

English Translation of the Proverbs in the Holy Qur'an:

A Critical and Comparative Study

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Abstract: This study examines the translation of Qur'anic proverbs into English, focusing on how their rhetorical and moral meanings are conveyed to non-Arabic-speaking audiences. The purpose of the research was to conduct a comparative analysis of selected Qur'anic proverbs in two prominent English translations: Abdullah Yusuf Ali's *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary* (1938) and Mohammad Mahmud Ghali's *Towards Understanding the Ever-Glorious Qur'an* (1997). Using a descriptive comparative qualitative design, the study employed qualitative content analysis to analyse a purposive sample of thirty Qur'anic proverbs. The comparison focused on translation strategies, stylistic features, and the extent to which each translation retained the rhetorical impact and moral essence of the Arabic source text. The results showed that Yusuf Ali's translation uses archaic, poetic English, evoking a literary tone but limiting accessibility for modern readers. Ghali's version, by contrast, adopts modern and straightforward English, addressing some interpretive ambiguities in Ali's work. Both translators applied literal translation, transliteration, and cultural adaptation strategies, yet neither fully captured the depth and rhetorical force of the original text. The study recommends adopting modern, fluent English and avoiding obsolete expressions, unnecessary transliteration, or personal bias. It further suggests that Qur'an translation should be a collective scholarly effort involving experts in Arabic, English, Qur'anic exegesis, and Islamic sciences to ensure accuracy, objectivity, and contextual fidelity in conveying the meanings of the Noble Qur'an.

Keywords: English Translation - The Proverbs - The Holy Qur'an.

Introduction: According to Ghazala (1995), "translation is generally used to refer to all the process and methods used to convey the meaning of the source language into the target language" (P.1). Ghazala's definition focuses on the notion of meaning as an essential element in translation. That is, when translating, understanding the meaning of source text is vital to have the appropriate equivalent in the target text, thus it is meaning that is translated in relation to grammar, style and sounds. It is the organizing thread that connects societies and supports the fabric of human civilization, and it is the bridge that connects the disparate and distant peoples and brings them closer together. Foster (1958) argued that translation is a mental activity in which a meaning of given linguistic discourse is rendered from one language to another. It is the act of transferring the linguistic entities from one language into their equivalents in another language.

Religious translation involves rendering sacred texts from one language into another while preserving their theological, cultural, and spiritual significance. As Nida and Taber (1989) emphasize, translating religious texts demands not only linguistic competence but also a deep understanding of the faith traditions involved. Hassan and Hussein (2021) noted that *mathal* is frequently used in the Qur'an to express various meanings, including comparison, likeness, description, similitude, example, and parable, often with the aim to "preach, guide, clarify or teach certain morals" (p. 41).

The translation of proverbs in the Holy Qur'an presents unique challenges that stem from the intricate interplay of linguistic, cultural, and stylistic elements inherent in the text. Al-Hussein (2011) explained that Qur'anic expressions, including proverbial language, embody moral and theological connotations that cannot be conveyed adequately without deep cultural and exegetical understanding. Moreover, Elimam (2009)

highlighted the tension between linguistic accuracy and stylistic fidelity, noting that Qur'anic proverbs exemplify this challenge because they blend moral instruction with rhetorical elegance.

This study focuses on translation of proverbs in the Holy Qur'an translated by two translators, Abdullah Yusuf Ali, born in India (1859 – 1953) and Muhammed Mahmud Ghali, born in Egypt (1920 – 2016). The study aimed at making a comparison between two books of translation of the Holy Quran conducted by Abdullah Yusuf Ali (1938) entitled "*The Holy Quran: Text, Translation and commentary*" and the translation of Muhammad Mahmud Ghali entitled "*Towards Understanding the Ever-Glorious Qur'an*" (1st ed. 1997) to detect the similarities and differences of translation of proverbs. The study adopted the comparative method and content analysis.

