْفُرُونَ." (سورة النحل: 72)

This Ayah is interpreted as:

"And how could you reclaim it when you have already entered into matrimony and communion with one another. . ." (Al Montakhab 113)

The main purpose of the question "كيف" (kayfa) which means "how" is to express disapproval of what the husband may do to his wife by taking back her "Mahr" (dowry).

قال تعالى: "وإن أردتم استبدال زوج مكان زوج وأنتم إحداهن قنطارا فلا تأخذوا منه شيئا أتأخذونه بهتانا وإثما مبينا. (20) وكيف تأخذونه وقد أفضى بعضكم إلى بعض وأخذن منكم ميثاقا غليظا. (21)

In Al Hilali, et al's book the *Interpretation of the Meanings of the Noble Qur'an*, this Ayah is interpreted as: "And Allah has given you wives of your own kind, and has given you, from your wives, sons and grandsons, and has bestowed for you good provision. Do they then believe in false deities and deny the favour of Allah (by not worshipping Allah Alone)" (54).

This phrase which is supposed to be "أَفَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْبَاطِلِ" (afato'menoona belbatel) is rendered by the mentioned translators as follows

Yusuf Ali: ". will they

(سورة النساء: 20، 21)

This Ayah is rendered as follows:

Yusuf Ali: "And how could ye take it."

M. Pickthall: "How can ye take it (back) . . ."

T.B.Irving: "How can ye hold it (back) ..."

A. J. Arberry: "How shall you take it,"

M.M.Ghali: "And how should you take it,"

The five translators above have succeeded in rendering the most appropriate rhetorical question of the "Istifham" (Rhetorical Question) "كيف" as "How."

II. Ilim El Bayahn:

This category is not concerned with meaning as much as it is concerned with the subtle implication embodied in simile, metaphor and metonymy. As Blankship (1975) rightly, says:

Here, then, we are concerned with the loss of effect, which, although not the same as the meaning itself, may nevertheless play a crucial role in conveying the original intent clearly and accurately, since both rhetorical effect and meaning register in the consciousness and understanding of the hearer or reader. Thus, failure of rhetorical devices like metaphors and similes as well as the more semantic devices may well dim the reader's comprehension in addition to affecting his attitude toward what he is reading. (16)

A. One of the features of "Ilim El Bayahn" is "Tashbih" (simile)

"Tashbih" is the use of words (figures of speech) to express an idea by comparing one thing to another, using "like" or "as" to show similarity. The words are used in an imaginative way to produce a stronger effect, as in 'He is as brave as a Lion.'

In Surah Al Nesa' Ayah 129 (Q 4:129), there is a tashbih (simile) as follows:

قال تعالى: "ولن تستطيعوا أن تعدلوا بين النساء ولو حرصتم فلا تميلوا كل الميل فتذروها كالمعلقة وإن تصلحوا وتتقوا فإن الله كان غفورا رحيما."
(سورة النساء: 129)

This Ayah is interpreted in *The Interpretation of the Meaning of the Noble Qur'an* as:

You will never be able to do perfect justice between wives, even if it is your ardent desire, so do not

incline too much to one of them (by giving her more of your time and provision), so as to leave the other hanging (i.e. neither in divorce nor in married state). And if you do justice, and do all that is right and fear Allah by keeping away from all that is wrong, then Allah is Ever Oft – Forgiving, most Merciful. (Hilali 432)

The phrase "فتذروها كالمعلقة" (fatadharuha kalmoa'laqa) above is a "Tashbih" (simile). The "ك" (k) has been used as "as"/ "like" to compare the state of an undivorced wife to a hanging object. It has been rendered as:

Yusuf Ali: "So as to leave her (as it were)

Hanging (in the air)."

M. Pickthall: ". . . leaving her as if she were suspended."

T.B.Irving: ". . . Your wives are [meant] for you to cultivate."

A. J. Arberry: ". . . so that you leave her as it were suspended."

M.M.Ghali: ". . . so that you leave her (behind) as if she were suspended."

