

# **A Quality Assessment Study of the Translation of The Prophetic Sîrah by Ibn Hishâm: A Pragmatic Approach**

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## **Abstract**

The study examined the English translation of the first part of Prophetic biography by Ibnu Hishâm with the aim of investigating inherent translation problems and more specifically the pragmatic element. This study adopts Nord's (1997) model to investigate the translation of Prophetic biography. In addition, the strategies used by the translator were investigated. This study has followed an objective approach of translation quality assessment based on a comparative analysis of both source and target text. Moreover, the translator achieved the function of the ST in general. The translator faced cultural and pragmatic translation problems and solved some of these problems.

**Keywords:** Prophetic biography, religious text, ST, TT, translation strategies, translation, pragmatic approach.

## **1. Introduction**

Prophetic biography has been a prominent mark in the history of Islamic writings. Prophetic biography by Ibn Hisham (d. 218/833 or 213/828) is considered one of the most eminent books written in the early Islamic period about Prophet Muhammad's life. In fact, Ibn Hisham selected and refined his work from the Book of Ibn Ishâq and Kitâb al- Tabaqât al-Kubrâ by Ibn Sa'd (d.230/845) who compiled it from the works of his predecessors, especially al-Wâqidî and al-Kabî (Azmi, 2018). Hence, evaluating the quality of Prophetic biography translation has become an essential issue as the translator handles a highly sensitive text and has to be very accurate in order to get a closer meaning to the source text as much as possible.

Translation quality assessment has become a key issue in translation studies. Quality of a translation has a serious concern in translation quality assessment (TQA) approaches. Its main concern is how to measure and express this quality. There have been many attempts in order to measure the quality of the translated work. Among these many approaches, some of them sound promising. One of these approaches is Nord's (1997) model of translation quality assessment.

The present study focuses on the first part of the Arabic book "Prophetic biography" by Ibn Hisham and its English translation by Dr. Muhammad Mahdi Al-Sharif in order to assess the quality of the translated work. Nord's (1997) model will be applied to assess the quality of the translation.

### *Context of the study*

The act of translation in its essence is not only a linguistic process, but it also refers to all methods used to transfer the meaning of the source text into the target text as closely and accurately as possible. However, the meaning of a text includes its subject, function or writer's intention, and tone. The text format, style and text type are additionally part of its importance since writers express their ideas through format, style and text type (Baker, 1992, p.25). In other words, the target text should have the same subject, function, tone, format, style and text type. The process of translation is also defined by House (2015, p.63) as "the replacement of a text in the source language by a semantically and pragmatically equivalent text in the target language". Hence, translation process depends on different factors; ideological, social and cultural, which make it a big challenge to the translator. According to Baker (1992), cultural differences can cause some serious difficulties for translators that are not familiar with them. Hence, the role of a translator has to be taken into consideration, which is "to facilitate the transfer of the message, meaning, and cultural elements from one language into another and create an equivalent response to the receivers"(Nida, 1964, p.13).

Religious texts are difficult to translate as the translator deals with highly sensitive texts and historical religious texts have difficult and specialized lexicons. Bahameed (2014) stated that religious translation is so sensitive and the translator has to be more accurate than any other types of translation. He asserts that a translator should pay extra attention to lexical

items to get the suitable word and meaning. A translator of religious texts from Arabic into English has to take into account several factors when translating a potential religious text.

Quality of translation is considered a key issue in translation quality assessment (TQA) approaches. Its main concern is to measure the quality of the translated work in comparison to the original text. TQA is considered a type of evaluation. Michael Scriven (1993), defined evaluation as follows: "‘Evaluation’ is taken to mean the determination of merit, worth, or significance" (p.1). According to House, translation quality assessment means, "both retrospectively assessing the worth of a translation and prospectively ensuring the quality in the production of a translation" (p.2).

### *1.2 Objective of the Study*

This study aims to apply Nord's (1997) model on the first part of the Arabic book "Prophetic biography" by Ibn Hîsham and its English translation by Dr. Muhammad Mahdi Al-Sharif. This includes analyzing both Arabic and English text in order to investigate whether the translator succeeded in rendering into English the same meaning and function of the source text.

### *1.3 Research Questions*

Accordingly, this research attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1- What are the translation strategies used on basis of translation quality assessment study?
- 2- To what extent does the translator succeed in achieving the function intended in the original text?
- 3- How far is Nord's model appropriate for assessing the quality of the translated text?

### *1.4 Rationale of the Study*

This study might be significant due to the fact that it would assess the translation of Prophetic biography as it offer some suggestions of the translation. The current study gains its importance from the fact that translating religious texts is considered a very sensitive and problematic issue for many translators as they deal with highly sensitive and classical

texts. Thus, the translator should be very accurate during translating the ST.

