



**Modality in Six English Translations
of the Qur'anic
Chapter /? af-fu9araa?/ 'the Poets**

By

Dr. Manal Abd Nasser

**Assistant Professor Department of English,
Faculty Of Arts, Assiut University**

0. Abstract

The present study investigates the employment of the central modal auxiliary verbs in six Qur'anic translations, namely Yusuf Ali's, Pickthall's, Dawood's, Abdel Haleem's, Al-Hilâlî & Khân's, and Ghâlî's, of the Qur'anic Chapter /ʔaf-ʃu9araaʔ/ 'the Poets'. The study illustrates that there is a significant difference in the frequency of each of the modal auxiliary verbs in the six translations. Moreover, it illustrates that among the mentioned translators, Dawood has made use of the central modal verbs more than the other translators. Pickthall, on the other hand, has made use of these verbs less than the others. In addition to the difference in frequency of using central modal auxiliary verbs, the study points out that these modals are polysemous in nature as they occur in different verses with different senses. Similarly, different translators may use different modals in the same verse.

Keywords: Qur'anic Translation, Modal Auxiliaries, Intrinsic and Extrinsic Modality, Deontic and Epistemic Modality

1. Introduction

The present study focuses on the role of human language as a means of communication. That role is not restricted to the give and take of information but is extended to expressing the emotions and attitudes of the speaker and influencing the behaviour and attitudes of the hearer (Leech and Svartvik 1979: 134). This is done through the use of the modal auxiliaries which are so called because "they affect what is called the mood of the verb. Mood refers to the manner in which a verb is expressed, such as a fact, a desire, a possibility, or a command. The modals convey conditions of probability, possibility, obligation, or necessity" (Kolln 1990: 45).

Crystal (1992:257) introduces the modal auxiliaries as "verblike words which typically express speakers' attitudes towards the factual content of an utterance, such as uncertainty, possibility, and necessity." Stageberg and Oaks (2000: 188) also state that "these modal auxiliaries precede verb stems and give them special shades of meaning, such as futurity, volition, possibility, probability, permission, and necessity. They are sometimes called verb markers because they signal that a verb is about to follow." However, they are not used alone without main verbs except stranded, i.e. when they refer to a main verb that is already mentioned, as in the following example:

(1) I cannot afford this car but he can.

Swan (1983: 388) sums up when to use and when not to use modal verbs stating that:

They are not used (except sometimes in the negative) to talk about things which are definitely happening, or have definitely happened. Modal verbs are used when we say that we expect things to happen, or that events are possible, or necessary or improbable, or impossible, or when we say that things did not happen, or that we are not sure whether they happened.

In other words, the modal verbs are used when there is a need to express the various degrees of likelihood. Leech and Svartvik (1979: 128) add that "instead of thinking of truth and falsehood in black-and-white terms, we can think in terms of a SCALE OF LIKELIHOOD. The extremes of the scale are impossibility and certainty (or logical necessity); other, intermediate concepts to be considered are possibility, probability, improbability, etc."

As stated by Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartvik (1985), the use of the modal auxiliary verbs is one of the most problematic issues of English grammar. They appear together with the main verbs to help them express particular nuances of meanings. The present study concentrates on nine modal verbs which are grouped under the title of "central modals" in the classification of Quirk et al. (1985: 137). These are can, could, may, might, shall, should, will, would and must. They are also given four criteria of being followed by the 'bare infinitive,' as in (2); having no

nonfinite forms, as in (3); having no -s form, as in (4); and having an abnormal time reference, as in (5) (Quirk et al. 1985):

(2) I will go.

(3) *to will / *willing / *willed

(4) *She wills come.

(5) I would be happy to help you overcome this problem. (future time reference, not past time reference)

It is worth stating that the above-mentioned modals are also called "pure modals" (Cowan 2008: 295). What is also true about the members of this group is that they do not co-occur.

Other shared characteristics among these modals are as follows:

(a) Most of them have lexical meaning. For example, can means 'be able to' and must means 'be obliged to' (Swan 1983).

