

Yasmin H. Hannouna

## Assessment of Translating Recurrence in Selected Texts from the Qur'an

### *Abstract*

This article examines how the various functions of recurrence in the Qur'an, the Holy Book of Islam, such as *emphasizing, clarifying, praising, warning*, etc are dealt with in the English translations carried out by two well-known translators of the Book, i.e., Ali (1973) and Pickthall (1930). Recurrence is one of the favourable textual issues that leads to much clarity and effectiveness. However, what can be considered as a semantically redundant expression in English may not be so in Arabic. Selected texts from the two translations are closely examined and compared. The analyses of texts are based on de Beaugrande and Dressler's model (1981) being the most relevant to the study requirements. Finally, the study asserts that both translators managed in preserving the functional aspects of recurrence in the target language, although Pickthall's seems more effective. In addition, deletion and other translation strategies, are required if a communicative translation is sought.

### **1 Introduction**

The aim of this study is to investigate the use of recurrence in the Qur'an and to find out how it can be rendered into English to be as efficient as it is in Arabic. This study also aims to explore what rhetorical functions recurrence serves in the Qur'an and what forms and types of recurrence there are in English and Arabic. In addition, the study concerns itself with the methods and strategies used in translating recurrence from Arabic into English and the strategies used to eliminate semantic redundancy in the target text (henceforth TT). More specifically, it sets out to examine the methods the translators use when rendering recurrence in the Qur'an and which of the two sample translations in this study is more effective than the other in rendering recurrence.

The data of the study consist of selected Qur'anic texts, since recurrence is an impressive way of expression and a rhetorical figure that is widely used in the Qur'an. These texts will be thoroughly analysed in terms of the forms and functions of repetition according to de Beaugrande and Dressler's (1981) model of recurrence. Two from among the best known translations of the Qur'an will be adopted for the analysis and assessment processes in terms of their effective rendering of recurrence into the target language (henceforth, TL). These translations are carried out by Ali (1973) *Translation of the Meanings of the Glorious Qur'an into English* (see also Ali 2009) and Pickthall (1930) *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an* (see also Pickthall 2009).

Repetition is a frequent phenomenon in probably all languages of the world. Repetitions of any kind usually serve rhetorical purposes. They indicate that there is a similarly regular relation between formal and content-related entities, usually expressing a relation of equivalence, but sometimes also of opposition (de Beaugrande/Dressler 1981: 63).

According to de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981: 57), the term for repetitions in a text is 'recurrence' which serves to put the focus on the speaker's viewpoint. It is argued that far from being trivial linguistic resources, repetitions from a functional standpoint, play a central role in increasing informativity and the audience interest in the text. In addition, de Beaugrande (1980: 134-135) states that deliberate motivated occurrences with certain functions contribute to the efficiency of a text.

Recurrence, the study argues, is used in the Qur'an to serve various functions. The repetition of words or phrases and even of structures that appears in the Qur'an is not worthless. It indicates emphasis, intimidation, veneration, and other functions. It also shows the frequency of eloquence of the Qur'an.

A special status is accorded to Arabic in Islam, due to the Qur'an being written in Arabic. However, Modern standard Arabic is best characterized as the form which resembles closest the classical Arabic *فصحى fusha* of the Qur'an. It is devoid of any regional accent and intelligible to all Arabic speakers. Modern Standard Arabic and Classical Arabic are in fact grammatically and syntactically the same. The difference lies primarily in the extensive vocabulary of classical Arabic much of which is rarely used in Modern Standard Arabic though there is no problem in understanding. The language of the Qur'an or Classical Arabic is generally recognized as being the most eloquent variety of Arabic. While Modern Standard Arabic is the only written form used across the entire Arab world, its spoken counterpart is usually confined to the media, used in news broadcasting, factual programs and to a lesser extent talk shows. The vast majority of spoken Arabic takes place in dialect all over the Arab world. All educated Arabs are expected to be able to converse in Classical Arabic when the need arises (e.g., recitation of the Qur'an). It is worth mentioning here, that as the Qur'an is written in Arabic and much of its meaning is bound to the cultural context of the 8th century Arabia, it is often deemed impossible to produce translations of words or phrases without losing some of the significance and poetic eloquence these same phrases hold in Arabic ("Arabic – The Language of the Arabs and Islam" 2009).

Although both English and Arabic use the main types of cohesive devices, the two languages show marked differences in the use of the subtypes. In this respect, Aziz (1998: 107) maintains that a number of differences may be detected in the use of lexical cohesion in the two languages. Arabic tends to repeat the same form, while English avoids repetition by using substitution, ellipsis or reference. The following examples show these differences (Aziz 1998: 111):

- (1) فذهب علي لمقابلته. وكف رجال علي عن الأنتقام.  
*Fedhahaba Alyun limuqabalatihi. Wa kaf rijalu Alyn 'an alintiqam.*  
(The proper noun 'Ali' is repeated in the second sentence.)  
Ali went to meet him, and his men stopped vengeance.  
(The noun 'Ali' is substituted by the pronoun 'his' in the second occurrence.)
- (2) وجعل يدعوهُ إلى سهراته الخاصة... شهد عرفة سهرة عجيبة.  
*Wa ja'ala yad'auhu ila saharatihi alkhassa ... shahida Arafa sahra 'ajiiba.*  
(The plural noun 'saharatihi' is repeated in the second sentence with its singular form 'sahra'.)  
He began inviting him to his special parties... Arafa attended a strange one in the drawing room.  
(The noun 'parties' is substituted by the pronoun 'one' in the second occurrence)
- (3) هل إنتهيت من كتابة المقال؟ نعم إنتهيت.  
*Hal intahayt min kitabat almaqal? Na'am intahayt.*  
(The verb 'intahayt' is repeated in the answer 'intahayt'.)  
Have you finished writing the essay? Yes, I have.  
(The verb 'finished' is ellipted in the answer and only the auxiliary 'have' stands for the whole predicate.)

These subtle differences have to be taken into consideration in any serious translation, so that the adequacy and efficiency of the TT will not suffer from any problem.

In the next sections, an overview of key theoretical and empirical investigations into repetitions is provided. First, recurrence in both English and Arabic will thoroughly be discussed from various view points. The model of recurrence on the basis of which the sample translations are analysed and evaluated will also be presented. Then, translating recurrence will be dealt with focusing on the secret of recurrence in the Qur'an and the assessment of translating recurrence from Arabic into English. Finally, the findings of the study will be discussed and the conclusion will be given.

## 2 Recurrence in English and Arabic

The present section gives a general discussion of repetition or "recurrence" in English and Arabic with the aim of showing the differences between the two linguistic systems in this respect.

### 2.1 Recurrence in English

This subsection deals with the identification and explanation of recurrence in English from the viewpoints of some specialists in the field of text linguistics and discourse analysis. Among these, the model proposed by de Beaugrande (1980) and de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) will be exploited for the purpose of the present study.

### *Models of Cohesion*

The pervasiveness of repetition has been highlighted by many authors and Halliday and Hasan indicate that reiteration is

a form of lexical cohesion that involves the repetition of a lexical item, at one end of the scale; the use of a general word to refer back to a lexical item, at the other end of the scale; and a number of things in between – the use of synonym, near-synonym, or superordinate. (Halliday/Hasan 1976: 278)

However, in this model, what is called "lexical cohesion" is merely the reiteration of a lexical item in a context of grammatical cohesion, the cohesion being simply a matter of reference (see also Talib s.a.).

Moreover, the distinction between reference and reiteration is that the former is a type of grammatical cohesion while the latter is a form of lexical cohesion. Repetition or "recurrence" is a phenomenon that creates a cohesive effect which is free of varied expression. However, even in its purest form, recurrence may be used together with pro-forms (Hatim/Mason 1990: 199). To summarize, reiteration (including recurrence) is independent of reference since it is lexical in dimension, but it can be accompanied by forms of reference such as pro-forms while maintaining a separate cohesive effect.

