

A Critical Study of Translating Sarcasm in Some Qurānic Verses into English

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1. Preliminaries

Sarcasm is characterized as one of the significant rhetorical devices used in literary and religious texts for criticism and to show the contrary of every thing belonging to society by mocking. Since sarcasm is an element of social interaction among people, it has gained much ground in Arabic culture. Many of the most prominent Arab scholars dealt with sarcasm within their studies about different sciences of the Qurān and rhetoric. Al-Jurjāni (n.d) in “Asrar Al-balāgha” referred to sarcasm through his display of various types of rhetorical devices with relevance to the sciences of the Qurān. Al-Jurjāni (n.d.: 62) defines sarcasm as two contrary attributes where one of them is used to reduce the value of the opposite one. Al-Zamakhshari (1948: 398) touches on it indirectly through interpreting some verses of the Qurān with reference to its signifying of opposite meaning to its literal meaning. For instance, in the following verse:

﴿ وَقَالُوا يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِي نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الذِّكْرُ إِنَّكَ لَمَجْنُونٌ ﴿٦﴾ الحجر: ٦ .

And they say: “O you (Mohammad ﷺ) to whom the Dhikr (The Qurān) has been sent down! Verily, you are a mad man!

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1977: 338).

In this verse, Al-Zamakhshari mentions that the vocation (يا أيها) is used for sarcastic purpose.

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Al-Masri (1964: 13) mentions that sarcasm may not be used in a purely linguistic sense; it may be used indirectly depending on the writer intention. Some scholars regard sarcasm as a kind of metaphor. For instance, Al-Sakkaki (1983: 293) points out that sarcasm belongs to a specific type of metaphor “sarcastic metaphor” which means replacing one of the contrary features metaphorically by the other one.

2. Modes of Expressing Sarcasm

A variety of modes has been suggested to account for sarcasm depending on various contexts in which this term occurs. Some such modes are associated with some rhetorical terms as metaphor, simile, metonymy, ...etc. For instance, in Sûrat Al-Masad:

﴿ تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ ﴿١﴾ ﴾ المسد: ١ .

Perish the two hands of Abū Lahab (an uncle of the Prophet) and perish he!

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1977: 853).

(أبي لهب) is metonymy illustrating sarcastically the bad nature of Muhammad’s uncle (Fathi, 1988: 203).

Al-Alosi (1854: 27) associates sarcasm with simile through his interpretation of the following verse:

﴿ وَظِلٌّ مِّنْ يَّحْمُورٍ ﴿٤٣﴾ ﴾ الواقعة: ٤٣ .

And Shadow of black smoke.

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1977: 735).

He used the expression of sarcastic simile to interpret (ظل) for the sake of threatening.

Most of modes which describe sarcasm are limited within syntax. A clear explanation of these modes is made by Ananza (2005:556-557). Following is a brief survey of some of these modes indicated by Ananza with examples:

1. Imperative mood

﴿ ذُقْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْكَرِيمُ ﴿٤٩﴾ ﴾ الدخان: ٤٩ .

“Taste you (this)! Verily, you were (pretending to be) the mighty, the generous!

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1977: 674).

The imperative (ذق) is used here sarcastically to refer to the opposite meaning of (العزیز الکریم).

2. Interrogative mood

﴿ أَهَذَا الَّذِي بَعَثَ اللَّهُ رَسُولًا ﴾ الفرقان: ٤١ .

“Is this the one whom Allāh has sent as a Messenger?”

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1977: 483).

(أ) is used here sarcastically against the prophet for mocking.

3. Demonstrative mood

﴿ وَقَالُوا مَا لِهَذَا الرَّسُولِ يَأْكُلُ الطَّعَامَ ﴾ الفرقان: ٧ .

And they say: “why does this messenger (Mohammad ﷺ) eat food, ...

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1977: 479).

(هذا) is employed sarcastically for the sake of scorning.

4. Relative mood

﴿ وَقَالُوا يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِي نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الذِّكْرُ إِنَّكَ لَمَجْنُونٌ ﴾ الحجر: ٦ .

And they say: “O you (Mohammad ﷺ) to whom the Dhikr (The Qurān) has been sent down! Verily, you are a mad man!

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1977: 338).

The relative pronoun (الذي) is sarcasm used to deride against the prophet.