(b) They are used with perfect infinitives to speak about things which did not happen, or past events about which we are not sure (Swan 1983):

(6) I should have tried again. [but I did not]

(7) He may have lost his way. [I am not sure about that.]

(c) Often the ideas they express "do not include an element of time Save that a notion of futurity is implicit in all of them" (Stageberg and Oaks 2000:189).

In line with this idea of time reference, Quirk et al. (1985: 220) state that "although historically, most of the modals can be paired into past and nonpast forms (can/could, may/might, will/would, shall/should), the 'past tense' forms are only in some respects usefully classified as such from the point of view of meaning." They also add that "the modals are often associated with particular pragmatic uses, eg in requests, offers, etc, where the past forms tend to have implications of tentativeness or politeness." Similarly, Kolln (1990: 45-46) confirms that the present and past forms of the modals have nothing to do with present and past time reference, stating that:

Although we call these forms present and past, they do not necessarily indicate present and past time; these are simply labels indicating the form of the modal. For example, in the sentence "I may eat" (present), the act of eating is not going on; in "I might eat" (past) the act of eating is not over; in fact, in both cases it may never happen. Rather, the present and past forms of may indicate degrees of probability regarding present and future events.

2. Theoretical Framework

According to Crystal (1997: 247), modality refers to "a wide range of meanings . . . especially attitudes on the part of the speaker towards the factual content of the utterance, e.g. uncertainty, definiteness, vagueness, possibility." Semantically speaking, by means of modality the speaker

assigns a certain degree of likelihood to the content of an utterance due to his/her understanding and estimation of the situation. Quirk et al. (1985: 219) also define modality as "the manner in which the meaning of a clause is qualified so as to reflect the speaker's judgment of the likelihood of the proposition it expresses being true." In other words, through the use of modality the meaning of a clause is given a qualification that reflects the speaker's assessment of the likelihood of the utterance in question. Moreover, Halliday (1994: 88) also defines modality as the "intermediate degrees, between the positive and negative poles."

Interestingly, the special meanings expressed by the use of the modal verbs are subdivided into two groups. The first group includes the meanings of 'permission', 'obligation' and 'volition' and it is known as "intrinsic" modality which is said to stand for "human control." The second group includes the meanings of 'possibility', 'necessity', and 'predication' and it is known as "extrinsic" modality which is said to stand for "human judgment" (Quirk et al. 1985: 219). This binary division of modality is often referred to as "deontic" and "epistemic" modality, respectively (Quirk et al. 1985: 220). It is worth mentioning that "the 'ability' meaning of can is considered extrinsic, even though ability typically involves human control over an action" (Quirk et al. 1985: 221).

In respect of these two types of modality, the modal verbs are bound together by the fact that they are polysemous. This results in being

used both intrinsically and extrinsically. In other words, having multi-meanings results in performing multi-functions. Quirk et al. (1985: 219) state that:

One important observation about the modals is that each one of them has both intrinsic and extrinsic uses: for example, *may* has the meaning of permission (intrinsic) and the meaning of possibility (extrinsic); *will* has the meaning of volition (intrinsic) and the meaning of prediction (extrinsic). However, there are areas of overlap and neutrality between the intrinsic and extrinsic senses of a modal: . . . *will* in a sentence such as *I'll see you tomorrow* then can be said to combine the meanings of volition and prediction.

Shopen (1985: 246) seconds the above-mentioned idea stating that "modal auxiliaries . . . often have both epistemic and deontic senses." What is worth mentioning is that the overlapping meanings of the modals pave the way to modal interchangeableness (Quirk et al. 1985: 220).

As indicated above the epistemic mode concerns 'human judgment.' It judges the actuality of an event in relation to the actual world and its possible alternative worlds. Shopen (1985: 242) states that "if the event belongs to the actual world, it is actual; if it belongs to some possible alternative world . . . it is possible." On the other hand, the deontic mode concerns 'human control.' It identifies an event as "non-actual by virtue of the fact that it is imposed on a given situation" (Shopen 1985: 246). It is worth noting that the two modes are bound together by 'parallelism.'

