In Search for New Translational Norms: Textual Additions in Parentheses as Devices of Textuality

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ABSTRACT

This study aims at exploring new norms as to the textual additions in parentheses (=TAiPs) in the translation of a Quranic text as writer-oriented devices of textuality. Coding for this sort of information could be useful in establishing an impact on any decision-making process on the TL version; such TAiPs can give a translated text of the Quran unity and purpose and distinguish it from a disconnected sequence of sentences. Six small-sized chapters of the Quran were selected as a research sample including a number of four hundred forty two (442) TAiPs. Two writer-oriented kinds of textuality were found: cohesivity at the levels of grammar and lexis to be in form of recurrence, reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunction; and relationality by coherence and intentionality to be in form of reiteration, collocation, connotation, evocation and interpretation. The study is a detailed analysis of such a severely criticized yet officially approved English interpretation of the Quran as the Hilali and Khan Translation (=HKT) against a predetermined set of text-linguistic norms. The strength or weakness of TAiPs as to how they might alleviate or aggravate the TL version is eventually identified for sake of improvement.

INTRODUCTION

For studying how parts of a text interconnect, linguists have paid attention to the devices used to ensure a text hangs together. A text is created by means of texture at a lexicogrammatical level of language. Halliday and Hasan (1976) argue that a “text has texture and this is what distinguishes it from something that is not a text” (p. 2). It is best regarded as a semantic unit; the concept of texture is appropriate to express the property of being a text. More specifically, those devices are the relations of meaning that define it as a text, as per which the interpretation of some elements in the discourse is dependent on that of another. In actual fact, it is the issue of cohesion in unifying a text and saving a short-term memory. It is the ways in which the components of the surface text are mutually connected within a sequence (Beaugrande and Dressler, 1981: 73).

Being the first standard of textuality, cohesion is the network of lexical, grammatical and other relations providing links between various parts of a text. Such elements of the surface depend upon each other according to given conventions. However, a kind of interaction must exist between cohesion and other producer-oriented standards for more efficient communication, namely coherence and intentionality. The basic communicative units of linguistic analysis shifted from words or isolated sentences to texts. This has caused the emergence of such concepts as cohesion and coherence to be the visible and invisible networks of a text and also ones of the most considerable aspects in any textual analysis, particularly in translation.

For the Quranic text, it has a non-linear web-like structure upon which its textual arrangement or literary expression seems to “exhibit lack of continuity or absence of thematic order” (Blomm and Bary, 1990, p. 65). This ostensible disorganization is, however, self-referentiality by explaining what is to be transmitted (Wild, 2006). Therefore, the two classical techniques in translation—i.e formal and dynamic—cannot be always the true choices. An occasional form of equivalence might be needed; it could be a set of textual additions in parentheses (TAiPs). Attempting to explore new norms and improving a translated text, this study addresses the Hilali and Khan Translation (HKT) as a highly criticized yet officially sealed translation of the Quran. It aims at investigate the TAiPs as devices of texture by answering the following two research questions:

1. How can the TAiPs be cohesively or non-cohesively related to a translated text of the Quran?
2. To what extent do the TAiPs really help alleviate or aggravate the English translation of a Quranic text?
RESEARCH METHOD

Theoretical Bases

Grammatical and lexical cohesion

A text cannot be distinguished as a text unless it has texture. Pursuant to Halliday and Hasan’s (1976) approach to cohesion in English and Beaugrande and Dressler’s (1981) first standard of textuality, cohesion is achieved by the following devices:

1. **Reference** is meant to be a device that can create cohesion by making reference to something else for their interpretation (Halliday and Hasan, 1976: p. 30). It is the use of short/economical words as pro-forms being empty of content (Beaugrande and Dressler, 1981) in place of more content-activating expressions (e.g. pronouns).

2. **Ellipsis and substitution** mean that a word(s) is omitted or substituted for another, more general one (Halliday and Hasan, 1976: 125-126). According to Beaugrande and Dressler (1981), they are the omission of words/phrases as they are already referred to and parallelism as the reuse of surface formats being filled with new elements or different expressions.

