

Cohesion in two English Translations of Surat An-Naml in the Holy Quran

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Abstract

The present paper aims to investigate how cohesion is handled in two English translations of Surat an-Naml in the Holy Quran. It seeks to examine how it is processed in the religious translated texts. It is concerned with observing the degree of explicitness of cohesive markers taking place in the target texts in comparison with the source text to validate Blum-Kulka's explicitness concept in the process of translating religious texts. Explicitness is hypothesized to be used as universal in translation; that is, translators have to use explicit cohesive links in target texts more than those used in source texts. After investigating whether cohesive ties are explicit, the researcher will identify the effect of such in/explicitness on translation. To this end, the researcher will compare two different translations: Saheeh International's (2001) Translation and Khattab's (2018) 'The Clear Quran'. The models used in this paper are Halliday and Hasan's (1976) "Cohesion in English" model and Blum-Kulka's (2004) concept of explicitness with the consultation of various Qur'anic exegeses and Arabic references.

Key Words: Cohesion - English Translation- the Holy Quran

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Introduction

The Holy Qur'an has been translated into different languages several times by numerous translators throughout the world. Each translator differentiates in the way of organizing the message of each clause of the Holy Quran, the source language (SL), according to the structural patterns of his language, the target language (TL). The Arabic language of the Holy Qur'an (SL) has its own different structure and order from the English language – the target language of this paper (TL). Each language has its own unity and organization. One of the aspects that make such unity in any language is cohesive devices. Cohesion is a linguistic means which creates a unified and meaningful text by connecting sentences and paragraphs through some grammatical and lexical patterns; namely, reference, conjunction, ellipsis, substitution, reiteration and collocation (Halliday & Hassan, 1976). The Holy Quran with its Arabic language is rich in using cohesive ties which link the verses (Ayats) with one another. Translating such ties into their equivalents in English is of great necessity to successfully convey the message of the Holy Book.

Throughout the translation process of cohesive links; according to Blum-Kulka (2004), the translator may tend to 'explicitness' of such links in the sense that the translator uses cohesive patterns more explicit than those used in the language he/she is translating from since explicitness is an inherent need in any translation. This paper is an attempt to investigate this hypothesis in the translations of religious texts; more specifically, Surat an-Naml in the Holy Qur'an. Moreover, this paper examines how the use of in/explicit cohesive devices

contributes to the understanding of the intended meaning of the Holy text. Thus, this paper attempts to answer the following questions: 1) Which cohesive device has the highest frequency in the religious text as well as its translations? 2) Do cohesive devices differ in frequency in the source text compared to those in the target texts? And 3) To what extent explicitation is a norm in the translations of the religious texts? And how do shifts in explicitness affect the intended meaning of the Ayats?

Theoretical framework

This paper adopts Halliday and Hassan's (1976) cohesion in English and Blum-Kulka's (2004) concept of explicitness and the Arabic related references and Qur'anic exegeses which will be applied to the analysis of two translations of Surat An-Naml in the Holy Quran.

Quran Translation

The Quran is revealed to Muhammad (PBUH) by the almighty Allah, and it has been agreed that translations may change its miraculous and unique nature. That is because the Arabic form of the Quran is as crucial as the meaning conveyed through the words, and it is a challenged task to translate the Arabic form of the Holy text without inevitable changes resulting from the big differences between Arabic and any other language; i.e. English language is considered in this study. Translators have long attempted to translate the Qur'an but they could not thoroughly convey its deeper message. A large amount of literature has been conducted on the translations of the Quran; and

this suggests the centrality of analyzing these translations upon which a big community depends to understand the source Qur'anic text.

Cohesion

Cohesion is a relation between an item in the sentence within a text and another. It is a process which refers to an element pointing to and indicated by another. This cohesive relation helps in interpreting the text semantically. It constitutes effective communication since it shows how statements link to each other (Abdul Raof, 2019, p. 275). Thus, cohesion is a tool employed "to analyze the text beyond the sentence level and to characterize text structure" (Ibid). Moreover, cohesive ties are located within a text according to its grammatical structure. Since the sentence is "the highest unit of grammatical structure", there are some rules which determine the way of organizing such cohesive items (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 8). The rules of *pronominalization* are that which determines whether the entity will be mentioned again in some place of the text or "will be referred to by a pronoun" (Ibid). However, *reference* is the only instance of cohesion that could be governed by such rules. As far as general cohesion is concerned, *conjunction* is another cohesive device which has certain forms to express several conjunctive relations between sentences. Furthermore, there are other instances of cohesion which are not affected by sentence structure like *ellipsis* and *substitution* and so is lexical cohesion which is expressed through *reiteration* and *collocation* (Ibid, p. 9). Each cohesive device offers a specific "logical sense and sequence to the sentence" (Abdul Raof, 2019, p. 276).

Cohesion in the Holy Quran

Cohesion plays a significant role in making any text components related together, and so is the case for cohesion in the Qur'anic text. Cohesion makes the components of the Qur'anic text (words, phrases, clauses) “associated semantically, grammatically, or both, and the sentences are linked together” (Abdul Raof, 2019, p.277). However, some components of cohesion differ from language to another according to each language linguistic and stylistic norms. An example of different linguistic norms is that Arabic has nominal sentence which involves a subject without a verb like الملعب كبير; while in English, this sentence can be (The playground is big) which has a verb. Another difference referred to by Abdul Raof (2019) is that through the verb (do) English achieves verbal substitution while Arabic does not. Abdul Raof claims that Arabic cannot achieve verbal substitution since it has only two types: nominal and clausal (Ibid, p. 280). This claim is, however, considered doubtful since it is inconsistent with the results of the present paper.