In his discussion of the lexicology of composition, Nash maintains that one effective device of lexical cohesion is simply to reiterate a word until it becomes "a pervasive motif, insistently claiming and directing the reader's attention" (Nash 1980: 46).

Hoey states that repetition is seen as "a clause relation signal" (Hoey 1983: 17-30), i.e., repetition of a clause or a sentence as opposed to the repetition of isolated words. He indicates that many relations are signalled by repetition. He notes that sentences are unable to convey all the information that might be given on a subject; they are by nature selective. Repetition is accordingly a way of "opening out" a sentence so that its lexical uniqueness may be used as a basis for providing further, related information.

Moreover, Hoey and Winter (1986: 129) state that repetition is also used to relate subordinate and main clauses, signalling the replacement of clause status, as illustrated in the example below:

- (4) These considerations were the ones that led the senator, in a new bill, to propose moving the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. *If they were the whole story*, there could be no good argument against the bill. *But they are not the whole story*. Two other major considerations apply. ("Jerusalem distraction" an editorial in *The Washington Post*, reprinted in the *Guardian Weekly*, 1 April 1984: 1 – quoted from Hoey/Winter 1986: 129)

Halliday (1985: 310) points out that continuity may be established in any text by the choice of words. This may take the form of word repetition; or the choice of a word that is related in some way to previous one either semantically or collocationally. He maintains that the most direct form of lexical cohesion is the repetition of a lexical item, i.e., complete recurrence, as in:

- (5) Algy met a *bear*. The *bear* was bulgy.

In addition, in order for a lexical item to be recognized as repeated, it needs not be in the same morphological shape. The following example illustrates this point:

(6) I *strove*, for none was worth my *strife*.

There is a strongly felt cohesion between the verb *strove* and the noun *strife*, an example of partial recurrence, suggesting that *strove* and *strife* are one and the same lexical item (Halliday 1985: 330-331).

It is noticeable that Halliday, in this model, makes a slight modification to his model of cohesion (Halliday/Hasan 1976) as both repetition and synonymy are sub-classes of reiteration; while they are separate types of lexical cohesion along with collocation in the present model.

According to Quirk et al. (1985: 1441) even in language that is being used in less specialized way, repetition is common enough to convey emphasis. Moreover, repetition in ordinary discourse also occurs to indicate the repetition, extent or confirmation of a phenomenon, as seen in the examples below:

- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
| (7) The only remedy is <i>work, work, work</i> .       | (Noun)        |
| (8) She <i>screamed</i> and <i>screamed</i> for hours. | (Verb)        |
| (9) She is <i>very, very</i> intelligent.              | (Intensifier) |
| (10) A <i>lovely, lovely</i> chrysanthemum.            | (Adjective)   |

(Quirk et al. 1985: 1441)

Further, Hatim and Mason (1990: 199) discuss recurrence with relevance to translation indicating that recurrence is the repetition of items with the same referent in a text. It is usually a symptom of intentionality and as such it is significant. They emphasize that it is the strict recurrence of the same items in the same form that creates the effect. They agree with de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) that recurrence is prominently used to assert and re-affirm one's viewpoint. This cohesive device at play is not random; it is motivated by overall rhetorical purpose. Assuming that recurrence is a universal rhetorical device, any attempt by a translator to vary TT expression at these points in the text is sure to detract from equivalence of text focus. (For further details, see Philips 1985; Hoey 1990; Johnstone 1991, 1994; Mojica 2006.)

## 2.2 The Model of Recurrence in the Present Study

De Beaugrande and Dressler point out that recurrence is "the straightforward repetition of elements or patterns" (de Beaugrande/Dressler 1981: 49). To them, it is one of the most important devices of cohesion with its contribution to the processing efficiency of a text (de Beaugrande 1980: 134). Another type of recurrence is referred to as "partial recurrence". This involves the shifting of already used elements to different classes (e.g., from noun to verb), i.e., a shift in the syntactic function of an expression where the recurring element is adapted to its environments, yet the identity of reference is still obvious. This recurrence type offers the text producer the potential to create new language items, since one occurrence can provide for the comprehension of the other (de Beaugrande 1980: 135).

Recurrence is said to serve various functions in certain texts and as Leech indicates repetition is "a fundamental device of intensification" (Leech 1969: 78). He gives the example below representing complete recurrence (i.e., verbatim) where the irregular repetition of the name "*Lycidas*", together with other repetitions, seems to contribute to the elegiac pomp of Milton's poem of that name:

- (11) For *Lycidas* is dead, dead ere his prime,  
Young *Lycidas*, and hath not left his peer.  
Who would not sing for *Lycidas*? He know  
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.

(Leech 1969: 78)

The following examples taken from de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981: 56-57) show partial recurrences as the adjective *separate* is shifted into the noun *separation* in (12) and the verb *suffer* is shifted into the adjective *sufferable* and then into the noun *sufferance* in (13):

- (12) ... to assume among the powers of the earth the *separate* and equal station  
... the causes which impel them to the *separation*.  
(13) mankind are disposed to *suffer*, while evils are *sufferable* ... such has been  
the patient *sufferance* of these Colonies.

Recurrence, as noticed here, has the disadvantage of reducing informativity. What also depress the informativity of a text are the recurrences of lengthy expressions or whole passages. Therefore, techniques are often used in which forms recur with somewhat different content or content recurs with different forms. Repeating a structure, but filling it with new elements constitutes "parallelism" (de Beaugrande 1980: 136; de Beaugrande/Dressler 1981: 49, 57). The following example taken from Leech (1969: 81) represents initial combined with final repetition to indicate parallelism:

- (14) *I will* recruit myself and you *as I go*;  
*I will* scatter myself among men and women *as I go*;

In this example, the repetition of *I will* and *as I go* contribute to textual efficiency. The elimination of these repetitions though results in a more economical example, would be probably less effective, as seen below:

- (15) *As I go*, *I will* recruit for myself and you, and scatter myself among men and women. (Leech 1969: 81)

However, what might increase informativity and interest are the deliberate violations of "stability" and "economy" principles. The former "assigns a high priority to strategies for co-ordinating surface expressions that share common or contiguous conceptual content", while the latter indicates that "wherever expedient or doubtful, preference should be given to re-using already activated content, rather than activating new content". The stability of a text as a system is upheld via a "continuity of occurrences". In this connection, recurrence would entail sameness of reference, but this could lead to conflicts in texts where there seem to be no alternative expressions for different referents (all quotations in this paragraph: de Beaugrande 1980: 134-135).

From the psychological viewpoint, there must be a difference between the "trivial" recurrences, i.e., required by the limited repertoires of language options, and "motivated" recurrences, i.e., where repetition has some deeper justification (de Beaugrande 1980: 135). This means that deliberate motivated occurrences with certain functions contribute to the efficiency of a text such as the case in poetic texts. In these texts, the surface organization of the text is often motivated by special correspondences to the meaning and purpose of the whole communication. In Tennyson's well-known line (quoted in de Beaugrande/Dressler 1981: 55), the recurrence enacts the motion of the waves being described.

(16) Break, break, break  
On thy cold grey shores, O Sea!

To sum up, there should be strong motivation for recurrence. Motivated occurrences are prominently used to assert and re-affirm one's viewpoint, or to convey a surprise at occurrences that seem to conflict with one's viewpoint. They intentionally add to the meaning and are used for clarification. Trivial occurrences, on the other hand, with no clear intention or rhetorical function decrease informativity. De Beaugrande and Dressler maintain that "recurrence is customarily kept within limits. If unduly frequent, it lowers informativity" (de Beaugrande/Dressler 1981: 54-55). For instance, utterances like:

(17) John ran home and John ran home.

would be unacceptable, since it is pointless to say exactly the same thing twice.

