



## An Investigation Into the Strategies Applied for the Translation of Informative, Expressive, and Operative Aspects of the Holy Qur'ān Into English: Towards Functional Equivalence

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### ABSTRACT

The present study centered around the problem of functional equivalence in source-text-target-text pairs. In fact, this study was an attempt to investigate patterns of professional translators' main approaches to the production of functionally equivalent Qur'ānic translations. The ultimate objective was to investigate the practicality of Reiss's theoretical functionalist text-oriented model of translation. Hence, five selected English translations were descriptively and linguistically analyzed and compared with their corresponding Qur'ānic surahs. The analysis included content-specific and formal features of the texts to discover common and frequent translation strategies applied in the production of each target text. The descriptive findings were then calculated using frequency and percentage. The findings on the translations of the informative and expressive texts revealed that Reiss's relevant prediction was right. However, in contrast to Reiss's view, the operative text was mostly translated literally rather than adaptively by most of the translators.

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## **1. Introduction**

The fundamental mediums for communication and for bridging the gap between languages are language and translation. This is indicative of a close connection between linguistics and translation studies. In this regard, one of the challenges ahead of linguists and translation scholars is the different functions of language. Besides, a particular problem the field of translation studies deals with is the concept of equivalence. Equivalence has been dealt with by different theorists in the field of translation studies in terms of its various levels and types. From among the theories that deal with the problem of equivalence at the text level and from the very perspective of functionalism, mentions can be made of Reiss's (2014) pioneering model. According to Reiss's (2014) theoretical model of translation, each text can be informative, expressive, or operative, based on the main function its language performs. Besides, different types of translation strategies are suggested in the model for the establishment of functional equivalence between a translated text and its corresponding original text. Practically speaking, the model seems to be a comprehensive guide to the translation of all texts, including sacred ones. The model also appears to be applicable to a descriptive study of translation products like the present study. Nevertheless, relevant past text-type-oriented research using Reiss's theoretical framework seems to suffer from several drawbacks, such as applying the model in terms of the typology of source texts proposed by Reiss (2014) and the translation strategies suggested by other theorists rather than the ones suggested by Reiss and inconsistencies in findings across various similar studies. Besides, no study has so far dealt with the problem of functional equivalence in the Qur'ān. Therefore, the present paper is an attempt to investigate whether professional translators' main approaches to the mentioned problem in the translation of the Qur'ān are in line with Reiss's prediction.

With regard to the mentioned problems and gaps, it should be noted that the significance of this research lies in the fact that it targets a fundamental problem ahead of translation theorists, researchers, and practitioners. Second, the descriptive nature of the study has the potential to develop the existing body of knowledge in such areas as product-oriented and rank, text type and problem-restricted in translation studies. Also, the theoretical framework of the study has always been a pioneering work that has resulted in the formulation of other text-type-restricted translation theories. Additionally, the unique and sensitive nature of the holy Qur'ān makes this study more appealing to be analyzed from a functionalist approach. Last, many agents, including translation researchers, theorists, and critics, translator trainers, translation agencies, and curriculum developers can benefit from the results.

With these in mind, this study attempted to investigate what pattern emerges in professional translators' main strategies for different text types of the Qur'ān and tries to examine the practicality of Reiss's (2014) proposed translation strategies in her text-typology model. Therefore, this study tries to address the following question:

- What pattern emerges in professional translators' main strategies for different text types of the Qur'ān as far as Reiss's (2014) model is concerned?

## **2. Review of the Literature**

Theories and ideas about six issues of functionalist approaches, text-oriented models, Reiss's theory of text type, equivalence, translation strategies and the Qur'ān, form the theoretical context of the present study. The following sections present a brief review of the mentioned topics.

## 2.1 Functionalist Approaches

'Functionalism' views translation as a function-oriented communicative act (Schaffner, 1998; as cited in Baker & Saldanha, 2009). The term 'function' is a key concept that can refer to the target-text function, source-text function, or word/phrase function (Schaffner, 1998, as cited in Manafi Anari, 2004). The function of a source text refers to the function of its language.

## 2.2 Text-oriented Models

Text-oriented models of translation consider language at a level beyond the sentence, i.e., the level of text. In this regard, Hatim and Munday (2004) stated that the criteria according to which texts are classified are not the situational factors such as the subject matter (e.g., texts classification according to different genres) but the contextual factors. The contextual criteria refer to the main rhetorical purposes or language functions.

## 2.3 Reiss's Theory of Text Type

One of the function-oriented and text-oriented models of translation belongs to Katharina Reiss (2014). The model consists of four main concepts, i.e., language functions, text types, equivalence and translation strategies. Defining 'function' as an author's intention, Reiss (2014) made use of Bühler's (2011) categorization of language functions into the representative, expressive and appellative types. She then associated the language functions with text functions, i.e., depiction, expression, and persuasion. Accordingly, Reiss (2014) proposed a typology for all texts, i.e., informative, expressive, and operative types. In fact, her categorization of text types was in accordance with the main functions of texts detectable from their main content-specific and formal features. The reason behind this sort of classification was to suggest solutions for dealing with the problem of equivalence establishment between the main functions of a target text and its corresponding source text. The mentioned solutions were some strategies proposed by Reiss (2014) for this reason. In this respect, she claimed that for the translation of an informative text, the strategy of literal translation, and if required, the strategy of explicitation must be mostly adopted for the complete transfer of informational content. In addition, for the translation of an expressive text, she suggested the most frequent use of the strategy of literal translation to preserve the aesthetically-formed content of the text. Moreover, since an operative text mainly intends to persuade its audience to behave in a particular way, according to Reiss (2014), the strategy of adaptation must be mostly adopted in its translation in order for the behavioral responses of target-text receivers to be similar to those of source-text receivers.

