

CHAPTER 8

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CONCLUSION

8.1 BACKGROUND

This last chapter restates the objectives of this study and provides a commentary on each objective. This writer includes relevant conclusions and recommendations based on the research and discussion.

The first objective of this study is to make a stylistic analysis on two versions of the English language translations of the meaning of the Quran. The two versions are:

- i. The Message of the Quran - English language translation of the meaning of the Quran by Muhammad Asad.
- ii. The Holy Quran - English language translation of the meaning of the Quran by Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

8.2 STYLE VARIATIONS OF MUHAMMAD ASAD AND ABDULLAH YUSUF ALI

With regard to language and style variations, the language of the set of Medinan and Meccan surah from The Message of the Quran- English language translation of the meaning of the Quran by Muhammad Asad is generally found to be Modern English, adult, religious-class, educated language. On the other hand, the

language of the same set of Medinan and Meccan surah from The Holy Quran-English language translation of the meaning Quran by Abdullah Yusuf Ali is generally found to be Classical English, adult, religious-class, educated language. Some of the words used that give that Classical English effect are 'ye' instead of you. For example, in verse forty-three of the seventy-seventh surah, Al-Mursalat.

Muhammad Asad provides a more narrative prosaic style while Abdullah Yusuf Ali , a more poetic-like style. This can be discerned in the arrangement of verses by each translator.

The medium is written language but the two sets of Medinan and Meccan surah from the two versions of the English language translations of the meaning of the Quran contain representations of spoken language. For example, in verse five of the sixty-first surah, As-Saff.

The tenor is generally formal in the two sets of Medinan and Meccan surah from the two versions of the English language translations of the meaning of the Quran. However, in verse six of the sixty-first surah, As-Saff, the children of Israel insulted Allah's words. In this instance, the tenor becomes informal, impolite.

The tenor of verses two and three carry a disappointed question (in verse two), leading to a sad but firm reminder (in verse three) so much so that verse three sounds like an appeal or persuasion. For example, in verses two and three of Surah As-Saff.

In verse forty-eight of Surah Al-Mursalat, the tenor becomes impolite, informal due to the disobedience of the disbelievers. When they were told to bow down before God, they disobeyed. For example, in verse forty-eight of Surah Al-Mursalat.

The domain of the two sets of Medinan and Meccan surah from the two versions of the English language translations of the meaning of the Quran is generally the language of instruction reaching out for all to believe in Allah, His Messengers and the Day of Judgement. For example, in verse eleven of surah As-Saff.

In verse thirty-six of Surah Al-Mursalat, Abdullah Yusuf Ali uses the word “pleas”, making it the language of the law in this instance. In verse forty-eight of Surah Al-Mursalat, Abdullah Yusuf Ali uses the word “prostrate”, making it the language of religion; consequently, the language of instruction in religion in this instance. For example, in verses thirty-six and forty-eight of Surah Al-Mursalat.

There is accessibility in the language used to describe Paradise. For example, in verses forty-one and forty-two of the seventy-seventh surah, Al-Mursalat. In both versions, the descriptive words -cool shades and springs, fruits- are familiar to all to help create a clear picture of Paradise. For example, in verse twelve of Surah As-Saff.

It is basically agreed upon that Muhammad Asad provides a clearer and more accurate translation of the meaning of the Quran than Abdullah Yusuf Ali. Muhammad Asad seems to spend more effort in using more words and explanations for the sake of clarity and this is noticeable in some instances, for example, in verse thirteen of Surah Al-Mursalat. The words in [] make that difference in clarity whereas Abdullah Yusuf Ali leaves it vague.

It was commented that although Abdullah Yusuf Ali aimed at a free translation, they find his translation to be fairly literal and in some instances, shades of meaning are missed. However, it was emphasized and applauded that in Abdullah Yusuf Ali’s version, God is substituted with Allah throughout.

Nevertheless, it was recommended that this writer use The Message of the Quran- English language translation of the meaning of the Quran by Muhammad Asad for teaching purposes.