3. **Conjunction** sets up a relationship between two clauses; it is cohesive by virtue of its specific meanings (Halliday and Hasan, 1976: 226). It presupposes the presence of other elements in the text into a logical order and, for Beaugrande and Dressler (1981), the use of connecting expressions (i.e. junction) linking events/situations in the textual world.

4. **Grammatical and lexical cohesion** enable the unity of a text or context (Halliday and Hassan, 1976: 274). A text uses a grammar dependency network at a phrase, clause or sentence level; at a word one, however, it is recurrence as the repetition of elements/patterns or paraphrase with changed expressions or the use of synonyms (Beaugrande and Dressler, 1981).

Coherence and Intentionality

On the basis of Beaugrande and Dressler’s (1981) second two standards of textuality and Cruse’s (1986) typology of lexical meaning, texture is achieved by the selection of vocabulary and configuration of concepts:

1. **Coherence** concerns the logical arrangement of elements of a text; it reflects language users’ cognitive processes, experience and knowledge of the world (Beaugrande and Dressler, 1981). Little choice exists for a translator to formulate his/her words and concepts, and meaning according to Cruse (1986) is either:
   a) **propositional**, arising from the relation between a given word and what it refers to in a real or imaginary world, or
   b) **presupposed**, arising from selective or collocative co-occurrence restrictions.

2. **Intentionality** is a user/translator-centered one; a text-producer normally seeks to achieve a goal (e.g. persuasion, instruction, request and information) on the basis of a given plan (Beaugrande and Dressler, 1981).

A large number of nonlinguistic variations can be employed, and meaning according to Cruse (1986) is either:

   a) **expressive**, related to the speaker’s feelings and attitudes rather than to what the given word(s) refers to, or
   b) **evoked**, arising from dialect and register variation.

Sampling Frame and Procedure

The subject English interpretation of the Quran is titled as *The Noble Quran: English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary*. It is the fifteenth revised edition published in 1996 as a co-translation of the Quran into modern English by Taqi-ud Din Al Hilali and Muhsin Khan. A six-chapter segment of this subject HKT was selected to be a representative sample of the study (namely, Surahs 44-49) with a total number of 442 TAiPs. Consisting of 2,862 SL words and representing 3.7% of the total text of the Quran, this research sample: a) **registerially** addressed the two types of the Quranic revelation, namely Makki and Madani; and b) **conceptually** contained a bunch of TAiPs that could be tackling the formal story of the Quran. The subject text was reduced to a set of categories (i.e. into its Ayaat/verses) and the TAiPs in each of them were given serial numbers as units of language or patterns.

The existence of TAiPs was coded for. This procedure appeared to be simple, but it did not really lead to simplistic findings. All the instances of TAiPs in the HKT were collected for how they would be related to the TL text or context.

They were found to be subject to two main translator-oriented types of textuality in the English translation of a Quranic text: a) **cohesivity**, which is the lexicogrammatical sets of linking to hold the translated text together and give it a more reasonably obvious meaning; it is in form of recurrence, reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunction; b) **relationality**, which is the content-organizing ways to let the text be of sense, have structured sentences and relate its concepts/relations to the situation; it is reiteration, collocation, connotation and evocation and interpretation.

**BINARY EXPLORATION OF NORMS**

**TAiPs as Devices of Cohesivity**

On the basis of Halliday and Hasan’s (1976) approach to cohesion in English and Beauagrande and Dressler’s (1981) first standard of textuality, cohesivity (CohT) in the HKT text of the Quran is the actual part of translator-oriented textuality. It is the use of language forms whereby the various lexical or grammatical features connect, or the network to provide links between the various parts of this text (Baker, 2011: 191). It is a property that the translated text is organized by ties requiring the reader to interpret the Quranic words or expressions in reference to the other ones in the surrounding sentences and paragraphs. From a binary perspective, it falls under two main headings: essential and excessive (see Figure 1).

