



## THE ESSENCE OF ARABIC RHETORIC CONTRIBUTIONS FROM ARABIC-ENGLISH TRANSLATION

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**ABSTRACT:** *In translation, the target text in general displays fewer linguistic variations than the source text, and its lexical and syntactic patterns incline to be copied, creating interference and standardization of the ST. Is a translation meant for audiences who are unable to comprehend the original text? Or is it saying the same thing again? These questions demonstrate the divergence of the audience in the domain of art. Yet any rendition, which tries to convey the function, cannot transmit anything but essential information. Does this mean that conveying the essential information represents the cause of inferior translation? Does the inferiority come as a result of the transfer of inaccurate content? This is the trademark of translationese. Is it true that traduttore, traditore? Does this really mean a translator is born not made? However, scholars engaged in a heated debate about what is generally regarded as the essential material of a literary work, what it contains in addition to information. Does it mean that we admit that literary work is profound and mysterious? Do we admit that literary work is poetic to the extent that it can only be reproduced by a translator only if he is also a poet? This will be true whenever a translation undertakes to serve its readerships. However, do we blame the translator if the original culture does not exist in the reader's language and culture? In the present paper, we will attempt to lay a finger on the significance of achieving equivalence in literary translation within cultural implications that may block the translator. A primary of the place is assigned to البلاغة (Arabic rhetoric) as one of the cornerstones of Arabic.*

**KEYWORDS:** Arabic Rhetoric, A Figure of Speech, English-Arabic, Culture, Literary Translation



## INTRODUCTION

The Arabic language is known for its rhetoric which augments its ornamental value and highly decorated in its splendid style that makes it one of the most aesthetic Semitic languages. Although much ink has been spilled on the Arabic rhetoric, little has been written about its translation into other languages especially English. In this article, some light is to be shed on the English translation of the Arabic figures of speech which are considered by Arab scholars as to the most effective tools in the hands of the Arabic rhetoric. The question to be answered is how to achieve equivalence in terms of form and content between the two incongruent languages in question. The idea of equivalence can be simple and complex at the same time. This means that it is something almost inherently cultural and relates to idiomatic expressions whereby all the lexical and grammatical elements are there. It can be said that adaptation is similar to equivalence in the way that the translator seeks to render the SL into the TL while ensuring it is just as relevant and meaningful as the original was. In this domain, another question should be asked: how could the translator achieve equivalence in such a situation? In answering this question, two methods are investigated: monitoring and managing (Hatim and Mason 1990). Managing is used when the dominant function is to guide the situation in a manner favorable to the text producer's goals whereas monitoring making the impression that things are moving in the normal course of events. Beaugrande and Dressler (1981:162) explain, "situation managing takes place when 'the dominant function of the text is to guide the situation in a manner favorable to the text producer's goals'". In other words, should the translator move away from the ST and takes the risk of monitoring the text according to the TL and culture. Or should he stick to the ST and manage it in favor of SL culture?

The translation is not simply a matter of seeking other words with similar meanings, but rather the finding of appropriate ways of saying things in another language. Different languages may use different linguistic forms, but these forms are only one of the aspects of the difference between the two language systems. It is known that translation is a process derived from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL). "A good translation to be, that, in which the merit of the original work is so completely transfused into another language, as to be as distinctly apprehended, and as strongly felt, by a native of the country to which that language belongs, as it is by those who speak the language of the original work." (Tytler 1978: 14). He recommends that the translators have to be faithful to the content and/or ideas of the original text and encourages them to be free from the linguistic constraints in favor of a more functional perspective. He also develops the concepts of fluency, naturalness, and domestication, but stand firmly against paraphrasing, considering it has exaggeratedly loose translation. One language cannot express the meaning of another; instead, a distinction has been made between the meaning built-in and the meanings that must be captured and expressed. Different languages direct their speakers to think differently, i.e. direct their attention to different aspects of the environment. There is no relation between the quality of a translation and the source text or with the time of its writer; rather, it depends on the theoretical knowledge and practical skill of the translator. This is because translation is not only a science, a science with its own peculiar laws and methods, but an art of reproduction and recreation.