## **2. Literature Review**

House (1977, p.29-30) defined translation as a "replacement of a text in the source language by a semantically and pragmatically equivalent text in the target language". Translation process is considered a process which involves transferring the stylistic, semantic and pragmatic features of the source language text into the target language text. In addition, Nida and Taber (1969, p12) proposed a definition which is not confined to the mere transference of meaning as follows: "Translation consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and second in terms of style". One of the main problems in the scientific study of translation is the difficulty of assessing its quality. That is why there is no absolute standards for the quality of translations. Wilss (1988, p.13) discussed this problem as follows:

Owing to its structure, it is more difficult for the science of translation than for the more strongly system oriented linguistic discipline to acquire an epistemological foundation and arrive at a description of translation which adequately deals with the problem involved.

Consequently, researchers differ in the way they assess translations. Some of them advocate qualitative assessments, while others prefer to give quantitative assessments. Qualitative assessments are kinds of assessments where a description of the quality of a translation is advocated in impressionistic terms such as excellent, very good, good, bad or poor. Quantitative assessments are kinds of assessments where a mark is advocated to describe the quality of a translation. In fact, qualitative assessment do not mirror the exact quality of the translation, in the light of the fact that the impressionistic terms such as good or bad are not precise enough to show the real quality of the translation. Furthermore, qualitative assessment disregards all the other factors, which are associated with translation process. Sager (1989, p.98) explained this as follows: "evaluation can be qualitative or quantitative, purely qualitative assessment ignores time, cost and other factors relevant to industrial process and product".

In the field of translation studies, equivalence is a contentious term. Some theorists described translation in terms of equivalent relations (Catford 1965; Nida and Taber 1969; Toury 1980a; Pym 1992a; Koller 1995), while others argue that equivalence is either unnecessary (Snell-Hornby, 1988) or misleading to translation studies (Gentzler, 1993). Many scholars defined equivalence from different perspectives. As a result, there is no consensus among scholars on the meaning of equivalence, and researchers have approached the topic of equivalence in a variety of ways. Thus, it became well-known in the subject of translation studies.

Equivalence, according to Vinay and Darbelnet (1995), is a process that "replicates the same situation as in the original whilst using completely different wording" (p. 342). Jakobson is considered one of the early scholars who introduced the concept of 'equivalence in difference'. Jakobson (1959, p. 232) introduced three varieties of translation: intralingual (rewording or rephrase within the same language), interlingual (between two languages), and intersemiotic (between sign systems).

Nida is one of the experts that have taken a new approach to the concept of equivalence. In the 1960s, he published two books that had a significant impact on many types of translations. Nida and Taber (1969/2003) defined the act of translation as "reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalence of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style" (p.12). Nida (1964) differentiated between two forms of equivalence: formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence (p.159). In both form and content, formal equivalence concentrates attention on the message itself (Munday, 2001, p.68). On the other hand, dynamic equivalence is based on Nida's "principle of equivalent effect", in which the relation between receptor and message should basically be the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message (Nida, 1964, p.159).

Catford's approach to translation equivalence differs considerably from that followed through Nida. Catford (1965) asserted that the basic difficulty of translation-practice is the discovery of TL equivalents (p.21). A major objective of translation theory is to define the nature and circumstances of translation equivalence (ibid, p. 21). In the field of translation equivalence, Catford has made a significant contribution. Catford (1974) stated that translation equivalence occurs when a SL and a

TL text or item are related to (at least some of) the same aspects of substance (p.50). Catford divided equivalence into two categories: formal correspondence and textual equivalence. His classification of formal correspondence and dynamic equivalence is essentially identical to Nida's. Formal correspondence, according to Catford, is:

Any TL category (unit, class, structure, element of structure, etc.) which can be said to occupy, as nearly as possible, the same place in the economy of the TL as the given SL category occupies in the SL. (Catford, 1974,p.27).

On the other hand, textual equivalence happens when any TL textual content or fragment of textual content is observed on a certain occasion to be the equivalent of a certain SL text or portion of text. (Catford, 1965, p.27).

*Approaches to Translation* (1981) and *A Textbook of Translation* (1988) by Newmark seek to build a foundation for dealing with problems that arise during translation. Newmark firmly replaced Nida's conceptions of formal and dynamic equivalence with *semantic* and *communicative* translation, respectively. Newmark's two kinds of translation are distinguished by the fact that semantic translation is concerned with meaning, whereas communicative translation is concerned with effect. In other words , semantic translation looks back at the ST and tries to keep as many of its characteristics as feasible.