It was commented that both translators have strived to provide the readers with as much understanding as possible of the meaning of the Quran in their own way. This writer is reminded by the fact that it is not within her scope to compare the translated versions with the original Quran by herself. There is no general consensus on which is the closest translated version to the original Quran and each scholar or expert may have his reasons for not thinking so - each translator can only do his best according to his own capacity.

With regard to using extracts from different surah as literary texts in the literature classroom, the idea is fully supported. It gives an opportunity to expose the beauty of the Quran. From the questionnaire data, all the respondents accept and fully support the use of the English language translations of the meaning of the Quran as a text at this particular (Islamic) institution. This receptiveness on the part of the respondents heralds well for facilitating and broadening the scope of Islamically-orientated education. A word of caution was given to this writer that the Quran should be handled very carefully by the teacher and the students.

From the questionnaire data, Muhammad Asad's version scored higher in terms of understanding and appeal which also indicates that this preference for Muhammad Asad's version is not dependent on the proficiency level in Arabic language.

8.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

This writer has found that it is indeed possible to accommodate Quranic verses from the English language translations of the meaning of the Quran as literary texts in the literature classroom.

Two versions of the English language translations of the meaning of the Quran were used in this study. Between the two versions, Muhammad Asad's translated version has been found to be a clearer and more accurate translation than Abdullah Yusuf Ali's translated version.

From the questionnaire data, 76% feel that Muhammad Asad's translated version is easier to understand than Abdullah Yusuf Ali's translated version and 59% feel that Muhammad Asad's translated version is more appealing than Abdullah Yusuf Ali's translated version. Thus, in terms of comparison, The Message of the Quran - English language translation of the meaning of the Quran by Muhammad Asad is a preferred translated version to that of The Holy Quran - English language translation of the meaning of the Quran by Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

Before the incorporation of any English language translations of the meaning of the Quran is to be done, some recommended measures should be taken:

A careful selection of which English language translation of the meaning of the Quran should be made. It may well be that the English language translations of the meaning of the Quran by different writers are suitable for particular subjects. For example, it is put forth in this study the possibility of accommodating verses from Muhammad Asad's and Abdullah Yusuf Ali's English language translations of the

meaning of the Quran as literary texts in the literature classroom, although students have shown a preference for Muhammad Asad's translated version. It is also possible for lecturers to use extracts from two English translated versions of the Quran at the same time and devise tasks of a comparative nature for the students in the literature classroom. Lecturers may decide to use English translated versions of the Quran by other translators.

Lecturers who decide to use the English language translations of the meaning of the Quran should be willing to constantly improve their own background in Islam so that a positive "feel" for Islam shows through when they teach.

Thus, optimally, English language lecturers should be willing to spend extra time consulting additional relevant texts and qualified lecturers from other departments to improve and enrich their presentation of "English-Quranic" lessons. There should be cooperation among academicians to make possible the imparting of sound knowledge to the students so that they can go out into the world to be useful and knowledgeable Muslims and/or citizens. Non-Arabic speaking lecturers can obtain information concerning topics spoken of in the Quran, including the reasons for and circumstances at the time of particular revelations from clearly and systematically presented work. Towards Understanding the Qur'an by Sayyid Abul A'la Mawdudi (Volumes 1-5), is one such recommended source of information about the Quran.

A word of caution about the proper handling of Quranic verses when using them as literary texts in the literature classroom is dealt with. A distinction is made between the English language translation of the meaning of the Quran and the original Quran as revealed in Arabic. For the purposes of this study, copies of extracts from

various surah of English language translations of the meaning of the Quran by Muhammad Asad and Abdullah Yusuf Ali are distributed to students without the Quranic (Arabic) verses beside it, only the English translated portion.

These copies of extracts are used as literary texts in the literature classroom. It is agreed upon that these texts should be used as any other text. The teachers whether Muslims or non-Muslims are expected to tell the students where the text originated from (as with any other text) and at this point, all students, whether Muslim or non-Muslims will be aware that these verses are from the English language translations of the meaning of the Quran by Muhammad Asad and Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

As a concluding point, it is hoped that the seeds initiating this study have been showered with sufficient supportive “nutrients” to germinate a growing field of Quran-based English language and literature instruction.