Furthermore, two points related to sacred texts like the Bible seem important to be mentioned. First, arguing that the Bible consists of different text types, Reiss (2014) stated that the 'Acts of the Apostles', the 'Song of Solomon', and the 'Letters of the Apostles', must respectively be considered informative, expressive, and operative texts. Second, according to Reiss (2014), the strategies most frequently adopted by translators in the translation of such texts, may vary based on the main functions of translations, i.e., translators' main intentions, in addition to the main functions of original texts. In detail, if such a text is translated for a missionary purpose, the strategy suggested for the translation of operative texts may be mostly used by its translator. However, if a translator's main intention is to preserve the sacredness of such a text, they may translate it through the most frequent application of the literal translation strategy. In fact, Reiss (2014) considered the latter point a limitation of her model.

## *2.4 Equivalence*

From among different issues in the field, the problem of equivalence most of all challenges translation theorists, researchers and practitioners. In fact, the concept correlates a translated text with its corresponding original (Palumbo, 2009). Besides, the challenging nature of the concept is due to theorists' various approaches to the problem, which is differently described in terms of its types and the levels at which it must be maintained. By 'type', according to Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997, as cited in Hatim & Munday, 2004), the aspect of similarity between two texts is meant. By 'level', a linguistic level is meant that at that level, the language of a source text is recodified into the language of a target text (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 1997, as cited in Hatim & Munday, 2004).

## *2.5 Translation Strategies*

Different translation theorists variously defined the term 'strategy'. For example, Munday (2012) defined it as the general orientation of a translation. However, Toury (2012) defined the term as a solution to a translation-specific problem. Furthermore, Hatim and Munday (2004) stated that variables such as text type must be taken into consideration in the selection of a strategy proper for translation.

## *2.6 The Qur'ān*

The Qur'ān is the sacred book of the religion of Islam. It contains 114 surahs or chapters each having ayahs or verses meant for oral recitation (Mustapha, as cited in Baker & Saldanha, 2009). Some scholars like Abdul-Raof (2001) believe in the problematic translatability of the Qur'ān. Nevertheless, among various strategies adopted by translators in translating the Qur'ān, the most common one, according to Manafī Anari (2003), is the strategy of literal translation.

## **3. Review of the Past Research**

The existing studies relevant to the present study can be categorized into two groups, i.e., directly related ones that were carried out using the same theoretical framework and indirectly related ones that investigated the same product. The mentioned studies are briefly described in terms of their findings in the following sections.

### *3.1 Reiss's Theoretical Framework-Oriented Studies*

Having applied Reiss's proposed text typology, along with other theorists' suggested translation strategies, five studies were found. First, Azizi's (2008) study showed that translations of content-focused texts were not accurate but rather target-language-oriented, while those of the form-focused texts were not formally analogous but source-language-oriented. Second, Igder and Karimnia's (2010) study indicated that the explicitation strategy was most frequently adopted in the translation of expressive texts, compared to informative texts. Third, Holst's (2010) study found that translations of the informative texts were mostly source-text-oriented, while translations of the operative texts were mostly target-text-oriented. Fourth, Vahid Dastjerdi and Baghaei Naeini's (2012) study suggested that Vahid Dastjerdi's translation was more adequate than Clarke's since the former one was formally and content-specifically closer to the expressive text. Last, Allard's (2014) study showed that the informative function of a source text could best be preserved by means of the strategies of addition or explicitation, or using target-language equivalents in translation. It

was also found that by means of either the strategy of literal translation or the strategy of equivalence, preservation of the expressive and the operative source-text functions could be expected.

In addition, four studies that applied Reiss's model in the investigation of expressive source-text cases were found. First, Manafi Anari and Adili's (2016) study found that the translation of the text under analysis was equivalently source-text-oriented and formally analogous. Second, Attar's (2016) study found that the translation under investigation in the study was not functionally equivalent to its corresponding source text due to the linguistic mistranslation of many of the lexical and stylistic elements. Third, Farshchi's (2017) study showed that none of the target texts was produced adequately equivalent to its corresponding source text since different translational errors, such as neglecting meaning for the sake of form, and semantic and stylistic errors, were identified in translations. Last, Manafi Anari and Jahanjouyan's (2020) study revealed that the translation under investigation was to a great extent equivalent since it had mostly preserved the content and form of its corresponding source text.

### *3.2 Qur'ān Translations-Oriented Studies*

From among past studies on the translation of the Qur'ān, two were found most noteworthy. First, Poshtdar's (2015) study on Molana's versified translation of some of the Qur'ānic verses and concepts, showed that free sense-for-sense translation was among the methods adopted in the poetic translation. Second, Manafi Anari and Mostafaei's (2017) study on different types of translations of the Qur'ān, revealed that the Qur'ānic form and content were respectively best preserved through the use of the prose and the explanatory translation types, while, similar to the finding of the former study, they were both more lost in the poetic type of translation.

## **3. Methodology**

### *3.1 Research Design*

In accordance with Holmes' (1988; as cited in Toury, 2012) map of translation studies, the present study was generally carried out in the area of 'pure' studies. More specifically, this study was conducted in the sphere of 'descriptive' translation studies. In detail, this descriptive study was carried out on translations of the holy Qur'ān within the framework of Reiss's (2014) theory. Hence, the design used for carrying out the present study was a descriptive-analytical one.

### *3.2 Research Corpora*

The corpora under analysis in this study were the Qur'ān and its English translations. In order for analyzing and describing the data to become feasible, three sample Qur'ānic-Arabic source texts and five sample English target texts were selected. More specifically, the sample source texts were surahs 'Yusuf', 'Al-Muddaththir', and 'Ar-Rahman'. These source texts were selected out of all Qur'ānic surahs. Besides, the target text sample included English translations of the Qur'ān by Pickthall (1930), Arberry (1955), Nikayin (2000), Saffarzadeh (2001) and Qara'i (2003). These target texts were selected from the most renowned translations of the Qur'ān.