1. The cohesively essential (CohTEss) devices are often structural. They are primary in form of recurrence (as
auxiliary, non-structural) and reference and secondary in form of substitution.

a) Primary CohTEss Devices:
   i. Recurrence is a lexically cohesive device of Quranic texture in form of TAiPs. Providing the English lexical form of a directly preceding unit of language that is transliterated-in-Arabic, it is either identical as in “…and before this was the Scripture of Musa (Moses) as a guide and a mercy” (46: 12) or rephrased as in “We shall marry them to Hur (fair female) with wide, lovely eyes” (44: 54). This type of TAiPs is also the most direct and obvious source of lexical cohesion in form of repetition; it is the recurrence of a preceding lexical item; and synonymity—by which lexical cohesion results from the choice of a lexical item that is in some sense synonymous to a preceding one (Halliday and Hasan, 1976: 331).

   ii. Reference is a structurally cohesive device of Quranic texture in form of TAiPs. Providing the reference of something to a directly preceding or following unit of language, it is either pronominal as in “…you see them bowing and falling down prostrate, seeking Bounty from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure” (48: 29) or, possibly, an adverb of focus as in “…but surely, you will know them by the tone of their speech! And Allah knows (all) your deeds” (47: 30). This type of TAiPs is also in light of Beaugrande and Dressler’s (1981) cohesive feature of tense, aspect and junction, by which signals were inserted for the relationships among events or situations in the textual world.

   b) Substitution is a structurally cohesive device of Quranic texture in form of TAiPs. Providing the specific referent of a directly preceding unit of language: pronouns and deictic adverbs, it is either pronominal as in “…by the manifest Book that makes things clear. We sent it (this Qur’an) down on a blessed night” (44: 03) or adverbial as in “…therein (that night) is decreed every matter of ordinances. As a Command from Us. Verily, We are ever sending” (44: 04). This type of TAiPs is also in light of Beaugrande and Dressler’s (1981) cohesive feature of tense, aspect and junction, by which signals were inserted for the relationships among events or situations in the textual world.

2. However, the cohesively excessive (CohTExc) devices are only structural, to be primary in form of ellipsis and secondary in form of conjunction.

a) Ellipsis is a structurally cohesive device of Quranic texture in form of TAiPs. Providing the piece of information omitted from a directly preceding or following unit of language, it is either obligatory as in “…and whosoever does evil, it is against (his ownself)” (45: 15) or optional as in “We shall remove the torment for a while. Verily you will revert (to disbelief)” (44: 15). This type of TAiPs is also in light of Beaugrande and Dressler’s (1981) cohesive feature of functional sentence perspective, by which themes or rhemes were partly or fully given, and of ellipsis, by which content-carrying structures were repeated, but some of the surface expressions were added.

b) Conjunction is a structurally cohesive device of Quranic texture in form of TAiPs. Providing a conjunctive constituent or complement of a directly preceding unit of language, it is either coordinate as in “Therein is decreed every matter of ordinances. As a Command (or this Qur’an or the Decree of every matter) from Us” (44: 05) or subordinate as in “They can avail you nothing against Allah (if He wants to punish you)” (45: 19). This type of TAiPs is also in light of Beaugrande and Dressler’s (1981) cohesive feature of parallelism, by which phrasal/clausal structures were repeated but they were filled in with new elements.

TAiPs as Devices of Relationality

Based upon Cruse’s (1986) approach to lexical meaning as well as Beaugrande and Dressler’s (1981) second two standards, relationality (RelT) in the HKT text of the Quran is the virtual part of translator-oriented textuality. It is the connectedness of the TL text of the Quran as a characteristic of its mental representation rather than of the text itself. It is established by actively relating the various Quranic units of language in the translated version on the basis of an interaction between the knowledge presented in this text and the TL reader’s own experience of the world. This sort of textuality is often conceived as coherence and can be either essential or excessive (see Figure 2).
1. For the relationally essential (ReltTEss) devices, they are only coherential. They are primary in form of reiteration and secondary in form of collocation.
   a) **Reiteration** is a coherently relational device of Quranic texture in form of TAiPs. Providing the English local or global denotation of a directly preceding lexical unit of language, it is either immediate as in “…whatever is niggardly, it is only at the expense of his own self. But Allah is Rich (Free of all needs)” (47: 38) or circuitous as in “…on the Day when We shall seize you with the greatest seizure (punishment). Verily, We will exact retribution “ (44: 16). This type of TAiPs also refers to the semantic relationships as being referentially literal denotations, and to fall under the linguistic meaning as little choice is provided to the translator to formulate his words (cf. Newmark, 1981: 134).
   b) **Collocation** is a coherently relational device of Quranic texture in form of TAiPs. Providing the associated meaning of a directly preceding or following lexical unit of language, it is either noun-qualifying as in “We have put you on a (plain) way of commandment. So follow you that” (45: 18) or verb-qualifying as in “…indeed We have destroyed towns round about you, and We have (repeatedly) shown the Ayat in various ways that they might return” (46: 27). This type of TAiPs also refers to the semantic relationships, being collocatively lexical associations and to fall under the linguistic meaning as little choice is provided to the translator to formulate his words.

