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A Study of the Translation Assessment of the Qur'anic Word "*Hikma*" into English

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الملخص:

يهدف البحث الحالي الى معرفة مدى قدرة المترجمين، الذين اختيرت ترجماتهم لغرض عملية التقويم، على نقل معنى لفظة "حكمة" الى الانكليزية بدقة. واعتمدت الدراسة الفرضيتين المذكورتين في ادناه:
1- يتوقع عدد قليل من المترجمين انتاج ترجمة مقبولة.
2- لايرجح من اغلب المترجمين نقل معنى "حكمة" في القرآن الكريم الى الانكليزية بنجاح نظراً للارباك في عملية اختيار اللفظة المناسبة في لغة الهدف.
ولاثبات صحة الفرضيتين المذكورتين اعلاه، اختيرت اربع آيات قرآنية تحتوي على لفظة "حكمة" واعتمدت خمس ترجمات قرآنية متوفرة وصمم انموذج تقويم الترجمات. فضلاً على ذلك، اثبتت نتائج تقويم الترجمات القرآنية صحة الفرضيتين المذكورتين في اعلاه.

Abstract

The paper aims to know to which extent the Qur'anic translators whose Qur'anic translations were selected for assessment are able to translate the meaning of the Qur'anic word "*Hikma*" into English accurately. The study is based on the following hypotheses, they are presented as follows:

- 1- Few Qur'anic translators are expected to produce acceptable translations of the Qur'anic word "*Hikma*" into English.
- 2- Most of the Qur'anic translators are not likely to render the meaning of the Qur'anic word "*Hikma*" into English successfully due to the confusion of choosing the correct term.

To validate the hypotheses highlighted above, four Qur'anic Ayas embracing the Qur'anic word "*Hikma*" were chosen, four existing Qur'anic translations were selected and an eclectic model of translation assessment was designed. Besides, the results of the translation assessment carried out on the translations of selected Ayas have validated the above-mentioned hypotheses.

1. The Study of Translation and Glorious Qur'an

The current part is to shed light on the relation between Translation and the Glorious Qur'anic and it is divided into the following sub-headings:

1.1. Types of Texts and Translation Methods

A lot of translation scholars like: (Newmark, 1988: 12) (Reiss, 2000: 16) and (House, 2001:245f) supported the concept which is dealing with the interrelation between types of texts and the translation method. It is obvious that there are many kinds of texts which require different translation methods. They are presented in the figure below:

Figure (1.1.) Division of Translation Methods, Text-Types and

Translation Methods (Approaches)	Text-Types	Subject-matter	Types of Subject Matter
Free (Communicative)	Expressive	Literary Texts	Poetries, Novels, Plays, Prose ,Short Stories..etc
Literal	Informative	Scientific and Legal Texts	Science, Technology, Medical, Legal..etc
Semantic	Vocative	Commercial	Advertisement

Subject-Matter

It is clear that free communicative method of translation is used when there is an expressive text-type. It is of different types like: poems, prose, stories and novels etc. because they have rhetorical devices (metaphors, similes) and these devices require this method mentioned above to convey the same sense and meaning of Source Text (ST) into Target Text (TT).

Literal method of translation is employed in rendering scientific, medical and legal texts because the readers look for meanings of these texts not the aesthetic effects. Besides, semantic method is very similar to literal method used for transferring the meanings of commercial texts for reasons of persuasions.

So, Reiss (Reiss, 2000: 16) stressed on the fact that the text-type defines the approach for the translator in question. The text-

type is seen as an important element that influences the choice of translator in picking the acceptable method of translation.

The translation of religious texts is more complicated than any other text types because it aims at transferring sacred beliefs, thoughts and concepts of certain culture into another language which must be achieved with accuracy. The beliefs and intentions of translator of religious texts must be impartial (AL-Khawalda, 2004: 217). In other words, he has to be neutral in translation so as to reach out the highest degree of clarity. It is said that translators of religious text retain to the original manuscripts than translators of other text-types (Stewart, 2000: 33).

1.2. Features of Religious Texts

It is crystal clear that not all texts have the similar features. There are many types of texts like political, medical, legal, scientific, economic, and religious texts... etc. Every type of the abovementioned texts has its features. They make them different from other text-types.