### 3.3 Research Instruments

This study was carried out using these instruments: Allameh Tabataba'i's book 'Tafsir al-Mizan' translated into Persian by Seyyed Mohammad Bagher Mousavi Hamedani, Ansarian's and Makarem's Persian translations of the Qur'ān, Lane's Arabic to English lexicon, Almaany Arabic to English dictionary, the Qur'ānic website *corpus.Qur'ān.com*, the website *languageguide.org*, Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, Abdul-Raof's (2001) book 'Qur'ān Translation: Discourse, Texture and Exegesis', and Abrams and Harpham's (2009) book 'A Glossary of Literary Terms'. The Exegesis book and the two Persian translations were accessed from the second version of the authentic Qur'ānic software 'Taranom Vahy', designed by Taranom Software Company.

### 3.4 Data Collection and Analysis

The study began with the selection of some source and target-text samples. In contrast to the target-texts sampling that was done randomly, the source-texts sampling was done systematically. In order to select the source-text samples, the main functions of the Qur'ānic surahs needed to be detected. Hence, Reiss's (2014) detailed descriptions on the main content-specific and formal features of each of the three text-type categories were applied. Meanwhile, the Persian translation of 'Tafsir al-Mizan', and Ansarian's and Makarem's Persian translations of the Qur'ān were consulted for further information on the main content-specific features of the surahs. Besides, to detect the main formal features of the surahs, Abdul-Raof's (2001) and Abrams and Harpham's (2009) books were consulted.

With the above-mentioned data collection procedure being applied, the three source texts were sampled in the following manner. The main content-specific and formal features of each category of source-text types, which were described in detail by Reiss (2014), were considered the first premise. The main relevant features of each of the Qur'ānic chapters, detected mostly similar to Reiss's (2014) detailed descriptions, were considered the second premise. It was then deductively concluded that the surahs Yusuf, Al-Muddaththir, and Ar-Rahman can be considered as the representative samples of the informative, expressive and operative texts, respectively. Further necessary information in this regard is presented in the following three paragraphs:

First, according to Reiss (2014), informative or content-focused texts mainly communicate fact(s) about something or someone using the logical dimension of language. Similarly, the text of the surah 'Yusuf' mainly communicates the story of the prophet Yusuf's stages of life, as also stated in Tafsir Al-Mizan. Besides, the logical dimension of language is mainly used in the text structure. Hence, according to Reiss's (2014) model of text types, Surah Yusuf can be considered an informative text.

Second, according to Reiss (2014), expressive or form-focused texts mainly communicate their authors' attitudes towards something or someone using the aesthetic dimension of language. Likewise, as also stated in Tafsir Al-Mizan, the text of the surah 'Al-Muddaththir' mainly communicates God's attitude towards the unbelievers, i.e., those who refuse to believe that the Qur'ān is His word, and attribute the Qur'ān to magic. In this regard, God's outrage towards such unbelievers can be clearly seen in the use of the word 'قَاتِلْ' (verses 19 and 20), meaning 'death be upon him', for example. Besides, the content of the text is mainly presented using the aesthetic dimension of language. In this regard, the evident rhyme scheme, and different literary devices, such as alliteration (e.g., verse 6) and palindrome (e.g., verse 3) are some instances of the main formal features. Hence, according

to Reiss's (2014) model of text types, Surah Al-Muddaththir can be considered an expressive text.

Third, according to Reiss (2014), operative or appeal-focused texts mainly communicate their persuasive contents to influence their receivers' behavior using the dialogic dimension of language. Similarly, the text of the surah 'Ar-Rahman' mainly attempts to influence its receivers persuasively using the dialogic dimension of language. In this regard, as also stated in Tafsir Al-Mizan, throughout the surah, all kinds of blessings God has bestowed on His creatures are mentioned. Besides, a particular rhetorical question is alternately repeated 31 times. The question is directly addressing and rebuking whoever of men and jinns that denies and ignores God's favors and signs in order to make them believe in Him. In detail, the mentioned question is 'فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ', meaning 'So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?' (translated by Sahih International). Hence, according to Reiss's (2014) model of text types, Surah Ar-Rahman can be considered an operative text.

After the sampling and before the analysis, two more steps were taken. First, to ensure consistency between the sample source texts, an equal volume of words was selected from the beginning of the surahs. The criterion for selecting a similar sample volume was the number of words within the smallest source text. Surah Al-Muddaththir had 256 words as calculated by *Microsoft Word Processing Software*. In this respect, the first 20 verses of Surah Yusuf, all the 56 verses of Surah Al-Muddaththir, and the first 56 verses of Surah Ar-Rahman were selected for the analysis. Second, following Reiss's (2014) clear explanation about the individual sense or thought units (i.e., micro-units of analysis) that any text (i.e., macro-unit of analysis) comprises, each source text was divided into its constituting units of thought. Since in many cases, two or more verses make a single meaningful unit, or one verse consists of two or more separate meaningful units, the unit of analysis was changed from verse to sentence. The identification of the mentioned units of analysis was done based on the semantic and syntactic features of sentences. Eventually, the first 22 sentences of Surah Yusuf, all 39 sentences of Surah Al-Muddaththir, and the first 24 sentences of Surah Ar-Rahman were selected for analysis.