2. The relationally excessive (ReltTExc) devices are often coherential. They are primary in form of connotation and secondary in form of evocation and interpretation (as auxiliary, non-coherential).
   a) **Connotation** is a coherently relational device of Quranic texture in form of TAiPs. Providing the implicit/emotional meaning of a directly preceding unit of language, it is either subordinate as in “…say to the believers to forgive those who hope not for the Days of Allah (i.e. His Recompense)” (45: 14) or descriptive as in “…a witness from among the Children of Israel (‘Abdullah bin Salam رضي الله عنه testifies that and he believed)” (46: 10). This type of TAiPs also refers to the pragmatic relationships, being connotatively cultural implications and to fall under the referential meaning as the translator can have a large number of linguistic variations to use.
   b) **Secondary ReltTExc Devices:**
   i. **Evocation** is a coherently relational device of Quranic texture in form of TAiPs. Providing the pragmatically second or auxiliary meaning of a directly preceding unit of language, it is either text-based as in “…how bad is it to insult one’s brother after having Faith [i.e. to call your Muslim brother (a faithful believer) as: O sinner]” (49: 11) or TAiP-based as in “…they are the ones who disbelieved (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) and hindered you” (48: 25). This type of TAiPs also refers to the pragmatic relationships, being circumstantial significations and to fall under the referential meaning as the translator can have a large number of linguistic variations to use.
   ii. **Interpretation** is an intentionally relational device of Quranic texture in form of TAiPs. Providing the redefinition of a directly preceding phrasal or clausal unit of language, it is either endophoric as in “…say: I am not a new thing among the Messengers (of Allah i.e. I am not the first Messenger) nor do I know what will be done with me or with you” (46: 09)… or exophoric as in “…and We made other people inherit them (i.e. We made the Children of Israel to inherit the kingdom of Egypt)” (44: 28). This type of TAiPs refers to something that is not part of a given text and is therefore not actually cohesive; a potential reader’s imagination is to create a context making an exophoric thing an essential element.

**POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENT OF THE HKT**

This section is discussing how TAiPs cohesively or relationally soften or harden the Quranic text being rendered. Each of the one-plus-four devices of cohesivity and the four-plus-one ones of relationality is of two sides as to the HK translation of the Quranic text: alleviating or aggravating the translated text and/or TL reader’s flow of attention (see Figure 3). To textually improve the translated text of the Quran in this particular respect is—on the whole—a basic, four-level possible mode of text-transfer.

It is to use the TAiPs in either a conservatively or alternatively manner as follows:
1. **Conservatively:**
   a) *literally*, to mean word-for-word or at least stick closely to SL lexis, for making sense (cf. Nida, 1964); It is to include all the ten TAiPs as cohesive (CohT) devices and exclude all the ten others as relational (ReltT) devices.
   b) *formally-1*, to respect context and even interpret for conveying the spirit of the original (cf. Nida, 1964); it is to include all the essential CohT/ReltT TAiPs in form of recurrence, reference, substitution, reiteration and collocation and exclude all the other excessive CohT/ReltT ones in form of ellipsis, conjunction, connotation, evocation and interpretation.

2. **Alternatively:**
   a) *formally-2*, to hand the TL readership everything on a plate for producing a similar response (cf. Nida, 1964); it is to include all the TAiPs of an essential CohT/ReltT type in form of recurrence, reference, ellipsis, reiteration, connotation, and exclude all the others of a excessive CohT/ReltT type in form of substitution, conjunction, collocation, evocation and interpretation.
   b) *liberally*, to have equivalent effect by letting the text into a TL setting for having a natural and easy form of expression (cf. Nida, 1964); it is to include all the CohT/ReltT alleviating TAiPs, and exclude all the other ten CohT/ReltT aggravating ones.