5. Restriction mood

﴿ وَإِذَا نُنزِلُ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا يَنْسَوْنَ مَا كَانُوا يَحْجِبُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا اتَّبِعُوا بَابِنَا إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴾ الجاثية:

.٢٥

And when Our cLear Verses are recited to them, their argument is no other than that they say: “Bring back our (dead) fathers if you are truthful!”

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1977: 678).

Here the sarcasm (لا) is used against the disbelievers for their foolish.

6. Conditional mood

﴿ وَإِذْ قَالُوا اللَّهُمَّ إِن كَانَتْ هَذِهِ حَقًّا مِنْ عِنْدِكَ فَامْطِرْنَا حِجَارَةً مِنْ السَّمَاءِ ﴾ الأنفال: ٣٢.

And (remember) when they said: “O Allāh! If this (Qurān) is indeed the truth (revealed) from You, then rain down stones on us from the sky...”

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1977: 235).

Conditional mood is used here sarcastically to refer to the obstinacy of the disbelievers.

7. Affirmative past

﴿ فَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ الْفَتْحُ ﴾ الأنفال: ١٩.

Now has the judgment come unto you ...

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1977: 233).

(جاءكم) is used sarcastically against the disbelievers.

3. Figurative Function of Sarcasm

In general, sarcasm acts as drawing attention, stimulation and self-relieve especially with the difficulty of declaring desires as a result of a frightening punishment (Al-Hawal, 1982: 63) and (Al-Hofy, 2001: 103). It builds upon revealing contradiction in the world through affirming the inherent distinction where the reader may be faced with some differences in the discourse (Sulaiman, 1991: 95).

With respect to employing sarcasm in the Qurān, the ultimate functions are invoking man to call for invocation towards Allah Al-Mighty and for relieving the prophet (PBUH) (Hanafy, 1987: 51).

﴿ وَلَقَدْ آسَأْتَهُمْ بِرُسُلٍ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فَحَاقَ بِالَّذِينَ سَخِرُوا مِنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ﴾ الأنبياء: ٤١.

Indeed (many) Messengers were mocked before you (O Mohammad ﷺ), but the scoffers were surrounded by that, where at they used to mock.

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1977: 433).

Masri (1964: 283) says that one of the figurative functions of sarcasm is using preaching instead of informing bad portent as follows:

﴿فَنَشِرُهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٦١﴾ آل عمران: ٢١﴾

Then **announce to them** a painful torment.

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1977: 70).

(البشرى) is usually used for preaching and good news, yet it is used here sarcastically to give bad news.

Another function is employing promising instead of threatening (Ibid: 383) as follows:

﴿وَأِنْ يَسْتَفِئِسُوا بِغَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ ﴿٢٩﴾ الكهف: ٢٩﴾

And if they ask for help (relief, water), they will be **granted** water like boiling oil.

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1977: 389).

Promising (بِغَاثُوا) is used here sarcastically instead of the real intentional meaning of the verse which is threatening.

Using praising instead of censor is another function of sarcasm in the Qurān (Al-Alawi, 1914: 162)

﴿إِنَّكَ لَأَنْتَ الْحَلِيمُ الرَّشِيدُ ﴿٨٧﴾ هود: ٨٧﴾

Verily, **you are** the forbearer, right-minded!

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1977: 298).

Here, this verse used praising sarcastically instead of real meaning which is censor.

Al Madani (1709: 185) mentions the employment of veneration instead of disrespect as follows:

﴿ذُقْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْكَرِيمُ ﴿٤٩﴾ الدخان: ٤٩﴾

“**Taste you (this)!** Verily, you were (pretending to be) the mighty, the generous!

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1977: 674).

The real meaning of this verse is disrespect, yet veneration is used here sarcastically.

4. Sarcasm and Other Types of Writing

Sarcasm overlaps with some terms such as irony, humour, satire, ...etc, which is problematic for translators; yet, it should not be mixed with these terms, since they do not conform to each other. Following is a brief survey to explain differences between sarcasm and these related terms.