All translators above have rendered the appropriate equivalent of the "Tashbih" and have rendered the coordinator "ك" (k) as "like" and "as" save Irving who did not render the coordinator. Therefore, his translation did not convey the meaning of the "tashbih" (simile) intended in the Qur'an. Since, the coordinator "ك" (k) exists in the original text, so it should exist in the translation. Consequently, Irving did not give the same effect by deleting the rhetorical figure (simile).

B. A second feature of "Ilim El Bayahn" is "Isti'ara" (metaphor):

"Isti'ara" is the use of words (figure of speech) to express an idea by comparing one thing to another without using "like" or "as" to show a similarity. Here the words are used in an imaginative way to produce a strong effect as i.e. in: "She was a feather in his arms." In the metaphor, the things compared may be either named or implied.

This is quite obvious in Surah Al Nisa' Ayah 4:

قال تعالى: "وأتوا النساء صدقاتهم نحلة فإن طبن لكم عن شيء منه نفسا فكلوه هنيئا مريئا . . ."

(سورة النساء: 4)

And give the women, whom you join in wedlock their dower with good will. But if they – the women – willingly remit a part thereof their own accord, then you may eat it – into your hearts and enjoy it; may it give you pleasure; may it give you good! (108)

As seen above, the Interpretation of Meaning of the Noble Qur'an has more clarification for "فكلوه هنيئاً مريئاً" (fkoluhu hania'n maria'a) as: "Take it (the money) and enjoy it without fear of any harm (as Allah has made it lawful)".

Concerning the word "كلوه" (koluhu) in the above Ayah, we find a metaphor (Iste'ara) which means "take it and enjoy it". The word "كلوه" (koluhu) here does not mean the physical eating because money can not be eaten, eating is closer to food and not to money, but it is an abstract which is "to take it and enjoy it and permit it lawfully". However, the term "eat it up" is concerned with money or another resource, when it uses it all, usually very quickly. In the Arabic language, we can say "eat the money" "أكل المال", (akala almaal), but due to the differences in the use of languages, so it is unacceptable in English. This phrase "فكلوه هنيئاً مريئاً" (fkoluhu hania'n maria'a) is rendered by the following translators as follows:

Yusuf Ali: "Take it and enjoy it

With right good cheer."

M. Pickthall: "then ye are welcome to absorb it (in your wealth)."

T.B. Irving: "then consume it at leisure and with good cheer."

A. J. Arberry: "..... consume it

With wholesome appetite."

M.M.Ghali: "....., then eat it up rejoicing with wholesome appetite."

The above three translators, Pickthall, Irving and Arberry, have misunderstood and misinterpreted the "Isti'ara" (metaphor) in the word "فكلوه" (fkoluhu). They have rendered it as a word for word translation "absorb it", "consume it" which has altered the meaning and makes no sense (as explained above). On the other hand, Yusuf Ali and M.M. Ghali who have rendered it as "Take it and enjoy it" (the money) and "eat it up" respectively have succeeded in rendering the most appropriate equivalent for the phrase "فكلوه" (fkoluhu).

C. A third feature of "Ilim el Bayahn" is the "Kinayah" (metonymy):

Metonymy is to substitute the name of a thing by the name of an attribute of it or something closely associated with it. The purpose of "Kinayah" in the Ayahs of marriage is for the purpose of politeness and pudency as for example in Surah Al Baqarah, Ayah 187:

قال تعالى: "نساؤكم حرث لكم فأتوا حرثكم أني شئتم . ."
(سورة البقرة: 223)

In Al Montakhab exegesis (1993) this Ayah is interpreted as:

"Your wives are your tilth wherein you cultivate your crop of posterity; they are your field in which you cultivate your mutual affection and emotion" (51).

The two lexical items are "Kinaya" (metonymy) for making sexual relationship.

It is translated as:

Yusuf Ali: "So approach your tilth

When or how ye will;

M. Pickthall: ". . . so go to your tilth as ye will, ."

T.B.Irving: ". . . so go to your cultivation whenever you wish."

A.J.Arberry: "..... so come
Unto your tillage as you wish,"

M.M. Ghali: "so come up to your tillage however you decide,"

Concerning the above translations, the word "حرث" (harth) is rendered as "tilth", tillage" and "cultivation". In the *Vocabulary of the Holy Qur'an* (1993 – 127), the word "حرث" (harth) is "tilth"; whereas, "tillage" in *Al Mawrid English – Arabic Dictionary* (2007:971) is "أرض محروثة – حرثة" (ard mahrutha – heratha) and "cultivation" in the same dictionary (238) is "يحرث" (yahroth).

