The Language of Command in Various English Quran Translation

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Abstract- Quran is the holy book for Muslims which mainly function as guidance. It was revealed in Arabic and for the maintenance of its originality the Quran must be in Arabic, if it is not in Arabic, it is not the Quran. The translation of the Quran into any languages is called translation of the Quran and it is not called the Quran. Theoretically, this can be accepted because the translation of one language into other languages will never be able to transfer the idea completely. There must be something missing because literal translation will not be able to convey the cultural message a word contained due to the different culture of the language. Moreover, subjectivity of the translators is indispensable result from for example their background of knowledge. Consequently, different translator will end up with different translation. This research aimed at analyzing and comparing five English Quran translation in translating the verses of command to see the similarities and differences. The findings of this research revealed that there are some similarities and differences among the five English Quran translation in translating commands. The similarities and differences related to the use of words as well as grammatical constructions. However, those differences do not lead to differences in meaning.

Index Terms- command and prohibition, English Quran translation, verses, translators

INTRODUCTION

The need for translation today is absolutely indispensable to communicate ideas from one language to another in writing form. Translation itself is a form of communication between people of different languages around the world. In theory, translation is defined as the transfer of ideas from one language to another, from the source language to the target language. In the process of translation, it must be able to transfer ideas completely and perfectly. (Dweik & Abu Helwah, 2014). Failure to do this will lead to misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the ideas. For this reason, a translator must have the skills required to become a translator such as mastering the target language and source language as well.

Translation itself is more needed in line with current global developments where communication between regions in the world can no longer be limited. Developments in all aspects such as technology, communication, transportation, politics, culture are required to always be communicated from one region to another in this world. For that reason, a translation is needed because each region has a different language. With this translation, obviously, it makes communication among people from all over the world much easier.

Translation is also necessary for religious life to understand the holy book as the guidance. For example, Quran as the holy book for the Muslims. As is known, the Quran uses Arabic, while Muslims are not only Arabs but all nations in the world. To be able to understand the Koran, the readers must understand Arabic. In fact, most of the Muslims outside the Arabs do not speak Arabic so they cannot understand the Quran. For that, in order to be understood by non-Arabs, the Quran must be translated into other languages. For the purpose that the Koran can be understood by all readers around the world globally, the Koran must be translated into English as a global language.

Translating religious texts, especially the Quran as a holy book, is not an easy job. It takes the expertise of a translator to be able to translate the Quran from the original Arabic language to the target language, for example English. Gerding-Salas (2000) states that to be able to translate Islamic texts a translator is required not only to be bilingual or multilingual, but also to be bicultural and multicultural. This is because the translation process is not only related to linguistic issues but also cultural transfer issues. However, there have been many translations of the Quran into English that have been produced by translators to meet the needs of readers in understanding the Quran for English speakers. Among these translations are The Holy Qur'an by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Quran in English by Talal Itani, The Clear Quran by Mustafa Khattab, The Qur'an by M. A. S. Abdel Haleem, and The Glorious Quran by Muhammad M.
languages – the source and the target language – problems related to language can be reduced. On the contrary, the more the differences, the more difficult the translation process.

One of the forms of language problem is the use of imperative in expressing command. In translating Qur’an into English, the translator should understand the forms and functions of imperative in both languages: Arabic and English. Ingeish, and Saadiya (2009) list several meanings of imperative in Arabic when used in different context. They are Permission, Supplication, Request, Advising and Guiding, Educating by Instruction, Wishing, Disabling, Threat, Insult and Humiliating, Alternative/choice, Obligation/Duty, Urging, Notification, Informing, Irony, Taking a warning or a lesson from, Approval, Putting on the Same Level, Honoring, Astonishment, Thankfulness, Subjugation, Total Acceptance, Give the Lie to Someone, and Making Someone Regret or Grieve for Something. They also compared the meaning of imperative in English which include Permission, Supplication, Request, Advice, Instructions, Wish, Challenge, Threat, Insult, Exhortation, Advertising, Irony, Warning, Suggestion, Invitation, Offer, Promise, Prohibition, Condition, Defiance, and Plea. They revealed from the analysis of the imperative forms in English and Arabic that there are no strict one-to-one similarities between the implications of the imperatives in English and their equivalents in Arabic.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

This is an analysis and comparative study conducted to see the similarities and differences of different English Quran translation. Five eminent English Quran translation were analyzed to see the differences and similarities in translating the selected verses of command and prohibitions. Three selected verses of Quran from the five translations related to command and prohibitions were taken to be analyzed. The analysis aimed at comparing and finding the similarities and differences. If they are similar, in what way they are similar, and if they are different in what way they are different. The five English Quran translation under investigation are The Holy Qur’an by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Quran in English by Talal Itani, The Clear Quran by Mustafa Khattab, The Qur’an by M. A. S. Abdel Haleem, and The Glorious Quran by Muhammad M. Pickthall.