Having presented the most common models of cohesion, the texts' analyses in the present study are based on de Beaugrande and Dressler's (1981) model. In this model, much focus is placed on the differences between the functional and the non-functional aspects of repetition serving the aims of the present study. In the other models, no such reference is made. Halliday and Hasan (1976) focus on repetition in a context of grammatical cohesion. Nash (1980) does not give details of this cohesive device especially what concerns the functional side. While Halliday (1980) discusses both complete and partial repetition, Hoey (1983, 1990) views repetition as a clause relation signals that emphasizes the syntactic and semantic aspects of the device. Finally, although Quirk (1985) and Hatim and Mason (1990) refer to how repetition serves the function of emphasis within a text, their models do not discuss the subject as profoundly and clearly as de Beaugrande and Dressler do in their model.

### 2.3 Recurrence in Arabic

Generally speaking, redundancy is often characterized as wordiness or unnecessary repetition in expressing ideas. This, however, should not lead us into thinking that all forms of redundancy are unacceptable for it is never the case. Some languages such as Arabic do accept some kind of redundancy. In other words, redundancy in Arabic falls into two types: functional redundancy and non-functional one. Of course, the concern of the present paper would be with the functional type of redundancy, i.e., verbosity, as recurrence is one of its various modes putting aside other terms pertinent to the non-functional type, such as *الإطالة* 'al-*ītaala* 'tautology' or 'prolixity'. Shunnaq

states that "as far as translation is concerned, the former, i.e., the functional semantic redundancy should be retained by the translator when rendering into English, whereas the latter, i.e., the non-functional should be eliminated" (Shunnaq 1994: 103).

In this connection, Johnstone (1983: 55) and Hatim (1997: 160) indicate that in Arabic functional repetition is motivated, serving important rhetorical functions, and thus has a place in the overall plan of developing a text; while non-functional repetition is not necessarily motivated, and thus it does not necessarily serve a particular rhetorical purpose.

According to Hilāl (1980: 239), Arabs knew this style (i.e., recurrence) long time ago, as it was a prominent feature in their poetry and literary language. Thus, various instances of this device occur in the Qur'an addressing the Arabs with a style most familiar to them and that they can most realize and grasp its different functions and implications.

The following Qur'anic verses show different forms and functions realized by recurrence in various contexts. This occurs on the level of lexical items within the same context (either at the beginning or at the end of the same Qur'anic verse, Examples 18 and 19 respectively), i.e., inseparable recurrence; the repetition of the same verse one part immediately follows the other (also instances of inseparable recurrence, Example 20) or in the form of a complete verse that is repeated many times throughout the same Qur'anic Chapter *Sūra* or throughout the whole Qur'an, i.e., separable recurrence (Example 21).

Recurrence here is used in a context of emphasizing God's praise and reward of the foremost believers.

(18) *وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ أُولَئِكَ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ*

*Walsabiqoona alsabiqoona 'ulaaika almuqarraboona*

(al-Wāqī'ah 10-11)

And the foremost in the race, the foremost in the race:

Those are they who will be brought nigh

(Pickthall 2009: 175)

Recurrence here is used in a context of emphasis, warning, threatening and clarification of the situation on the Day of Reckoning. It also serves the functions of veneration and intimidation, as in:

(19) *كَلَّا إِذَا دُكَّتِ الْأَرْضُ دَكًّا دَكًّا*

*Kalaa idhaa dukkat al- ardu dakkan dakkan*

(Al-Fajr 21-22)

Nay, but when the earth is ground to atoms, grinding, grinding

(Pickthall 1930: 440, 2009: 202-203)

Other instances show recurrence on the level of more complex structures and expressions. Recurrence is also used here to emphasize and threaten people of the situation on the Day of Reckoning. It serves the functions of veneration and intimidation, as in:

(20) وما أدراك ما يوم الدين، ثم ما أدراك ما يوم الدين  
*Wa ma adraaka ma yawmu aldeen*  
*Thuma ma adraaka ma yawmu aldeen*

(Al-'Infitār 17-18)

Ah, what will convey unto thee what the Day of Judgment is!  
Again, what will convey unto thee what the Day of Judgment is!

(Pickthall 2009: 199)

In the example below, the bounties of Allah Almighty are mentioned one after the other and after each bounty this Qur'anic verse is repeated throughout the whole Chapter *Sūra*. This whole discourse is couched in oratorical language. It is a spirited and eloquent address in the course of which after mentioning each of the wonders of Allah's great power, and each of the blessings bestowed by Him, and each of the manifestations of His Sovereignty and dominion, and each of the details of His punishment and rewards, the jinn and men have been over and over again questioned: "Which then of the bounties and favours of your Lord will you deny?" Since the purpose behind mentioning this verse in one place differs from these behind mentioning it in other places, it is, then, an example of repetition. In general, the extract serves to emphasize warning and to remind jinn and men of the evil consequences of His disobedience and make them aware of the best results of His obedience.

(21) فبأي آلاء ربكما تكذبان

*Fa bi 'yyi alaa'i Rabbikuma tukadhiban*

(Al-Rahmān, where it is repeated 31 times)

Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that you deny?

(Pickthall 2009: 174-175)

In addition to its role in reinforcing the note of poetic language, recurrence is skilfully used as a cohesive device in Arabic literature with the purpose of linking and connecting utterances together in a discursal form and manner. This can be illustrated in the following poetic lines of Ta'bbata Sharran:

- (22) عولي إن كنت ذا عول لكنما على بصير يكسب الحمد سياق  
سياق غايات مجد في عشيرته مرجع الصوت هذا بين ارفاق

*Auli in kunti dhaa 'aulin lakinama*  
*'alaa baseerin yaksubu alhamdu*  
*sabaaq*  
*Sabaaqu ghaayaatu majdin fee*  
*'asheeratihi*  
*Marj'a alsawtu hadha bayn arfaaq*

(Ta'bbata Sharran quoted in Hilāl 1980: 244)

In the above example, the repetition of the word *Sabaaq* سياق in the rhyme of the first verse and the beginning (initial position) of the second emphasizes the note of the rhyme and links it with the second verse. This kind of recurrence helps to bring the force of the tone and its continuity to the hearer.

In short, we can say that recurrence in the Arabic literature, and especially in poetry, has been used mainly as a kind of note intended to reinforce the musical effect of the utterances. In addition, the recurrence of names and places is a kind of longing and yearning as most of these are associated with love, pain, lament, abandon, death, etc.

Further, repetition may be appealed to for the sake of coherence. Bander emphasizes this fact when he states that one of the means "of achieving coherence is to repeat a key word from one sentence to the next" (Bander 1983: 271). This can be found in the following Qur'anic verse:

- (23) إهدنا الصراط المستقيم، صراط الذين أنعمت عليهم  
*Ihdina alssiraata almustaqeema ,*  
*Siraata alladheena an'Amta 'Alayhim*

(Al-Fātiha 6-7)

Show us the straightway. The way of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace.

(Ali 1973: 6-7)

The lexical item *الصراط alssiraata* 'the way' is repeated from one verse to the next in order to preserve coherence.

It is worth noting that in Arabic we might find some examples which are not pleonastic (i.e., the repetition is functional), but when translated literally into English, they look on the face of it redundant. This is why some western scholars may consider Arabic to be a pleonastic or redundant language. Thus, in the Qur'an itself, we come across numerous examples, in Arabic they are highly communicative (with the emphatic

function), but when rendered into English, they look pleonastic, as illustrated in the example below (Shunnaq 1994: 115):

(24) إذ تلقونه بألسنتكم وتقولون بأفواهكم ما ليس لكم به علم وتحسبونه هيناً وهو عند الله عظيم.

*Idh talqawnahu bi alsinatikum wa taqooloona bi afwahikum ma laysa lakum bihi 'almun wa tahsaboona hayinan wa huwa 'ainda Allahi 'aḍeemun.*

(An-Nūr 15)

When you welcomed it with your tongues and uttered with your mouths that whereof you had no knowledge, you counted it a trifle, while it was very great in the sight of Allah.