4.1. Sarcasm and Irony

Fareha (1962: 17) states that irony is a special literary expression used to convert pain and reduce misery. The term 'irony' covers a wide range of closely related terms as sarcasm in our case, since both of them explain the intended meaning in an opposite way of what is expressed by the words used (Waba and Al-Mohandis, 1984: 35&198). Sarcasm is regarded as a form of ironic speech commonly employed to convey seriousness within comedy and vice versa (Al-Awa, 1995: 2).

Scholars like Al-Zobaydi (n.d.: 108), Al-Zamakhshari (1948: 704) and Ibn Manthor (1997: 617) agree that both of sarcasm and irony shared approximately sets of meanings such as undervaluing, mocking, boasting, etc.

Although both terms seem near to each other, yet they are not exactly the same and must be considered separately. Hifni (1987: 13) says that irony is a literary technique mixed with sense of humour usually taking the form of sarcasm. Al-Tonjy (1993: 502) distinguishes between sarcasm and irony on the basis of their approach to goals; he says that irony is used indirectly to reach aims in which an implicit meaning is hid by the explicit meaning of the expression while sarcasm is used directly to show contrast between what is said and the actual situation.

Sulaiman (1991: 97) refers to two types of irony which are verbal irony and irony of situation, and he says that verbal irony is closest to sarcasm in that both of them have the feature of producing the intention of the speakers.

﴿وَصَنَعَ الْفُلْكَ وَكَلَّمَا مَرَّ عَلَيْهِ مَلَأَ مِنْ قَوْمِهِ سَخِرُوا مِنْهُ قَالَ إِنْ تَسْخَرُوا مِنَّا فَإِنَّا نَسْخَرُ مِنْكُمْ كَمَا تَسْخَرُونَ﴾ هود: ٣٨.

And as he was contrasting the ship, whenever the chiefs of his people passed by him, they mocked at him. He said: “if you mock at us, so do we mock at you likewise for your mocking.

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1977: 291).

4.2. Sarcasm and Humour

Taha (1978:14) defines humour as a funny criticism used to distort human image and expose his defects such as mental, physical, motion in an indirect way. Al-Roayni (2000: 214) says that humour is an expression which uses words to praise or to dispraise suitable for state of affairs in a funny way.

﴿تَوْتُو نُوْتُو نُو﴾ الأعراف: ٢١.

And he [Shaitân (Satan)] swore by Allâh to them both (saying): “Verily, I am one of the sincere well-wishes for you both.”

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1977: 202).

Sarcasm is a subtype of humour affirming similar features as causing, fun; yet, they are not the same since sarcasm does not always involve fun, but it is as Al-Hawal (1982: 17) says, a weapon of intelligence used to avoid responsibility and leads to bitterness.

Al-Masri (1964: 283) points out that the external feature of sarcasm is seriousness and the internal one is amusing, which humour is the opposite.

4.3. Sarcasm and Satire

Satire is one of the closest literary devices to sarcasm. Both seem to be synonymous, since they present humourous image which displays faults and sometimes exaggerates in cover merits (Al-Awa, 1995: 53).

Although both of them diminish someone bitterly, yet they are not equal in their real aim because satire conveys diminishing, show defects and aggression by scron and savage ridicule while sarcam purpose is refinement and correction (Al-Hofy, 2001: 73).

Al-Kory (1881: 134) says that sarcasm conveys explicit liking meaning while satire presents explicit praise or dispraise meaning.

5. The Concept of Sarcasm in English

Traditionally, mocking, sense of humor, conveying scornful meaning, etc. are some of apparent meanings of sarcasm; yet some scholars deal with it differently.

Cudden (1979: 338) defines sarcasm as saying one thing and meaning another. Haiman (1998: 20) says that what is important to sarcasm is that it is an intended overt irony employed by the speaker as a form of verbal aggression.

McDonald (1999: 486-487) points out that sarcasm is an indirect form of speech employed intentionally to produce special effect on the listener as well as conveying emotions and thoughts which are less aggressive from what is really on one's mind. A similar opinion is made by Toplak and Katz (2000: 88) who state that sarcasm is used to have some effect on listeners, which differ from direct assumption of the speaker in a way that the listeners are aware of the effect intended by the speaker.