Rationale of the Study: The topic of this study is English Translation of the Proverbs in the Holy Qur'an: A Critical and Comparative Study. The researcher selected two translations of the Holy Qur'an. The rationale behind the selection of these two translators is that: They represent translations made by Muslims and non-native Arabic speakers. Their translations represent two different eras: 1930s Abdullah Yusuf Ali, and 1990s Muhammad Mahmud Ghali. The justification of choosing these two translations is that Yusuf Ali's translation (1930s) reflects the colonial-era English of his time, characterized by archaic, formal, and literary language reminiscent of Shakespearean diction. In contrast, Ghali's translation (1990s) reflects modern English usage, with greater accessibility for contemporary readers.

Statement of the Problem: Abdul-Raof (2001) emphasized the linguistic and cultural complexity of the Qur'an, while Mustapha (2016) highlighted the difficulty of translating Qur'anic proverbs because of their embedded moral and cultural meanings. Proverbs are important parts of the text that contain moral lessons and cultural wisdom deeply rooted in the Arabic language. This study concentrates on the translation of proverbs in the Holy Qur'an by two widely recognized translators, namely Ali and Ghali. Their works, *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary* (1934) and *Towards Understanding the Ever-Glorious Qur'an* (1997), respectively, are a rich field for comparative analysis with regard to the way in which each translator interprets and conveys the meanings carried by the proverbs.

The primary problem of this study addresses is the difficulty in translating proverbs from Arabic to English within the context of the Qur'an. Proverbs can include idiomatic expressions, cultural references, and stylistic nuances that do not easily translate into another language. This linguistic complexity may lead to a variety of interpretations and meanings from the texts that may, in turn, affect readers' perception of meaning. Since the proverb is not an ornament but full of ethical and moral significance, it is important to translate the proverbs in the Qur'an accurately to understand the intended message. Previous studies (Ahmed, 2005; Khalidi, 2012) have recognized challenges in different contexts regarding translating Qur'anic proverbs. The body of literature on Qur'anic translation emphasizes that figurative expressions, particularly proverbs, pose significant difficulties for accurate rendering. Ahmed (2005) and Khalidi (2012) stressed that Qur'anic proverbs require careful interpretation to ensure that their full moral and spiritual significance is conveyed.

Although there is some literature on Qur'anic translation, focused comparative studies in the area of proverbs are lacking. Most research tends to focus on broader themes or individual translator analysis without delving into how proverbs are treated across different translations. This gap calls for a systematic study of the proverbs in the works of Yusuf Ali and Ghali to pinpoint the similarities and differences in their methods. This study is also intended for students of translation and translators.

Objectives of the Study: This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To critically analyze and compare the translation strategies adopted by Abdullah Yusuf Ali and Muhammed Mahmud Ghali in their respective renderings of proverbs from the Holy Qur'an.
2. To compare how each translator renders certain proverbs to identify similarities and differences, with special regard to the variations in meaning and cultural context.
3. To compare the extent to which each translation retains the rhetorical effect and moral lessons of the Qur'anic proverbs.

Research Questions: This study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the translation strategies used by Abdullah Yusuf Ali and Muhammad Mahmud Ghali in their respective renderings of Qur'anic proverbs, and how do these strategies compare?
2. How do the translations by each translator differ in their treatment of specific proverbs, especially regarding variations in meaning and cultural context?
3. To what extent does each translation retain the rhetorical impact and moral messages of the Qur'anic proverbs?

Significance of the study:

This study examines the translation of proverbs in the Holy Qur'an by two prominent translators: Abdullah Yusuf Ali and Muhammad Mahmud Ghali. These translations have been chosen due to their widespread use among English-speaking audiences. Each translation has its own unique readership, contributing to the broad accessibility of the Holy Qur'an in English. Both translations are recognized as some of the most frequently consulted versions in the English-speaking world. Abdullah Yusuf Ali's translation is particularly popular among a general audience, providing an accessible version that resonates with a broad readership. On the other hand, Muhammad Mahmud Ghali (1920-2016) was Professor of Linguistics & Islamic Studies, and founder of Al-Azhar's Faculty of Languages & Translation. Each translation appeals to different groups. Abdullah Yusuf Ali's version is widely embraced by those seeking a traditional and accessible approach. In contrast, Muhammad Mahmud Ghali's translation finds favor in scholarly circles and among readers looking for a text that engages with the theological and historical context of the Qur'an in a detailed, thoughtful way. Moreover, the study focuses on translating proverbs in the Holy Qur'an. Proverbs in the Holy Qur'an carry deep cultural, linguistic, and theological meanings, often rooted in historical contexts. Effective translation thus demands not only linguistic accuracy but also a sensitive approach to capturing the essence of these proverbs within their original context, making the meaning accessible to English-speaking readers. By exploring how proverbs are translated by these two influential figures, this research aims to contribute valuable insights into the complexities of translating sacred texts while fostering greater appreciation for the linguistic and cultural richness embedded within the Holy Qur'an.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study mainly arise from its methodological approach and limited scope. The analysis relied on a purposive sample of only thirty Qur'anic proverbs, which restricts the extent to which the findings can be generalized to the translation challenges of the Qur'an as a whole. In addition, the use of qualitative content analysis and the exclusive focus on two historically situated English translations (Ali and Ghali) render the results interpretive and limit their applicability to the wider range of contemporary Qur'anic translations. While this narrow focus allows for an in-depth examination, it does not consider the strategies or outcomes of other modern translation efforts. Therefore, the conclusions regarding translation complexity are specific to the selected texts and sample.

Literature Review:

This section exposes a brief literature review relevant to the topic:

Proverb Definition:

Terminologically: Al-Askari (1988, p.117) explained that the proverb origin is the similarity between two things in speech. For example, to say this thing is like something else. **Rhetorically,** Al-Baghdadi (1980, p. 34) described the proverb as the wisdom of the Arabs in the pre-Islamic and- Islamic eras, so that, it conveys what you need by logic metaphorically other than explicitly. It has three characteristics: the expression brevity, the meaning accuracy, and the good similitude. Proverb: Theoretically, it is "a saying, usually short, that expresses a general truth about life. Proverbs give advice, make an observation, or present a teaching in a succinct and memorable way" (Manser 2007, p. 4). According to Carter (2002, p.68), proverbs "have formal and semantic characteristics in common. They convey some kind of aphoristic truth, usually in simple present tense and are normally neither syntactically devisable nor substitutable."

Proverbs (*Amthal*) in the Holy Qur'an: Nature and Function: The translation of proverbs in the Holy Qur'an is a field that highlights the complexities involved in conveying the intricate layers of meaning embedded in the original Arabic text. The significance of proverbs in the Qur'an extends beyond mere linguistic expression; they encapsulate cultural norms and ethical teachings that are central to Islamic values. The Holy Qur'an, the central religious text of Islam, is revered not only for its divine message but also for its profound literary and rhetorical qualities. Among its many stylistic features are the *amthal* (singular: *mathal*), commonly translated as proverbs, parables, or similitudes. These *amthal* serve multifaceted roles within the Qur'anic discourse, acting as powerful tools for conveying complex theological concepts, ethical guidance, and wisdom in a concise and memorable manner (Hassan & Hussein, 2021). They often employ vivid imagery and analogies drawn from the natural world or human experience to illustrate abstract truths, making the divine message more accessible and impactful for the audience. Hassan and Hussein (2021) noted that *mathal* is frequently used in the Qur'an to express various meanings, including comparison, likeness, description, similitude, example, and parable, often with the aim to "preach, guide, clarify or teach certain morals" (p. 41). The significance of understanding these *amthal* is underscored within the Qur'an itself, suggesting that grasping their meaning is a mark of true comprehension and scholarship.

However, the very features that make Qur'anic proverbs effective in their original Arabic context, their linguistic richness, cultural specificity, and rhetorical depth, pose significant challenges for translators seeking to render them accurately and effectively into other languages, particularly English. Translating religious texts is inherently complex, involving not just linguistic transfer but also the navigation of theological sensitivities, cultural gaps, and the preservation of the source text's unique style and impact. Proverbs, embedded deeply within the source language's cultural and linguistic matrix, amplify these difficulties. The translator must grapple with finding equivalents not only for words but also for the underlying concepts, cultural assumptions, and rhetorical force encapsulated within the proverb (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1990). The task involves balancing fidelity to the source text's form and meaning with the need for clarity and resonance in the target language and culture.