Accordingly, all translators above have mentioned the "Kinaya" (metonymy) "حرث" (harth) without mentioning its implication which is "make sexual relation" between brackets.

Another example of the "Kinayah" is in Surah "Al Nisa", Ayah 21

قال تعالى: "وكيف تأخذونه وقد أفضى بعضكم إلى بعض وأخذن منكم ميثاقاً غليظاً."
(سورة النساء، 21)

This Ayah is interpreted as follows: "And how could you take it (back), while you have done in unto each other, and

they have taken from you a firm and strong covenant?"
(Hilali: 338)

The phrase "و قد أفضي بعضكم إلي بعض" (w qad a'fda ba'dhakom ila ba'dh) is clarified more in *Al Montakhab exegesis* (1993) as: "When you have already entered into matrimony and communion with one another" (113).

This phrase is rendered as follows:

Yusuf Ali: "When ye have gone in

Unto each other."

M. Pickthall: ". . . after one of you hath gone in unto the other."

T.B.Irving: "when you have had intercourse with each other."

A. J. Arberry: ". . . when each of you has been
privily with the other."

M.M.Ghali: ". . . and each of you has already gone privily with the other."

As for the word "أفضي" (afda), in the *Al Elias: Modern Dictionary Arabic-English* (1976: 508) it means "contribute". However, neither of the translators has mentioned the rhetorical figure of the "Kinayah", which is "contribute". They have all rendered the implication for the "Kinayah" and not the rhetoric figure itself. The word "contribute" could have been the most appropriate equivalent for the "Kinayah" and, as said before, an explanation of the rhetorical figure should be written either in a footnote or between brackets as (consort with each other).

III. Ilim El Badi':

"Ilim El Badi'" is another rhetorical device which is concerned with the sound effect of the language as in the "sag" (rhyme), "nazm" (rhythm), "Tikrar" (alliteration or repetition) and "Tibaq" (antithesis).

Ilim El Badi' strengthens the meaning with its emotive and evocative qualities. It is concerned with the effect, the highly, divine beauty and eloquence of the language. It is rhetoric at its peak.

A. "Al Tibaq" (anitithesis):

"Tibaq" is a technique in which opposite or contrasting idea etc. are put together for emphasis or dramatic effect.

In Surah "Al Nahl" Ayah 72:

قال تعالى: "أفبالباطل يؤمنون وبنعمت الله هم يكفرون." (سورة: النحل: 72)

This sentence is interpreted in the *Interpretation of the Meanings of the Noble Qur'an* as:

". . . Do they then believe in false deities and deny the favour of Allah (by not worshipping Allah Alone)" (Al Hilali 54).

In the *Vocabulary of the Holy Qur'an* (1983:49), the word "يؤمنون" (yo'menun) means "they believe"; while the word "يكفرون" (yakferun) in the same dictionary (1983: 573) is "they disbelieve." Thus, the two words "يؤمنون" (yo'menun) and "يكفرون" (yakferun) are "Tibaq." It is rendered as follows:

Yusuf Ali: ".: will they

Then believe in vain things,

And be ungrateful for God's favours?"

M. Pickthall: "Is it then in vanity that they believe and in grace of Allah that they disbelieve?"

T.B.Irving: "So will they still believe in falsehood which they disbelieve in God's favor?"

A. J. Arberry: ". What do they believe
in vanity, and do they disbelieve
in God's blessing?"

M.M.Ghali: ". . . . Is it then that they believe in untruth, and in the favor of Allah they (do) disbelieve?"

Surveying the above translations, M. Pickthall, T.B.Irving, A. J. Arberry and M.M.Ghali have successfully rendered the "Tibaq" as "believe" and "disbelieve." Whereas, Yusuf Ali rendered "يكفرون" (yakforun) as "ungrateful" (جاعد) which I think does not give the equivalence of "يكفرون" (yakforun). Therefore, "believe" and "disbelieve" give an appropriate equivalence of "يكفرون" (yakforun) and "يؤمنون" (yo'menun) which is "Tibaq" (antithesis).