Cohesion in Translation

Any translator tries to convey a message in the target language using words and then organizing these “words in ways characteristic of that language” (Callow, 1974, p. 10). Cohesion is signaled differently in both source and target languages. While some languages use references, others prefer using constant repetition. Cohesion is crucial to be achieved in the target text. Thus, the translator must show “what participant performs each action, and what order the various actions occur” (Ibid, p. 30). A good translator should know the target

language's own pattern to convey the interrelationships of these participants and events. Callow (1974) maintains that the participant is not necessary to be overtly involved in the sentence; however, one can perfectly identify who is referred to. If the words are properly related, the reader will sufficiently distinguish the relationship among different participants and events.

Each language has its own devices to establish cohesive ties. Thus, language and text type preferences must be taken into consideration in the process of translation (Baker, 1992, p. 190). In long and complex sentences, for example, it is difficult to trace participants. In such cases, a variety of devices is used to establish cohesive links. English and Arabic differentiate in using cohesive devices. It is easier in Arabic to trace participants even when the verbs and their subjects are separated by embedded clauses. This is because all verbs in Arabic agree with their subjects in gender and number, which makes the links between them clear and not confused. Therefore, the Arabic grammatical structure prefers "pronominal reference as a common device for tracing participants and establishing cohesive links in general" (Ibid). It's noteworthy that independent pronouns in Arabic language are not always used to trace participants but they are "mainly used to signal emphasis or contrast" (Ibid, pp. 215-6). Unlike Arabic, tracing participants in English language is achieved through lexical repetition. Distinctions in terms of gender, number and subject-verb agreement are few in English. Thus, English sometimes resorts to use lexical repetition to avoid ambiguity of reference in the process of translation.

Since translation is a kind of communication between the reader and writer; in the process of translation, thoughts and ideas are transferred from the source text into the target text. Through such process, any interpreter aims at achieving equivalence, accuracy and functionality that all reflect the meaning implied in the source text. Accordingly, it is important for the translator to preserve cohesion to produce an effective target text. Hence, it is vital for the translator to have knowledge of the source language system in order to retain its purpose (Ibid).

Blum-Kulka (2004) maintains that through the process of translation some shifts may occur on the level of cohesion. According to the source and target language different grammatical systems; some changes in the types of links can be expressed when translating from the source to the target texts. As each cohesive tie has its own function in the text, choosing certain types of cohesive links affects the texture, the style and the meaning of the text. Thus, shifts in the choice of these links may alter their functions in the process of translation.

Shifts in the cohesive markers Blum-Kulka (2004, p. 299) states can affect translation processes in the following directions: a. Shifts in levels of explicitness; i.e. the general level of the target texts' textual explicitness is higher or lower than that of the source text, b. Shifts in text meaning(s); i.e. the explicit and implicit meaning potential of the source text changes through translations. Using a higher number of references than is used in the source text may lead to a higher level of redundancy in the target text. The result is shifts in the level of explicitness. Blum-Kulka (2004) argues that stylistic preferences in

each language for types of cohesive links are claimed to be the main cause of such kind of shifts. She also explains what is titled “explicitation hypothesis” as an inherent use of explicit cohesive markers in the target texts more than in the source texts; that is, the number of cohesive links increases in the process of translation. She agrees that there is a need for more empirical studies that can dis/prove either or both the “stylistic preference” and the “explicitation” hypothesis.

Examining how the use of cohesive ties in the process of translation affects the target text’s level of explicitness as compared to the source text is this paper’s main purpose. Level of explicitness is hypothesized to occur due to the stylistic differences of the two languages. Comparing between the source text and the target text through the process of translation may to a large extent reveal which of the two languages is probably more explicit cohesively than the other.

Cohesion in Surat an-Naml Selected Translations

The paper makes use of both Halliday and Hassan’s (1976) model of cohesion in English for classifying cohesive devices used in source and target texts and Blum-Kulka’s concept of explicitness to examine the extent to which the target texts use explicit links more than those used in the source text. Thus, the researcher goes through Surat an-Naml (ST) verse by verse, investigating the different categories of cohesion listing their frequency in the two translations under study, comparing them to those presented in the source text. This frequency or distribution helps to examine the similarities and differences in the texts under investigation and to scrutinize the validity of Blum-Kulka’s

explicitness phenomenon. The first translation is that of Saheeh International referred to as TT1 while the second translation is Dr. Khattab's pointed to as TT2.

I. Reference

Comparing to the other three grammatical devices (conjunctions, ellipsis and substitution), Reference has the highest frequency occurrences in ST as well as TTs. The incidences of references in the Arabic text are more than those in their English translation texts. Following personal pronouns, demonstrative and comparative references come next with lower frequency.

I.1 Personal References

While ST uses two personal pronouns "هم/they" in the second part of the 3rd Ayah "وهم بالآخرة هم يوقنون", TT1 uses only one and TT2 does not use any of personal pronouns at all. The repetition of the personal pronoun (هم) is a means of confirmation (Ibn Attia, 546H) and it also mirrors the meaning of *exception* that none believes except *those* who firmly believe in the Hereafter. The function of repeating is not attained in TTs. It is remarkable that the translators' use of the adjectives like "sure" in TT1 and "certain" in TT2 is to modify the Arabic verb "يوقنون" which differs from "يؤمنون/believing". The verb "يوقن" means to believe *firmly*, thus needs a modifier to reflect its powerful meaning. Conversely, in the second part of the 5th Ayah "وَهُمْ فِي الآخِرَةِ هُمْ" "الأخسرُونَ", TT2 uses a personal pronoun "they" in addition to the adverb "truly" in an attempt to satisfy the function of pronoun repetition, i.e. confirmation.