(Ali 1973: 899-900)

The argument, here, is that since the mouth is an instrument of speech, there is no need for the added information. However, within its context this example shows that such added information has a reinforcing effect (i.e., not pleonastic, but has an emphatic function).

Aziz (1998: 107) mentions that many translated texts are felt to be inadequate, because they suffer from faults in cohesion. Regarding recurrence as a type of lexical cohesion, it is noticeable that Arabic frequently repeats the same form, while English avoids repetition by using substitution, ellipsis or references. So, this marked difference between the two languages must be taken into consideration for an adequate translation.

In fact, this subject is too broad to be covered in such a paper. For more information and further details on the subject, see Al-Jubouri (1984), Shunnaq (1992, 1994) and *AlSh'air wa Delalaat al Tikraar* (2009).

### 3 Translating Recurrence

#### 3.1 The Secret of Recurrence in the Qur'an

Arab rhetoricians have paid attention to recurrence since, among other reasons, it is an impressive way of expression and a rhetorical figure that is widely used in the Qur'an.

A great number of studies have been carried out to investigate the rhetorical secrets of the Qur'an. Not surprising, therefore, that the most significant incentive to the development of Arabic rhetoric is to have information about the language of the Qur'an (Khaleel 1968: 79).

The Qur'an is written in Arabic and all Islamic terms are in Arabic. Millions of Muslims (both Arab and non-Arab) study the language. Classical Arabic is the language found in the Qur'an and used from the period of Pre-Islamic Arabia to that of the Abbasid Caliphate. It is considered normative. Modern authors attempt to follow the syntactic and grammatical norms laid down by classical grammarians (such as Sibawayh), and use the vocabulary defined in classical dictionaries (such as the *Lisaan al-Arab*). Based on Classical Arabic, Modern Standard Arabic (فصحى *fushaa*) is the literary language used in most current printed Arabic publications. It is spoken by the

Arabic media across North Africa and the Middle East, and understood by most educated Arabic speakers. "Literary Arabic" and "Standard Arabic" are less strictly defined terms that may refer to Modern Standard Arabic and/or Classical Arabic (Arabic Language 2009).

Recurrence is one of the most effective and persuasive means of expression that is used in the Qur'an and contributes to its splendour. It helps Muslims to memorize the Qur'anic verses – a requirement in Islam. Furthermore, the secret behind the excessive recurrence of the Qur'anic expressions and lucidities (*bayanat*) is for the great persuasive and informative effects of this device. It has an emphatic function in exhorting people especially Muslims to obey God. Ali (1973: 14-18) indicates that before the reader begins the study of the Qur'an, he must bear in mind that it is a unique book quite different from the books one usually reads. It is a style of Gods' discourse which depends on groups of features and contains many characteristics. It deals with various aspects of human life. It concerns itself with creeds, gives moral instructions, lays down laws, invites people to Islam, admonishes the disbelievers, draws lessons from historical events, administers warnings and gives good tidings all blended together in a beautiful manner. Moreover, a mission and a movement naturally demands that only certain things should be presented and repeated over and over accordingly to the requirements of a particular stage, and as long as the movement remains in the same stage. That is why those Qur'anic Chapters that were revealed at a particular stage of the movement generally deal with the same topics. Thus, the many instances of recurrence are due to these facts, although the same things are differently worded and styled to avoid monotony and are couched in a beautiful and dignified language to achieve impressive effects.

By contrast, no such motivations appear to be there in English to encourage the use of recurrence. This is attributed to the fact that each notion has its own means of expression which are compatible to its environment and which may or may not correspond to other such means that are used in other languages.

### **3.2 Assessment of Translating Recurrence in the Qur'anic Texts**

Since it is a Holy and unique book like the Bible, it is more appreciative to translate the meanings and the message of the Qur'anic texts rather than focusing on the exact rendering of single words and expressions that have no precise linguistic and cultural equivalents in the target language in most cases.

For Muslims, the Words of Allah 'God' assumed a specific Arabic form and that form is as essential as the meaning that the Words convey. Hence, only the Arabic Qur'an is the Qur'an, and translations are simply interpretations of its meaning. Translations into the local languages of the Islamic world, particularly Persian, were made at a very early date. However, these were not independent books, but rather interlinear commentaries on the meaning of the text and aids to understanding. The Qur'an has been translated dozens of times into English. Each translation represents one person's understanding of the text, each is significantly different from the others, and none is the Qur'an itself. There is but one Word, but there are as many interpretations of that Word (Murata/Chittick 2009).

Hilāl (1980: 263) believes that recurrence in the Qur'anic texts reinforces meaning, awakens the minds and raps the ears. He also considers noting as an art of speech. Moreover, in Qur'anic texts, we can see the combination between the force of meaning and the magic of note. What is more, the essence of repetition lies not in the partial, but in the complete repetition of the lexical items and expressions. (For more details, see Al-Kirmaani 2009.)

Shunnaq (1994: 105-106) presents some of the main purposes of using verbosity (the functional repetition) maintaining that it is one of the most effective rhetorical devices. Most of the extracts he uses are examples from the Qur'an:

(a) Mentioning a specific concept after a general one: The purpose here is to highlight the importance of the specific.

(25) تنزل الملائكة والروح فيها بإذن ربهم من كل أمر

*Tanazalu almala'katu wa alroohu feehaa bi 'dhni Rabihim min kuli amrin*

(Al-Qadr 4)

The angels and the Spirit descend therein, by the permission of their Lord, with all decrees.

(Pickthall 2009: 205)

In this verse, the Spirit is specifically mentioned, although he is included in the general concept angels. The purpose is to focus on the specific concept (i.e., the Spirit "Jabriel").

(b) The confirmation of Warnings: Verbosity is also used to confirm warnings in Arabic, as in:

(26) كلا سوف تعلمون، ثم كلا سوف تعلمون، كلا لو تعلمون علم اليقين

*Kalaa sawfa t'alamoon,  
thuma kalaa sawfa t'alamoon,  
Kalaa law t'alamoona 'alm alyaqeen*

(At-Takaathur 3-5)

Nay, but ye will come to know!

Nay, but ye will come to know!

Nay, would that ye knew (now) with a sure knowledge!

(Pickthall 2009: 206-207)

Here, the repetition of *Kalaa sawfa t'alamoon* confirms warning.

(c) Clarity after ambiguity: In this case, the meaning could be shown through two basic means (one is ambiguous, whereas the other is clear), as seen in:

(27) واتقوا الذي أمدكم بما تعلمون، أمدكم بأنعام وبنين وجنات وعيون

*Wataqoo allaDhee amadakum bima t'alamoon,  
Amadakum bi an'aamin wa baneen  
Wa jannatin wa 'ayoon*

(ash-Shu'raa' 132-134)

And fear Him Who has aided you with all (good things) that you know.

He has aided you with cattle and children. And gardens and springs

(Pickthall 2009: 156)

Verse (132) واتقوا الذي أمدكم بما تعلمون *Wataqoo allaDhee amadakum bima t'alamoon* introduces a general and ambiguous idea explained and clarified by the details following it.

Further, Shunnaq (1994: 107) also refers to paraphrase as a repetition of content, i.e., a lexical item or an expression is followed or preceded by linguistic units to clarify its meaning.