The language of religious text has some characteristics, they are highlighted by Waard and Nida (1986: 21f):

- 1- It is figurative. It makes use of symbols, where metaphors and metonymies are widely used, and they make extensive employment of poetic forms.
- 2- It is timeless: it presents a truth which goes beyond time and history.
- 3- In this language, experience generally outweighs in a rational way. Therefore, there is no hesitation to speak of miracles.
- 4- New and unusual expressions become special features of the new community of faith.
- 5- It almost always consists of a great deal of expressions that refer to instructions and the appeal to the commitment.
- 6- The religious texts consist of many ethics. Although spirituality takes priority over ethics, the ethical behaviour is defined as the product of a change in one's spiritual relationships.

1.3. The Language of the Glorious Qur'an

The Glorious Qur'an is defined as a heavenly book. In other words, its language and discourse in the Arabic Language are equal by none. It is uniquely different from normal discourse and from classical Arabic in its highly rhetorical fusion of form and content. It is unanimously agreed by Muslim theologians and linguists that the language of the Glorious Qur'an is of divine authorship. In other words, no one can write down an Aya due to its uniqueness. One of those famous figures is Al-Jirjani, 1984 whose work *Dalā'il al-iḥjāz Evidence pieces of Inimitability*. The language of the Glorious Qur'an is absolutely unparalleled in its style, eloquence, structure and lexis.

Tawhidi gives a detailed view concerning the language of the Glorious Qur'an by saying the following:

The language of Qur'an shows "some unparalleled eloquence of speech and writing to the extent that the most able poets and orators were astounded before the beauty and magnificence of the text" (2004: xx).

Bell and Wottcite say that the language of the Glorious Quran is "neither a treatise on theology, nor a code of laws, nor a collection of sermons, but rather a medley of all three" (1970: xi).

The Glorious Qur'an is described as the most phenomenal textual material; it is the most wonderful artistic combination. This is why,

Ahmed Khan cites the following:

The holy Qur'an is neither a poetry, nor prose, nor rhymed prose, yet in emphasizing the significance of its message, it brings home of its main ideas in ever so fresh a set of effective artistic combination (1987: 12).

Almighty Allah indicates that neither human beings nor jinns (angels) can produce a book like the Glorious Qur'an:

قُلْ لَنْ يَجْتَمِعَتِ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ
بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا

(Al-Israa, aya: 88)

Say: "If the mankind and jinn were together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they

helped one another."(Surat Al-Isra': aya: 88) (Hilal and Khan, 1996: 325).

1.4. Translation and the Glorious Qur'an

The process of translating the meanings of the Glorious Qur'an is considered to be the most difficult task assigned to the translators. The complexity of translating the Qur'anic text is partially due to its importance whose ultimate goal is to spread the message of Islam and to strengthen the faith and partially resulted from the nature of language which this book counts on.

The translators of religious texts in general and of the Glorious Qur'an in particular have to bear the following criteria in mind:

- 1- They have to believe in or at least be passionate with the message found in the body of texts.
- 2- They must be thoroughly familiar with the various nuances of the words which they intend to translate.
- 3- As long as religious texts are deeply related to faith, and faith is an important aspect of the culture of the speaking community, translators have to engage themselves in trying to shape the original culture (Yowell and Latawish, 2000: 111)

When translating the Sacred Books, two incompatible criteria have to be satisfied:

- 1-Accuracy: being faithful to the meaning
- 2-Intelligibility: being understandable to the reader and related to the current trend (Crystal, 1987: 385).

Since words have relations understood intuitively by native speakers, the main role of the translator is to render not only what is said but also what is implied (Duff 1981: 111). Terms of religious vocabulary carry with them a heavily charged pragmatic meaning (Nida1964: 36).

2. Types of Meanings of the Qur'anic Word "*Hikma*"

There are five meanings of the Qur'anic word "*Hikma*", they are presented below:

2.1. The Qur'anic Word "*Hikma*" Means Preaching:

It means that the Qur'anic word "*Hikma*" is used to refer to Qur'anic preaching and pieces of advice as in the Aya mentioned below:

"ويعلمه الكتاب والحكمة والتوراة والانجيل"

(Surat AL-Imran, Aya: 48)

Qur'anic Commentaries:

It means that he teaches Jesus Christ the Book (scripture), fonts, good knowledge, understanding the secrets of things, the Torah that was sent to Moses and Bible that will be inspired to him later (AL-Zihili, 1994: 57).