Newmark's strong prescriptivism has been criticized, and the language of his assessments still sounds similar to what he himself referred to as the pre-linguistics period of translation studies: translations are "smooth" or "awkward," and translation is an "art" (if semantic) or a "craft" (if communicative). On the other hand, the large number of examples in Newmark's book is seen as helpful information for the trainee, and the questions he tackles are directly relevant to translation (Munday, 2016, p.74).

## 2.1 Prophetic Biography

Sirah is derived from the word Sayr. Sirah literally means "sunnah," "situations," or "journey" (Al-Zawi, 1971). In the early phases of writing Prophetic biography, the word Sirah was usually paired with the word Magazi, which refers to the conflicts in which Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was involved. The term Magazi, on the other hand, had a broader meaning in Islamic historiography, encompassing both the life of Prophet

Muhammad (PBUH) before Islam and the period following his Prophethood. As a result, the word Magazi was seen as a synonym for Sirah. (Al-Duri, 1960).

## *2.2 Ibnu Hîsham*

He is Abu Muhammad Abd Al-Malik Ibn Hîsham Ibn Ayoub Al-Maafri Al-Basri Al-Masri. He started his scholar life in Basra in Iraq. The documents mentioned nothing about his birth or his early life (Al-Said, 1995, p. 20). He was a student of Basra's scholars and learned from them. He wrote Prophetic biography of Zeyad Ibn Abdu Allah Al-Bakkaee who himself dictated it to him (Abdu Al-Latif, 2008, p.49). He also travelled to Egypt to learn and he met Muhammad Ibn Idris Al-Shafee and stayed there until his death (Al-Said, 1995, p.20). The Egyptian school benefited from him in various knowledge such as grammar, language and lineages knowledge in addition to his eternal book of Prophetic biography printed by Westenfield in Gotengen, Germany in 1859 AB (Abdu Al-Latif, 2008, p. 49-50). He died in 183 AH (ibid, p.49).

- His style of notating Sîrah:

Ibnu Hîsham put Ibn Ishaq Sîrah in his hands checking, investigating and commenting on what he has written. He briefed and omitted from it what is not trusted. On the other side, he added to Sîrah some incidents as he sees that it serves the unity of the topic. On the other side, Ibn Hîsham continued mentioning some lineages that are not significant in the position and this much came in contrast to the context of the events. In addition, he explained and interpreted some words in segments of the events and he did so in the poems as well. Ibn Hîsham was honest when he classified his book which he proved the transmitted texts from Ibn Ishaq by saying: "Ibn Ishaq said" and he said about what he added "Ibn Hîsham said" (Tadmory, 1990, p.8).

## **3. Methodology**

The current study adopts Nord's (1997) functional approach using the analytical tools in order to assess the quality of the translated work. This approach mainly discusses the function of the ST and how the translator succeeded in achieving the function of the ST in the TT. In other words, this study focuses on producing target-oriented translation without neglecting the source text's culture. Nord (1997) proposed a more flexible version of her model and highlighted "three aspects of functionalist

approaches that are of particular use for translator training” (p.59). The aspects are as follows:

- (1) the importance of the translation commission (or ‘translation brief’, as Nord refers to it);
- (2) the role of ST analysis;
- (3) the functional hierarchy of translation problems.

As for The importance of the translation commission, it is described as a translation assignment created by translators after consultation with the client to [specify] what kind of translation is required (Nord, 1997, p.30). The translator compares the ST and TT described in the commission to see where the two texts may differ (Nord, 1997, pp.59–1). The translation commission has to include the following information in both texts:

- 1- The intended functions of both texts;
- 2- The addresser and the addressee (sender and recipient);
- 3- The time and place of receiving the text;
- 4- The medium (spoken or written);
- 5- The motive (the reasons of writing the ST and translating it).

As for the role of ST analysis, Nord (ibid., p.62) stated that when the ST and TT have been compared, the ST can be analyzed to determine:

- (a) the feasibility of the translation assignment;
- (b) the most relevant ST items that must be included to achieve functional translation; and
- (c) which translation strategy that will lead to an appropriate target text for the translation brief.

### *3.1 Tools of Analysis*

In her model, Nord listed intratextual factors for the ST analysis (Munday, 2016, p.132-133):

- 1- Subject matter: it is the culture-bound either to the SL or TL context;
- 2- Content: it is the ‘meaning’ of the text which includes connotation and cohesion;
- 3- Presuppositions: this relates to the relative background knowledge of ST and TT receivers including their culture- and genre-specific conventions. Therefore, the ST can include redundancies (explications, repetitions, etc.) that may be omitted in the TT. On the other hand, implicit meanings may exist in the ST that need to be explained to the receiver of the TT.