After the required data was collected and prepared, the analysis was carried out in the following manner. First, to identify the type of strategy applied by each translator in the translation of each sentence, each target-text sentence was linguistically, i.e., content-specifically and formally, analyzed and compared with its corresponding source text and target-text sentences. In this regard, if content or both content and form (as in the case of aesthetically-formed contents) of a source text were invariably transferred into a target-text, the strategy of 'literal translation' was identified to be adopted. In addition, if content of a source-text was explicated in a target text, the strategy of 'explication' was recognized to be adopted. Moreover, if content or both content and form of a source text were altered (e.g., omitted or recreated) in a target text, the strategy of 'adaptation' was identified to be adopted. Meanwhile, as briefly mentioned earlier, a significant gap was noticed in Reiss's (2014) suggested translation strategies. That was because in so many cases, both strategies of 'explication' and 'adaptation' were applied in the translation of a source-text sentence. Hence, the new category of the 'combined' strategy was introduced and added to Reiss's (2014) suggested translation strategies. Second, the findings of the descriptive analysis of the data were converted into frequency and percentage. In this respect, the number of times each strategy was applied by each translator in the translation of each source text was counted. Then, frequencies were converted into percentages. In order to do so, each frequency was divided by the total number of sentences analyzed—the total number of times

each strategy was applied by each translator—in each translation, and then, the quotient of the division was multiplied by 100 (see Figures 1 to 3).

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Qualitative Findings

The qualitative findings of the descriptive analysis of strategies applied by the translators in the translation of the informative, expressive and operative Qur'ānic texts are briefly demonstrated through the following examples.

#### *Example of the Analysis of Strategies Applied in the Translation of Surah Yusuf*

Sentence 4:

نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ أَحْسَنَ الْقَصَصِ بِمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ وَإِنْ كُنْتَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ لَمِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ (٣)

Pickthall: We narrate unto thee (Muhammad) the best of narratives in that We have inspired in thee this Qur'an, though aforesime thou wast of the heedless. (3)

Arberry: We will relate to thee the fairest of stories in that We have revealed to thee this Koran, though before it thou wast one of the heedless. (3)

Nikayin: As We reveal unto you this Qur'ān, We shall be telling you a story, the finest of the fine; whereas before this, you were among the heedless. (3)

Saffarzadeh: We do narrate to you [O, Messenger] The fairest of stories while revealing to You this Holy Qur'ān, though you were One of those who did not know about it Before (3)

Qarai: We will recount to you the best of narratives in what We have revealed to you of this Qur'ān, and indeed prior to it you were among those who are unaware [of it]. (3)

Analysis:

In this sentence, Pickthall's, Saffarzadeh's, and Qarai's translations demonstrate the application of the explicitation strategy. That is because Pickthall and Saffarzadeh respectively added the proper name 'Muhammad' and the noun 'Messenger' as the antecedents of the pronoun *كَ* or 'thee/you' in the Qur'ānic phrase *عَلَيْكَ*. Besides, Saffarzadeh added the adjective 'Holy' to modify the noun *الْقُرْآنَ* or 'Qur'ān'. In addition, Saffarzadeh and Qarai expanded the form of the source-text sentence, respectively by using the noun clauses 'those who did not know about it' and 'those who are unaware [of it]' instead of the noun *الْغَافِلِينَ*, meaning 'the heedless, the unaware and so on'. In fact, the formal expansion resulted in the explication of the content of the source-text sentence. In contrast, Arberry's and Nikayin's translations clearly manifest the employment of 'literal translation'. Examples of this can be seen in their translations of the pronoun *كَ* and the word *الْغَافِلِينَ*.

#### *Example of the Analysis of Strategies Applied in the Translation of Surah Al-Muddaththir*

Sentence 7:

سَأُرْهِفُهُ صَعُوداً (١٧)



Pickthall: On him I shall impose a fearful doom. (17)

Arberry: and I shall constrain him to a hard ascent. (17)

Nikayin: Soon I shall make him take a troublesome ascension! (17)

Saffarzadeh: Soon I will make him encounter with a Mountain of calamities and hardship (17)

Qarai: Soon I will overwhelm him with hardship. (17)

Analysis:

The present sentence consists of two parts: *صَعُوداً* and *سَأُرْهِقُهُ*. The verb *سَأُرْهِقُهُ*, which is in the future tense, is taken from the infinitive *أَرْهِقَ*. The word *أَرْهِقَ* means ‘to make, to require, or to constrain someone to do something, to cover someone with something, to incite or to urge someone to do a thing that he/she is not able to do and so on’. In this respect, all the five translations used the ‘literal translation’ for the verb. However, regarding the word *صَعُوداً*, meaning ‘ascension’, ‘difficulty’, and so on, the translations differ. In detail, the word *صَعُوداً* also signifies ‘a mountain-road difficult of ascent’, according to Lane’s Arabic-English Lexicon (1863). Besides, according to Tafsir Al-Mizan, there is a metaphor in the Arabic sentence. The mentioned figure of speech is that ‘the bad and bitter punishment that the unbeliever will taste soon’ is likened to ‘him getting stuck in a valley difficult to pass through’. With these in mind—whether this metaphor is truly used in the Arabic sentence or not—, Arberry’s, Nikayin’s, and Qarai’s translations were produced ‘literally’. This is clear from their translation of the word *صَعُوداً* into ‘a hard ascent’, ‘a troublesome ascension’ and ‘hardship’, respectively. On the contrary, Saffarzadeh’s translation of the word *صَعُوداً* into ‘a Mountain of calamities and hardship’ clearly manifests her application of the strategy of ‘explicitation’. In sharp contrast, Pickthall’s free translation of the noun *صَعُوداً* into the noun phrase ‘a fearful doom’ evidently shows his employment of the ‘adaptation’ strategy.