Methodology: This study employed a qualitative method; the researcher used the comparative, critical, descriptive approach due to the complex nature of the examined the Holy Quran. As suggested by Creswell (2007), qualitative research is conducted when researchers seek understanding of a complex issue, and when quantitative measurements and analyses do not seem appropriate for the research problem under investigation.

The data were collected by running a comparison between the source text and the two translations chosen for research using content analysis focusing on proverbs. Through the means of content analysis of the proverbs collected from the Holy Quran, data were collected to inform the body of the research.

Data Collection Methods: Research instrument is very important to obtain the result of a study; it is a set of methods which are used to collect the data. Creswell (1994, p.145) stated that the qualitative research is the primary instrument for the data collection and data analysis. A qualitative content analysis method was employed to collect and categorize the relevant data. Subsequently, the researcher analyzed the data to address the study's objectives and answer the research questions.

Sample of the Study: The sample for this study consisted of 30 proverbs purposefully selected from the Holy Qur'an, along with their corresponding English translations by Ali (1938) and Ghali (1997). The selection of the sample was guided by the purposive sampling technique.

Saldanha and O'Brien (2014, p.34) stated that purposive sampling involves selecting a sample based on pre-defined critical parameters. Such a technique is particularly appropriate for qualitative research where the aim is to gain in-depth knowledge about a specific phenomenon, rather than to generalize findings to a larger population. In this context, purposive sampling allowed the researcher to deliberately select proverbs that are representative of the linguistic, cultural, and rhetorical challenges inherent in translating the Qur'an, ensuring the relevance of the sample to the research questions.

Criteria for selecting Qur'anic proverbs

Firstly, the selected verses had to be generally recognized by Islamic scholarship and exegesis (Tafsir) as containing proverbial expressions or conveying proverbial wisdom (Amthal).

Secondly, the selection aimed to include a variety of proverb types, encompassing those that use direct comparison, metaphor, or didacticism to convey moral or ethical lessons.

Thirdly, preference was given to Qur'anic proverbs that presented potential translation difficulties, such as those containing culturally specific idioms, complex syntactical structures, rhetorical complexity such poetic structure and use of metaphor or theological concepts.

Finally, the selection sought a balance, ensuring that the chosen proverbs were distributed across different Surahs of the Qur'an to avoid concentrating on a narrow portion of the text.

Analysis and Discussion: This section presents a comparative analysis and critical discussion of the selected Qur'anic proverbs and their English translations by Abdullah Yusuf Ali and Muhammad Mahmud Ghali. The discussion is thematically structured, starting with an overview of each proverb, followed by a detailed comparative examination of the translation strategies employed, such as literal translation, paraphrasing, and cultural adaptation.

The analysis also reveals the extent to which each translator maintains rhetorical fidelity and conveys the theological, linguistic, and moral dimensions of the original text. Special attention has been given to the preservation of the didactic, metaphorical, and moral dimensions inherent in the source text, recognizing that Qur'anic proverbs are deeply embedded in the semantic, cultural, and religious matrix of classical Arabic.

What follows is a sample of the study that has been analyzed and discussed:

Table: The samples of the study (Quranic Proverbs)