- 4- Text composition: includes microstructure (information units, stages of a plot, logical relations, thematic structure . . .) and macrostructure (beginning, end, footnotes, quotations . . .);
- 5- Non-verbal elements: such as illustrations, italics, font, etc.;
- 6- Lexical elements: includes dialect, register and subject-specific terminology;
- 7- Structure of sentences: includes rhetorical features such as parenthesis and ellipsis;
- 8- Suprasegmental features: includes stress, intonation, rhythm and stylistic punctuation.

Additionally, Nord set a functional hierarchy when performing a translation; work top down from a pragmatic point of view and with the intended utmost function of TT (Munday, 2016, p.133-134). This hierarchy is as follows:

- (a) Comparing the intended ST and the proposed TT functions helps to determine the functional form of translation to be produced (documentary or instrumental).
- (b) Those functional elements that may be reproduced and those that will need to be adapted to the TT addressees 'situation have to be determined by the analysis of the translation commission.
- (c) The translation type decides the translation style. Therefore, a documentary translation will be more source-culture oriented and an instrumental translation more target-culture oriented.
- (d) The text problems may be then dealt with at a lower linguistic level according to ST analytical elements.

### *3.2 Procedures*

The data analyzed in the study is the first part of Prophetic biography by Ibn Hīsham. The first part of the book was chosen as it represents many pragmatic problems. The first part in question consists of one hundred and twelve pages. To analyze the first part of the book, the following procedures are to be followed:

- 1- Presenting the Arabic copy of the first part of the book.
- 2- Presenting the English translation of this part of the book.
- 3- Comparing the SLT to the TLT to find where the two texts may diverge.
- 4- Applying the intratextual factors of Nord's model and analyzing the ST and its English translation to find which translation strategy adopted by the translator and to find if the TT achieved the function of the ST.
- 5- Checking the accuracy of the translation applying Nord's (1997) model and suggesting an alternative translation.

The researcher investigates the strategies the translator adopted in translating Prophetic biography.

## 4. Data Analysis

### 4.1 Discussion and Findings

Nord's functional model can be applied on different kinds of texts. Therefore, some extracts from “The Prophetic Biography Sîrah of Ibn Hishâm” (SLTs) and their translation (TLTs) were analyzed following Nord's (1997) model.

### The Importance of Translation Commission

According to Nord's model, the translation brief suggests that the ST and TT have referential-informative function that both of the texts convey information about Prophets, characters, incidents and poetry the author included and excluded in his book. All this information is transferred to both ST and TT readers. The addressees in the ST are Arab readers or people who have knowledge of Arabic language. On the other side, the addressees of the TT are English people or people who have knowledge about English language. As for the TT, it was published in Lebanon in 2013. The medium of both the ST and TT are printed written texts. Furthermore, the motive of the ST and TT production is to inform the addressees about the characters and incidents the author or the translator mentioned in the book.

#### 4.1.1 Example 1:

##### SLT:

قال ابن هشام: وأنا -ان شاء الله تعالى- مبتدئ هذا الكتاب بذكر اسماعيل [صلى الله عليه وسلم] بن ابراهيم [صلوات الله تعالى عليهما] ومن ولد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من ولده وأولادهم لأصلا بهم: الأول فالأول من اسماعيل الى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم وما يعرض من حديثهم, وتارك ذكر غيرهم من ولد اسماعيل على هذه الجهة للاختصار الى حديث سيرة رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم, وتارك بعض ما ذكره ابن اسحاق في هذا الكتاب مما ليس لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فيه ذكر ولا نزل فيه من القرآن شئ وليس سببا لشئ من هذا الكتاب ولا تفسيراً له ولا شاهداً عليه, لما ذكرت من الاختصار, وأشعاراً ذكرها لم أر أحداً من أهل العلم بالشعر يعرفها, وأشياء بعضها يشنع

الحديث به, وبعض يسوء بعض الناس ذكره, وبعض لم يقر لنا البكائي بروايته, ومستقص  
-إن شاء الله تعالى- ما سوى ذلك منه بمبلغ الرواية له والعلم به. (ص 40-41)

## **TLT:**

Ibn Hishâm says: **Allâh willing**, I am going to begin this book with Ishmael [peace be upon him], and from among his sons and grandsons those to whom The Messenger of Allâh [peace be upon him] belongs, the eldest to the eldest, from Ishmael to Muhammad [peace be upon him], and **their related stories**. I thus will make no mention of anyone of Ishmael's other sons, by way of abridgement, in order to move direct to the biography of The Messenger of Allâh [peace be upon him].

I will abandon some of what is brought in the book of Ibn Ishâq, where there is no mention of The Messenger of Allâh [peace be upon him], and in connection with which there is no Divine revelation, nor is it a reason for, an explanation of, or a witness to anything in this book, simply for the purpose of abridgement as I have already mentioned.