*Example of the Analysis of Strategies Applied in the Translation of Surah Ar-Rahman*

Sentence 4:

وَالْأَرْضَ وَضَعَهَا لِلْأَنَامِ (١٠) فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ وَالنَّخْلُ ذَاتُ الْأَكْمَامِ (١١) وَالْحَبُّ ذُو الْعَصْفِ وَالرَّيْحَانُ (١٢) فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ (١٣)

Pickthall: And the earth hath He appointed for (His) creatures, (10) Wherein are fruit and sheathed palm-trees, (11) Husked grain and scented herb. (12) Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny? (13)

Arberry: And earth -- He set it down for all beings, (10) therein fruits, and palm-trees with sheaths, (11) and grain in the blade, and fragrant herbs. (12) O which of your Lord's bounties will you and you deny? (13)

Nikayin: And the Earth, He has laid out for the living creatures, (10) Wherein are fruits and palms, with hanging clusters, (11) And grains in husks and herbs of fragrance. (12) Could you indeed afford to spurn a bounty of your Lord! (13)

Saffarzadeh: Ar-Rahmān is the One Who has spread Out the earth for the earthly beings (10) Therein grow fruits, and palm-trees Having sheathed dates, (11) And also corn with

leaves and stalks for Fodder and sweet-smelling plants (12) Then which of the Bounties of your Creator and Nurturer do you deny (13)

Qarai: And the earth—He laid it out for mankind. (10) In it are fruits and date-palms with sheaths, (11) grain with husk, and fragrant herbs. (12) So which of your Lord's bounties will you both deny? (13)

Analysis:

This sentence was translated 'literally' by Arberry and Qarai, which is clear from their translations of different parts of the source text. For example, the noun *الْأَكْمَامُ*, literally meaning 'sheaths, coverings, and so on', was translated into 'sheaths' in both translations. In addition, another evidence supporting their employment of the 'literal translation' strategy can be found in their translations of the subordinate clause *فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ*. This subordinate clause, which is a rhetorical question, was similarly translated 'literally' by Pickthall. However, Pickthall's addition of the possessive pronoun 'His' to the noun *أَنَامٍ* or 'creatures' shows his application of 'explicitation' rather than 'literal translation'. That is because, as mentioned previously, the micro-unit of analysis is the whole sentence rather than the clause. By the same token, Saffarzadeh's use of 'explicitation' is manifest in her translation of this sentence. In detail, the proper noun 'Ar-Rahmān' was added to the clause *وَالْأَرْضِ وَضَعَهَا لِلْأَنَامِ* as its explicit subject. Saffarzadeh also included the word 'grow' in the translation of the clause *وَالنَّخْلُ ذَاتُ الْأَكْمَامِ وَالْحَبُّ ذُو الْعَصْفِ وَالرَّيْحَانُ* as its explicit verb. She also added the attributive adjective 'earthly' to the noun *أَنَامٍ* or 'beings'. The noun 'dates' was also added to the participial adjective 'sheathed' in the noun phrase *النَّخْلُ ذَاتُ الْأَكْمَامِ*, which literally means 'palm-trees with sheaths, sheathed palm-trees, and the like'. Besides, the prepositional phrase 'for Fodder' was included in her translation of the noun phrase *الْحَبُّ ذُو الْعَصْفِ* or 'corn with leaves and stalks'. In fact, the mentioned prepositional phrase functions as an adjective for the nouns 'leaves' and 'stalks'. In contrast, the free translation of the noun *الْأَكْمَامِ* (into the noun phrase 'hanging clusters') by Nikayin and the subordinate clause *فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ* by Nikayin and Saffarzadeh, evidently demonstrate the application of the 'adaptation' strategy. Concerning the mentioned subordinate clause, its style as well as its form and content was altered by Nikayin in his translation of the clause into 'Could you indeed afford to spurn a bounty of your Lord!'. In a somewhat similar manner in Saffarzadeh's translation, the word *رَبِّ*, literally meaning 'Lord', in the mentioned clause was freely translated into 'Creator and Nurturer'. Hence, Saffarzadeh's simultaneous use of both strategies of 'explicitation' and 'adaptation' in the translation of this Arabic sentence is clearly indicative of her application of the 'combined' strategy.

In addition to what has already been described, another point in Arberry's and Qarai's translations is worthy of attention. The point is related to their translations of the subordinate clause *فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ*. In this respect, as mentioned before, the subordinate clause addresses the two groups of men and jinns as the beings created by God. In detail, the reference to the two addressees is evident in the second person dual possessive pronoun *كُمَا* in the noun phrase *رَبِّكُمَا*, and the second person dual attached subject pronoun *ان* in the verb *تُكَذِّبَانِ*. Since in English, the pronoun 'you' is used for both second person singular and plural, all the translations of the verb *تُكَذِّبَانِ* were done 'literally'. However, compared with the other ones, Arberry's and Qarai's translation of the Arabic pronoun respectively into the equivalent phrases 'you and you' and 'you both', more precisely preserved the form of the Arabic subordinate clause.

## 4.2 Quantitative Findings

The findings of the quantitative analysis of the qualitative findings of the present study are presented in the following figures. These quantitative findings belong to the analysis carried out on the first twenty-two sentences of Surah Yusuf, all the thirty-nine sentences of Surah Al-Muddaththir and the first twenty-four sentences of Surah Ar-Rahman.