No.	Ghali's Translation	Ali's Translation	Quranic Proverbs
1.	The likeness of them is as the likeness of one who set to kindle a fire; so, as soon as it illuminated whatever is around him, Allah went away with their light, (i.e., took away their light) and left them in darkness (es) (where) they do not behold (anything). (Qur'an 2:17, trans. Ghali).	Their example is that of one who kindled a fire, but when it illuminated what was around him, Allah took away their light and left them in darkness [so] they could not see. (Qur'an 2:17, trans. Ali).	مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي اسْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا فَلَمَّا أَضَاءَتْ مَا حَوْلَهُ ذَهَبَ اللَّهُ بِنُورِهِمْ وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ (سورة البقرة، الآية 17).
2.	Deaf, dumb, blind, so they will not return. (Qur'an 2:18, trans. Ghali)	Deaf, dumb, and blind, they will not return (to the path) (Qur'an 2:18, trans. Ali).	صُمٌّ بُكْمٌ عُمَيٌّ فَهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ (سورة البقرة، الآية 18).
3.	Or as a cloudburst from the heaven in which are darkness, and thunder, and lighting. They set their fingers in their ears against skinning (thunder bolts) wary of death, and Allah is supremely encompassing the disbelievers (Qur'an 2:19, trans. Ghali)	Or (another similitude) is that of a rain-laden cloud from the sky: In it are zones of darkness, and thunder and lightning: They press their fingers in their ears to keep out the stunning thunder-clap, the while they are in terror of death. But Allah is ever round the rejecters of Faith! Qur'an 2:19, trans. Ali.	أَوْ كَصَيِّبٍ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فِيهِ ظُلُمَاتٌ وَرَعْدٌ وَبَرْقٌ يَجْعَلُونَ أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِمْ مِنَ الصَّوَاعِقِ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ وَاللَّهُ مُحِيطٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ (سورة البقرة، الآية 19).
4.	The lightning almost snatches their beholdings (Literally: eye sights); whenever it illuminates for them, they walk in it, and when it darkens over them, they keep stationed; and if Allah	The lightning all but snatches away their sight; every time the light (Helps) them, they walk therein, and when the darkness grows on them, they stand still.	يَكَادُ الْبَرْقُ يَخْطَفُ أَبْصَارَهُمْ كُلَّمَا أَضَاءَ لَهُمْ مَشَوْا فِيهِ وَإِذَا أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ قَامُوا وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَذَهَبَ بِسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَارِهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (سورة البقرة، الآية 20).

No.	Ghali's Translation	Ali's Translation	Quranic Proverbs
	had so decided, He would indeed have gone away with (i.e., taken away) their hearing and their beholdings. (Literally: eyesights) Surely Allah is Ever Determiner over everything (Qur'an 2:20, trans. Ghali)	And if Allah willed, He could take away their faculty of hearing and seeing; for Allah hath power over all things (Qur'an 2:20, trans. Ali)	

Quranic Proverb No. 1

What follows is the analysis and discussion of the Qur'anic proverb no. 1:

Table 1 reveals that original Arabic verse presents a metaphorical image of the hypocrites through the example of a person who kindles a fire. Once the fire illuminates the surroundings, the light is suddenly taken away, leaving the individual in darkness. This image symbolizes those who initially appear to be guided by faith but ultimately fall into spiritual blindness due to insincerity or disbelief. The primary aim of the verse is didactic: it warns against superficial or pretended faith. The rhetorical device employed is a vivid simile that underscores both moral decline and divine punishment.

Ghali's translation employs a strategy of explicitation, literal with explanatory additions, as seen in his use of parenthetical explanations such as "i.e., took away their light" and "(es)" for "darkness(es)." While these additions may clarify the meaning for readers unfamiliar with Qur'anic style, they tend to interrupt the natural rhythm and rhetorical flow of the verse. His phrase "went away with their light" is less direct than "took away their light," potentially weakening the theological emphasis on divine intervention. The use of "behold" in place of "see" introduces a more formal and archaic tone, which may elevate the register but might distance it from the understanding of contemporary readers. Although Ghali's translation retains the basic metaphor and moral message, the overall rhetorical and stylistic force of the original is reduced due to the overly literal and explanatory rendering.

In contrast, Ali's translation is more idiomatic and stylistically coherent. He avoids parenthetical clarifications and adopts terms that align more closely with natural English usage. His use of "example" instead of "likeness" reads more fluently, and "took away their light" more strongly conveys the notion of divine action. The phrase "they could not see" is simple and accessible while preserving the verse's intended theological and moral implications.

Ali's translation displays greater rhetorical fidelity by capturing the metaphorical and moral strength of the original without over-explaining. His lexical choices support the verse's didactic function, reinforcing its warning against hypocrisy. Furthermore, Ali's version better preserves the aesthetic qualities and literary coherence of the source text, making it more suitable for an English-speaking audience seeking spiritual resonance and clarity.