None of the early English translations of the Qur'an (e.g., Mohammad Abdul Hakim Khan: *The Holy Qur'an* 1912; Hairat Dehlawi: *The Koran Prepared* 1912 and Mirzal Abu'l Fadl: *Quran, Arabic Text and English Translation Arranged Chronologically with an Abstract* 1912) was by a reputed Islamic scholar. Both the quality of the translation and level of scholarship are not very high and these works are of mere historical interest. Later works, however, reflect a more mature and scholarly effort. Among the best translations are Ali's (1973) *Translation of the Meanings of the Glorious Qur'an into English* (see also Ali 2009) and Pickthall's (1930) *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an* (see also Pickthall 2009). Ali's translation of the Qur'an is perhaps the most popular translation that stands as a major achievement in this field. Ali was doubtless one of the few Muslims who enjoyed an excellent command of the English language. This is fully reflected in his translation. Though his translation of the Qur'an is more of a paraphrase than a literal one, it faithfully represents the sense of the original. Pickthall's translation, on the other hand, keeps close to the original in its stylistic elegance. It is more a literal than a meaning based translation. It is also one of the most widely used English translations of the Qur'an (Kidwai 1987/2010).

In this section, an endeavour is made to assess the translation of recurrence. To achieve this end, examples of Arabic texts in which the types and functions of this device are magnificently employed will be cited and their translation into English will be assessed. The texts are some selected ones taken from the Qur'an. Two translations of each text will be analysed, discussed and evaluated. One represents Ali's (1973, 2009) and the other is that translated by Pickthall (1930, 2009).

The model on which the analyses and assessments of texts are based is that of de Beaugrande (1980) and de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981). The goal in this study is to find out how recurrence can be rendered into English to be as efficient as it is in Arabic. To serve this goal when assessing the translations, no comprehensive criticism is given to the choices made by the translator whether on the semantic or syntactic

level. Rather, concentration is mainly placed on one aspect, i.e., how recurrence is rendered on the level of lexical items, merely. In this connection, Newmark (1981: 147) points out that a lexical item repeated in the same or the following sentence of the source text (henceforth ST) must be correspondingly repeated in the TT, unless the original is poorly or loosely written.

Thus, the process of assessment goes this way:

- Determining the location and type of recurrence in the texts to be cited and the function(s) for which it is used.
- Making a comparison between the available translations and the original text in terms of whether or not and how recurrence is rendered serving its intended function(s).
- Evaluating the translations in terms of being or not being efficient and adequate and if possible, proposing an alternative.

It is worth mentioning here that semantic redundancy is favoured in Arabic (as it constitutes a major component of the theory of style), while it is not so in English. Moreover, the translator of Qur'anic texts into English should preserve the various functions of the ST in the TT (e.g., emphatic, informative, aesthetic, clarifying, etc.) to maintain the effectiveness of the ST in the TL. Therefore, recurrence should be kept as much as possible in TL text. However, Sirriyya (1998: 84) states that to attain a natural TL equivalent, deletion is the preferred strategy especially in the case of repetition.

Throughout the *Sūras* (i.e., Chapters) of the Qur'an, recurrence is creatively employed to serve specific function(s). It may be used in order to emphasize a given meaning, to clarify another one or to serve any other function(s) dictated by the necessity of the context of a certain Qur'anic text where recurrence is introduced (e.g., to inform, threaten or warn, persuade, etc.). In what follows, attempts are made to detect these functions and the extent to which they are preserved when translated into English.

A final note to be stated, here, is that not all instances of recurrence create a problem in translation, some can be easily translated into English and be as effective as they are in Arabic. However, unnecessary repetition of the words is irritating to the reader. So, some of the repeated items must be omitted in translation, because the discourse and the text in English do not accept them.

The following Qur'anic text is the first sample of analysis and assessment in this study:

(28) لا يعصون الله ما أمرهم ويفعلون ما يؤمرون

*La y'asoonā Allaha ma amarahum wa yaf'aloona ma yu'maroon*

(At-Tahriim 6)

Who flinch not (from Executing) the Commands they receive from God, but do (precisely) what they are Commanded

(Ali 1973: 1571)

Who resist not Allah in that which He commandeth them, but do that which they are commanded

(Pickthall 1930: 407, 2009: 185)

Here, we think of an angel's nature as gentle and beautiful, but in another aspect, perfection includes the firm execution of duty according to the lawful commands.

Recurrence in this Qur'anic text is highly motivated and has an emphatic function. It is not a straightforward repetition of elements. It is an instance of partial recurrence as the first verb is active أمرهم *amarahum*, while the second is passive يؤمرون *yu'maroon*. The verbs have the same meaning in this context of confirmation, i.e., Angels disobey not Allah in what He commands them.

The first translation, i.e., that is given by Ali is an instance of translation couplet strategy. Ali translated the sense of the ST with addition of words like 'from Executing' and 'precisely' to clarify and reinforce the emphatic function. These additions reduce the economy principle, but not the stability one. The translation could have managed without such additions the meanings of which are implicit (i.e., of course angels also do what they are commanded precisely, and 'execute' what they are commanded without objection or resistance). In addition, the translator shifted the verb أمرهم *amarahum* into a noun (أوامر *awaamir* 'the commands'). Though the translator preserved the emphatic function of the ST, his translation does not maintain the same effectiveness of the ST.

Pickthall's translation, on the other hand, is a too literal one though it adheres to the economy principle. Yet, the repetition of 'that' which is redundant, here, sounds odd in English. This, of course, reduces the effectiveness of the TT. Thus, a possible alternative translation would be: (Who resist not Allah in that which He commandeth them, but do what they are commanded).

However, Pickthall preserved the emphatic and informative meanings of the ST. In short, both translations are not fully adequate.

(29) كلا إذا دكت الأرض دكاً دكاً وجاء ربك والملك صفاً صفاً

*Kalla idha dukkat al ardu dakkan dakkan*  
*Wa jaa' a Rabbuka walmalaku saffan saffan*

(Al-Fajr 21-22)

(A) Say! When the earth  
Is pounded to powder  
And thy Lord cometh,  
And His angels,  
Rank upon rank.

(Ali 1973: 734)

(B) Nay, but when the earth is ground to atoms, grinding, grinding,  
And thy Lord shall come with angels, rank on rank.

(Pickthall 1930: 440, 2009: 202-203)

These verses call the attention to the Day of Reckoning. This solid earth, which we imagine to be so real, will crumble to powder like dust before the real presence, manifested in glory.

There is an instance of partial recurrence in *دكت dukkat, دكاً دكاً dakkan dakkan* (verb/cognate accusative), as well as complete recurrence (literally, a bang after a bang) denoting that the earth will be ground repeatedly until it will turn to powder. Likewise, *صفاً صفاً saffan saffan* (literally, 'rank on rank') is an example of complete recurrence which is an indication of text effectiveness. Moreover, there is parallel recurrence presented by *دكاً دكاً dakkan dakkan* and *صفاً صفاً saffan saffan* successively, a sign of effectiveness too.

In fact, there is a strong motivation represented in the ST as it has more than one function, i.e., the functions of 'emphasis', 'warning', 'threatening' and 'clarification', regarding the situation on the Day of Reckoning. The 'aesthetic' function is also clear in this text which is said to reinforce the emphatic one. The repetition of *دكاً دكاً dakkan dakkan* and *صفاً صفاً saffan saffan* respectively combines the force of meaning with the magic of note.

The translators, therefore, should opt for recurrence in the TT to preserve the same functions and achieve the same degree of effectiveness of the SL text. Regarding Ali's translation, he did not use recurrence in the first verse in order to preserve the aesthetic function which was distracted in Pickthall's translation as a result of repeating the lexical item 'grinding'. However, both translators intended to achieve the emphatic function that the original text reflects. In this respect, Pickthall resorted to literal translation (i.e., *ground / grind* for the partial recurrence *دكت / dukkat / dakkan* and *grinding, grinding* for the complete recurrence *دكاً دكاً dakkan dakkan*) maintaining the principle of economy with this complete recurrence. He achieved as well parallel recurrence with the second verse (i.e. *rank on rank* for *صفاً صفاً saffan saffan*). Thus,

his translation preserves the emphatic function of the ST, yet it maintains some of its effectiveness.

On the other hand, in his translation, Ali did not preserve the recurrence of elements to maintain the aesthetic effect of the text. It is said that the emphatic function may be preserved if the aesthetic function is first preserved. Therefore, Ali's translation also reflects the emphatic function; and since the two functions are preserved, it seems more effective than Pickthall's.