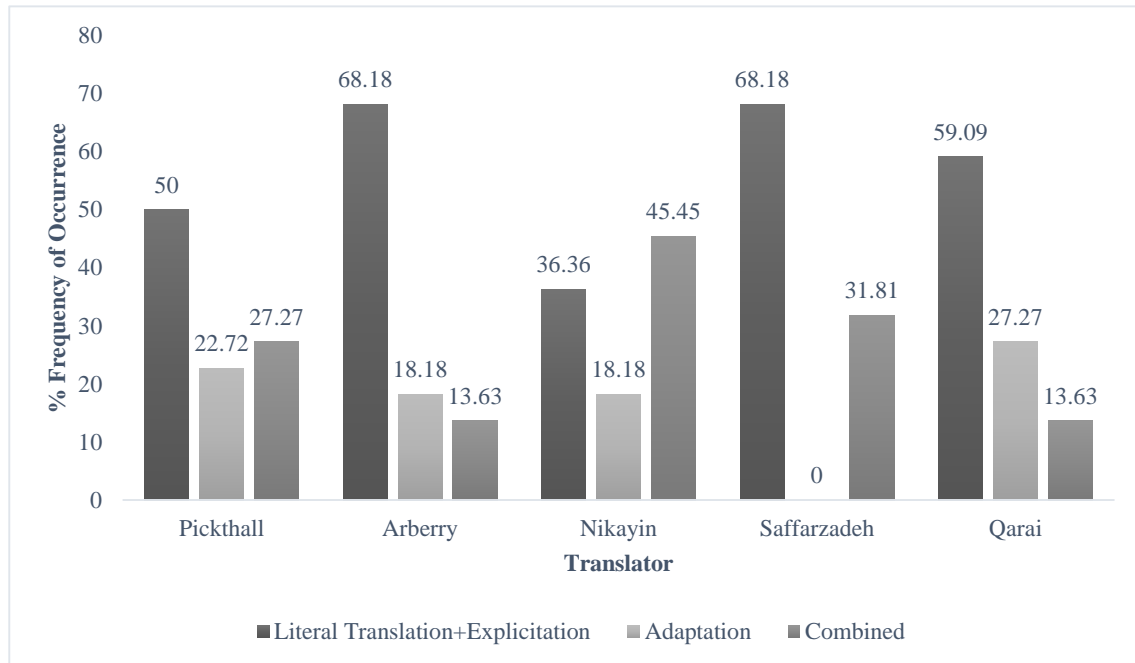


Figure 1. The percentage of the Frequency for Strategies in the Translation of Surah Yusuf

As shown in Figure 1, from among the translation strategies applied in the translations of Surah Yusuf, the strategy of 'literal translation, explication as required (i.e., literal translation + explication) was most frequently employed by four translators. Hence, in line with Reiss's (2014) model, Pickthall's, Arberry's, Saffarzadeh's and Qarai's translations can be considered functionally equivalent when it comes to informative texts. However, Nikayin's translation, which was produced through the most frequent use of the 'combined' strategy, cannot be considered equivalent to the source text in functional terms. Thus, Nikayin's translation contradicts Reiss's (2014) model. The occurrence of the 'combined' strategy by the five translators for 27.27, 13.63, 45.45, 31.81 and 13.63 of the cases suggests that their approach is not in line with Reiss's (2014) theoretical model.

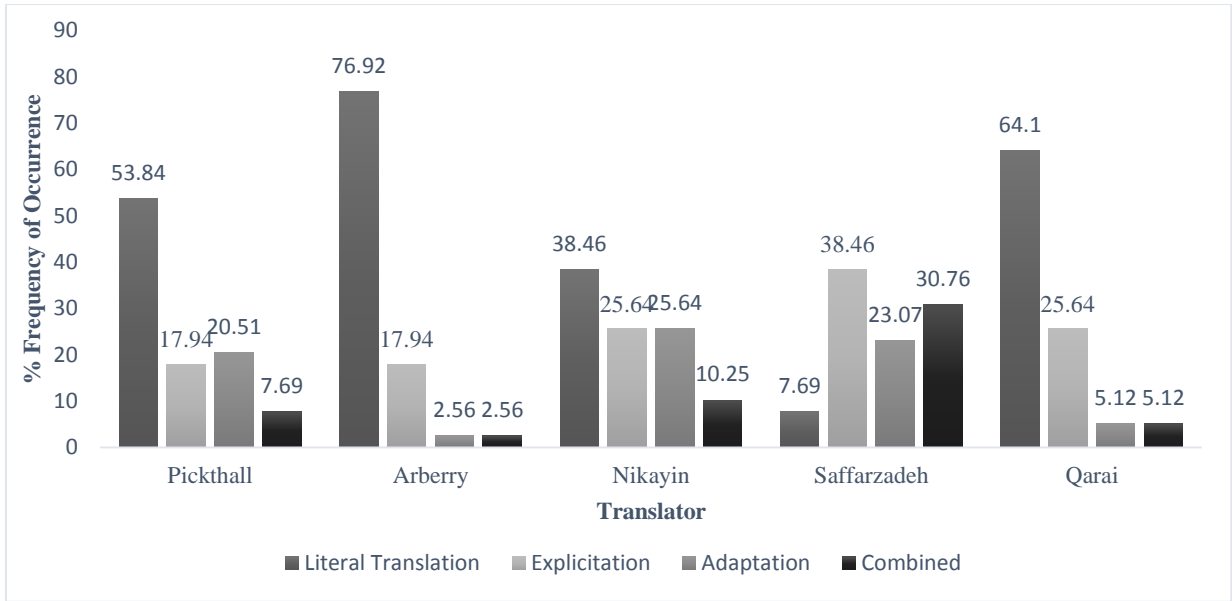


Figure 2. The Percentage of the Frequency for Strategies in the Translation of Surah Al-Muddaththir

As shown in Figure 2, four translators (Pickthall, Arberry, Nikayin and Qarai) most frequently applied the ‘literal translation’ strategy in the translation of Surah Al-Muddaththir. Hence, the translations produced by these translators can be considered functionally equivalent to their corresponding expressive source text. However, Saffarzadeh’s translation of the source text is in contrast to the model. That is because the most frequently employed strategy in Saffarzadeh’s translation is ‘explication’. Hence, her translation cannot be considered functionally equivalent to the expressive source text, with regard to Reiss’s (2014) model. The occurrence of the ‘combined’ strategy by the five translators for 7.69, 2.56, 10.25, 30.76 and 5.12 of the cases suggests that their approach is not in line with Reiss’s (2014) theoretical model.