**FINDINGS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Translator</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yusuf Ali</td>
<td>Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Talal Itani</td>
<td>And fight in the cause of God those who fight you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pickthall</td>
<td>Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**REFERENCE**

Jahanshahi, Maryam, and Reza Kafipour (2015) found out in their research that the most frequent errors made by students in translating Islamic text into English was related to language problems. When there are similarities between the two...
All of the translators start the command using verb 1 or
infinitive. However, they use different types of verbs to start
the command or order. Two of them use full verb, while the other
two use ‘be’ followed by adjective. Other differences are on the
use of word ‘forgiveness’, ‘tolerant’, and ‘gracious’.

In English, the use of ‘be’ followed by adjective is a form of
imperative to give suggestion or advise. In this translation, the
adjectives used are tolerant and gracious. These two words are
closely related in meaning. Gracious is characterized by
kindness and courtesy. One form of kindness is tolerant. Those
who are tolerant must be kind, and consequently, gracious. The
same goes for the word forgiveness. If you are forgivable, you
are gracious. Thus, the use of different words in this translation
does not deviate from the original meaning of the word ‘afwu’
in Arabic.

From the translation, only one translation follows the rule of
imperative to give command or order in English by using verb
1 or infinitive without mentioning the subjects. The other four
use other construction – by mentioning the subjects. Other
differences are on the use of ‘ye’ and ‘you’, the use of ‘kind’
and ‘good’, the use of ‘kindness as the noun form of ‘kind’,
and the use of ‘parents’ and ‘your parents’.

In imperative sentences in English, the subject is normally
eliminated because it is already clear who the command or order
is addressed to, that is the second person. However, the subject
can also be mentioned to give emphasis. So, the use of any of
these two constructions does not influence meaning. In
religious scripts, some old English words are still used like
thou, ye, thee, etc. Ye is used for 2nd person plural subject.
This is the same as you which is used now to mean 2nd person
singular/plural subject/object. So, the use of ye and you in this
translation has the same meaning. The use of different words
‘kind’, ‘good’, and ‘honour’ is just a matter of the translators’
choice of words. They are all synonymous, so they convey
exactly the same meaning. The use of your parents as the
objects aims to clarify the reference is the parents of the receiver
of the command, not anyone else. The translation ‘and that ye
be kind to parents’ without using your parents, also means the
same. Thus, the use of your parents is merely to give emphasis.

DISCUSSION

1. (CH 2 – Al Baqarah: 190)
From the translation, all of the translators follow the basic
construction of command or order in English which use verb 1
or infinitive. The first verb used is also the same where all of
the translators used the verb ‘fight’. However, the differences
that can be seen here are related to the use of ‘in the cause of’,
‘in the way of’, and in God’s cause’, the use of God and Allah,
the use of against, and the insertion of the word ‘only’.

The use of ‘in the cause of’ and ‘in the way of’ does not have
significant different in meaning. The first concerns more on the
reason to fight, that is for the God, and the latter concerns on
the way to fight which has to be in line with the way that the
God wishes. The construction ‘in the cause of God’ and ‘in
God’s cause’ have no difference in meaning. Both of them are
acceptable in English grammar. Different use of word God and
Allah does not bring different understanding because in Islam,
Allah is the name of the God. Consequently, anytime the word
God is used, the reference will be Allah. The use of word
‘against’ after the word ‘fight’ (fight against) is merely to
emphasize that the opponent is the enemy. Without using the
word ‘against’ the word fight has already mean that we fight
with our enemy. The insertion of the word ‘only’ in the
translation ‘Fight in the cause of God only against those who
wage war against you’ is to accentuate the teaching of Islam
that fighting is only allowed if Muslims are attacked. Muslims
are prohibited to start the fight.

2. (CH 7 – Al A’raaf: 199)
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