(30) والمرسلات عرفاً. فالعاصفات عصفاً. والناشرات نشراً. فالفارقات فرقاً. فالملقيات ذكراً

*Walmursalati 'urfan. Fal'asifati 'asfan. Walnashirati nashran. Falfariqati farqan.  
Falmulqiyati dhikran*

(Al-Mursalaat 1-5)

- (A) By the (Winds) Sent Forth  
One after another  
(To man's profit)  
Which then blow violently  
In tempestuous gusts,  
And scatter (things)  
Far and wide;  
Then separate them,  
One from another,  
Then spread abroad  
A Message

(Ali 1973: 1663)

- (B) By the emissary winds (sent) one after another  
By those which cause earth's vegetation to revive;  
By those who winnow the winnowing  
By those who bring down the Reminder

(Pickthall 1930: 425, 2009: 194)

This highly mystical *Sūra* (i.e., Qur'anic Chapter) begins with an appeal to five things pointing that the Day of Justice and Judgment is bound to come, and we must prepare for it. These things refer to (a) Winds in the physical world, (b) Angels in the spiritual world, and (c) Prophets in the human world; connecting the Day of Judgment with the spiritual world.

Apparently, the ST has both the emphatic and informative function in the context of threatening and warning of the Resurrection. The instances of partial and parallel recurrences that the text provides in (Verses 2-4) represent the use of the 'cognate accusative' *Fal'asifati 'asfan Walnashirati nashran Falfariqati farqan* that the Arab readers certainly enjoy despite their semantic redundancy. They are communicative rhetorical devices. However, when they are translated literally into English, they look irritating, because they furnish more information than is required. In other words, Arabic expressions constitute a problematic area in the translating process, because they are semantically 'terse', but when rendered into English, they become semantically redundant. Hence, footnotes, paraphrases and

other clarification forms are required if communicative translation is sought. Yet, these instances are motivated in the ST, and therefore, it is highly effective.

In his translation, Ali (1973: 1663) confirmed that this triple thread of allegory (i.e. Verses 2-4 in the ST) is difficult to translate, though easy to understand. Ali avoided recurrence in his translation completely, in order not to make it seem semantically redundant – a sign of text ineffectiveness in English. However, his TT is as informative as the ST though less effective (as the recurrence of elements increases text effectiveness and reinforces its functions).

Pickthall's translation, on the other hand, shows instances of partial as well parallel recurrences, i.e., keeping almost the same structure repeated 'By the' and 'By those' at the beginning of each of the translated verses. In addition, there is an example of partial recurrence in the forth verse between the verb 'winnow' and the noun 'a winnowing'. By doing so, he tried neither to avoid abandoning recurrence completely nor to make it appear as a semantic redundancy. It is as informative and effective as the ST preserving the function of emphasis.

Consequently, I think that Pickthall's translation of these Qur'anic verses is more effective than Ali's, since he resorted to the recurrence of elements which maintains some of the effectiveness of the ST.

(31) ليس على الذين آمنوا وعملوا الصالحات جناحٌ فيما طعموا إذا ما اتقوا وآمنوا وعملوا الصالحات ثم اتقوا  
وآمنوا ثم اتقوا وأحسنوا والله يحب المحسنين.

*Laysa 'ala aladheena aamaoo wa'amiloo alsalihati junahun feema tu'aimoo 'dha  
ma 'ttaqaw wa aamanoo wa 'amiloo alsalihati thuma 'ttaqaw wa aamanoo thuma  
'ttaqaw wa ahsanoo wa Allahu yuhibu al muhsineen*

(Al-Maa'ida 93)

- (A) On those who believe  
And do deeds of righteousness  
There is no blame  
For what they ate (in the past),  
When they guard themselves  
From evil, and believe,  
And do deeds of righteousness, ...  
(Or) again, guard themselves  
From evil and believe, ...  
(Or) again, guard themselves  
From evil and do good.  
For God Loveth those  
Who do good.

(Ali 1973: 271)

- (B) There shall be no sin (imputed) unto those who believe and do good works for what they may have eaten (in the past). So be mindful of your duty (to Allah), and do good works; and again: be mindful of your duty, and believe; and once again: be mindful of your duty, and do right. Allah loveth the good.

(Pickthall 1930: 105, 2009: 36)

In fact, there is a subtle synonymy in what appears at first sight to be a triple repetition. This complete and parallel repetition has both the aesthetic function in the magic of note and the informative/emphatic functions represented by recurrence reinforcing and clarifying the meaning of the ST. This involves: believing or faith, guarding ourselves from evil or conscience and doing good or righteousness. All three manifest themselves in a willing obedience to God, and love for Him. We realize His love in loving and doing good to His creatures, and our love for Him is meaningless without such good. This last meaning is indicated by partial recurrence وأحسنوا والله يحب *wa ahsanoo wa Allahu yuhibu al muhsineen* where the verb أحسنوا *ahsanoo* is converted into the noun المحسنين *al muhsineen*. The context of this Qur'anic text is that of praise.

Here, the complete recurrence is represented by the repetition of the verbs اتقوا *'ttaqaw* and آمنوا *aamanoo* each three times; the verb عملوا *'amiloo* twice and the noun الصالحات *alsalihati* also twice. In addition, we can treat آمنوا وعملوا الصالحات *aamenoo wa 'amiloo alsalihati* as a single expression repeated twice. Parallel recurrence is realized by ثم اتقوا وأحسنوا *thuma 'ttaqaw wa ahsanoo* and ثم اتقوا وآمنوا *thuma 'ttaqaw wa ahsanoo*. All these instances of recurrence contribute to text effectiveness which is strongly motivated and hence informative (prompting processing depth and interest in the ST).

By a close comparison between Ali's translation of this Qur'anic text and the ST, it is noticeable that the translator opted for nearly the same recurrence in the TT. Of course, he did his best in order to preserve the same functions and effectiveness of the ST. He managed to do so, though there are few points to be commented on. First, the element between two brackets, i.e., (in the past) should be deleted as there is no need for it. The meaning is clear and the past form of the verb implies the time at which the action of the verb took place. However, this affects the principle of economy in the text. The expression 'Do deeds' in 'And do deeds of righteousness' does not sound well with this immediate repetition of the sound /d/ with respect to the magic and effect of note. It would be better to say 'do good work' instead as translated by Pickthall. We can also notice that one lexical item like اتقوا *'ttaqaw* is translated by a whole expression 'they guard themselves from evil'. This could have been rendered as 'being pious', for instance, to maintain the principle of economy in the TT. Further, what seems as a partial recurrence in the ST (i.e., أحسنوا / المحسنين *ahsanoo / al muhsineen*) is rendered into complete recurrence represented by 'do good / those who do good'. This, in fact, increases the effectiveness of the text as it is said that a complete recurrence is more effective than a partial one.

The analysis of Pickthall's translation reveals that the same elements in the ST are also repeated with the same types of recurrence. The words, of course, are somehow different like instead of translating اتقوا *'ttaqaw* as it appears in Ali's translation, Pickthall refers to this lexical item by 'be mindful of your duty'. Unlike Ali in his translation, Pickthall did not preserve the recurrence between أحسنوا *ahsanoo* and المحسنين *al muhsineen* of the ST. Moreover, there is no need for the elements that appear between brackets (except for 'imputed') in Pickthall's translation as their meanings are clear and can be predicted from the context. They reduce the effectiveness of the text

intended to preserve the principle of economy. However, the instances of recurrence in Pickthall's translation could be considered trivial as semantic redundancy is not preferred in English. However, since these are the Words of Allah, the translator found it necessary to make it a verbatim translation, i.e., the surface organization of the TT is motivated by special correspondences to the meaning and purpose of the ST. After all, in this instance, Ali's translation seems neater and more efficient than Pickthall's (i.e., a better equivalent to the ST).