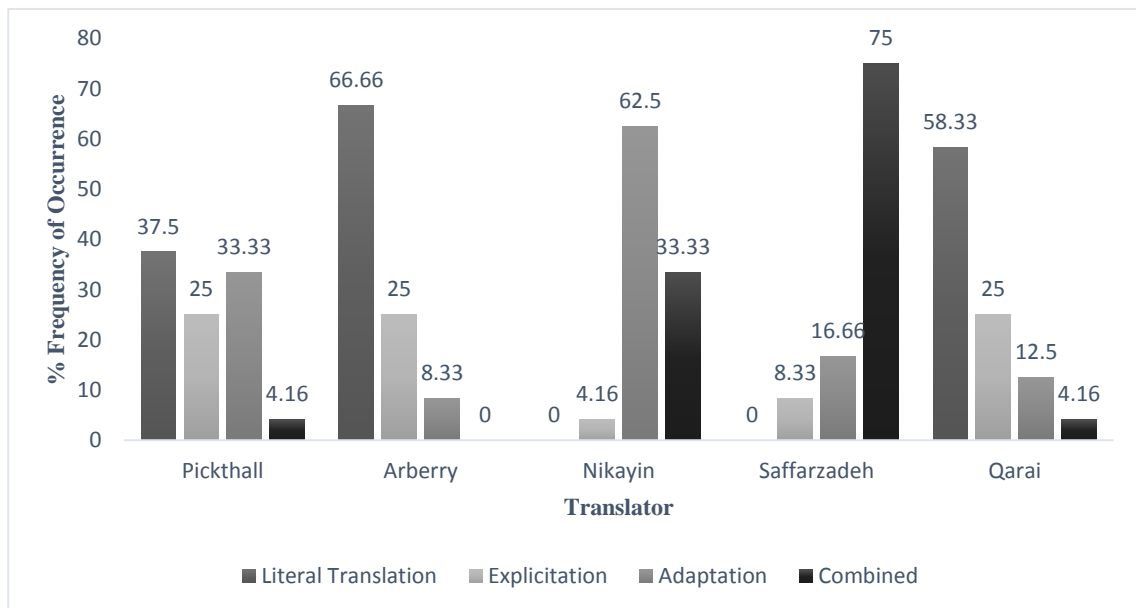


Figure 3. The Percentage of the Frequency for Strategies in the Translation of Surah Ar-Rahman.

As shown in Figure 3, from among the five translations of Surah Ar-Rahman, Pickthall's, Arberry's, and Qarai's translations were produced through the most frequent application of 'literal translation'. In addition, Saffarzadeh's translation was produced through the most frequent employment of the 'combined' strategy. Hence, with respect to Reiss's (2014) model, these four translations cannot be considered equivalent to their operative original text in terms of their main functions. However, Nikayin's translation can be considered functionally equivalent to its corresponding source text, conforming to Reiss's (2014) model. That is because Nikayin most frequently applied the 'adaptation' strategy in the translation of the text. With these in mind, there seems to be a sharp contrast between the practices of translation of source texts of the operative type and Reiss's (2014) relevant theoretical viewpoint. Another contradiction between the practice and the theory can again be seen in the application of the 'combined' strategy.

## 5. Discussion

In line with the research objective, the findings of the present study are reported and discussed in the following subsections. In this respect, the findings are compared with Reiss's (2014) theoretical model and the empirical findings of past research.

### 5.1 Translation Pattern of Informative Texts

The analysis of the translations showed that four translators most frequently applied the strategy of 'literal translation, explicitation as required' in the translation of informative texts. This pattern is similar to Reiss's (2014) relevant prediction and the findings of Allard's (2014) study. However, this finding stands in contrast to the results of the studies by Azizi (2008), Igder and Karimnia (2010), and Holst (2010). The discrepancies found between the findings may be due to the following reasons. First, the samples under analysis in those studies were simple texts, not sensitive sacred ones. Second, only some sections of Reiss's (2014) theoretical model were applied in those studies, especially the text-type typology rather than the translation strategies. Last, regarding Azizi's (2008) study, the translations under his analysis were produced by semi-professional translators, while Reiss's (2014) model is related to professional translators. Nevertheless, it may also be possible that the findings from the analysis of the translations of only one informative source text cannot be generalized.

### 5.2 Translation Pattern of Expressive Texts

The analysis of the translations showed that four translators most frequently applied the strategy of 'literal translation' in the translation of expressive texts. This is in accord with Reiss's (2014) relevant prediction. This pattern is also similar to the findings of the studies by Vahid Dastjerdi and Baghaei Naeini (2012), Manafi Anari and Adili (2016), Farshchi (2017), and Manafi Anari and Jahanjouyan (2020). However, this finding is in contrast with the findings of the studies by Azizi (2008), Igder and Karimnia (2010), and Attar (2016). The difference between the findings may be because of the reasons discussed in the previous section. In addition, regarding Azizi's (2008) study, it seems that its weak internal validity may have resulted in this contrast. The mentioned problem with the internal validity is due to Azizi's (2008) single analysis of the rhyme scheme of a sample expressive source text rather than the complete analysis of all different representative features of the form. The mentioned formal features, according to Reiss (2014), are not only rhyme schemes but also literary devices, syntactic features and the like. Moreover, regarding Attar's (2016) study, the small sample size may be a possible cause of the discrepancy. Similarly, the use of only

one text as the expressive source text in this study may also be a possible reason for the dissimilarity.