And We will teach him the Book, that is, script, wisdom, and the Torah, and the Gospel. (AL-Jalalyan, tr. Feras Hamza, 2007: 61).

2.2. The Qur'anic Word "*Hikma*" Means Prophecy:

The Qur'anic word "*Hikma*" refers to the fact that AL-mighty Allah bestowed upon the prophet Abraham the prophecy as in the Aya presented below:

"ام يحسدون الناس على ما اءاتهم الله من فضله فقد اتينا آل ابراهيم الكتاب والحكمة وءاتيناهم ملكاً عظيماً"

(Surat AL-Nisa, Aya: 54)

Qur'anic Commentaries:

It is about that we gave Abraham and his Children like David and Solomon the power of grasping secrets of provisions, prophecy and grand kingdom (AL-Zihili, 1994: 88).

It means that we gave the House of Abraham, his forefather, the likes of Moses, David and Solomon, wisdom, and prophecy, and we gave them a mighty kingdom. (AL-Jalalyan, tr. Feras Hamza, 2007: 94).

2.3. The Qur'anic Word "*Hikma*" Means the Interpretation of the Glorious Qur'an:

The Qur'anic word "*Hikma*" is about the clarification of the importance of the Glorious Qur'an as in the Aya cited below:

"يؤتى الحكمة من يشاء ومن يؤت الحكمة فقد اوتى خيراً كثيراً وما يذكر الا اولوا
الالباب"

(Surat AL-Baqara, Aya: 269)

Qur'anic Commentaries:

It is concerned with the fact that Almighty Allah gives science, knowledge of understanding the secrets of the Glorious Qur'an, grasping the life matters, mastering the word and work, doing everything correctly to any believer. And the one who is granted wisdom (good knowledge), they won the goodness of this world and the here-in-after life and only men of understanding get benefit from the rules of the Glorious Qur'an (AL-Zihili, 1994: 46).

He gives wisdom, that is, the profitable knowledge of the Glorious Qur'an that leads to [righteous] action, to whomever He will, and he who is given wisdom, has been given much good, because he will end up in perpetual bliss; yet none remembers (that is to say, [none] is admonished, but the people of pith, possessors of intellects (AL-Jalalyan, tr. Feras Hamza, 2007: 50).

2.4. The Qur'anic Word "Hikma" Means the Glorious Qur'an:

The Qur'anic word "Hikma" is concerned with the Heavenly Book the Glorious Qur'an as in the Aya highlighted below:

"ادع الى سبيل ربك بالحكمة والموعظة الحسنة وجادلهم بالتي هي احسن ان ربك هو اعلم بمن ضل عن سبيله وهو اعلم بالمهتدين"

(Surat AL-Nahil, Aya: 125)

Qur'anic Commentaries:

It means that Almighty Allah Calls upon the prophet to guide people to right direction and Islam by the Glorious Qur'an, good pieces of advice, smooth talk and contend them with the employment of best means of dialogue and pure logic. Almighty Allah knows those who got a strayed from the direction of belief and those who were guided to the path of righteousness (AL-Zihili, 1994: 282).

It refers to the fact that AL-Mighty Allah tells his Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) to call upon the mankind to the way of Al-Mighty Allah, to be religious and wise with the Glorious Qur'an and fair exhortation (AL-Jalalyan, tr. Feras Hamza, 2007: 294).

3. The Assessment of the Translations the Qur'anic Word "Hikma" into English

3.1. Preliminaries

The current paper is concerned with the assessment of the translations of the Qur'anic Ayas that contain the Qur'anic word "*Hikma*" into English. The researcher has selected four Qur'anic Ayas containing the Qur'anic word mentioned above. And he consulted on five published Qur'anic Translation whose translators belong to different religions and cultural background to know to which extent the Qur'anic translators whose translations were chosen are capable of rendering the meaning and sense of the Qur'anic word "*Hikma*" appropriately. For this reason, the researcher has created an eclectic model for translation assessment process.