Ducharme (1994: 51-52) classifies the basic functions of sarcasm according to its types as follows:

1. Social control, where sarcasm is employed to blame members of special group when an inappropriate behaviour is displayed.
2. Declaration of allegiance when someone blames himself for an inappropriate behaviour.
3. Establishing social solidarity and social distance, where sarcasm takes place where others do not adopt what is acceptable by a group expectation.
4. Venting frustration, where sarcasm explains rejection with a situation that does not support the standards of an individual.
5. Humorous aggression, where sarcasm is used to be funny by saying the opposite of a fact used by group members.

These two types convey a sense of anger with someone or situation.

6. Translation of the Qurān

Although translations of the Qurān may be helpful, yet they are unable to reach the real meaning of the Qurān because both the message and the words expressing the message are sacred (Aziz and Lataiwish, 2000: 110). In translating such words into other words, this will create loss in their divine value and consequently the message will lose its real meaning too (ibid: 111).

Al-BûTi (2003: 229-232) confirms that the translating of the Qurānic verses presents literal rendering which deform the implicit meanings of the verses; this can be illustrated below:

﴿ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلَىٰ عُنُقِكَ وَلَا تَبْسُطْهَا كُلَّ الْبَسْطِ فَتَقْعُدَ مَلُومًا مَّحْسُورًا ﴾ الإسراء: ٢٩ .

And let not your hand be tied (like a miser) to your neck, nor stretch it for forth to its utmost reach (like a spendthrift), so that you become blameworthy and in severe poverty.

(Al-Hilali and Khan, 1977: 372).

In the above verse, the words do not refer to the real meaning, and as such, the translator should have deep understanding of the Qurān and Islamic jurisprudence to translate them.

Since the Qurān is a unique book, it is better to transfer the meanings and the message of the Qurānic verses rather than concentrating on the rendering of single words which may have no equivalents in the other language. Bell (1991: 207) says that to transfer the meaning and the force of the message of religious text from SL into TL, the translator should have wide information of all linguistic aspects in both languages.

7. Appropriateness in Translation

Appropriateness is an essential feature of a good translation that should be accomplished in the context of the target language. VanDijk (1977: 176) argues that appropriateness realizes “pragmatic success”. By the same token Chuan (2006: v) mentions that appropriateness in translation should include linguistic, stylistic and pragmatic appropriateness.

Baker (1992: 111) points out that the first step of translating any text needs to understand its total message, then the translator has to

treat the task of producing a target version which can be accepted as a text in its own right; furthermore the acceptable collocational and grammatical patterning of the target version should be adapted to target language norms.

To supply the unity of a text, de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981: 12) state that a text can be viewed as communicative event when it is based on seven principles of textuality (cohesion, coherence, intentionality, acceptability, informativity, contextuality and intertextuality) as well as the regulative principles (efficiency, effectiveness and appropriateness), since one of the regulative principles will be adopted for analysis in this study, it will be better to present a brief account of these principles:

- Efficiency depends on its use in communicating with lowest employing of the participants effort (ibid.: 11).
- Effectiveness depends on creating a power influence and producing agreeable circumstances for attaining an aim (ibid.: 11).
- The appropriateness of a text is the concord between its setting and the ways in which the standards of textuality are maintained (ibid.: 11).

8. Data Analysis Procedure

Five verses of the Qurān have been chosen according to various functions and modes of sarcasm with four translations forwarded by Ahmed and Ahmed (1995), Pickthall (1971), Asad (2003) and Yousif, A. (1989) for each of them. The model adopted in this study is Newmark's (1989) which comprises: semantic and communicative translations, as well as providing one of the principles (appropriateness) in de Beaugrande and Dressler model (1981).

SLT: 1

﴿ تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ ﴿١﴾ ﴾ المسد: ١ .

Interpretation:

In this verse, two rhetorical devices are used to achieve an intensive attack against Abu-Lahab to denude him of his abstract

and concrete power as a result of Abu-Lahab's hostility against the Prophet (PBUH). It started with (تبت) which is satire and the use of sarcasm (أبي لهب). (Ibn 'Aashuur, 2000: 497)

TLTs:

1. Father of the flame of smokless fire's (known as prophet Mohammad's uncle) hand was destroyed/ lost and destroyed/ lost.
(Ahmed and Ahmed, 1995: 479)
2. The power of Abû Lahab will perish, and he will perish.
(Pickthall, 1971: 824)
3. Doomed are the hands of him of the glouring countenance, and doomed is he!
(Asad, 2003: 1123)
4. Perish the hands of the Father of Flame! Perish he!
(Yousif, A., 1989: 1804)