Shopen (1985: 246) asserts that "there is considerable parallelism between the epistemic and deontic modes. Both can be described in terms of alternative worlds Thus, epistemic necessity is parallel to deontic obligation, and epistemic possibility is parallel to deontic permission."

Moreover, Shopen (1985: 246-7) distinguishes between the epistemic and deontic modes by two properties, as follows:

First, the deontic mode often includes a source of obligation/permission (for example, the speaker). But an event can also be imposed without any explicitly named or understood source Conversely . . . the epistemic mode sometimes includes a source from whose point of view the event is evaluated as possible.

Second, the deontic mode typically includes a participant target who can be held responsible for the event (for example, the subject and/or semantic agent).

In line with the differences between deontic and epistemic modality, Lyons (1977: II/824) states that "there is an intrinsic connexion between deontic modality and futurity." He also adds that "the origin of deontic modality . . . is to be sought in the . . . instrumental function of language: that is to say, in the use of language . . . to get things done by imposing one's will on other agents" (Lyons 1977: II/826). As for epistemic modality, Lyons states that it is "possibility-based" (Lyons

1977: II/801). Deontic modality, on the other hand, is said to be "necessity-based" (Lyons 1977: II/840).

3. Review of the Literature

Some studies, mainly comparative and contrastive, attempted to investigate the use of modal auxiliary verbs in the Qur'anic translations. Examples are Mansouri's (2010) "An Investigation of Modal Verbs in English Translations of the Holy Qur'an," Hong-yan's (2015) "Comparative Analysis of Modal Auxiliary Verbs in English and in Chinese," Mansoori and Afshari's (2016) "The comparative analysis of the modal verbs in three Surahs: Yasin, Al-Rahman and Yusuf and their contrastive Persian and English Translations," and Betti and Igaab's (2018) "A Contrastive Study of Modulation in English and Arabic." However, as far as I know, none of these studies was attempted on the Chapter of /ʔaf-ju9araaʔ/ 'the Poets'.

4. Using Modal Verbs in Translating the Chapter /ʔaf-ju9araaʔ/ 'the Poets'

The Holy Qur'an is the message of the Creator of all creations, the All Knowing and the One Who taught man the gift of speech. Accordingly, translating the meanings of the Holy Qur'an demands mastering both the source language and the target language in order to convey these meanings exactly as they are intended in the source language. This also necessitates that the translators should be aware of the

peculiarities of the two languages to be able to produce an accurate translation which "should not read like translation at all" (Phillips 1953 cited in Nida 2012: 148). Nida (2012: 142) points out that 'the nature of the message' plays an important role in justifying differences in translations. He states that:

Messages differ primarily in the degree to which content or form is the dominant consideration. Of course, the content of a message can never be completely abstracted from the form, and form is nothing apart from content; but in some messages the content is of primary consideration, and in others the form must be given a higher priority.

The use of the modal verbs in the translation of the Qur'anic Chapter /ʔaf-ju9araaʔ/ 'the Poets' is seen in 78 verses out of 227, sometimes with two or three occurrences in the same verse. This makes a total of 92 occurrences as a whole. In general, the modals are used when, as pointed out before, there is some degree of likelihood, either high or low. However, when definiteness of the actions is the case, they are not. Table (1) summarizes the use of modal verbs in this Qur'anic Chapter. The use of a dash indicates the nonuse of a modal or the use of a finite verb form.

Table (1): Modal Auxiliaries in /ʔaf-fu9araaʔ/ 'the Poets'

Serial	Verse	Translators					
		Yusuf Ali	Pickthall	Dawood	Abdel Haleem	Al-Hilāfi & Khān	Ghāfi
1	3	may...-	may...-	will...-	... will	may...-	would...-
2	4	could... would	can... would	can... will	could... would	could... would	will...-
3	6	will	will	Will	will	will	will
4	11	will	will	Will	will	will	will
5	12	will	will	Will	will	will	will
6	13	will... may	shall... will	may...-	will...-	...-	will... will
7	14	may	will	May	may	will	will
8	15	... will	shall... -	shall... shall	shall...-	shall...-	will...-
9	24	-	-	-	would	-	-
10	28	-	-	Could	would	-	can
11	29	will	shall	Shall	will	will	will
12	35	-	would	-	-	-	would
13	37	-	shall	-	-	-	will
14	39	-	-	-	-	-	will
15	40	may	may	Will	may	may	would
16	41	shall	will	Shall	shall	will	will
17	42	shall	will	Shall	will	shall	will
18	43	-	-	-	will	-	will
19	44	will	-	Shall	shall	will	will