I also will leave some poetry not mentioned nor known by anyone of the scholars well-versed in poetry; and also many things some of which are too hideous to mention, others may cause harm to some people, and others whose narration is not authorized by Al-Bakâ'i. Except for that, I will, **Allâh willing**, investigate all things with narration and knowledge. (p.29-30)

## **SLT Analysis**

### **Subject matter**

The main topic of the above-cited extract is Ibn Hishâm's technique in writing the book in which the author sheds light on the characters he is going to mention at the beginning of the book and what incidents and poetry he is going to include and exclude in this book.

### **Content**

The content of this extract cannot be paraphrased as it is a historical religious text, and it is considered a great heritage for readers. The internal situation of the text is obviously factual because the author refers to the actual incidents and characters he is going to mention in his book. The text was written in prose style, and the lexical items he used are formal as the author used eloquent Arabic.

## **Anaphoric and Cataphoric Reference**

### **Anaphoric Reference**

Concerning anaphoric reference, there is anaphoric reference in *عليهما* that is an explicit attached pronoun (alif of duality) and the word *أصلابهم* in which there is also an explicit attached pronoun (third person haa). There is anaphoric reference in *حديثهم* that is an explicit attached pronoun (third person haa).

### **Cataphoric Reference**

There is cataphoric reference in *هذه الجهة* that means "this" for feminine. There is cataphoric reference in the word *ما ذكره* in *ابن اسحاق* that is an explicit attached pronoun (third person haa).

### **Substitution and Ellipsis**

In the above extract, there are three examples of substitution and ellipsis such as *وبعض يسوء بعض الناس ذكره* which refers to ellipsis of *أشياء* and belongs to the nominal group. The second example is "وبعض لم يقر لنا البكائي بروايته" which also refers to ellipsis of *أشياء* and it also belongs to the nominal group.

### **Conjunctions**

The above mentioned extract contains some conjunctions; some of them are positive additive extending ones (*وأولادهم /ومن ولد /وأنا*). The connective *wa* in *وأنا* has a resumptive function. The connective *wa* in *ومن ولد رسول الله صلى* has an additive function.

### **Theme-rheme**

In the sentence *قال ابن هشام*, the verb *قال* is an unmarked theme as it started with a predicator and the rheme is *ابن هشام*. In the sentence *وأنا – ان شاء الله تعالى - مبتدئ هذا الكتاب بذكر اسماعيل [صلى الله عليه وسلم] بن ابراهيم [صلوات الله تعالى عليهما]*, the theme is *وأنا-ان شاء الله تعالى*, which is a marked theme, and the rheme is *مبتدئ هذا الكتاب بذكر اسماعيل [صلى الله عليه وسلم] بن ابراهيم [صلوات الله تعالى عليهما]*.

### **Lexical Cohesion**

Lexical cohesion includes repetition, synonymy, hyponymy and collocation.

### **Repetition**

There are many examples of repetition mentioned in the above written ST extract; the word *ذكر* has been repeated in *مبتدئ هذا الكتاب بذكر* and in *وتارك*. Additionally, the words *ذكر /ذكرت /ذكره* have

been repeated many times because the sentence is too long and the author tried to remind the reader of the words mentioned before.

### **Hyponymy**

“the general sense of hyponymy is ‘be a kind of’, as in ‘fruit is a kind of food’ ” (Halliday, 2014, p.647). In the above extract, there is one example of hyponymy (وما يعرض - حديثهم).

### **The Grammatical features of the ST**

Additionally, the content analysis focuses on the grammatical features of the source text. Some verb forms are in the first person singular such as (مبتدئ - تارك - أر - مستقص - ذكرت) and others are in the third person singular such as (يعرض - ذكره - نزل - يعرفها - يشنع - يسوء - يقر). Regarding the voice of the verbs, most of them are active but there are two passive voice examples (يعرض - يشنع). Finally, the verbs in the extract above have been written in different tenses; the majority of them are in the present tense (يعرض - أر - مبتدئ - تارك - مستقص), three verbs are in the future tense (يعرفها - يشنع - يسوء - يقر) and three verbs are in the past tense (ما ذكره - نزل - ذكرت).

### **Denotative and connotative meaning**

Most of words in the text have neutral connotation, but there is a word that has a negative connotation يشنع and its denotative meaning is "to become very ugly" and the connotative meaning is "to be horrible". On the other hand, there is one word that has a positive connotation; the word مستقص means "to investigate the information and hit the target in searching it". The connotative meaning of مستقص is "interest and accuracy".