It is worth mentioning that the study has depended on five published translations of the Glorious Qur'an translated by the following:

- 1- Shaker, M. H. (2009)
- 2- Pickthall, M. M.(1970)
- 3- Dawood, N. J. (1956)
- 4- Rodwell, J.M. (1994)
- 5- Khan, M. Z. (2003)

The Qur'anic translators whose full names are mentioned above are respectively abbreviated as follows:

- 1- Sh
- 2- Pick
- 3- Daw
- 4- Rod
- 5- Kh

The most important reason of choosing the Qur'anic translators whose names are cited above is because they are from different religions and cultural backgrounds: Shaker is Muslim, Pickthall is Christian converted to Islam, Dawood is Jew Rodwell is Christian and Khan is Muslim. Translator's religious/cultural background is likely to have an influence upon his products in the Target Language. This is why; Iiyas (1989: 107) affirms that the religious texts translators may sometimes be impacted either consciously or

unconsciously, by their own religious doctrines and beliefs, i.e. their religious background.

3.2. Model of Translation Assessment the Qur'anic Word "*Hikma*"

The researcher has relied on New mark's methods of translation. It is of two parts Semantic Method and Communicative One. For this reason, he created an eclectic model for the assessment of the Qur'anic Word (*Hikma*) whose diagram is presented below (see diagram 3.1.).

3.2.1. Semantic Method of Translation (SMT)

Semantic translation attempts to transfer, as closely as the semantic and syntactic structures of the target language allow the exact contextual meaning of the original text (Newmark, 1981:38).

3.2.2. Communicative Method of Translation (CMT)

It aims at conveying the impact of the texts on its readers as close as possible to that effect received by its original readers (Ibid, 1981:38).

The following is the eclectic model created by researcher, based on Newmark's Methods of Translation, for the assessment of the Qur'anic Word (*Hikma*) into English:

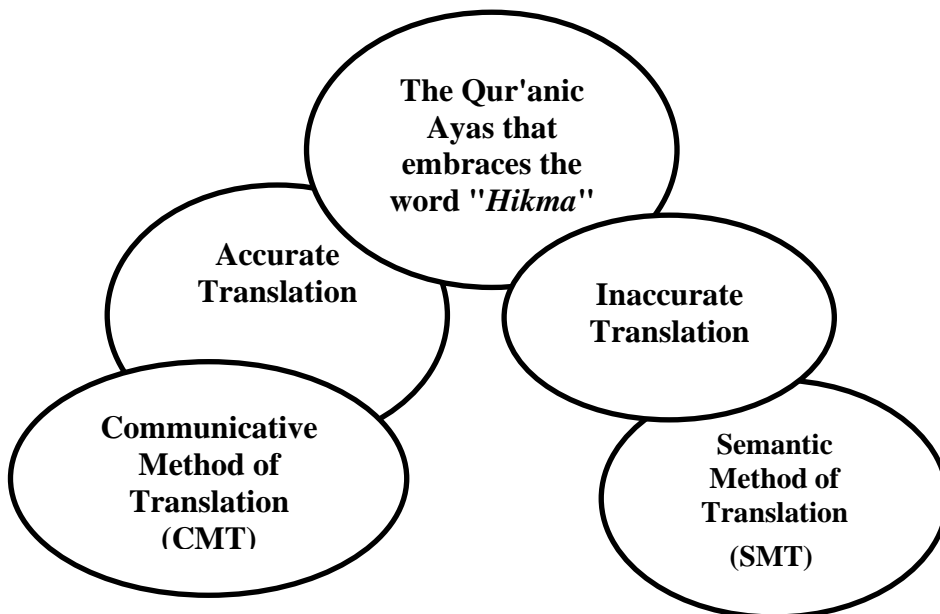


Diagram (3.1.) The Eclectic Model for the assessment of the translations of the Qur'anic word (*Hikma*) into English