20	49	-. . . shall ... will ... will	- . . .shall ... will ... will	must ... shall ... will ...-	must ... will ... will ...-	- . . .shall. .. will ... will	- . . .will . . .will ... will
21	50	- . . . shall	- shall	can shall	will ... -	-	-
22	51	will may	will ... -	will ... -	will ... -	will ... -	should. . . -
23	52	shall	will	Will	will	will	will
24	61	-	-	-	shall	-	-
25	62	will	will	Will	will	will	will
26	73	-	-	Can	-	-	-
27	81	will	-	Will	will	will	-
28	82	will	will	Will	will	will	will
29	87	will	-	-	-	will	-
30	88	will	-	Will	can	will	will
31	89	will	-	Shall	will	-	-
32	90	will	will	Shall	-	will	will
33	91	will	will	Shall	-	will	will
34	92	shall	will	Will	will	will	will
35	93	can	can	Can	can	can	-
36	94	will	will	Shall	will	will	will
37	96	will	will	Will	will	will	will
38	102	. . . shall	- . . . might	could. .would	Could . . . would	- . . .shall	- . . .should
39	106	will	will	Will	will	will	will

Modality in Six English Translations of
the Qur'anic Chapter /ʔaf-fu9araaʔ/ 'the Poets'

Dr Manal Mohamed Abdel Nasser

40	109	-	-	Can	-	-	-
41	111	shall	shall	-	should	shall	should
42	112		may	May	-	-	-
43	113	-... could	-	can .would	-...could	-...could	-
44	114	-	-	Will	will	-	would
45	116	shalt	wilt	Shall	will	will	will
46	124	will	will	Will	will	will	will
47	127	-	-	Can	-	-	-
48	128	-	-	Will	can	-	-
49	129	-	may	May	-	will	may
50	135	-	-	-	will	-	-
51	138	-	shall	Shall	shall	-	will
52	142	will	will	Will	will	will	will
53	145	-	-	Can	-	-	-
54	146	will	will	-	will	will	will
55	155	-	-	Shall	should	-	-
56	156	-	-	Shall	will	should	-
57	158	-	-	-	will	-	-
58	161	will	will	Will	will	will	will
59	164	-	-	Can	-	-	-
60	165	will	-	Will	Must	-	-
61	167	wilt	wilt	Shall	will	will	will
62	174	-	-	-	will	-	-
63	177	will	will	Will	will	will	will
64	180	-	-	Can	-	-	-

65	183	-	-	Shall	-	-	-
66	190	-	-	-	will	-	-
67	194	mayest	mayest	May	could	may	may
68	199	would	would	Would	would	would	would
69	201	will	will	Shall	will	will	will
70	202	will	will	Will	will	shall	will
71	203	will. .shall	will . . . -	will shall	will . . . can	will . . . can	will . . . will
72	204	-	would	-	can	would	-
73	207	will	-	Will	would	shall	will
74	211	Would. . . would	-	-	-	would...can	-
75	213	wilt	-	-	will	should	should
76	221	shall	shall	Shall	shall	shall	shall
77	223	-	-	-	-	may	-
78	227	will. . . will	will . . . will	will . . . -	will . . . will	will . . . will	will . . . will

Table (1) reflects the thorny and tricky nature of the modals. It shows that they are both polysemous and interchangeable. Consider the following examples (The phonemic symbols used in the transcription of Arabic data are given in the Appendix):

(8) la9allaka baaxi9un nafsaka ʔallaa yakuunuu muʔminiin (Qur'an 26:3)

Yusuf Ali's: It may be thou frettest thy soul with grief, that they do not become believers.

Pickthall's: It may be that thou tormentest thyself (O Muhammad) because they believe not.