Title	No. of SL Text	Sarcastic Expression	Function of Sarcasm	Mode of Sarcasm	No. of TL Text	Type of Translation		Appropriateness
						Semantic	communicative	
	1	أبي لهب	For the sake of upbraiding & disparage	metonymy	1	+	-	-
					2	-	+	+
					3	-	+	-
					4	+	-	-

Table (1): Translational Analysis of Source Text

Discussion:

(أبو لهب) is translated differently by the translators. Ahmed and Ahmed and Yousif have offered literal rendering as (Father of

Falme) which is lexically right to maintain the rhetorical impact of the expression, but it seems inappropriate since they did not recognize the real function of this expression as it is in the ST which, according to the context, disparage Abu Lahab by referring to his bad nature as hellish. Asad's rendering looks vague and it did not refer to a certain person. Pickthall has preserved the sarcastic expression as in the SL text and given appropriate transcription of (أبي لهب) as (Abu Lahab).

Ahmed and Ahmed, Asad and Yousif have translated (يدا) literally as (hand, hands, and hands), Pickthall translated (يدا) as (the power); all the renderings of the translators of this word are inappropriate, since the intended meaning for this word refers to (him) which means (أبو لهب) (Al-Baghawy, 1987: 578). Therefore, (يدا أبي لهب) can be appropriately translated into (Abu Lahab).

It can be said that semantic translation is employed by Ahmed and Ahmed and Yousif, while Asad and Pickthall renderings seem communicative.

SLT: 2

﴿إِنَّكَ لَأَنْتَ الْحَلِيمُ الرَّشِيدُ﴾ هود: ٨٧.

Interpretation:

This verse is sarcastically pronounced by Shuaib's people against him, which apparently praises him, but covertly dispraises him as if they say: that you think you are the only right-minded one. (Ibn 'Aashuur, 2000: 259)

TLTs:

1. That you, you are (E) the clement* الحليم, the correctly/rightly guided.
(Ahmed and Ahmed, 1995: 151)
2. Lo! thou are the mild, the guide to right behaviour.
(Pickthall, 1971: 296)
3. Thou art indeed the only clement, the only right-minded man.
(Asad, 2003: 369)
4. Truly, thou art the one

That for beareth with faults

And is right-minded.

(Yousif, A., 1989: 538)

Title	No. of SL Text	Sarcastic Expression	Function of Sarcasm	Mode of Sarcasm	No. of TL Text	Type of Translation		Appropriateness
						Semantic	Communicative	
	2	إنك لأنت الحليم الرشيد	For the sake of praising instead of censure	Restriction	1	+	-	-
					2	-	+	+
					3	-	+	+
					4	-	+	+

Table (2): Translational Analysis in Terms of Source Text

Discussion:

Ahmed and Ahmed rendered (النون) in (إنك) and (اللام) in (لأنت) into (that you, you are) which implies certainty as in the ST, yet their rendering seems inappropriate since it did not reflect the sarcastic function as in the ST and did not determine the force of the verse and confuse the reader whether the merits (الحليم الرشيد) in this verse are for the sake of real praising or for sarcastic purposes.

Other translators, on the other hand, use communicative translation which looks more convincing. Nevertheless, appropriate renderings are those of Pickthall and Asad which reflect to a certain degree the force of the message of the sarcastic function as in the ST construction.

SLT: 3

﴿ إِن تَسْتَفِينُوا فَمَا كَانَ مِنكُمْ أَلْفَنِيحٌ ﴾ الأنفال: ١٩.

Interpretation:

The verse addresses disbelievers in a sarcastic way after their request to have victory against Moslims in Badr Battle.

(Ibn 'Aashuur, 2000: 183)

TLTs:

1. If you seek victory* *تستفتحوا*, so the opening/victory had come to you.

(Ahmed and Ahmed, 1995: 116)

2. (O Qureysh!) if ye sought a judgment, now hath the judgment come unto you.