### **Text Composition**

The composition of the above extract serves to establish cohesion, since the author started the text with قال ابن هشام to indicate that the words are going to be said are a reported speech by Ibn Hishâm. This extract is considered an introductory text in which the author shows the reader the persons he is going to start with and ends his book. Then, he continues mentioning the incidents he is going to exclude and include in his book. This helps the logical distribution of information and the coherence of the text to be achieved in addition to achieving a functional communication of the author's intention.

### **Lexis**

#### **Stylistic levels and registers**

The author used a frozen style in writing this extract which is extremely formal. In addition, the ST belongs to the formal register. The author used the style of repetition for different purposes and it involves repetition of words from the same root such as بذكر, /ولد, ولده, أولادهم/اسماعيل /الأول, فالأول

رسول الله صلى الله /بعضها, بعض /وتارك /حديثهم, حديث / ذكر, مذكروه, ذكر, ذكرت, ذكرها  
عليه وسلم. There is also a synonymous repetition, which is repeating the  
words or phrases with its synonyms أولادهم, أصلاهم.

### **Selection of words**

Nord (1991) asserted that “the choice of lexis in a particular text is determined by both extratextual and intratextual factors” (p.112). Nord deals with these extratextual factors one by one in order to explain their impact on the choice of words.

1- Sender – the text includes the name of the author who said the reported speech in the whole text; the author started his words by قال ابن هشام. The author clearly states that he is the writer of this extract. Furthermore, the selection of words in the text shows that he is an organized person in arranging the incidents in his book. Such words are من ,بذكر, تارك, مبتدئ, من ولده وأولادهم لأصلاهم, الأول فالأول, اسماعيل صلى الله عليه وسلم الى رسول الله عليه وسلم. In addition, the choice of lexis shows that he is accurate in transmitting the information to the reader that he excluded the untrusted incidents. Furthermore, the choice of words shows that the author is caring about the reader's feelings that he excluded the terrible things mentioned in writing Sîrah. Such words are ييسوء, يشنع, تارك. Thus, the character of the author is clear through the text mentioned.

2- The sender's intention- the text contains reference to the sender's intention, which is to clarify what is going to be mentioned in his book and what is going to be excluded. This is achieved through the use of such words مستقص, ييسوء, يشنع, بعض, تارك, بذكر, مبتدئ.

3- Recipient- the recipients have not been directly addressed in the text and not even mentioned. However, the recipient's orientation is also reflected in the text, as only the Arab readers would understand the purposes of repetition style in writing the text such as بذكر, ذكر, ذكره, ذكر, ذكرت, ذكرها /رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم /وتارك /اسماعيل /الأول, فالأول /ولد, ولده, أولادهم, لأصلاهم /بعض. This repetition indicates the attitude of the sender and his style. The effect resulting from repetition reflects the author's desire to emphasize his ideas through the text.

4- Medium- the medium influences the level of style of the lexical elements. It is a religious historical text in which some religious lexis have been used such as اسماعيل صلى الله عليه وسلم, رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم, ابراهيم and some historical names of persons such as ابن اسحاق, البكائي.

5- Place- the text contains a lexical item denoting to the cultural background such as the proper noun القرآن. In addition, the text does not contain any social dialect that may refer to the place of text production.

6- Time- the time of text production is not reflected on the text lexis as there are no words referring to the time of writing this text. In fact, the time of text production is not important to be mentioned to the reader.

7- Motive- the occasion for communication is that the extract is an introductory paragraph at the beginning of the book written in order to clarify what is going to be mentioned and excluded. The motive of writing the text is mentioned in the extract as a whole and this is reflected on the choice of lexis such as مبتدئ، بذكر، وتارك، ذكر، ومستقص.

8- Text function- as the text function is referential-informative, this is reflected in the choice of lexis in the text such as مبتدئ، بذكر، وتارك، ذكر، بعض، مذكروه، ولانزل، ليس سبباً، ولا تفسيراً، ولا شاهداً، ذكرت، أشعاراً، لم أر، أشياء، بعضها، يشنع، يسوء، لم يقر، مستقص، مأسوى ذلك.

### **Sentence structure**

The structure of sentences in the extract above mainly belongs to the hypotactic structure as the sentences contain conjunctions to indicate the relation between clauses. The ST is characterized by its long compound sentence, which is expected in Arabic. This extract contains only one long compound sentence. Further, the ST is mainly written in the declarative indicative mood in order to convey its informative function.

The main verbs used in the text are in the future tense which reflect the author's intention to inform the readers about what is going to be mentioned and excluded in the book.