Dawood's: You will perhaps fret yourself to death on account of their unbelief.

Abdel Haleem's: [Prophet], are you going to worry yourself to death because they will not believe?

Al-Hilâlî & Khân's: It may be that you (O Muhammad are going to kill yourself with grief, that they do not become believers

Ghâlf's: You would possibly consume yourself that they are not believers.

In this verse, the modal may expresses possibility in three translations, namely Yusuf Ali's, Pickthall's, and Al-Hilâlî & Khân's. Abdel Haleem refrains from using a modal in this slot and uses a finite verb in the form of a question while saving the modal to the next slot in the same verse to express volition on the part of the disbelievers. Dawood and Ghâlf use different modals, will and would, respectively plus an adverb that adds the sense of possibility when mixed with the sense of volition expressed by will and would.

(9) wa lahum 9alayya ðambun faʔaxaafu ʔay yaqtuluun (Qur'an 26:14)

Yusuf Ali's: "And (further), they have a charge of crime against me; and I fear they may slay me."

Pickthall's: And they have a crime against me, so I fear that they will kill me.

Dawood's: They accuse me of a crime, and I fear that they may put me to death.

Abdel Haleem's: . . . besides, they have a charge against me, and I fear they may kill me.

Al-Hilâlî & Khân's: "And they have a charge of crime against me, and I fear they will kill me."

Ghâli's: And they have a guilty deed against me; so I fear they will kill me.

In the above verse, the auxiliary *may* is used in three translations to express possibility in the future. In the other three translations, *will* is used to express the "FUTURE predictive sense of will" which is mixed with the "volitional sense of intention" (Quirk et al. 1985: 228, 229). This mix implies the sense of possibility conveyed by *may*. Obviously, the use of these two auxiliaries in the same slot in verse No. (14) emphasizes their interchangeable and polysemous nature.

(10) qaala laʔin it-taxađta ʔilaahan gayrii laʔaj9alannaka mina l-masjuuniin (Qur'an 26: 29)

Yusuf Ali's: (Pharaoh) said: "If thou dost put forward any god other than me, I will certainly put thee in prison!"

Pickthall's: (Pharaoh) said: If thou choosest a god other than me, I assuredly shall place thee among the prisoners.

Dawood's: 'If you serve any other god but myself,' replied Pharaoh, 'I shall have you thrown into prison.'

Abdel Haleem's: But Pharaoh said [to him], 'If you take any god other than me, I will throw you into prison.'

Al-Hilâlî & khân's: [Fir'aun (Pharaoh)] said: "If you choose an ilâh (god) other than me, I will certainly put you among the prisoners."

Ghâlf's: He said, "Indeed in case you take to yourself a god other than me, indeed I will definitely make you one of the imprisoned."

Another sense of will used in the translations of the above verse is that of warning which involves future time. Four translators agree on the use of will while Pickthall and Dawood use its "formal alternative" (Quirk et al. 1985: 230) shall with the same shades of meaning.

(11) min duuni Ilaahi hal yanSuruunakum ʔaw yantaSiruun (Qur'an 26: 93)

Yusuf Ali's: 'Besides God? Can they help you or help themselves?'

Pickthall's: Instead of Allah? Can they help you or help themselves?

Dawood's: Can they help you or even help themselves?

Abdel Haleem's: . . . beside God? Can they help you now, or even help themselves?

Al-Hilâlî & Khân's: "Instead of Allâh? Can they help you or (even) help themselves?"

Ghâlf's: Apart from Allâh? Do they vindicate you or vindicate themselves? In the first five translations of verse (93) above, the sense of ability is mixed with that of possibility. However, Ghâlf's translation presents a yes/no question in the simple present to indicate that there is no room for argument or rather for gradability here.

(12) falaw ʔanna lanaa karratan fanakuuna mina lmuʔminiin (Qur'an 26: 102)

Yusuf Ali's: "'Now if we only had a chance of return, we shall truly be of those who believe!'"

Pickthall's: Oh, that we had another turn (on earth), that we might be of the believers!