ST (V: 3): الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ بِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ

TT1: Who establish prayer and give zakah, and of the Hereafter *they* are certain [in faith].

TT2: ‘those’ who establish prayer, pay alms tax, and have sure faith in the Hereafter.

The implicit first person singular pronoun (أنا / I) after the verb (سأتي / will bring) is explicited in both TT1 and TT2 in (v: 7) and the implicit third person singular pronoun (هو / He) after the verb (جاء / came) comes explicit in (v: 8). These pronouns are obligatory explicited out of differences between the two languages: Arabic frequently uses implicit pronouns while English uses them in few cases (like in imperative clauses). On the contrary, other optional explicited pronouns are like those occur in (v: 11) in TT2 since the translator optionally starts a new sentence with a new subject pronoun violating the sentence structure used in ST. It is notably that TT1 translates this Ayah using a similar structure to the ST considering the whole Ayah as a single unit while TT2 divides the Ayah into two parts adding two personal pronouns (they – their) in the second part of the Ayah, thus increasing the number of personal references.

ST (V: 7): ...إِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِأَهْلِهِ إِنِّي آنَسْتُ نَارًا سَآتِيكُمْ مِنْهَا بِخَبَرٍ

TT1: ... I will bring you from there information...

TT2: ... I will either bring you some directions from there...

ST (V: 8): ...فَلَمَّا جَاءَهَا...

TT1: But when he came to it...

TT2: But when he came to it...

ST (V: 11): ...إِلَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ ثُمَّ بَدَّلَ حُسْنًا بَعْدَ سُوءٍ

TT1: Otherwise, he who wrongs, then substitutes good after evil...

TT2: 'Fear is' only for those who do wrong. But if they later mend 'their' evil 'ways' with good...

Unlike English, Arabic language may have more than nominal subject in one clause. This leads, when translating from Arabic into English, to inevitable loss especially in religious texts; and this loss can be tolerated or possibly, in some cases, be dealt with in footnotes (Nida, 1964, p. 184). Out of differences between the two languages, both TT1 and TT2, in (v: 16), translate only one nominal subject (the demonstrative not the personal pronoun). Both TTs translate the last part of (v: 16) dropping the personal pronoun (هو) used in ST. Thus, they miss its desired function. The detached pronoun (هو) with the confirming and swearing letter (ـ) is used to glorify the following word which is the privilege given to the prophets (PBUT) (Ibn Ashur, 1393H).

ST (v: 16): "إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْمُبِينُ ..."

TT1: "...Indeed, this is evident bounty."

TT2: "...This is indeed a great privilege."

Another but optional dropping occurs in TT2 when translating (v: 18): the translation reduces a full clause into an adverb. One of the famous Arabic norms says that increasing in structure leads to increasing in meaning (الزيادة في المبنى زيادة في المعنى) (Ibn Ashur, 1393H; Ibn Kathir, (1998); Al-Alusi (1270H)). Agreeing with this norm, the full sentence "وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ" has more significant and powerful meaning than the phrase "بدون شعور". Moreover, Ibn Ashur (1393H) states that the warner when warning others of something bad or wrong comes with

various sentences and clauses out of fear and carefulness to prevent such bad thing. In this Ayah, the ant is trying to warn its companions of Solomon (PBUH) and his soldiers so it calls them to enter their homes in order not to be crushed using a number of sentences: imperative (ادخلوا/ enter), negative imperative (لا يحطمنكم/ Do not be there in order not to be crushed) (Salih, 1418H) and negative (لا يشعرون/ while they perceive not). Therefore, translating the last part of the Ayah into a parallel structure is more sensible. For that reason, the reduction of this clause into the adverb “unknowingly” in TT2 does not reflect the intended purpose. However, it is not totally guaranteed that this parallel structure has the same effect on the target readers as their language may have different norms for interpretation. Thus, the researcher sees that it is also essential to explain these Arabic rules for the target readers in the introduction of the same translated book or Surah. That would make the process of translation more accurate and effective.

ST (v: 18): " ...وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ..."

TT1: "...while they perceive not."

TT2: "..., unknowingly."

It is not surprising given the fact that there is no one fixed and definitive translation for any ST: it can be interpreted differently in various TTs with decent justification and reasoning. In (v: 26), for example, TT1 prefers to imitate the ST style starting with the nominal subject (الله/ God) and then follow it with its definition. The glorified utterance (الله/ God) put in the introductory part of the Ayah adequately attracts the readers' attention to it and increases their desire to read and recognize what follows it. Otherwise, TT2 adds the subject personal

pronoun *He* and its verb *is* agreeing with what Salih (1418H) says that there is an ellipped item at the beginning of the Ayah (هو/ He).

ST (v: 26): "... الله لا إله إلا هو"

TT1: "God - there is no deity except Him..."

TT2: "He is God! There is no god 'worthy of worship' except Him..."