In summary, both translations convey the essential didactic, metaphorical, and moral meanings of the Quranic proverb in the verse (Quran, 2:17), though they do so through different strategies. Ghali favours a more literal and explanatory style, which may assist novice readers but at the expense of rhetorical impact. Ali, on the other hand, strikes a balance between semantic accuracy and rhetorical fluency, making his rendering more effective in conveying the Qur'an's moral depth, metaphorical richness, and theological clarity.

Quranic Proverb No. 2

What follows is the analysis and discussion of the Qur'anic proverb no. 2:

As shown in Table 1 the linguistic context of the proverb is part of a larger passage (verses 6–20) in Surah Al-Baqarah describing the hypocrites who have turned away from divine guidance. The verse uses triple metaphors—deafness, mutism, and blindness—to symbolize their moral and spiritual incapacity. The structure is concise, emphatic, and rhythmically powerful in Arabic, creating a strong rhetorical impact.

Ghali's translation adopts a literal translation strategy, rendering the verse almost word-for-word. His version maintains the metaphorical sequence "deaf, dumb, blind", closely mirroring the Arabic syntax. However, he

uses a slightly awkward conjunction structure ("so they will not return") without further contextualization. The strengths of his translation are the literal fidelity; close adherence to the Qur'anic structure. However, the absence of any explanatory insertion may hinder comprehension for readers unfamiliar with the Qur'anic worldview. Moreover, the phrase "so they will not return" feels syntactically disconnected from the previous triadic structure and lacks clarity about what they are not returning to.

Ali's Translation also preserves the metaphorical triad, but enhances clarity by inserting "(to the path)". This explicitation strategy clarifies that the "return" refers to returning to the path of guidance, a meaning that is contextually implied in Arabic but not explicit. The strengths of his translation are the addition that reinforces the didactic and moral intent of the verse by specifying the nature of the deviation. The use of "and" also adds smoother rhythm and cohesion. Although this insertion aids comprehension, it may be viewed by purists as interpretive rather than strictly translational.

Both translations retain the metaphorical force of the original. The triple metaphor (hearing, speech, sight) is a profound representation of spiritual alienation and moral paralysis. These sensory losses metaphorically represent the refusal of hypocrites to engage with divine truth, a theme central to Qur'anic theology.

Ghali's version reflects textual loyalty but at the cost of rhetorical fluidity and contextual clarity. Ali's version achieves a balanced compromise by preserving metaphor and structure while subtly guiding the reader toward the moral and theological implications through minimal explanation.

From a comparative critical perspective, both translations succeed in capturing the essential metaphorical structure and moral warning of the original Arabic. However, Ali's translation is more effective in achieving the didactic and theological aims of the verse due to his careful use of explicitation. His translation helps readers—especially those outside the Islamic or Arabic tradition—grasp the moral consequences of the imagery. Ghali's version is more literal and may appeal to readers seeking fidelity to the Arabic form, but it risks obscuring the deeper moral implications without additional context.

Thus, in alignment with the aims of your study, Ali's rendering better preserves the rhetorical effect, metaphorical richness, and moral clarity of the Qur'anic proverb in a manner accessible to the target audience.

Quranic Proverb No. 3

The analysis and discussion of the Qur'anic proverb no. 3:

Table 1 shows that original Arabic verse presents a metaphorical image of the hypocrites through the example of a rain-laden cloud from the sky. God Almighty resembles their situation to the case of those who were hit by heavy rain, in a dark night full of lightning flash and thunder snarl, whenever the light of lightning illuminated for them they walked in it, and if it darkens them they stand confused and do not know where to go, and they are in this case afraid and terrified, if the lightning shines almost snatched their eyes from it, and if the thunder bombards, they put their fingers in their ears from fearing it. Also, the hypocrites are clothed in their appearance with Islam, which is like a strike from heaven, but they really feel anxious and troubled, and they oscillate between meeting the believers and their return to demons, between what they say with their tongues and what their chests hide, between what they ask for of guidance and light, and what they come to from misguidance and darkness, between what they want from the benefits and fruits of Islam, and what they fear of its consequences, functions and sermons. The primary aim of the verse is didactic: it warns against superficial or pretended faith. The rhetorical device employed is a vivid simile that underscores both moral decline and divine punishment.