Dawood's: Could we but live our lives again we would be true believers.

Abdel Haleem's: If only we could live our lives again, we would be true believers!

Al-Hilâlî & Khân's: (Alas!) If we only had a chance to return (to the world), we shall truly be among the believers!

Ghâlf's: So, if we had (a chance) to recur, then we should be among the believers!

The utterance in the above verse is conditional. In the first slot, the condition, a past tense verb is used in four translations while the modal

'could,' followed by the bare infinitive, is used in the other two. This is because the situation is hypothetical or contrary to fact. Accordingly, could here conveys the sense of zero possibility because the situation is unreal and its meaning is "connected with the idea of freedom" (Swan 1983: 127). That is to say, the disbelievers are not free or permitted to return. Grammatically speaking, this type of sentences when "the past subjunctive is used in the 'if' clause and would or should + the infinitive are used in the main clause" (Eckersley & Eckersley 1960: 349) may refer to the present time. This justifies the use of shall in the main clause by Yusuf Ali and Al-Hilâlî & Khân to express "determination" (Eckersley & Eckersley 1960: 163) as well as "the intentional sense" (Quirk et al. 1985: 230) of volition. In Pickthall's translation, might stands for "epistemic possibility" (Quirk et al. 1985: 223). In Dawood's and Abdel Haleem's, would expresses volition. Finally, should in Ghâlî's translation stands for "non committed necessity" (Quirk et al. 1985: 227).

(13) qaaluu ʔanuʔminu laka wa-ttaba9aka lʔarðaluun (Qur'an 26: 111)

Yusuf Ali's: They said: "Shall we believe in thee when it is the meanest that follow thee?"

Pickthall's: They said: Shall we put faith in thee, when the lowest (of the people) follow thee?

Dawood's: They replied: 'Are we to believe in you when your followers are but the lowest of the low?'

Abdel Haleem's: They answered, 'Why should we believe you when the worst sort of people follow you?'

Al-Hilâlî & Khân's: They said: "Shall we believe in you, when the meanest (of the people) follow you?"

Ghâlî's: They said, "should we believe you, and the most decrepit closely follow you?"

In the translations of the above verse, shall stands for obligation and should for necessity. Quirk et al. (1985: 230) state that "in questions containing shall I/we, shall consults the wishes of the addressee, and thus moves from a volitional towards an obligational meaning." In Dawood's translation, no modal is used. Instead, the structure be + infinitive is used "to talk about arrangements which have been planned for the future" (Swan 1983: 97).

(14) ʔataʔtuuna ððukraana mina l9aalamiin (Qur'an 26: 165)

Yusuf Ali's: Of all the creatures in the world, will ye approach males..?

Pickthall's: What: Of all creatures do ye come unto the males. . .?

Dawood's: Will you fornicate with . . .?

Abdel Haleem's: Must you, unlike [other] people, lust after males...?

Al-Hilâlî & Khân's: Go you in unto the males of the 'Alamîn (mankind). .
.?

Ghâlî's: Do you come up to (stout) males of the worlds . . .?

In three of the above translations of verse No (165), will denotes volition (insistence) while must expresses necessity. The other three translations refrain from using modals. They use exclamatory questions instead.

(15) falaa tad9u ma9a llaahi ʔilaahan ʔaaxara fatakuuna mina
Imu9ađđabiin (Qur'an 26: 213)

Yusuf Ali's: So call not on any other god with God, or thou wilt be among those under the penalty.

Pickthall's: Therefor [sic] invoke not with Allah another god, lest thou be one of the doomed.

Dawood's: Call on no other god besides God, lest you incur His punishment.

Abdel Haleem's: So [Prophet] do not invoke any gods beside God, or you will incur torment.

Al-Hilâlî & Khân's: So invoke not with Allâh another ilâh (god) lest you should be among those who receive punishment.

Ghâlî's: So do not invoke another god with Allâh, then you should be of the tormented.

The use of will in Yusuf Ali's and Abdel Haleem's translations stands for warning, while the use of should in Al-Hilâlî & Khân's and Ghâlî's stands for necessity. Both senses are conveyed in Pickthall's and Dawood's translations by means of using a finite form in a clause introduced by lest.