(Pickthall, 1971: 228)

3. If you have been praying for victory, [O believers] – victory has now indeed come unto you.

(Asad, 2003: 273)

4. (O Unbelievers!) if ye prayed
For victory and judgment,
Now hath the judgment
Come to you

(Yousif, A., 1989: 419)

Title	No. of SL Text	Sarcastic Expression	Function of Sarcasm	Mode of Sarcasm	No. of TL Text	Type of Translation		Appropriateness
						Semantic	communicative	
	3	فقد جاءكم الفتح	For the sake of preaching instead of causation	Affirmative past	1	+	-	-
					2	-	+	+
					3	-	+	-
					4	-	+	+

Table (3): Translational Analysis of Source Text

Discussion:

Some of the translators maintain the sarcastic meaning through their different renderings. Ahmed and Ahmed offered a semantic rendering without mentioning to whom this verse is addressed which may cause an obscure understanding for the reader, so he should either put a footnote for the sake of explanation or translate it appropriately by adding (O unbelievers) in the beginning of his rendering.

It is obvious that Asad misunderstands the verse, where he says [O believers] since, according to many interpretations, this verse addresses the disbelievers; so his rendering of the sarcastic expression is inappropriate.

Pickthall and Yousif have presented communicative renderings which seem appropriate and maintain the real sarcastic meaning of preaching as in the ST.

SLT: 4

﴿ وَجَعَلُوا الْمَلَائِكَةَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عِنْدَ الرَّحْمَنِ إِنَّنَا آخِذُوا خَلْقَهُمْ سَتُكْتَبُ شَهَادَتُهُمْ وَيُسْأَلُونَ ﴾
الزخرف: ١٩.

Interpretation:

Narrated Al-Kalby and Mukatel: Mohammad (PBUH) asked the unbelievers who claimed that angels are females: how did you recognize that? Unbelievers replied that their forefather told them that. So Allah Al-Mighty warns them that their claim will be recorded and they will be punished for that in the Judgment day (Al-Baghawy, 1987: 209). In this verse, sarcasm is used to show the falsity of their claim which is not in line with the reality. (Ibn 'Aashuur, 2000: 465)

TLTs:

1. And they made the angles those who they are the merciful's worshipper's/slaves (as) females, did they witness their creation? Their testimony/ certification will be written *ستكتب and they (will) be asked/ questioned.

(Ahmed and Ahmed, 1995: 357)

2. And they make the angels, who are the slaves of Beneficent, females.

Did they witness their creation?

Their testimony will be recorded and they will be questioned.

(Pickthall, 1971: 647)

3. And (yet) they claim that the angels – who in themselves are but being created by the Most Gracious – are females:

[but] did they witness their creation?

This false claim of theirs will be recorded, and they will be called to account [for it on judgment Day].

(Asad, 2003: 850)

4. And they make into females

Angeles who themselves serve

God. Did they witness

Their creation? Their evidence

Will be recorded, and they

Will be called to account!

(Yousif, A., 1989: 1327)

Title	No. of SL Text	Sarcastic Expression	Function of Sarcasm	Mode of Sarcasm	No. of TL Text	Type of Translation		Appropriateness
						Semantic	communicative	
	4	اشهدوا خلقهم	For the sake of threaten and warning	Interrogative mode	1	+	-	-
					2	+	-	-
					3	+	-	-
					4	-	+	-

Table (4): Translational Analysis of Source Text

Discussion:

Most of the translators have offered literal renderings for this verse, except Yousif who presented communicative one and he used hyteron – proteron device in translating ﴿ وَجَعَلُوا الْمَلَائِكَةَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عِنْدَ الرَّحْمَنِ أَنْثَىٰ ﴾ as (And they make into females Angels who themselves serve God) to make it more effective for the reader. Ahmed and Ahmed’s rendering seems as a mass of synonyms.

The sarcastic question ﴿ أَشْهَدُوا خَلْقَهُمْ ﴾ is rendered similarly by all the translators as (Did they witness their creation?), although all the translators have reflected the same structure as that in the SL text, yet such rendering did not present the implied sarcastic function which is for the sake of threaten, and if it was not illustrated by interpreters, it would be so difficult to understand the sarcastic mode of this verse, so their renderings are inappropriate and need some explanation.

SLT: 5

﴿ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَهُ النَّارُ ﴾ المائدة: ٧٢.

Interpretation:

Israel claimed that christ is God and they worshiped him beside Allah, so christ warns them that who do that, Allah will forbid him from paradise and make the hell their home.