### *5.3 Translation Pattern of Operative Texts*

The evidence derived from the findings of the analysis of the translations revealed an unexpected approach to the translation of the operative text, which was adopted by most professional translators. In accordance with the mentioned evidence, it seems that most professional translators (three translators) mostly applied the 'literal translation' strategy in the translation of such texts. Besides, the findings of this study also revealed that professional translators may most frequently apply the 'combined' strategy or the 'adaptation' one—each with a 20 percent chance of occurrence—in the translation of operative texts. Hence, compared to Reiss's (2014) theory, it seems that the translation practices of such texts show an 80 percent contrast. Similarly, this finding is different from the related one of Holst's 2010 and the main one of Allard's 2014 studies, which were similar to Reiss's (2014) relevant claim. This difference can be ascribed to different kinds of source texts (different genres) in the studies. However, the pattern detected regarding the translation of operative texts is similar to the secondary findings of Allard's 2014 study. That is because Allard (2014) also found that whenever (almost) no concepts in an operative source-text are unfamiliar to the text receivers, the persuasive function of the text can be preserved in translation even if the formal and content-specific features of the source text are copied. This also seems to be the case in Surah Ar-Rahman. Since the chapter attempts to influence the behavioral responses of its addressees, it seems that the concepts God used in this chapter are familiar to almost all humans. This possibility seems to be in accord with Reiss's (2014) extra-linguistic determining factor, also known as 'immediate situation'. The 'immediate situation', according to Reiss (2014), refers to a situation in which whether source-text concepts are comprehensible or incomprehensible for target-text receivers, determines professional translators' choices of translation strategies. Besides, another justification for the high probability of the reliability of this finding can be surprisingly seen in the findings of Poshtdar (2015) and Manafi Anari and Mostafaei (2017) studies. According to the findings of those studies, the poetic type of translation seemingly gives translators the freedom to ignore formal and content-specific features of original texts in translation. Hence, Nikayin's choice of the 'adaptation' strategy in his poetic translation of the operative text is not surprising. Moreover, Surah Ar-Rahman, as declared by Prophet Muhammad, is known as the bride of the Qur'ān due to its unique aesthetic form. Hence, its selection as an operative source text may question the internal validity of this study. Another reason for this finding can be ascribed to the fact that the sample size for this study was not large enough. Finally, the genre of the corpus under analysis in this study can be the most probable reason for this unexpected finding. According to Manafi Anari (2003), translators prefer to maintain both the content and form (which are usually integrated into each other) of religious texts like the Qur'ān in their translations. This justification seems to be in accord with what Reiss (2014) predicted as a limitation of her model. In this respect, in the translation of sacred texts like the Bible, the main function of the original sacred text, along with the main function of the translation should be determined determinant (Reiss, 2014). In detail, according to Reiss (2014), if a translator mainly intends to invite others to a certain religion, the original text can be operative. However, if another translator mainly intends to preserve the sacred nature of the original text in the translation, the original text will be expressive (Reiss, 2014). With this in mind, it seems that professional translators' main intention of translation governs their strategies in the translation of the Qur'ānic operative texts.

## 6. Conclusions

The present study had two objectives. It was first intended to discover what pattern emerges in professional translators' main strategies for different text types of the Qur'ān. The findings suggest that most professional translators most frequently applied the 'literal translation' and 'explicitation' strategies when translating the Qur'ānic informative texts. Besides, 4 and 3 out of the 5 translators most frequently applied the strategy of 'literal translation' in the translation of Qur'ānic expressive and operative texts, respectively. Second, this study was intended to find to what extent Reiss's (2014) model of source-text types and translation strategies for the translation of the Qur'ān was applicable and practical. The results indicated that the emerged patterns, by and large, were consistent with the theoretical model concerning the translation of Qur'ānic informative and expressive texts. Besides, according to the previously mentioned numerical findings of the present study, Reiss's (2014) model seems to be, by and large, inconsistent with the practices of translation of Qur'ānic operative texts. The reason can be ascribed to the influence of professional translators' main intention for the translation of such sacred texts. With these in mind, it can be concluded that Reiss's (2014) model seems to be applicable to the translation of the Qur'ān as far as 'informative' and 'expressive' text types are concerned and the 'adaptation' translation strategy is the goal. This is probably because for professional translators, the Qur'ān has two main functions and only two text types can be considered for it (focusing either on the content or on the form).

As a text-type-oriented research on translations of the Qur'ān, this study seems to be the first seminal work in this regard. Hence, it has the potential to be replicated in the future by other researchers. Therefore, future researchers can benefit from both theoretical and practical aspects of this study. For instance, the new strategy introduced in this paper -i.e., the 'combined' strategy- can be interesting and useful for other scholars. This study can also lead to modification of Reiss's (2014) theory and development in the area of descriptive translation studies. The present study can further be of benefit to translation researchers, theorists, and critics, translator trainers, trainee translators, translation agencies and curriculum designers.

Despite the above-mentioned benefits of it, this study had also some limitations, which were as follows. First, the researcher's limited knowledge of the Qur'ān language could constrain the reliability of the analysis. Second, the researcher's time and energy were limited. Third, they were multiple varied function-based theoretical models for the analysis of translation. Lastly, Reiss's model has a drawback, which can limit the analysis. However, in order to resolve these limitations, some delimitations were introduced. To assist the analysis, exegesis of the Holy Qur'an, together with two Persian translations of the Qur'ān as well as Arabic-English dictionaries were used. Secondly, three source texts and five target texts were used. Thirdly, Reiss's functionalist model was employed. Lastly, to improve the model, a new category named 'combined' strategy, was added to Reiss's suggested translation strategies.

Given the pioneering nature of this study, its replication is recommended. In addition, it is suggested that interested researchers select another surah as a sample of operative texts and choose a larger corpus. Moreover, it is highly recommended that future researchers investigate the influence or lack of influence of each of the discussed possible causes of the unexpected finding. More specifically, three reasons, as discussed in the paper, can form new hypotheses for future studies. These hypotheses can be tested: (a) The factor that influences professional translators' mostly applied strategies in the translation of operative

texts of the Qur'ān is the immediate situation. (b) The use of the poetic method of translation by professional translators influences their most frequent application of the adaptation strategy in the translation of Qur'ānic operative texts. (c) The main function of a translation influences professional translators' mostly applied strategies in the translation of operative texts of the Qur'ān.

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### **Conflicts of interest**

The authors declared no conflict of interest.

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