(32) القارعة ما القارعة وما أدراك ما القارعة

*Alqaari'atu*

*Ma alqaari'atu*

*Wamaa adraaka ma alqaari'atu*

(Al-Qaari'a 1-3)

(A) The (Day) of Noise and Clamour  
What is the (Day)  
Of Noise and Clamour?  
And What will explain  
To thee what the (Day)  
Of Noise and Clamour is?

(Ali 1973: 1777)

(B) The Calamity!  
What is the Calamity?  
Ah, what will convey unto thee what the Calamity is?

(Pickthall 1930: 448, 2009: 206)

The context of this *Sūra* is that of warning and threatening. The 'Day of Noise and Clamour' is the 'Day of Judgment', when the whole of the present order of things will be overthrown with a tremendous convulsion. All our present landmarks will be lost. It will be a stunning experience to begin with, but it will inaugurate a new world of true and permanent values, in which every human deed will have its true and just consequences, as if weighed in the balance. The complete immediate recurrence of the lexical item القارعة *Alqaari'atu* has the function of strong emphasis of veneration and intimidation, i.e., to threaten people and draw their attention to what will happen on this day (later being informed throughout this *Sūra*). So, this repetition is highly motivated and effective.

Concerning the translated texts, in (A), the translator rendered the lexical item القارعة *Alqaari'atu* into a complex noun phrase (i.e., the Day of Noise and Clamour) in which the word 'Day' is added between two brackets representing the noun head word and the rest of the important meaning is explained by the complement of preposition (compound nouns), i.e., 'Noise and Clamour' where the former, i.e., 'noise' has the meaning "loud and unpleasant sound especially when confused and undesired" (Hornby 1985: s.v. *noise*), while the meaning of the latter i.e., 'clamour', is "loud confused noise or shout especially of people complaining angrily or making a demand" (Hornby 1985: s.v. *clamour*). In Ali's translation, the recurrent element القارعة *Alqaari'atu* is repeated three times matching the instance of complete recurrence in the ST. In

Pickthall's translation of the text, the choice of 'calamity' seems a more appropriate lexical equivalent to the item القارعة *Alqaari'atu*. It has the meaning "great and serious misfortune or disorder" (Hornby 1985: s.v. *calamity*). This is more informative and expressive of the situation than what was suggested by Ali, as the meanings of "loud and confused noise or shout" and "loud and unpleasant sound" are implied in the meaning of 'calamity'. In addition, Pickthall's choice of one word to stand for what occurred in the ST maintains economy and effectiveness in the TT making the text as informative as the ST, i.e., the instance of recurrence here is not trivial or a matter of semantic redundancy.

(33) فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا . إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

*Fa inna m'aa al'ausri yusran. Inaa m'aa al'ausri yusran*

(Al-Inshirah 5-6)

(A) So, verily, with every difficulty, there is relief:  
Verily, with every difficulty there is relief.

(Ali 2009)

(B) But lo! with hardship goeth ease,  
Lo! with hardship goeth ease;

(Pickthall 1930: 448, 2009: 204)

The object of this *Sūra* is to console and encourage the Messenger (i.e., Prophet Mohammed). Before his call, he never had to encounter the conditions which he suddenly had to encounter after it when he embarked on his mission of inviting the people to Islam. This was by itself a great revolution in his own life of which he had no idea in his life before Prophethood. When he started preaching the message of Islam, the same society which had esteemed him with unique honor, turned hostile to him. The same relatives and friends, the same clansmen and neighbors, who used to treat him with the highest respect, began to shower him with abuse and invective. No one in Makkah was prepared to listen to him. He began to be ridiculed and mocked in the street and on the road and at every step he had to face new difficulties. Although gradually he became accustomed to the hardships, the initial stage was very discouraging for him.

The recurrence of فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا . إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا *Fa inna m'aa al'ausri yusran. Inaa m'aa al'ausri yusran* is a motivated rather than a trivial one. It emphasizes God's console and His giving of confidence, hope, support and encouragement to Prophet Mohammed. The Lord and Sustainer of the universe reassured His Messenger that the period of hardships which he was passing through, was not very long, but following close behind it there was also a period of ease. The repetition here is meant to assure Prophet Mohammed that soon the Lord will give him so much that he will be well pleased.

Concerning the translated texts, both Ali and Pickthall rendered إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا *Inaa m'aa al'ausri yusran* almost literally. Ali used the word 'verily' which is an old use with the meaning 'truly' and 'really' (Wehmeier 2004: s.v. *Verily*) to indicate more emphasis in this Qur'anic verse. In the two translations, there is repetition of the same

structure and words i.e., both show parallel structures and complete recurrence. Ali's translation seems more accurate with respect of word choices. He used the word 'difficulty' for العسر *al'ausri* (Baalbaki/Baalbaki 2008: s.v. *difficulty*) which is more appropriate than 'hardship' شدة *Shidah* (Baalbaki/Baalbaki 2008: s.v. *hardship*) used by Pickthall in this context. However, Pickthall's choice of the word 'ease' was more appropriate than Ali's using the word 'relief' as a lexical equivalent to يسر *yusran*. In *Al-Mawrid* (Baalbaki/Baalbaki 2008: s.v. *ease*), the word 'ease' has the meaning يسر *yusran*, while 'relief' has the meaning فرج *Faraj* and راحة *Rahaa*. The meaning for 'ease' which occurs in Wehmeier (2004: s.v. *ease*) as 'lack of difficulty' is also more appropriate than the meaning of the word 'relief' (as the feeling of happiness when something unpleasant stops or does not happen) In this context, both translations seem informative and of equal effectiveness. Though Pickthall's is more economical with the number of words he used, Ali's with the use of the words 'verily' and 'very' emphasized more the function of God's console and His giving of confidence, hope, support and encouragement to Prophet Mohammed.

#### 4 Discussion of Findings

Here, the main issues concerning recurrence in both Arabic and English are discussed. The emphasis is on the differences, since these may pose problems in translation:

##### A. The Concept and Types of Recurrence

- 1 In general, recurrence, in English, is considered one of the most important devices of cohesion with its contribution to the processing efficiency of a text. Arabs knew this style (i.e., recurrence) long time ago, as it was a prominent feature in their poetry and literary language. It is an impressive way of expression and a rhetorical figure that is widely used in the Qur'an. It is also used to indicate textual coherence and effectiveness.
- 2 Recurrence in English and Arabic is not always motivated and used to serve a specific function or intention within a text, i.e., trivial recurrence with no clear intention or rhetorical function decreases informativity and textual efficiency. In Arabic, verbosity is one of the various modes of recurrence putting aside other terms pertinent to the non-functional type, such as الاطالة *'al-'itaala* 'tautology' or اسهاب *Ishab* 'prolixity'. Some of the main purposes of using verbosity in the Qur'an are: (a) to highlight the importance of a specific concept, (b) to confirm warnings and (c) to show clarity after ambiguity.
- 3 In both English and Arabic, recurrence takes two basic forms, i.e., restating almost the same meaning in another expression, i.e., partial recurrence and repeating almost the same meaning with the same expression i.e., complete recurrence. There is also 'parallel recurrence' represented by repeating the same structure (e.g., in Pickthall's translation of example 30 in this study). Nevertheless, recurring the same elements of the ST may or may not seem redundant in the TT. Many rhetoricians indicate that the essence of repetition lies not in the partial, but in the complete repetition of the lexical items and expressions.