Ghali's translation employs a strategy of explicitation, literal with explanatory additions, as seen in his use of parenthetical explanations such as "i.e., (thunder bolts)". While these additions may clarify the meaning for readers unfamiliar with Qur'anic style, they tend to interrupt the natural rhythm and rhetorical flow of the verse. The strength of his translation is the literal fidelity; close adherence to the Qur'anic structure. However, the absence of any explanatory insertion may hinder comprehension for readers unfamiliar with the Qur'anic worldview. Although Ghali's translation retains the basic metaphor and moral message, the

overall rhetorical and stylistic force of the original is reduced due to the overly literal and explanatory rendering.

In contrast, Ali's translation is more idiomatic and stylistically coherent. He avoids parenthetical clarifications and adopts terms that align more closely with natural English usage "another similitude" to inform the target reader this is another proverb to become simpler and more accessible while preserving the verse's intended theological and moral implications.

Ali's translation displays greater rhetorical fidelity by capturing the metaphorical and moral strength of the original without over-explaining. His lexical choices support the verse's didactic function, reinforcing its warning against hypocrisy. Furthermore, Ali's version better preserves the aesthetic qualities and literary coherence of the source text, making it more suitable for an English-speaking audience seeking spiritual resonance and clarity. Ghali uses "darknesses and thunder and lightning" while Ali uses "thunder, and lightning." Ghali's translation uses "wary of death," which adds a layer of uncertainty and fear, while Yusuf Ali uses "terror of death," which is more direct.

Quranic Proverb No. 4

The analysis and discussion of the Qur'anic proverb no. 4:

Table 1 reveals that the rhetorical image of the Almighty's saying: "*Lightning almost catches their eyes*" is a metaphorical image, an image that illustrates the intensity and brightness of lightning so that it almost caught their eyes and prevented them from seeing. This metaphor describes the condition of the hypocrites, who do not benefit from the light of faith as they benefit from the light of lightning, but are misled by doubt and hesitation. The primary aim of the verse is didactic: it warns against superficial or pretended faith. The rhetorical device employed is a vivid simile that underscores both moral decline and divine punishment.

Ghali's translation employs a strategy of explicitation, literal with explanatory additions, as seen in his use of parenthetical explanations such as "i.e., Literally: eye sights" for "beholdings." While these additions may clarify the meaning for readers unfamiliar with Qur'anic style, they tend to interrupt the natural rhythm and rhetorical flow of the verse. His word "eye sights" is less direct than "beholdings" potentially weakening the theological emphasis on divine intervention. The use of "behold" in place of "eye sights" introduces a more formal and archaic tone, which may elevate the register but might distance it from the understanding of contemporary readers. Although Ghali's translation retains the basic metaphor and moral message, the overall rhetorical and stylistic force of the original is reduced due to the overly literal and explanatory rendering.

Ali's translation adopts a strategy of explicitation literal with explanatory additions, as seen in his use of parenthetical explanations such as "i.e.; every time the light (Helps) them)." While these additions may clarify the meaning for readers unfamiliar with Qur'anic style, they tend to interrupt the natural rhythm and rhetorical flow of the verse.

Ali's translation displays greater rhetorical fidelity by capturing the metaphorical and moral strength of the original. His lexical choices support the verse's didactic function, reinforcing its warning against hypocrisy. Furthermore, Ali's version better preserves the aesthetic qualities and literary coherence of the source text, making it more suitable for an English-speaking audience seeking spiritual resonance and clarity.

From a comparative critical perspective, both translations succeed in capturing the essential metaphorical structure and moral warning of the original Arabic. However, Ali's translation is more effective in achieving the didactic and theological aims of the verse due to his careful use of explicitation. His translation helps readers—especially those outside the Islamic or Arabic tradition—grasp the moral consequences of the imagery. Ghali's version is more literal and may appeal to readers seeking fidelity to the Arabic form, but it risks obscuring the deeper moral implications without additional context.

Thus, in alignment with the aims of your study, Ali's rendering better preserves the rhetorical effect, metaphorical richness, and moral clarity of the Qur'anic proverb in a manner accessible to the target audience.