Six personal references are rendered into ten in TT1 and into eight in TT2. Explicitness occurs in both TTs when translating the verse (36). Two implicit personal references are turned into explicit: the subjects of the two verbs (قال - جاء) are implicit in ST and mandatorily explicated because of the differences between the two languages. However, in TT1 they are translated into two personal pronouns (*they* and *he*) while in TT2 they are rendered into two nouns (*the chief-envoy* and *Solomon*). This is among the examples which explain why TT1 increases in the number of personal pronouns over TT2. Another case of explicitness in the mentioned Ayah arises from translating the implicit attached personal pronoun (هي) in the Arabic clause (أتمدونني) into an explicit one in both TTs (Do you provide/ offer *me*). Again in the last part of the Ayah, there is another instance of TT1 which shows its preference of using pronouns more than TT2. The pronoun (كم) in the phrase (بهديتكم) is rendered into an alternative in TT1 while it is totally dropped in TT2. Two functions are lost when dropping this essential pronoun: confirmation and specification. Solomon (PBUH) means to use this word attached with this pronoun to confirm the meaning of *their* joy with this gift and specify this special gift and no other gifts would please them. Although this gift is so great as it is prepared for kings like Solomon, it does not please him (PBUH)

and otherwise he refuses to take it telling them that *they* not *he* would be pleased with *their* gift. Moreover, adding this pronoun to the noun may refer to their *pride* to be able to give such a great gift to the kings (Az-Zamakhshari, 538H).

ST (v: 36): فَلَمَّا جَاءَ سُلَيْمَانَ قَالَ أَتُمِدُّونَ بِمَالٍ فَمَا آتَانِيَ اللَّهُ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا آتَاكُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ بِهَدْيِكُمْ تَفْرَحُونَ

TT1: So when *they* came to Solomon, *he* said, “Do you provide *me* with wealth? But what God has given *me* is better than what *He* has given you. Rather, *it* is you who rejoice in your gift.

TT2: When the chief-envoy came to *him*, Solomon said, “Do you offer *me* wealth? What God has granted *me* is far greater than what *He* has granted you. No! *It* is you who rejoice in ‘receiving’ gifts.

I.2 Demonstrative References

It is noted that both translations translated "تلك", a singular demonstrative pronoun (for far person or thing), into “these”, a plural demonstrative pronoun (for close person or thing). This shift from singularity to plurality is obligatory due to the differences between the two languages. Although "تلك" is singular, it can refer to singular or plural nouns like what occurred in the 1st ayah of Surat an-Naml in which "آيات" is a plural noun followed the singular demonstrative "تلك". In contrast, the singular demonstrative “this” or “that” in English cannot be followed by a plural. Thus, the appropriate translation for "تلك" is “those” which can be used to refer cataphorically to the word “verses”. The two translations under study preferred “these” rather than “those” to interpret the pronoun "تلك" agreeing with what at-Tabari (310H) mentions in his interpretation of this Ayah referring to the Ayats sent to the prophet (PBUH) using “هذه/this” rather than “تلك/that”.

TT2 differs from both ST and TT1 in adding an extra demonstrative reference in the 1st Ayah: it specifies the noun “book” with the definite article “the”. While the Qur’anic ST mentions “كتاب/book” without the Arabic definite article "ال", TT2 identifies it. Similarly, TT2 specifies the noun “one” referring to the Lord of the Worlds in the 5th Ayah while TT1 does not. Furthermore, TT2 starts the 3rd Ayah with an identification explaining the previous words after a colon putting a subject “those” for the verb “establish”. TT1 lacks such additions just like the ST.

The increasing number of demonstratives in TTs over their alternatives in ST is due to splitting the Ayats which do not have demonstratives and translating them into separate parts using new clauses with more demonstratives. TT2 translates the first part of the Ayah *إِلَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ ثُمَّ بَدَّلَ حَسَنًا بَعْدَ سُوءٍ* into two clauses: “‘Fear is’ only for *those* who do wrong. But if they later mend ‘their’ evil ‘ways’ with good ...’. Similarly, TT1 renders the clause *وَأَدْخِلْ يَدَكَ فِي جَيْبِكَ تَخْرُجَ بَيْضَاءَ مِنْ غَيْرِ سُوءٍ فِي تِسْعِ آيَاتٍ إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ وَقَوْمِهِ* into two separate clauses: And put your hand into the opening of your garment [at *the* breast]; it will come out white without disease. [*These* are] among *the* nine signs [you will take] to Pharaoh and his people. Therefore, these new clauses create new demonstrative pronouns besides the personal ones.

Violating ST indefiniteness in (v: 12), TT1 uses the definite article (the) before the number (nine) to describe the nine signs sent to Pharaoh by Allah Almighty. ST mentions the numeral (تسع /nine) without the Arabic definite article (ال/ the) since it is the first speech between Allah Almighty and His prophet and thus the first mentioning

of these nine signs. Since one usually uses the definite article in the second mentioning, specifying the numeral/noun in translation using the definite article may be not significant. On the other hand, TT2 mentions the numeral before the noun without a definite article observing ST indefiniteness.

ST (V: 12): "... فِي تِسْعِ آيَاتٍ إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ وَقَوْمِهِ ... "

TT1: ...[These are] among *the nine* signs [you will take] to Pharaoh and his people...

TT2: ...‘These are two’ of *nine* signs for Pharaoh and his people...

The noun (الآيات/ the signs) is mentioned twice in ST in (V: 13 – 14). ST mentions it with the attached first person pl. pronoun (نا/ Our) in (v: 13) which is similarly translated into (Our signs) in both TT1 and TT2. Conversely, while ST refers to these signs in (v: 14) using the third person singular pronoun (ها/ it), TT2 translates this pronoun into the noun (the signs) turning it from implicit information into explicit. Such explicitness does not take place in TT1 which accordingly preserves the ST style.