- 4 Recurrence is one of the most effective and persuasive means of expression that is used in the Qur'an and contributes to its splendour. It occurs in various contexts and serves many functions like: *praise, guidance, warning and threatening, forgiveness, etc.*, not only on the level of lexical items, but also on the level of whole expressions.
- 5 The Qur'anic verses analyzed and compared in this study show different forms and functions of recurrence in various contexts. This occurs on the level of: (a) lexical items within the same context either at the beginning or at the end of the same Qur'anic verse, i.e., inseparable recurrence; والسابقون السابقون أولئك المقربون; *Waalssabiqoona alssabiqoona 'ulaaika almuqarraboona* 'And the foremost in the race, the foremost in the race', (b) the repetition of the same verse one part immediately follows the other, i.e., also instances of inseparable recurrence فَأِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا . إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا *Fa inna m'aa al'ausri yusran. Inaa m'aa al'ausri yusran* 'So, verily, with every difficulty, there is relief: Verily, with every difficulty there is relief' or (c) in the form of a complete verse that is repeated many times throughout the same Qur'anic Chapter *Sūra* or throughout the whole Qur'an, i.e., separable recurrence فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ *Fa bi-ayyi alaa'i Rabbi-kuma tukadhiban* 'Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that you deny?' (Al-Rahmān, where it is repeated 31 times).
- 6 The same notions and topics are repeated in the Qur'an, although they are differently worded and styled to avoid monotony and are couched in a beautiful and dignified language to achieve impressive effects. By contrast, no such motivations appear to be there in English to encourage the use of recurrence. This is attributed to the fact that each notion has its own means of expression which are compatible to its environment and which may or may not correspond to other such means that are used in other languages.

#### *B. The Model of Textual Analysis*

- 1 The model of 'recurrence' designed by de Beaugrande (1980) and de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) and adopted in this study is the most organized and applicable to textual analysis and assessment. In this model, much focus is placed on the differences between the functional and the non-functional aspects of repetition serving the aims of the present study. In the other models, no such reference is made. They do not discuss the subject as profoundly and clearly as de Beaugrande and Dressler do in their model.

#### *C. Translating Recurrence*

- 1 In general, since semantic redundancy is favoured in Arabic (as it constitutes a major component of the theory of style) and is not so in English, the translator should be aware of this phenomenon, and should eliminate any semantic redundancy in his/her translation (from Arabic into English). However, not all instances of recurrence are semantically redundant in the TT. Newmark (1981: 147) points out that a lexical item repeated in the same or the following sentence of the ST must be correspondingly repeated in the TT, unless the original is

- poorly or loosely written. This will maintain fidelity to the SL text especially in the translation of the Holy Books and religious texts where translators should be so careful in preserving the same functions and effects of the Words of God in the TL.
- 2 In order to preserve the various functions of the ST in the TT (e.g., emphatic, informative, aesthetic, clarifying, etc.) and to maintain the effectiveness of the ST in the TL as well, recurrence should be preserved as much as possible in the translation of the Qur'an (although this might sometimes affect the economy principle and be considered a semantic redundancy in the TL). In other words, the functional semantic redundancy should be retained by the translator when rendering into English, whereas the latter, i.e., the non-functional should be eliminated.
  - 3 As for the strategies in translation, it is noticeable that Arabic frequently repeats the same form, while English avoids repetition by using substitution, ellipsis or references. So, this marked difference between the two languages must be taken into consideration for an adequate translation. In this study, the translation of the Qur'an suggested by Ali shows less repetition in comparison to Pickthall's which is a more literal one, i.e., in most of the examples analysed in this study, Pickthall tried to preserve the same forms and wordings of the ST.
  - 4 To attain a natural TL equivalent, deletion is preferred in certain cases, especially in the case of recurrence. However, other translation strategies, such as using footnotes, paraphrases, substitution, translation couplets (e.g., Ali's translation of the Qur'an which is a more meaning-based one), etc. are required if a communicative translation is sought.

#### *D. Assessment of Translations*

- 1 Analyses of selected Qura'nic verses in the present study show that both Ali and Pickthall, in their translation of recurrence, managed in preserving the functional aspects of this cohesive device in the TL. With the word choices and meanings, both translations seem of equal effectiveness. However, while Pickthall's is more economical with the number of words he used, Ali's shows more varieties of words and meanings to indicate the functions of recurrence in the Qur'an.
- 2 In translating recurrence in the Qur'an, Ali focuses more on reflecting the aesthetic function in the magic of note. This method reinforces and clarifies the meaning of the ST. However, in some instances (see example 30) this makes the TT as informative as the ST, but less effective. He also uses couplet strategy (translating the sense of the ST with additions) as it is more meaning-based (see example 29) to preserve the emphatic and other functions of the ST in the TT. In short, the texts translated by Ali are stable, i.e., informative and interesting, but not economic.
- 3 Pickthall relied more on literal translation with complete and partial recurrence in translating the Qur'anic texts. This indicates a more effective translation of the ST. It seems more economical and stable than Ali's too (see example 30).

Pickthall resorted to the recurrence of elements which maintained the same functions of the ST. Therefore, his translation of recurrence in the Qur'an is more effective than that of Ali, in general. Some instances of recurrence in Pickthall's translation could be considered trivial as semantic redundancy is not preferred in English. However, since these are the Words of God, the translator found it necessary to make it a verbatim translation, i.e., the surface organization of the TT is motivated by special correspondences to the meaning and purpose of the ST.

- 4 The analysis of texts points to the fact that not all instances of recurrence are problematic in translation. Some can be preserved in the TT to maintain the same effect they have in the ST. However, others can be deleted or not preserved as they are in the ST, because they may not be favoured or may occur as a fault of style in the TT. Consequently, the TT will be inefficient.

## 5 Conclusions

Although the same notions and topics are repeated in the Qur'an using different words and styles to avoid monotony and are couched in a beautiful and dignified language to achieve impressive effects, no such motivations appear to be there in English to encourage the use of recurrence. However, not all instances of recurrence are semantically redundant in the TT. This will maintain fidelity to the SL text especially in the translation of the Holy Books and religious texts where translators should be so careful in preserving the same functions and effects of the Words of God in the TL. In certain cases, deletion and other translation strategies are used to attain the natural TL equivalent.

To conclude, the Qur'anic verses analyzed and compared in this study show different forms (i.e., separable and inseparable) and functions of recurrence in various contexts. In order to preserve the functions of the ST in the TT (e.g., emphatic, informative, aesthetic, clarifying, etc.) and to maintain the effectiveness of the ST in the TL as well, the study reinforces that recurrence is preserved as much as possible in the texts analysed and assessed without being considered a semantic redundancy in the TL. Both Ali and Pickthall, in their translation of recurrence in selected Qur'anic texts, managed in preserving the functional aspects of this cohesive device in the TT. While Ali's translation of recurrence seems more beautiful with the various words and meanings he used, the analyses of the texts show that Pickthall's translation is a more economic, stable and effective one. In most of the examples, Pickthall tried to preserve the same forms and wordings of the ST. This indicates a rather more accurate and faithful translation of the ST. In short, for an effective and adequate translation of a text, a proper equivalent and transfer of cohesive devices should be used in the TL.

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#### Redaktion

Leona Van Vaerenbergh  
Artesis Hogeschool Antwerpen  
Vertalers en Tolken  
Schilderstraat 41  
B-2000 Antwerpen  
Belgien  
[leona.vanvaerenbergh@scarlet.be](mailto:leona.vanvaerenbergh@scarlet.be)

Klaus Schubert  
Universität Hildesheim  
Institut für Übersetzungswissenschaft  
und Fachkommunikation  
Marienburger Platz 22  
D-31141 Hildesheim  
Deutschland  
[klaus.schubert@uni-hildesheim.de](mailto:klaus.schubert@uni-hildesheim.de)

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#### *Author*

Yasmin H. Hannouna is an assistant professor of translation at the United Arab Emirates University and member of the International Association of Translation and Intercultural Communication. Her fields of research interests are: translation theory and assessment, text linguistics, machine translation and evaluation of machine translation systems, localization and translation and intercultural studies.  
E-mail: [yasminhannouna@uaeu.ac.ae](mailto:yasminhannouna@uaeu.ac.ae)