After examining the data in Table (1) above and discussing the use of the central modals in the six translations of the selected examples, eight

semantic categories can be noted. These semantic categories are possibility, volition, prediction, warning, ability, determination, necessity and obligation. While the concepts of possibility, prediction, ability and necessity stand for epistemic modality, the other four concepts stand for deontic modality. The expression of every individual semantic category is fulfilled by using at least two of the nine central modals, which again emphasizes their having multiple meanings. Table (2) illustrates the various shades of meanings revealed in the six translations of the Chapter /ʔaf-fu9araaʔ/ 'the Poets' together with their types and modality and the modals used to convey these meanings.

Table (2): Semantic Categories and Modality Types of Central Modals

Central Modals	Modality Type	Semantic Category
may, can, could, might	Epistemic	Possibility
will, would, shall	Deontic	Volition
will, would, shall	Epistemic	Prediction
shall, will	Deontic	Warning
can, could	Epistemic	Ability
shall, will	Deontic	Determination
should, must	Epistemic	Necessity
shall, should	Deontic	Obligation

In sum, Table (2) classifies the central modal auxiliary verbs according to their modality types and the different senses in which they are used in the six Qur'anic translations of the Qur'anic chapter under analysis. The table also stresses the polysemous nature of these modals, which results in their being classified under both epistemic and deontic modalities, as shown in the four cases of will, would, shall and should.

The frequency of occurrence of every central modal in each of the six translations is shown in Table (3). Moreover, the total number of occurrences of the nine modals in each translation is also shown. The percentage of using these nine modals in each translation is displayed as well.

Table (3): Frequency of Central Modals in the Six Qur'anic Translations

Central Modals Translations	can	could	shall	should	will	would	may	might	must	Total	%
Yusuf Ali's	1	2	11	0	35	4	6	0	0	59	16.39
Pickthall's	2	0	9	0	31	4	5	1	0	52	14.44
Dawood's	10	2	21	0	27	3	5	0	1	69	19.17

Abdel Haleem's	5	4	6	2	40	6	2	0	2	67	18.61
Al-Hilāfi & Khān's	3	2	8	2	34	4	4	0	0	57	15.83
Ghālī's	1	0	1	4	43	5	2	0	0	56	15.56
Total	22	10	56	8	210	26	24	1	3	360	100

The above table shows that Dawood's translation shows the highest frequency of using modals, whereas Pickthall's shows the lowest frequency.

5. Conclusion

The present study centres on the polysemous and interchangeable nature of the nine central modal auxiliary verbs as reflected in six English translations of the Qur'anic chapter /ʔaf-fu9araaʔ/ 'the Poets'. Careful examination of some selected examples reveals eight semantic categories of modal verbs. These semantic categories are possibility, volition, prediction, warning, ability, determination, necessity and obligation. They are further subdivided into two subgroups. One is called epistemic modality which includes possibility, prediction, ability and necessity. The other is called deontic modality which includes volition, warning, determination and obligation. The study proves that each one of these

eight concepts may be expressed by at least two modals because of the multi-meanings of these modals. It also proves that the same modal may be used in the two senses: the epistemic and the deontic.

The study also shows that Dawood made use of the central modals more than all the other translators. To the contrary, Pickthall made less use of these modals than the others, as shown in Table (3). Another striking observation is that the auxiliary will appears, in the six translations, for 210 times out of 360 which is the total number of occurrences of all the nine modals. This is because it is used to express the multi-meanings of prediction, warning, determination and volition, as shown in Table (2). Moreover, the nonuse of the modals on the part of some translators is also referred to and justified in light of whatever structure is employed as a substitute of the modal + bare infinitive structure.