4. The Assessment of the Translations of the Qur'anic word "*Hikma*" into English:

4.1. The Qur'anic Word "*Hikma*" Means Preaching:

As cited in (2.1. above), the meaning of the Qur'anic word "*Hikma*" means Preaching. Moreover, the meaning of the Qur'anic word mentioned above is understood by the help of the interpretation of the Aya in question explained in part one. The followings are the Qur'anic Aya the embraces the word "*Hikma*" with its translations:

"ويعلمه الكتاب والحكمة والتوراة والانجيل"

(Surat AL-Imran, Aya: 48)

Sh (p. 89)

"And He will teach him the Book and the wisdom and the Tavat and the Injeel"

Pick (p. 69)

"And He teach him the scripture and wisdom, and the Torah and the Gospel"

Daw (p. 401)

"He will instruct him in the scriptures and in wisdom, in the Torah and Gospel"

Rod (p. 36)

"And he will teach him the Book, and the Wisdom, and the Law and the Evangel"

Kh (p. 53)

"He will teach him the Book and the Wisdom and the Torah and the Gospel"

All the above mentioned Qur'anic translators rendered the Qur'anic word "*Hikma*" into "*Wisdom*". Besides, the word concerned is defined as "the ability to make sensible decisions and give good advice because the experience and knowledge that you have." ((OALD) Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, 2008: 1751). Besides, the word "*advice*" is the synonymy of "*Wisdom*" according to Chambers Synonyms and Antonyms (2007:10). In other words, they followed CMT.

4.2. The Qur'anic Word "*Hikma*" Means Prophecy:

As highlighted in (2.2. above), the Qur'anic word "*Hikma*" refers to the prophecy. Besides, the nature of the Qur'anic word concerned is clear with the employment of the Qur'anic commentaries. And the followings are the Aya with their Qur'anic translations:

"ام يحسدون الناس على ما اءاتهم الله من فضله فقد اتينا آل ابراهيم الكتاب والحكمة وءاتيناهم ملكاً عظيماً"

(Surat AL-Nisa, Aya: 54)

Sh (p. 124)

"Or do they envy the people for what Allah has given them of His grace? But indeed We have given to Ibrahim's children the Book and the wisdom, and We have given them a grand kingdom"

Pick (p. 108)

"Or are they jealous of mankind because of that which Allah of His bounty hath bestowed upon them? For We bestowed upon the house of Abraham (of old) the scripture and wisdom, and We bestowed upon them a mighty kingdom"

Daw (p. 362-363)

"Do they envy others what Allah has of His bounty given them? We gave Abrahams descendants scriptures and prophethood, and an illustrious kingdom"

Rod (p. 55)

"Envy they other men what God of his bounty hath given them? We gave of old the Scriptures and wisdom to the line of Abraham, and we gave them a grand kingdom"

Kh (p. 81)

"Or, do they envy people that which Allah has given them out of His bounty? Surely, We gave the children of Abraham the Book and Wisdom, and We also gave them a great kingdom"

All Qur'anic translators whose translations are presented above except for **Daw** failed to transfer the meaning of the Qur'anic word "*Hikma*" into English successfully because they employed the word "*wisdom*" which was explained in (4.1. above) and it does not mean prophecy. Yet, **Daw** rendered it clearly because he used the word

"prophethood" instead. So, all translators with the exception of **Daw** followed SMT while **Daw** resorted to CMT.

4.3. The Qur'anic Word "*Hikma*" Means the Interpretation of the Glorious Qur'an:

As stated in (2.3. above), the Qur'anic word "*Hikma*" deals with the clarification of the importance of the Glorious Qur'an. Moreover, the followings are the Aya in question with their Qur'anic translation:

"يُوتَى الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو
الْأَلْبَابِ"

(Surat AL-Baqara, Aya: 269)

Sh (p. 78)

"He grants wisdom to whom He pleases, and whoever is granted wisdom, he indeed is given a great good and none but men of understanding mind"

Pick (p. 56)

"He giveth wisdom unto whom He will, and unto whom wisdom is given, he truly hath received abundant good. But none remember except men of understanding"

Daw (p. 354)

"He gives wisdom to whom He will; and that he receives the gift of wisdom is rich indeed. Yet none except men of sense bear this in mind"

Rod (p. 29)

"He giveth wisdom to whom he will: and he to whom wisdom is given, hath had much good given him; but none will bear it in mind, except the wise of heart."