ST (V: 13 -14): فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْهُمْ آيَاتُنَا مُبْصِرَةً قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ * وَجَحَدُوا بِهَا وَاسْتَيْقَنَتْهَا أَنفُسُهُمْ ظُلْمًا وَعُلُوًّا...

TT1: But when there came to them *Our* visible signs, they said, “This is obvious magic.”* And they rejected *them*, while their [inner] selves were convinced thereof, out of injustice and haughtiness...

TT2: But when *Our* enlightening signs came to them, they said, “This is pure magic.”* And, although their hearts were convinced *the signs* were true, they still denied them wrongfully and arrogantly.

It is also remarkable that Verse (39) does not use any of the demonstratives in ST whereas TT1 uses one and TT2 uses two. The word (مقامك) within the phrase (قبل أن تقوم من مقامك) is translated without a demonstrative in TT1 (your place) but interpreted with *this* in TT2 (*this* council of yours). Moreover, the attached personal pronoun (هـ) in (وإني) (عليه لقوي أمين) is turned into a demonstrative plus a noun *this task* in both TTs.

ST (V: 39): قَالَ عَفْرَيْتُ مِنَ الْجِنِّ أَنَا أَتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَقُومَ مِنْ مَقَامِكَ وَإِنِّي عَلَيْهِ لَقَوِيٌّ أَمِينٌ

TT1: A powerful one from among the jinn said, “I will bring it to you before you rise from your place, and indeed, I am for *this* [task] strong and trustworthy.”

TT2: One mighty jinn responded, “I can bring it to you before you rise from this council of yours. And I am quite strong and trustworthy for *this* ‘task’.”

In verse (32), TT2 shows a demonstrative where it is not used in ST. TT2 renders the noun (أمرًا) into a demonstrative besides a noun (*this* matter) increasing the number of demonstratives. However, TT1 translates it into a personal pronoun plus a noun (*my* matter).

ST (V: 32): قَالَتْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ أَفْتُونِي فِي أَمْرِي مَا كُنْتُ قَاطِعَةً أَمْرًا حَتَّى تَشْهَدُونِ

TT1: She said, “O eminent ones, advise me in my affair. I would not decide a matter until you witness [for] me.”

TT2: She said, “O chiefs! Advise me in *this* matter of mine, for I would never make any decision without you.”

On the other hand, verse (57) reveals a demonstrative in TT1, which is not shown in TT2. TT1 interprets (من الغابرين) as (of *those* who remained behind) using a demonstrative *those* rather than the grammatical definite article (*the*). Yet, TT2 translates it into (one of the

doomed) where the article (the) is not a demonstrative since it is used to mean generalization and not specification (Halliday and Hassan, 1967).

ST (V: 57): فَأَنْجَيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ إِلَّا امْرَأَتَهُ فَفَرَّهَا مِنَ الْغَابِرِينَ

TT1: So We saved him and his family, except for his wife; We destined her to be of those who remained behind.

TT2: So We delivered him and his family, except his wife. We had destined her to be one of the doomed.

I.3 Comparative References

There is an inevitable need for the use of comparative references in the Ayats comparing the differences between the qualities of the believers and disbelievers. The noun “سوء” in the ST means “أسوء/ the worst” (As-Sa’di, 1376H), thus translated into a superlative in TT1 to mean that there is no punishment worse than this. However, TT2 translates it into a regular adjective “dreadful”. Although TT2 uses the same structure used in ST, it does not reflect the comparative meaning intended by it. The superlative adjective “الأخسرون” is translated into a similar one in both TT1 and TT2: the greatest losers.

Only one comparative reference item is used in ST in the verse (15) and translated into its alternative in TTs. The prophets Solomon and David (PBUT) express their gratitude to the Lord of the World that He blessed and favored them with knowledge over His servants. The prophets show their own superiority to other servants using the adjective (كثير/ many). It is worth mentioning that they show their thanksgiving of being favored over faithful people and not over corrupted people since being favored over corrupted people is not such an honor.

وَقَالَ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي فَضَّلَنَا عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ: (ST (v: 15)

TT1: "Praise [is due] to God, who has favored us over *many* of His believing servants."

TT2: "All praise is for God Who has privileged us over *many* of His faithful servants."

In (v: 36), the noun (خير) which is often used for comparison is replaced by a comparative adjective (better) in TT1 and (greater) in TT2.

ST (V: 36): "...فَمَا أَنَايَ اللَّهُ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا أَنَاكُمْ ..."

TT1: "... But what God has given me is *better* than what He has given you..."

TT2: "...What God has granted me is far *greater* than what He has granted you..."