### **TLT Analysis**

#### **Content**

The content of this extract can be paraphrased and expressed in different strategies according to the translator. The internal situation of the text is obviously factual because the translator refers to the actual incidents and characters he is going to mention in his book. The text was written in prose style, and the lexical items he used are formal. In addition, the ST contains a lexical item with positive connotation such as أهل العلم. For the negative connotations, there are some lexical items have negative connotations such as وتارك بعض مذكروه ابن اسحاق تارك. The verb تارك was translated as "abandon", but it is better to be translated as "I will not mention".

## Anaphoric and Cataphoric Reference

### Anaphoric Reference

Concerning anaphoric reference, the word *عليهما* that is an explicit attached pronoun (alif of duality) was ellipted and it was translated as "*peace be upon him*" as the translator omitted *بن ابراهيم* for abridgement. The word *أصلابهم* that is also an explicit attached pronoun (third person haa) was omitted in translation as the translator did not find an equivalent word for it in English.

### Cataphoric Reference

The cataphoric reference *هذه الجهة* that means "*this*" for feminine was omitted in translation for the difference between English and Arabic and it was translated as "*by way*". The translator added cataphoric reference "The Messenger of Allâh" which does not exist in the ST as cataphoric reference. The explicit attached pronoun (third person haa) in *ما ذكره ابن اسحاق* was turned into passive voice "*what is brought in the book of Ibn Ishq*". Therefore, the cataphoric reference was omitted in translation.

### Substitution and Ellipsis

In the above extract, there are some examples of substitution and ellipsis such as *ويعض يسوء بعض الناس ذكره* which refers to ellipsis of *أشياء* and belongs to the nominal group. The second example is "*وبعض لم يقر لنا البكائي بروايته*" which also refers to ellipsis of *أشياء* and it also belongs to the nominal group.

### Conjunctions

The connective *wa* in *وأنا* has a resumptive function. The translator succeeded in transmitting the meaning in the TT as he ellipted the connective *wa*. The connective *wa* in *ومن ولد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم* has an additive function. The translator succeeded in translating this connective as he translated it as "*and*".

### Theme-rheme

In the ST, the theme is *قال*, which is an unmarked theme and the rheme is *ابن هشام*. On the other side, the theme in the TT is "*Ibn Hishâm*" which is a marked theme and the rheme is "*says*". In the sentence *وأنا- ان شاء الله تعالى- مبتدئ هذا الكتاب بذكر اسماعيل [صلى الله عليه وسلم] بن ابراهيم [صلوات الله تعالى عليهما]*, the marked theme *أنا - ان شاء الله تعالى-* is "Allâh willing, I" in the TT. The rheme is *مبتدئ هذا الكتاب بذكر اسماعيل [صلى الله عليه وسلم] بن ابراهيم [صلوات الله تعالى عليهما]*, but the rheme in the TT is "*am going to begin this book with Ishmael [peace be upon him]*".

## **Repetition**

The word *بذكر* in the extract under analysis was translated as "*with*" and in another position *ذكر* was translated as "*make no mention*" which is acceptable in English. The word *وتارك بعض ما ذكره ابن اسحاق* was translated as "*brought*".

## **Hyponymy**

In the above extract, there is hyponymy between *وما يعرض / حديثهم* and they were translated as "*their related stories*". Therefore, hyponymy was ellipated.

## **The Grammatical features of the TT**

The verbs in the first person and third person singular were retained in translation. The active voice was changed into a passive voice such as: *بعض ما ذكره ابن اسحاق* was translated as "*what is brought in the book of Ibn Ishâq*". Additionally, the passive voice *وما يعرض من حديثهم* in *يعرض* was translated as "*their related stories*". The passive voice *وأشياء بعضها* in *يشنع* was translated as "*are too hideous to mention*". Finally, tenses of the verbs in the extract above were retained in the TT. However, the past simple tense in *ذكره* was translated as present "*is brought*" and *ولا نزل* was translated as "*there is no Divine revelation*".

The analysis of the grammatical features in the extract above demonstrates that there are many deviations between the ST and TT. Both the ST and TT belongs to the indicative mood. Regarding the form, the ST contains six first person singular pronouns and seven third person singular pronouns versus eight first person singular pronouns and three third person singular pronouns in the TT. The most common voice is the active voice which the ST contains thirteen active voice sentences and two passive voice sentences versus ten active voice sentences and four passive voice sentences in the TT. The most common tense in both the ST and TT is the present tense.

## **Lexis**

### **Stylistic level and register**

The translator used a formal style in translating this extract. Additionally, the TT belongs to the formal register. The style of repetition is less used in the target text and this is according to the differences between the two languages.