B. "Al Mobalagha" (hyperbole):

The hyperbole is to say more than you actually mean. This is obvious in Surah "Al Baqarah" in Ayah 187:

قال تعالى: "أحل لكم ليلة الصيام الرفث إلى نسائكم، هن لباس لكم وأنتم لباس لهن علم الله أنكم كنتم تختانون أنفسكم فتاب عليكم وعفا عنكم . . ." (سورة البقرة: 187)

The phrase "تختانون أنفسكم" (takhtanuna anfusikum) is interpreted in the *Interpretation of the Meanings of the Noble Qur'an* (1989) as:

It is made lawful for you to have sexual relations with your wives on the night of the Fasts. They are "Libas" [like body cover or screen or "سكن" "Sakan", i.e. you enjoy the pleasure of living with her . . .] for you and you are the same for them. Allah knows that you have been deceiving yourselves. So He accepted your repentance and forgave you. (Al Hilali 100)

As for the word "تختانون" (takhtanun) in this Ayah, it is "Mobalagha", for "تختانون" (takhtanun) is more than "خيانة" (kheyana) "betrayal" just as "الإكتساب" (alektisab) is more than "الكسب" (alkasb). Allah has mentioned "Al Mobalagha" (hyperbole) above to show the importance and seriousness of the subject – what you have done in committing sin.

في تفسير القرطبي يقال: خان وأختان بمعنى من الخيانة، أي تخونون أنفسكم بالمباشرة في ليالي الصوم ومن عصي الله فقد خان نفسه إذ جلب إليها العقاب. [19 – 690]

It is said in Al Kortoby exegesis: Being greatly betrayed and betraying are forms of betrayal, i.e. you betray yourself by proceeding at the nights of fasting. He who disobeys Allah, has betrayed himself by causing punishment to himself.

This phrase is rendered as follows:

Yusuf Ali: "Used to do secretly among yourselves"

M. Pickthall: "deceiving yourselves"

T.B.Irving: "deceiving yourselves"

A. J. Arberry: "betraying yourselves."

M.M.Ghali: "betraying yourselves,"

In *Al Mawrid: A Modern English – Arabic Dictionary* (2007: 101), the word "betray" is "يخون" (yakhun); "deceive" (1975: 253) is "يخدع – يضل" (ydalel – yakhda'). Concerning the above translations, not one translator has mentioned the rhetorical figure of "Mobalagha" (hyperbole). They should have rendered "تختانون" (takhtanun) as "greatly betraying" and not just betraying, "greatly deceiving" and not just "deceiving". Accordingly, all translators did not succeed in rendering the correct rhetorical feature.

C. "Nazm" (Rhythm):

"Nazm" in poetry is the metrical arrangement lines, while in the Qur'an, it is a metrical arrangement of the Ayahs. It has a regular succession of weak and strong stresses, accents, sounds or movements (in speech, music, movements etc.). It has beauty in the sound as well as in meaning.

The Qur'an was revealed and recited orally. It was revealed in rhythmic and stressed patterns. However, through translation, these rhythmic and stressed patterns disappear although some translators have tried their best in some Ayahs to transmit them in their translation. We have an example of this in Surah Al Nur Ayah 26.

قال تعالى: "الخبثات للخبثين والخبثون للخبثات

والطيبات للطيبين والطيبون للطيبات .."

(سورة النور: 26)

It is rendered as follows:

Yusuf Ali: "Women impure are for men impure,

And men impure for women impure

And women for purity

Are for men for purity

And men of purity

Are for women of purity. . ."

M. Pickthall: "Vile women are for vile men, and

vile men for vile women. Good

women are for good men and

good men for good women; . . ."

T.B.Irving: "Bad women are for bad men, and

bad men are for bad women, while

good women are for good men, and

good men are for good women. . ."

A.J. Arberry: "Corrupt women for corrupt men,
and corrupt men for corrupt women;
good women for good men,
and good men for good women. . ."

The translators above have, to some extent, succeeded in transferring the rhythmic patterns, but still they do not have the same effect as that in the Ever-Glorious Qur'an.