In contrast, TT2 uses in (v: 30) a comparative reference where ST and TT1 do not. In Arabic language, the attributive noun (الرحيم) - for example - is called (صيغة مبالغة) which is used for exaggeration, thus should be taken for granted in the process of translation. One translated word/ adjective is not sufficient to describe such exaggeration meant by these holy and precise words. Therefore, the two Arabic attributive nouns (الرحيم - الرحمن) are rendered into two base adjectives preceded by two modifiers (adverbs) in TT1, and interpreted into two superlative adjectives in TT2 as shown below:

ST (V: 30): إِنَّهُ مِنْ سُلَيْمَانَ وَإِنَّهُ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

TT1: Indeed, it is from Solomon, and indeed, it is [i.e., reads]: 'In the name of God, *the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful,*

TT2: It is from Solomon, and it reads: 'In the Name of God—*the Most Compassionate, Most Merciful.*

II. Conjunctions

Examples of incidences of conjunctions are explained as follows:

The additive conjunction “and” is used only in TT1 in the 6th Ayah “من لدن حكيم and عليم”/ from one Wise and Knowing”. TT2 uses less additive conjunctions. The translator prefers to stick to the common English grammatical structure; for example, he ignores the following underlined additives from his translation: “يُؤْمِنُونَ الصَّلَاةَ - آيَاتُ الْقُرْآنِ وَكِتَابٍ” “وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ”.

In (v: 8), ST uses an additive conjunction (و/ and) before the last part of the Ayah (وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ). TT1 sustains it (*And* exalted is God) whereas TT2 drops it (*Glory be to God). Likewise, the translators render the words (ولم يعقب) in (v: 10) differently: TT1 interprets it using an additive (*and* did not return) while TT2 uses a preposition rather than a conjunction (*without* looking back).

Following the structure of ST in (v: 11), TT1 uses almost the same conjunctions with the same function used in ST. The conjunctions (إلا – بعد – ثم) are literally translated into (otherwise – then – after) respectively. Alternatively, TT2 excludes the conjunction (إلا/ otherwise) using an adverb (only) and replaces (ثم/ then) by an adversative conjunction (But). It is worthy noted that in this Ayah TT2 preserves the conditional conjunctive element (ف) *which comes as an answer for the condition functioned through the relative pronoun (مَنْ who)* (Salih, 1418H) translating it into the additive (then). That is, Arabic conditional conjunctive elements are additives (Abdul Raof, 2019, p. 38).

ST (v: 11) إِلَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ ثُمَّ بَدَّلَ حُسْنًا بَعْدَ سُوءٍ فَإِنِّي غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

TT1: Otherwise, he who wrongs, then substitutes good after evil - indeed, I am Forgiving and Merciful.

TT2: 'Fear is' only for those who do wrong. But if they later mend 'their' evil 'ways' with good, then I am certainly All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

ST in (v: 14) uses one type of conjunctions while there is a variety of conjunctions in TTs. The four additives used in ST are reduced into three in TT1: an additive, an adversative and a causal. On the other hand, TT2 uses three additives and one adversative. The first additive (وَ/ and) in وَجَحَدُوا with the function of joining the elements of the sentence together is translated into (and) in both TTs. The second additive (وَ/ and) in وَاسْتَيْقَنَتْهَا which describes the manner of the disbelievers (Salih, 1418H) is rendered into adversatives in TTs; i.e. into *while* by TT1 and *although* by TT2. These adversatives effectively designate the contrast between their outer denial and their inner confession. The third additive in وَعَلُوا resembles the first in function and is thus translated into *and* in TTs. The conjunction (فَ/ then) in فَانظُرْ is استئنافية (Ibid) used to start a new sentence with no relation with the previous one in terms of cause and order. The function of this conjunction in this Ayah is to add information and to confirm the meaning of injustice and arrogance by realizing the end of the corruption. Thus, translating it into an additive *then* as in TT2 is better than a causal *so* as in TT1 which violates its intended function.

ST (v: 14): وَجَحَدُوا بِهَا وَاسْتَيْقَنَتْهَا أَنفُسُهُمْ ظُلْمًا وَعُلُوًّا فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

TT1: And they rejected them, while their [inner] selves were convinced thereof, out of injustice and haughtiness. So see how was the end of the corrupters.

TT2: And, although their hearts were convinced the signs were true, they still denied them wrongfully and arrogantly. See then what was the end of the corruptors!

The sentence with the beginning conjunctive letter ف (فاء التفریع) in the last part of (v: 17) is structured to confirm the meaning of the previous words besides the new meaning given (Ibn Ashur, 1393H). The use of the conjunctive letter alongside the personal pronoun (فهم) has a function of repeating and asserting the meaning of gathering the jinn, humans and men for Solomon (PBUH) and adding that all these creatures are organized in rows. This relationship between the two parts of Ayah is not provided by TT2 which only describes the verb *organized* by using the modifier/ adverb before it.

ST (v:17): وَخَشِرَ لِسُلَيْمَانَ جُنُودَهُ مِنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنْسِ وَالطَّيْرِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ

TT1: And gathered for Solomon were his soldiers of the jinn and men and birds, and they were [marching] in rows

TT2: Solomon's forces of jinn, humans, and birds were rallied for him, perfectly organized

Three additive conjunctions in ST in (v: 33) are rendered into three types of conjunctions in TTs. The first is interpreted the same, the second turned to an adversative and the final to a causal. The conjunction (و) within the clause (والأمر إليك) is translated differently: instead of using an additive (and) like ST, both TTs use an adversative (but). ST uses the conjunction (و) which is حرف استئنافي (Salih (1418H)) –its function is explained earlier in (v: 14). In this Ayah, it is used by the queen's chiefs to let her choose either accepting or refusing Solomon's letter without suggesting a specific opinion. They let her order them what she wants reminding her of their military might.