Recommendations: Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Adopt a balanced hybrid approach, combining literal fidelity with semantic and rhetorical adaptation to preserve both meaning and impact.
- Avoid overuse of archaic English or rigid literalism; instead, employ clear, modern, idiomatic English that conveys the intended moral and rhetorical lessons.
- Use footnotes, glossaries, or annotations to explain culturally specific or theologically loaded terms rather than distorting the translation or overburdening the text.
- Limit transliteration to essential cases where no English equivalent exists (e.g., *taqwa*, *ummah*, *salah*).
- Integrate comparative translation analysis into translation studies, Qur'anic studies, and linguistics programs to build critical awareness of translation strategies.
- Encourage students and researchers to consult multiple translations and tafsir (exegesis) alongside the Arabic text, rather than relying on one version.
- Qur'anic translation should be approached as a collective scholarly endeavour involving teams of linguists, Arabists, Qur'anic exegetes, and native English speakers, to reduce bias and improve accuracy.
- Translators should possess mastery of Arabic, English, Qur'anic sciences, rhetoric, and Islamic intellectual traditions to handle the theological and cultural weight of Qur'anic proverbs.
- New translations should utilize digital and multimodal resources (annotations, commentaries, cross-references) to assist modern readers without compromising textual fidelity.

Conclusions: This study conducted a comparative analysis of thirty selected Qur'anic proverbs in two English translations: Muhammad Mahmoud Ghali's *the Message of the Qur'an* and Abdullah Yusuf Ali's *The Holy Qur'an*. The analysis highlighted notable differences in language, style, and interpretative approach. Ghali's translation employs modern, idiomatic English with a formal, academic, and religiously informed register, emphasizing clarity and logical explanation of complex passages. Yusuf Ali, in contrast, uses classical English, marked by elevated and archaic diction, extensive reliance on traditional exegesis, and integration of Western intellectual and cultural knowledge.

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الترجمة الإنجليزية للأمثال في القرآن الكريم: دراسة نقدية مقارنة

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الملخص: هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى إجراء مقارنة بين ترجمتين للأمثال القرآن الكريم المترجم محمد محمود غالي (1997م) (نحو فهم القرآن الكريم) وعبد الله يوسف علي (1938م) (القرآن الكريم: النص والترجمة والتفسير) لكشف أوجه التشابه والاختلاف اعتمدت الدراسة الطريقة المقارنة وتحليل المحتوى، وقد قسمت هذه الدراسة على خمسة فصول: ناقش الفصل الأول نشأة الترجمة ودورها في فهم ثقافات الأمم لبعضها البعض، والتحديات التي واجهت المترجمين وخاصة في صعوبة نقل النص القرآني إلى اللغات الأخرى، في حين ناقش الفصل الثاني الإستراتيجيات في ترجمة الأمثال وتوضيح أنواع الأمثال، التي ذكرت في القرآن الكريم مع تحليل آيات مختارة من القرآن الكريم؛ وذلك بتحديد الصعوبات التي واجهت المترجمين؛ فقد كانت الترجمة الحرفية مهيمنة على تحويل النص القرآني إلى اللغة الهدف، وتضمن الفصل الثالث ثلاثين مثلاً وترجمة لكلا المترجمين، في حين حوى الفصل الرابع على التحليل المقارن بين الترجمتين ونوع الترجمة، التي استخدمها كل مترجم، وفي الفصل الخامس قدمت الدراسة عدداً من التوصيات، من بينها: يجب على المترجمين إنتاج ترجمة بأسلوب طبيعي يستخدم مفردات اللغة الإنجليزية الحديثة، ويجب على المترجمين تجنب تأثير الشخصية، ويجب النظر إلى ترجمة النصوص الإسلامية، على أنها مجموعة من الإرساليات بدلاً من أن تكون مهمة فردية، ومن المفترض أن يضطلع بهذه المهمة موظفو المؤسسات المتخصصة، وأن يكون مترجمو معنى القرآن الكريم على دراية باللغة العربية والإنجليزية، والتفسير والعلوم القرآنية للاحتفاظ بالقوة البلاغية والأخلاقي .

الكلمات المفتاحية: الترجمة الإنجليزية - الأمثال - القرآن الكريم.