Based upon a considerably reasonable notion that translating is moderately as both literal and liberal as possible, we have the following equation-like description of the TAiPs. Moderately, our formal-1 and formal-2 translational types shall apply, and a final status of either including or excluding a CohT/ReltT type of TAiP shall be eventually reached by multiplying the former by the latter (see Figure 4).

For possibly improving the subject HKT material by TAiP-driven textuality, the bare syntactic and semantic constraints of the TL are employed to reproduce the precise contextual meaning of the SL author, and the same effects are attempted on the TL readers as are produced by the original text on the SL readers. Based upon the equation above, the TAiPs as cohesive devices in an English translation of the Quranic text help avoid producing ill-formed sentences in the TL text either lexically or grammatically; they are consciously performed in order fill in missing categories. The first two types of such devices (*recurrence and reference, with all of their identical, rephrased, pronominal and adverbial subtypes*) are only let be kept out of the parentheses and merely replace their preceding units of language (see Examples 1-4).

1. “…and before this was the Scripture of **Musa** (Moses) as a guide and a mercy” (46: 12).
In Search for New Translational Norms: Textual Additions in Parentheses as Devices of Textuality

2. “We shall marry them to Hurr (fair female) with wide, lovely eyes” (44: 54).
3. “...falling down prostrate, seeking Bounty from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure” (48: 29).
4. “…know them by the tone of their speech! And Allah knows (all) your deeds” (47: 30).

The other essential type of devices (pronominal and adverbial substitution) as in Examples 5-6 might be principally to replace their preceding units but be kept in the parenthesses; otherwise; they may be excluded at all or, at least, the pronominal subtype of them is included in parentheses while the adverbial one is completely excluded. In this respect, the translator supplies information that is missing or unstated e.g. to acquire knowledge or provide co-operation in a plan:
5. “…the Book that makes things clear. We sent it (this Qur’an) down” (44: 03).
6. “…therein (that night) is decreed every matter of ordinances. As a Command” (44: 04).

It seems as an attitude on the translators’ part to have a cohesive/coherent text that can be of some use or relevance to the TL reader and, hence, influence the acceptability of the translated text. This also helps that reader determine the kind of text the translators intend to send. For the other two excessive types of cohesive devices in Examples 7-8, they are attributed to textbuilding or even stylistic reasons or preferences so that a resultant translation can be more natural and idiomatic. The first of them (obligatory and optional ellipsis) is principally excluded at all from the translated text; however, such TAiPs may be let be part of the translation if any of them is considered to be obligatory such as the quotative or vocative ones.
7. “…(they shall be) among the dwellers of Paradise - a promise of truth” (46: 16).
8. “We shall remove the torment for a while. Verily you will revert to disbelief” (44: 15).

Anyhow, the last type of cohesivity (conjunction with its two coordinate and subordinate subtypes) is completely excluded from the text (see Examples 9-10). This sort of insertion would help attain some balanced informativity between the known and the unknown in the translated text or, say, the extent to which the textual occurrences are expected or unexpected:
9. “…every matter of ordinances. As a Command (or this Qur’an) from Us” (44: 05).
10. “…they can avail you nothing against Allah (if He wants to punish you)” (45: 19).

As regards the TAiPs as devices of relationality, they could be taken out of the English text of the Quran while the text remains lexically or grammatically good enough to the TL reader. However, their being included—particularly, the essential ones of them—definitely help dispense of or at least get any cultural or shared-knowledge mismatches toned down. To be moderate or in the safe side, the first type of such devices (immediate and circuitous reiteration) is let replace the preceding units of language in the TL text but be kept out of the parentheses (see Examples 11-12).
11. “…it is only at the expense of his ownself. But Allah is Rich (Free of all needs)” (47: 38).
12. “…on the Day when We shall seize you with the greatest retribution (punishment)” (44: 16).

The other essential type of relationality (N-qualifying and V-qualifying collocation), as one can see in Examples 13-14, might be principally included in the way discussed above—i.e. kept in the parentheses—or, at least, its adjectival/noun-qualifying subtype is merely let replace a preceding/following unit of language whereas the adverbial/verb-qualifying one is completely excluded. Generally, such TAiPs look as factors that can make a text relevant to a situation of occurrence and provide the context that affects how a potential TL reader would interpret the translated text of the Quran.
13. “We have put you on a (plain) way of commandment. So follow you that” (45: 18).
14. “We have (repeatedly) shown the Ayat in various ways that they might return” (46: 27).