However, both TTs use *but* (offering an opposing idea to the previous speech) which may refer that the chiefs' opinion is to confront Solomon as they have enough strength to hold on, but they finally leave the decision of the matter to the queen. TTs' use of this conjunction is not away from the right meaning as actually a number of interpretations see that they suggest to confront Solomon by displaying their strength to the queen. As-Sa'di (1376H) and Ibn Ashur (1393H) argue that the queen's opinion has been better and wiser than her chiefs' that she has known well what the consequences of their opinion would be. On the other hand, Salih (1418H) argues that the conjunction (ف) before the verb (انظر) can be سببي or استئنافي; that is, the causal conjunction *so* used in both TTs has a worthy justification.

قَالُوا نَحْنُ أَوْلُوا قُوَّةً وَأَوْلُوا بِأَسْ شَدِيدٍ وَالْأَمْرُ إِلَيْكَ فَانظُرِي مَاذَا تَأْمُرِينَ: (ST (V: 33)

TT1: They said, “We are men of strength and of great military might, but the command is yours, so see what you will command.”

TT2: They responded, “We are a people of strength and great ‘military’ might, but the decision is yours, so decide what you will command.

III. Ellipsis

Ellipsis is noticed to be used lower than References and Conjunctions in source and target texts. Examples of their occurrences are as follows:

ST starts the 2nd Ayah with a predicate “هدى/guidance” dropping its subject “هي/ It” (Salih, 1418H; Abu Hayan, 547H). TT1 translates this Ayah starting with the noun “guidance” just like the ST while TT2 starts a new sentence with a new subject/personal pronoun “It”. Similarly in the 3rd Ayah, TT1 likens ST in starting the Ayah with the

relative pronoun “who”, and thus treats the first three Ayats as a whole entity not as independent clauses. Alternatively, TT2 starts a new clause after a colon inserting a demonstrative pronoun “those”. In short, ST uses two ellipsis cohesive devices and TT1 maintains this ellipsis process in translation while TT2 uses some additions.

The adverb of time (إذ) in (v: 7) is used to mean *remember the time of Moses when he talked to his family* (Ibn Ashur, 1393H). ST drops the verb (الذكر/ remember) before mentioning the story of Moses (PBUH) (Salih (1418H)). This process of Ellipsis is not sustained in TTs but explicated using the verb *Mention* in TT1 and *Remember* in TT2. Another ellipsis occurs in ST is that of the verb *أسبح* before the cognate adverb *سبحان* in (v: 8) (Ibid). Both TT1 and TT2 sustain this ellipsis process without adding the elliptic verb.

Preserving the ST structure, TT1 sustains the ellipsis occurred in (v:11) starting with a conjunction (لا/ otherwise). Ibn Ashur (1393H) maintains that there is speech meant to be ellipited in the beginning of this Ayah in order to accelerate the good news told to the prophet Moses (PBUH) and not to start with *fear* which was the topic of the previous Ayah. Allah Almighty reminds Moses of his repentance and confirms His forgiveness by talking about only two things: Moses’ substitution of wrongness by goodness and Allah’s mercy and forgiveness. Along the same line, TT1 starts the translation with the exception meant by the conjunction (لا/ otherwise). TT2, on the other hand, does not sustain the ellipsis process starting with the noun *Fear*.

ST (v: 11): *إِلَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ ثُمَّ بَدَّلَ حُسْنًا بَعْدَ سُوءٍ فَإِنِّي غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ*

TT1: Otherwise, he who wrongs, then substitutes good after evil - indeed, I am Forgiving and Merciful.

TT2: ‘Fear is’ only for those who do wrong. But if they later mend ‘their’ evil ‘ways’ with good, then I am certainly All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

There is speech dropped from verse (42): a number of exegeses argue that the word (العلم/ knowledge) refers to the queen’s knowledge of Solomon’s prophethood before seeing the miracle of the palace (Al-Baghawi, 516H; As-Sa’di, 1376H). This process of ellipsis is sustained in TT1 but explicated in TT2 mentioning this ellipted information between single quotes. However, TT1 interpretation agrees with other strong exegeses that this knowledge is of Solomon (PBUH) that the queen would be a Muslim before her coming and submitting to Islam (Al-Montakhab, 2017; Ibn-Katheer, 1998; At-Tabari, 310H; Ibn-Ashur, 1393H).

ST (V: 42): " ...وَأوتِينَا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهَا وَكُنَّا مُسْلِمِينَ "

TT1: ... “And we were given knowledge before her, and we have been Muslims [in submission to God].

TT2: “... We have ‘already’ received knowledge ‘of Solomon’s prophethood’ before this ‘miracle’, and have submitted ‘to God’.”

IV. Substitution

It is remarkable that substitution is not found neither in ST nor in TTs except one case in ST and TT1 and two cases in TT2. A clausal substitution takes place in verse (34) in ST translated into a verbal one in TTs. The queen confirms that when the kings enter a city intending to destroy it, they *do so*; that is, this *do so* refers back to the clause (أفسدوها/ they ruin it). TT1 renders this clausal substitution into the

verbal substitution *do* and TT2 into *do so* which is also verbal substitution since the head here is the verb *do* (Halliday and Hassan, 1976, p. 141).

ST (v: 34): قَالَتْ إِنَّ الْمُلُوكَ إِذَا دَخَلُوا قَرْيَةً أَفْسَدُوهَا وَجَعَلُوا أَعْرَبةَ أَهْلِهَا أَدْنَىٰ وَكَذَٰلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ

TT1: She said, “Indeed kings - when they enter a city, they ruin it and render the honoured of its people humbled. And thus do they do.”

TT2: She reasoned, “Indeed, when kings invade a land, they ruin it and debase its nobles. They really do so!”