D. "Al Fawasel" (Rhyme):

All through the Qur'an, there are examples within words or within phrases named "Fawasel" (rhyme). Rhyme in the Qur'an is the "sag" (rhyme) in poetry. Rendering the "Fawasel", music and tone constitute one of the most difficult problems facing the translator, for the "fawasel" cannot be rendered without affecting the meaning, which is the main target in translation. Some translators have made an attempt in some Ayahs in the Qur'an which were to some extent successful.

قال تعالى: "الخبيثات للخبِيثين والخبِيثون للخبِيثات
والطيبات للطيبين والطيبون للطيبات. .."
(سورة النور: 26)

Yusuf Ali and A. J. Arberry have rendered the Qur'an in Ayah where you find a rhyming scheme in some of the Ayahs. i. e.

Yusuf Ali: "Women impure are for men impure,
And men impure for women impure
And women for purity
Are for men for purity
And men of purity
Are for women of purity. . ."

A.J. Arberry: "Corrupt women for corrupt men,
and corrupt men for corrupt women;

good women for good men,
and good men for good women. . ."

The translators above have tried as much as possible to transfer the same rhyme, and they have succeeded in trying to render the rhyme but not the effect.

E. "Tikrar" (Repetition):

"Tikrar" is another rhetorical feature that means "repetition", either of a word (noun or verb) or of meaning. In most cases, it is done for emphasis. One of the problems which face translators in translation is that sometimes repetition in English seems useless or monotonous for it does not give the same effect. Nevertheless, in the Arabic language, it strengthens the language, whether in meaning or in "nazm" (rhythm) etc.

An example is in Surah "Al Nisa" Ayah 128.

قال تعالى: "فلا جناح عليهما أن يصلحا بينهما صلحا والصلح خير."
(سورة النساء: 128)

If we look at the Arabic text, we will find that the word "يصلحا" (yosleha) is repeated twice in different ways once as "صلحا" (solhan) and another as "الصلح" (alsolh) which is (a subject). This repetition in different forms is to emphasize the importance of "الصلح" (alsolh) "reconciliation" between the husband and wife. This part of the Ayah is rendered as follows:

Yusuf Ali: "there is no blame on them

If they arrange
An amicable settlement
Between themselves;
And such settlement is best;"

M. Pickthall: ". . . it is no sin for them twain if they make terms of peace between themselves. Peace is better."

T.B.Irving: ". . . It should not be held against either of them if they should try to come to terms: coming to terms is best,"

A. J. Arberry: ". . . there is no fault in them

if the couple set things right between them:
right settlement is better . . ."

M.M.Ghali: "... then there is no fault in both of them if they make a righteous reconciliation between them; and reconciliation is most charitable;"

Surveying the above translations, we noticed that not only none of the translators has mentioned the idiom "صلاح", (solhan) which has no equivalent in the English language, but also A. J. Arberry has mentioned the subject different for the verb:

"Set thing right" "يصلح" (yosleha)

"right settlements" "الصلح" (alsolh)

Accordingly, they have not succeeded in rendering the same "Tikrar" (repetition) of the original text and therefore, it loses its effect.

In Conclusion, as revealed above, some translators have succeeded to a certain extent in rendering the rhetorical features, but others have not. In order to convey the message of the Qur'an in the best way possible, translators must understand the environment (at that time) and the occasion of the revelation. At the same time, they must understand the rhetorical features of the original language and try to render them as precisely as possible. Translators must keep in mind that the Qur'an was revealed and recited orally. There are rhythms, rhyme, repetition, music . . . etc at its peak; in translation all that music is lost. Nevertheless, the translator must try as much as possible to be restricted to the original text. He must not try to add or delete any item because this might change the meaning and mislead the reader. He must try to translate a word for word translation as long as the meaning is not modified.

In Yusuf Ali's translation, he has tried as much as possible to render every word and in addition, giving a footnote to the rhetoric figures. On the contrary, T. B. Irving was not concerned with rhetoric, as much as with simplifying the meanings of the Qur'an for the common people and even for the children, to be easily understood. Some other translators have failed to understand the rhetorical figures in some of the Ayahs and consequently have not rendered them correctly. Others did not understand the aim of these rhetorical devices, such as the repetition of some words or phrases for emphasis, thus they have deleted them and the result is that the meanings lose their effect. That is to say, the power of language of the Qur'an and the effect of its meaning are weakened via translation.