Appendix

Symbols used in the phonemic transcription of Arabic data

A. The Consonants of Standard Arabic:

Place		Bilabial	Labiodental	Interdental	Dento-Alveolar		Dental	Velar	Palatoalveolar	Palatoalveolar	Glottal
Manner	Voicing				Non-	Emphatic					
Stop	Voiceless				t	T		k	q		ʔ
	Voiced	b			d	D					
Fricative	Voiceless		f	θ	s	S	ʃ	x		ħ	h
	Voiced			ð	z	Z		g		ʁ	
Affricate	Voiced						j				
Flap	Voiced				r						
Lateral	Voiced				l						
Nasal	Voiced	m			n						
Glide	Voiced	w					y				

B. The Vowels of Standard Arabic:

	Short			Long		
	Front	Central	Back	Front	Central	Back
High	i		u	ii		uu
Mid						
Low		a			aa	

Note: The two tables are adapted from Gadalla (2000).

References

- Abdel Haleem, M. A. S. (Trans.) (2004). *The Qur'an: English Translation And Parallel Arabic Text*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Al-Hilâlî, M. T. & Khân, M. M. (Trans.) (1417 H.). *Translation of the Meanings of the Noble Qur'an in the English Language*. Madinah: King Fahd Complex.
- Ali, A. Y. (Trans.) (1938). *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary*. 3 rd ed.; Beirut: Dar Al Arabia.
- Cowan, R. (2008). *The Teacher's Grammar of English: A Course Book and Reference Guide*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Crystal, D. (1997). *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*. 4th ed.; Oxford: Blackwell.
- Crystal, D. (1992). *An Encyclopedic Dictionary of Language and Languages*. Oxford: Blackwell.

- Dawood, N. J. (Trans.) (1959). *The Koran*. London: Penguin Books.
- Eckersley, C. E. & Eckersley, J. M. (1960). *A Comprehensive English Grammar*. Essex: Longman.
- Gadalla, H. (2000). *Comparative Morphology of Standard and Egyptian Arabic*. Muenchen, Germany: Lincom Europa.
- Ghâlî, M. M. (Trans.) (2008). *Towards Understanding The Ever-Glorious Qur'ân*. 5th ed.; Cairo: Dar An-Nashr Liljâmi9ât.
- Halliday, M. (1994). *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. 2nd ed.; London: Edward Arnold.
- Kolln, M. (1990). *Understanding English Grammar*. 3rd ed.; New York: Macmillan.
- Leech, G. & Svartvik, J. (1979). *A Communicative Grammar of English*. Essex: Longman.
- Lyons, J. (1977). *Semantics*. 2 Vols; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Vol. II.
- Nida, E. (2012). *Principles of Correspondence*. In *The Translation Studies Reader*. (Ed.) Lawrence Venuti. 3rd ed.; London: Routledge.
- Pickthall, M. M. (Trans.) (1930). *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran*. New York: New American Library.
- Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G. & Svartvik, J. (1985). *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. London: Longman.

Shopen, T. (Ed.) (1985). *Language Typology and Syntactic Description: Grammatical Categories and the Lexicon*. Vol. III; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stageberg, N. & Oaks, D. (2000). *An Introductory English Grammar*. 5 th ed.; Wadsworth: Cengage Learning.

Swan, M. (1983). *Practical English Usage*. Oxford: The English Language Book Society.

الملخص العربي

القيدية في ست ترجمات إنجليزية لسورة الشعراء

تبحث الدراسة الحالية في استخدام الأفعال المساعدة الرئيسية في ست ترجمات قرآنية وهي: يوسف علي وبيكتول وداوود وعبد الحلِيم والهاللي وخان وغالي لسورة الشعراء. وتوضح الدراسة وجود اختلاف واضح في معدل تكرار الأفعال المساعدة في الترجمات الست، كما توضح أن ترجمة داوود كانت الأكثر استخداماً من غيرها للأفعال المساعدة الرئيسية، في حين كانت ترجمة بيكتول الأقل استخداماً لهذه الأفعال. وإلي جانب الإشارة إلي معدل استخدام الأفعال المساعدة الرئيسية، أوضحت الدراسة أن الأفعال المساعدة في الإنجليزية متعددة المعاني، حيث تظهر في الآيات المختلفة بمعانٍ مختلفة وأشارت أيضاً إلي اختلاف الأفعال المساعدة التي يستخدمها المترجمون الستة في نفس الموضوع.