Kh (p. 43)

"He grants wisdom to whom He pleases, and whoever is granted wisdom has indeed been granted abundant good, and none takes heed except those endowed with understanding"

Sh, Pick, Daw, Rod and **Kh** did not translate the Qur'anic word "*Hikma*" communicatively because they failed to highlight the real meaning which is about the interpretation of the Glorious.

Instead, they rendered it into "*wisdom*" as in (4.1. above). In other words, all of them employed SMT

4.4. The Qur'anic Word "*Hikma*" Means the Glorious Qur'an:

As said in (2.4. above), the Qur'anic word "*Hikma*" means the Glorious Qur'an (The Heavenly Book). Furthermore, the meaning of the word above is grasped with the help of the Qur'anic commentaries. The Qur'anic Aya concerned and their Qur'anic translations are presented below:

"ادع الى سبيل ربك بالحكمة والموعظة الحسنة وجادلهم بالتي هي احسن ان ربك هو اعلم بمن ضل عن سبيله وهو اعلم بالمهتدين"

(Surat AL-Nahil, Aya: 125)

Sh (p. 334)

"Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and have disputations with them in the best manner: surely your Lord best knows those who go astray from His path and He knows best those who follow the right way"

Pick (p. 362)

"Call unto the way of thy Lord with wisdom and fair exhortation, and reason with them in the better way. Lo! Thy Lord is Best Aware of him who strayeth from his way, and He is Best Aware of those who go aright"

Daw (p. 306-307)

"Call men to the path of your Lord with wisdom and kindly exhortation. Reason with them in most courteous manner. Your Lord best knows those who stray from his path and those who are rightly guided"

Rod (p. 180)

"Summon thou to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and with kindly warning: dispute with them in the kindest manner: thy Lord best knoweth who stray from his way, and He best knoweth those who yielded to his guidance."

Kh (p. 263)

"Call unto the way of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and contend with them on the basis of that which is

best. Thy Lord knows best those who have strayed away from His path, and He knows best those who are rightly guided"

All the Qur'anic translators whose Qur'anic translations mentioned above did not succeed in their renderings because they did not make use of the right meaning of the Qur'anic word "Hikma" in the Aya concerned which means the Glorious Qur'an. So, they resorted to the word "Wisdom". Moreover, all Qur'anic translators without exception used SMT.

5. Assessment Results

The researcher made the table presented below to highlight the results of the translation quality assessment of the Qur'anic word "Hikma" by assessing the translations of Qur'anic translators whose works were selected for assessment. The results are as follows:

Qur'anic Translators	Aya No.1	Aya No.2	Aya No.3	Aya No.4	Rates of Success	Rates of Failure
(Sh)	Success	Failure	Failure	Failure	25 %	75 %
(Pick)	Success	Failure	Failure	Failure	25 %	75 %
(Daw)	Success	Success	Failure	Failure	50 %	50 %
(Rod)	Success	Failure	Failure	Failure	25 %	75 %
(Kh)	Success	Failure	Failure	Failure	25 %	75 %

Table (5.1) Assessments Results of the Qur'anic Word "Hikma" into English

Conclusions

- 1- It has been discovered that few translators of the Glorious Qur'anic whose existing translations were chosen for the assessment rendered the meaning of the Qur'anic word "*Hikma*" into English with the employment of Communicative Method of Translation (CMT).
- 2- Most of Qur'anic translators whose translations were employed rendered the meaning of the Qur'anic word "*Hikma*" with the help of Semantic Method of Translation (SMT). Therefore, they produced inaccurate translations.
- 3- The results of assessment are presented below:
 - A- The following Qur'anic translators whose translations were consulted run as follows: Shaker, Pickthall, Rodwell and Khan received 25 % rates of success. Yet, Dawood got 50 % rate of success.
 - B- All of them have had high rates of failure by 75 % in comparison with Dawood who got 50 %. Besides, four of them were confused in selecting the appropriate equivalent in the target language.
 - C- Shaker, Pickthall, Rodwell and Khan followed SMT in translating most of the Qur'anic Ayas chosen whereas; Dawood employed CMT higher than them.

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