## **Selection of words:**

- 1- The sender's intention- it was retained in the TT as the translator wanted to clarify to the readers the incidents he is going to mention in his book and the incidents he is going to exclude. This is achieved by using such words: begin/ make no mention/ abandon/ some/ hideous/ cause harm/ not authorized/ investigate.
- 2- Recipient- the recipients have not been directly addressed in the text and not even mentioned.
- 3- Medium- the medium in the ST was retained in the TT as it is a religious historical text in which some religious lexis have been used such as "The Messenger of Allah [peace be upon him]/ Ishmael [peace be upon him] and some historical names such as "Ibn Ishâq" and "Al-Bakâ'I".
- 4- The place- the place of text production is Egypt as the translator is an Egyptian. However, the text does not contain any social dialect that may indicate the place of text production.
- 5- Time- The time of text production is not reflected on the text lexis as there are no words referring to the time of writing the text.
- 6- Motive- the motive of writing the ST was retained in the TT and it is mentioned in the extract as a whole and this is reflected on the choice of lexis such as: begin/ make no mention/ abandon/ leave/ investigate.
- 7- Text function- the referential-informative function of the ST has been retained in the TT and this is reflected on the choice of lexis e.g. begin/ make no mention/ some/ what is brought/ no Divine revelation/ a reason for/ an explanation of/ a witness to/ mentioned/ some poetry/ not mentioned/ hideous/ cause harm/ not authorized/ except for that/ investigate.

## **Sentence Structure**

The structure of sentences in the TT extract above conforms with the ST as both of them belong to the hypotactic structure. The sentences in the TT extract are shorter than the one in the ST because the ST contains only one long compound sentence and the TT contains many long compound sentences. The TT conforms to the ST in its declarative indicative mood to convey the informative function.

#### 4.4 Translation Strategies

According to Baker (2005, p. 188), a translation strategy is a method for solving a problem that arises when translating a text or a section of it.

Ex.	Translation Strategy	ST	TT	Frequency
1	Compensation by splitting	يسوء	cause harm	1
	Ellipsis strategy	بمبلغ الرواية له والعلم به	It was not translated and به is redundant in the TT for the difference between Arabic and English.	2
	Addition strategy		move direct I also will leave	2

In the first example, the translator adopted various strategies in translating the Prophetic biography by Ibnu Hîsham. Such strategies are ellipsis strategy, compensation by splitting strategy, addition strategy. Further, The translator did not fully achieve the function of the ST as there are some translation problems. However, the translator achieved the function of the ST in general. The linguistic translation problems include linguistic mistakes, spelling mistakes and mistakes in meaning. However, the TT maintained the referential-informative function of the ST. In fact, the translator faced cultural and pragmatic translation problems and he succeeded to some extent in solving some of these problems. The change in form of errors has to be taken into account.

#### 5.2 Implications of Findings

The study has made comparative analysis between Arabic and English applicable in the field of translating religious texts. The importance of assessing the quality of translating religious texts lies in the fact that there is a pressing need to use translation to transmit Islam's teachings to non-Muslims through the tool of translation and to avoid any misunderstanding or misinterpretation by the reader of the translated text.

The translator of the religious text should be very precise due to the sensitivity of such kinds of texts. In addition, the translator should be competent in his native language so that he can be aware of the connotative and the denotative meaning of the item in each Islamic context from which he translates. He must also have a good understanding of his religion (beliefs, attitudes, values, and the rules of the SL audience) in order to fully

comprehend the ST and properly translate it for people who have a different set of beliefs, attitudes, values and rules (Naguib, 2001).

## **6. Conclusion**

As is clear from the above discussion, this study reveals some challenges, which face translators in translating religious texts from Arabic into English. The translator faced some cultural and pragmatic translation problems and succeeded in some of these problems. In addition, the study reveals that the pragmatic approach is applicable on all kinds of texts including religious texts. Hence, the study highlighted the importance of following a pragmatic approach in translation. The researcher applied Nord's model (1997) on ten examples from Prophetic biography by Ibnu Hîsham and its English translation by Dr. Muhammad Mahdi Al-Sharif. The translator succeeded in achieving the function of the ST in the TT in general. The linguistic translation problems include linguistic mistakes, spelling mistakes and mistakes in meaning. They also include cultural problems and this is for the cultural difference between Arabic and English. However, the translator succeeded in solving some of these cultural and translation problems. In addition, the translator applied various translation strategies in translating the Prophetic biography by Ibnu Hîsham.

## **5.5 Suggestions and Recommendations**

The present research attempted to pragmatically analyze the translation of the first part of the Prophetic biography by Ibn Hishâm. Thus, it is recommended that further studies can be applied on the other parts of the book or any other religious book, as it is important to assess the quality of such kinds of sensitive and accurate texts. The current researcher recommends that focus on analyzing the other parts of the book and other religious books.

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