English Bibliography:

I. Primary sources:

A. Texts:

1. Ali, Abdullah Yusuf. *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an*. (New edition). USA: Amana Corporation, 1992.
2. Arberry, Arthur J.. *The Koran Interpreted*. Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1983.
3. Ghali, Mohammad Mahmud. *Towards Understanding the Ever-Glorious Qur'an*. 3rd ed. Egypt: Dar An-Nashr Liljamiaat. 2005.
4. Irving, T.B. *The Qur'an*. (1st American Version). Brattleboro, Vermont: Amana Books, 1985.
5. Pickthall, Mohammed Marmaduke. *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an*. USA: The New American Library Limited, 1930.

B. Interpretations:

1. Al Hilali, Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din Khan and Muhammad Mushin. *Interpretation of the Meanings of the Noble Qur'an*. Pakistan: kazi publication, 1992.
2. Abu Shabanah and Abdel Khalek Himmat. *Al Montakhab [The Select]: The Interpretation of the Holy Qur'an Arabic – English* (1st ed). Cairo 1993.

C. Dictionaries:

1. Dr. Al-Nadwi, Abdullah Abbas. *Vocabulary of the Holy Qur'an*. Jeddah: Dar Al Shorouq, 1983.
2. Ba'albaki, Munir. *Al Mawrid: A Modern English – Arabic Dictionary*. Lebanon: Dar El Ilm lil Malayen, 2007.
3. *Encarta Webster's College Dictionary*. Great Britain: Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 2005.
4. Urdang, Laurence. *The Oxford Thesaurus*. Oxford: Oxford press, 1991.
5. Wehr, Hans. *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*. London: J. Milton Cowan, Spoken languages Services, INC, Urbana, IL, 1979.

II. Secondary Sources:

1. Al- Azhar Academy of Islamic Researches. *Marriage in Islamic Law*. Cairo: General

4. المنجد الإعدادي (الطبعة الأولى) - دار المشرق - بيروت - لبنان - 1969 -
5. المنجد في اللغة العربية المعاصرة، دار المشرق - بيروت - ط/1 - 2000م
6. المنجد في اللغة والأعلام، دار المشرق - بيروت - ط/37 - 1998م
7. روعي البعلبكي - المورد: قاموس عربي إنجليزي - الطبعة الثالثة - دار العلم للملايين - بيروت - لبنان - 2008م.
8. أحمد إبراهيم مهنا - دراسة حول ترجمة القرآن الكريم - مطبوعات الشعب - القاهرة - بدون تاريخ.
9. أحمد عيسى عاشور - الفقه الميسر في العبادات والمعاملات - مكتبة الاعتصام - (الطبعة الرابعة) - القاهرة - 1978.
10. السيد سابق - فقه السنة - دار الكتاب العربي - بيروت - لبنان - بدون تاريخ.
- Organization for Government Printing offices, 1984.
2. 'Ali, maulana Muhammad. The Religion of Islam. UAR: National Publication & Printing house, ...
3. Blankinship, Khalid "Abdulahdi Yahaya". Some Problem in Translating the Qur'an with Reference to Rhetorical Features. M.A. Thesis, 1975.
4. Higab, Muhammad. Islam Moderate Legislation for Progressive Nation. Egypt: El-Falah for translation, publishing & distribution, 1977.
5. "Religions Weddings," Religions Section. Article. *Maqsood*, Ruqaiyyah Waris. BBC. 8 Sept. 2009.

المراجع العربية:

1. القرآن الكريم: مصحف المدينة المنورة. مجمع الملك فهد لطباعة المصحف الشريف. المدينة المنورة.
2. الإمام الجليل العلامة أبي البركات عبد الله بن أحمد بن محمود النسفي. تفسير النسفي. دار الكتاب العربي - بيروت - لبنان - 1967.
3. الياس انطوان وأدوارد ألياس - قاموس ألياس العصري - دار العالم العربي - القاهرة - 2007

Dr. Amira Wasfy

amira_wasfy@cic-cairo.com

Canadian International College