(Ibn 'Aashuur, 2000: 497)

TLTs:

1. So He had forbidden on him the Paradise, and his shelter/refuge (is) the fire* النار.

(Ahmed and Ahmed, 1995: 74)

2. for him Allah hath forbidden paradise, His a bode is the Fire.
(Pickthall, 1971: 150)

3. unto him will God deny paradise, and his goal shall be the fire.

(Asad, 2003: 183)

4. God will forbid him
The Garder, and the Fire
Will be his a bode.

(Yousif, A., 1989: 266)

A Critical Study of Translating Sarcasm in Some Qurānic Verses into English
Asst. Prof. May M. Abdul Aziz

Title	No. of SL Text	Sarcastic Expression	Function of Sarcasm	Mode of Sarcasm	No. of TL Text	Type of Translation		Appropriateness
						Semantic	communicative	
	5	مأواه النار	For threatening	Nominal sentence (inchoative + tenunctive)	1	-	+	+
					2	+	-	-
					3	+	-	-
					4	-	+	-

Table (5): Translational Analysis of Source Text

Discussion:

According to English word order, most of the translators attempted to maintain the sarcastic nominal sentence (مأواه النار) in their renderings. Ahmed and Ahmed's rendering looks more successful, since they have offered the appropriate sarcastic image of the word (مأواه) as (his shelter/refuge) and realized the real situation of the sarcastic function of the sentence; (المأوى) means home where man can get comfort and safety which is of course not identical to hell. Although Yousif used hysteron-proteron in his translating for the above sentence as (and the Fire will be his abode) to make it more powerful, yet his rendering as well as Asad and Pickthall's seem inappropriate and are not able to convey the implied meaning of the ST.

Findings:

After analyzing the renderings of some Qurānic verses, the study has come up with the following main findings:

1. The translators have presented varied translations depending on their understanding of the verses meanings. Ahmed and Ahmed keep to semantic approach in rendering the verses most of times and used overabundance of synonyms for explaining the meaning of words without conveying the "force" of sarcastic expressions. Pickthall, Asad and Yousif's renderings presented communicative rendering in most cases, yet they could not reach the same effective meaning as it is in the Qurān. Through the below table we can find that communicative rendition rate is higher than the rate of semantic:

	Frequency	Percentage
Semantic	9	%45
Communicative	11	%55
Total	20	% 100

Table (6): The percentage of achieving semantic and communicative renditions of the selected verses

2. In most cases the translators renderings seem inappropriate because they did not offer the sarcastic function as it is in the ST. the following table can illustrate the percentage of appropriateness:

	Frequency	Percentage
appropriateness	7	%35
inappropriateness	13	%65
Total	20	%100

Table (7): The percentage of achieving appropriateness and inappropriateness in the renditions of the selected verses

Conclusion:

The following conclusions are come up in this study:

1. Translating sarcasm in the Qurān needs to convey its intended meaning and its exact sarcastic function as it is in the ST to maintain the effect created by sarcasm. This matter is not an easy task because the Qurān is divine book related to Allah and it is hard to be submitted to changes made by human interference.
2. Misunderstanding of sarcastic expression may cause mistranslating of sarcasm, as Asad's rendering of the verse ﴿إِنْ تَسْتَفْتِنَاهُمْ فَمَا جَاءَكُمْ﴾
الفتوح
3. Footnotes are needed in some cases to enable the reader to understand the verses.

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دراسة نقدية في ترجمة التهكم لبعض آيات القرآن الكريم إلى الإنكليزية

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المستخلص

يسلط البحث الضوء على أسلوب التهكم في بعض آيات القرآن الكريم في محاولة لفهم المعنى الحقيقي له وبيان الاختلافات المتضمنة في ترجمته إلى الإنكليزية. يهدف البحث إلى تقديم بعض مفاهيم التهكم وأخذها بنظر الاعتبار في ملاحظة النصوص الأصلية لغرض بيان فيما إذا كان المترجمون قادرين على ترجمة المعاني الضمنية للتهكم بشكل ملائم وذلك اعتماداً على أنموذج نيومارك (١٩٨٩). يفترض البحث أن التهكم يؤدي إلى بعض المشكلات المحتملة للمترجمين أحد الاستنتاجات التي يحصل عليها البحث هي التنوع في التراجم اعتماداً على فهم المترجم لمعنى النص الأصلي.