In actual fact, the TAiPs above could affect the tools of cohesion; i.e. the less cohesive a text is, the more appropriate it could be as the given situation is based upon in getting the text interpreted. In other words, there must be a translation need, as the situationality of the English translation is never the same as that of the SL text. However, the other relational devices are considered to be excessive type of an excessive type of textuality. Supposedly making the TL text longer than the original, they are almost pragmatic with some technical feature due to the particular nature of the translating process itself.
15. “…to forgive those who hope not for the Days of Allah (i.e. His Recompense)” (45: 14).
16. “…a witness from among… Israel (‘Abdullah bin Salam –البتول_بيته) testifies” (49: 02).

In Examples 15-16 above, the subordinately and descriptively connotative TAiP-like devices depend, to a great extent, on the translators’ view of appropriateness as to the relationship between the SL text of the Quran and its English translation. The first type of such devices (subordinate connotation) is principally excluded but could be reasonably kept in the translated text by replacing the preceding unit (s) of language whereas the descriptive ones—as basically stated in Arabic—are to be completely taken out.
17. “…how bad is it… [i.e. to call your Muslim brother (a faithful believer) as: O sinner]” (49: 11).
18. “…they are the ones who disbelieved (in the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism)” (48: 25).
19. “…not a new thing among the Messengers (of Allah i.e. I am not the first Messenger)” (46: 09).
20. “We made other people inherit them (i.e. We made the Children of Israel to inherit the kingdom of Egypt)” (44: 28).

The last types of devices of relationality (evocation and interpretation with their all text-based, TAiP-based, endophoric and exophoric subtypes) as illustrated by Examples 17-20 above are to be completely excluded from such an English version of the Quran or, as an alternative, to be sent down as only footnotes. In fact, they might be kept in the translated text only for an intertextual purpose on the basis of the translators’ knowledge of other texts or, say, pre-ex-
isting cognitive templates abstracted from their experience. However, if there is no such prior knowledge of a relevant text, the communication with the TL readership might break down as the understanding of the current translated text is obscured.

CONCLUSION

Owing to the concise original language of the Quran and the various linguistic aspects this religious language would entail, its being rendered into a completely different language and/or culture such as English has been highly demanding. TAiPs could be sometimes mistaken or misleading as they might be distorting the original meanings of the Quran. In light of renowned theories, this strategy encountered in an officially approved yet heavily criticized translation of the Quranic text into English was analyzed. New binary types of TAiPs were illustrated in fulfilling the requirements of a theory-wise Contribution (binarity-themed exploration of translational norms). Besides, an improved version of the HKT was proposed in fullfilling the requirements of the practice-wise Contribution (corpus-based improvement of the HK translation).

1. In terms of textuality in its actual part of cohesivity, a set of one-plus-four types of TAiPs as cohesive devices of texture were encountered at two levels: lexical in form of recurrence and structural in form of reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunction.

2. As to the virtual part of it, textuality was attained by coherence and intentionality in four-plus-one types of TAiPs as devices of relationality: coherential in form of reiteration, collocation, connotation and evocation and intentional in form of interpretation.

Having investigated the strategy of TAiPs in translating a Quranic text into English, the present study speculates to what extent the HKT (“THE NOBEL QUR’AN”) is acceptable upon a content-based analysis. Backgrounded by Beaugrande and Dressler’s (1981) standards of textuality, it is more to know whether it is appropriately thought of being a literary transposition into a quite different lingual/cultural setting as it might appear as an amplified, over-explicated translation by its too many textual additions in brackets. The subject HKT is more acceptable than it is an adequate English interpretation of the Quranic text since the optional and technical TAiPs prevail to their obligatory and pragmatic counterparts respectively (cf. Toury, 1995). This all could eventually add to the consideration that the HKT is to a great extent a literal, unbiased and unprejudiced English interpretation of the Quranic text.

END NOTE

1. Since the Quranic text in Arabic as almost commonly agreed by Muslims includes 77,439 words.

REFERENCES