Discussion and conclusion

This paper aimed at investigating cohesion in the Holy Quran translations. Focus was on the grammatical cohesive devices; namely, Reference, Conjunction, Ellipsis and Substitution. This helps to get a deeper insight into cohesive links that are mostly applied in the translations of the religious text comparing them to those used in the source Arabic text. Examining the two translations (Saheeh International (2001) and Khattab (2018)), the researcher considers the frequency of the grammatical cohesive devices, basically based on Halliday and Hassan (1976), to validate Blum-Kulka’s concept of explicitness.

The present paper finds that Reference has the highest frequency among the whole grammatical cohesive devices in the source text and the two target texts as well. Personal references are the most dominant reference devices: they represent more than 90% of the other reference links in the source text and more than 85% in both translated texts. This result is expected since personal references involve a big number of pronouns: first person singular or plural pronouns which the speakers

use to tell or describe something, second person singular or plural pronouns which express the person spoken to and third person singular or plural pronouns which refer to the absent ones. When the prophet Solomon (PBUH), for example, asks the hoopoe to go with his letter to the Queen of Seba, he uses five personal pronouns against only one demonstrative pronoun: *أَذْهَبْ بِكِتَابِي هَذَا / فَأَلْقِهِ إِلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ فَانظُرْ مَاذَا يَرْجِعُونَ*. Moreover, the study finds that personal pronouns in TT1 are more than those in the source text while the latter exceeds those in TT2. It is also remarkable that both demonstratives and comparatives in the Arabic text are less than those in both translated texts.

As for Conjunctions, their frequency in the Qur'anic text exceeds those in the two target texts. This proves the notion which describes Arabic language as additive due to its preference of using variety of conjunctions specifically the additive conjunctions (و – and) and (ف – then) (Abdul Raof, 2019; Lulu, 2013; Mohamed & Omer, 2000).

The low frequency of Ellipsis and Substitution in the source text and in return in the target texts stems from the fact that it is a religious text conveying a clear message and avoiding ambiguity and misperception. It is also remarkable that Ellipsis in the two target texts are lower than that in the source Qur'anic text in an attempt to give clearer message of the ellipted items especially for the target readers who are not speaking the language of the Holy Qur'an.

Regarding Substitution, it is found to be used only once in both ST and TT1 while it is used twice in TT2. As for the only example of Substitution found in the Qur'anic text; it is worth mentioning that the Holy Qur'an uses verbal substitution represented in the verb *يفعلون* in

Surat an-Naml: قَالَتْ إِنَّ الْمُلُوكَ إِذَا دَخَلُوا قَرْيَةً أَفْسَدُوهَا وَجَعَلُوا أَعْرَآةَ أَهْلِهَا أُدْنَىٰ وَكَذَٰلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ. This disproves Abdul Raof's (2019) claim that the Qur'an has no verbal substitutions giving an example, to confirm his claim, from Surat al-Baqara when Allah says وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا where Allah Almighty repeats the verb كفروا and does not use the verbal substitution فعلوا. This paper proves the existence of verbal substitution which is used instead of repeating the prior text within the Ayah.

Explicitness means, according to Blum-Kulka (2004), to use more cohesive markers in translation than those used in the source text. Moreover, she claims that this is a naturally occurring phenomenon which cannot be avoided in the process of translation. The findings of this study partly confirm this claim since Reference as one main kind of cohesive markers is found to be explicitly expressed in both TTs. However, the other types like Conjunctions and Ellipsis are translated into a lower frequency. This doubts Explicitness as being a norm in translation.

Having considered the total findings in both TT1 and TT2, explicitness is only found in TT1 (Saheeh International Translation) where the total frequency of the grammatical cohesive devices (656) is higher than that used in the source text (643). Conversely, Khattab's translation shows a lower frequency of the total grammatical cohesive links (607). Thus, these findings disprove Blum-Kulka's claim; more specifically or at least in religious translated texts.

It is important to know that to attain explicitness in the target text is to preserve the frequency of cohesive devices and it is highly expected to increase them in the target texts (Blum-Kulka, 2004). Thus,

decreasing or subtraction of certain cohesive devices can refer to shifts in explicitness. These shifts sometimes lead to loss in meaning. An example explaining that kind of shifts is when TT2 omits the personal references in the third Ayah of Surat an-Naml وَهُمْ بِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ, it fails in reflecting the purpose of repeating this reference. Such repetition is not put without a reason in the Holy Qur'an (the word of Allah the Almighty). Confirmation and the meaning of exception are two functions unattained due to this shift in explicitness which occurred through such process of omission or subtraction. The additional personal pronoun (هم/ they) in ST *confirms* that none can be a believer *except* those who firmly believe in things among of which is the Hereafter (Ibn Attia, ٥٤٦ H).

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ملخص

تلقي الدراسة الضوء على سورة النمل في القرآن الكريم وصور ترجمة أدوات التماسك بها (cohesive devices) إلى ما يعادلها لفظيا أو ما يفيد معناها في اللغة الإنجليزية وقياس صلاحية فرضية الوضوح والامتداد (explicitness hypothesis) لبلوم كالكا في ترجمة النصوص الدينية؛ وللوصول إلى هذه الغاية، تتبنى الباحثة نظريتي "التماسك النصي في الإنجليزية" لهاليدي و"الامتداد" لبلوم كالكا وبعض المراجع العربية وتفسير القرآن الكريم.

كلمات مفتاحية: التماسك النصي، ترجمة القرآن، سورة النمل