## Variety of Arabic

Arabic is spoken by more than four hundred million people who have lived in an area stretching from the Arabian Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean. In addition, about one billion Muslims all over the world use Arabic in their prayers. Ferguson (1990:147) praises Arabic by saying that “after all, Arabic is a VSO language, as they say (that is Verb-Subject-Object). The least common of the three major word order patterns in the world’s languages”. Being rich in its inflectional system, Arabic shows different word orders, in contrast to the impoverished inflectional system of English, which restricts word order to one, and only one, word order, i.e. Subject-Verb-Object. The flexibility of Arabic structure makes it more complex: one sentence can have six possible word orders of subject, verb, and object which are all grammatically correct. This feature can be seen as the richness in overt case marking:

- |                   |               |
|-------------------|---------------|
| a. قابل زيد عليًا | Met Zayd Ali. |
| b. قابل عليًا زيد | Met Ali Zayd. |
| c. قابل عليًا زيد | Zayd met Ali. |
| d. عليًا قابل زيد | Zayd Ali met. |
| e. قابل زيد عليًا | Ali met Zayd. |
| f. عليًا زيد قابل | Ali Zayd met. |

As illustrated above, in all six positions (word order), the subject *Zayd* remains nominative, and the object *Ali* remains accusative. However, Fassi (1993) among others considers Arabic essentially a VSO language. On the other hand, Ouhalla (1994) argues that SVO order may be the underlying structure. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Arabic demonstrated what Ferguson (1990:325) terms diglossia (from French *diglossie*): “in many speech communities two or more varieties of the same language are used by some speakers under different conditions”, whereby two varieties of a language exist side by side throughout the community, with each having a definite role to play. This is attributed to the fact that classical Arabic has undergone some changes in its nature which culminated in three Arabic varieties, i.e. Arabic language nowadays represents a triglossic situation, classical, modern and colloquial.

The first variety is Classical Arabic (CA) the language of the Holy Book of Islam, the Qur’an, and it is the vehicle through which the culture, heritage, and religion of the Arabs spread worldwide. The second variety is Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) a modernized version of CA which started to spread hand in hand with the expanse of journalism and mass media in radio, television, modern literature, formal meetings, and the language of instruction at schools and universities. At present, MSA is accepted as the *lingua franca* for written and formal spoken Arabic and as a language of science and technology throughout the Arab World. The third variety is colloquial spoken Arabic or the vernacular. Each Arab country, even each region, has its own distinctive dialect. It is simpler than CA in its syntax and lexicon, uses fewer inflections, and is open to borrowing from other languages. The phonology of the dialects differs from that of CA. In this research, our main concern is with CA since most of the examples are taken from Islamic and pre-Islamic eras where CA was the dominant language in the Arabian Peninsula. The main source of difficulty in CA springs from its rhetoric which



creates its unique style. It is an undeniable fact that Arabic has been and still is a religious symbol, a national identity, and an articulation of the Arabs' patriotism.

### البلاغة **Arabic Rhetoric**

Plato defines rhetoric as the art of winning the soul by discourse. Rhetoric, or the art of persuasion, adopts a number of strategies or persuasive appeals to win the soul of the audience or convince them of a particular idea or a product or service. Campbell (1988:1) states that eloquence in its greatest latitude denotes "that art or talent by which one discourse is adapted to its end." He (Ibid.) identifies four aims of discourse: to enlighten the understanding, to please the imagination, to move the passion, or to influence the will. Rhetoric is the art of using words in a persuasive way in speaking or writing. In this respect, Arabic employs most of these aims which termed صور بلاغية (tropes). Arabic Rhetoric is considered the flesh and blood of the language. It is a linguistic discipline that aims to sharpen and upgrade the linguistic competence of writing and speaking. It also provides language users with the appropriate and effective stylistic mechanisms required for eloquently forceful discourse. Although it was not known as a separate study in the pre-Islamic era, rhetoric is manifested in the Arabs' literature, especially in their lengthy poems or what they termed in CA المعلقات (Pendants (the hanging poems)).

Arabic Rhetoric explores the history, disciplines, order, and pragmatic functions of Arabic speech acts. In Arabic, rhetoric is derived from the verb بلغ (to reach or achieve). Al-Jurjani (1988) opens up a new dimension in the study of Arabic rhetoric with two important underlying theories, called النظم (systems) which means مطابقة الكلام لمقتضى الحال (the appropriateness of language use to the context or situation of occurrence). He describes the method in the arrangement and structure of sentences with the words:

أَن لِّيس الغرض بنظم الكلم أَن توالى الفاظها في النطق بل أَن تناسقت دلالتها وتلاقت معانيها على الوجه الذي اقتضاه العقل.  
(The purpose is not for word combinations to follow in pronunciation, but rather for their semantics to be harmonious, and their meanings converging in the manner required by the mind).

In the fifth century, Al-Jurjani (Ibid.) recognized the important field of Arabic rhetoric and divides it into three components of rhetorical knowledge, namely (1) علم المعاني (Semantics), i.e. the study of meaning. It is an act of conveying intended ideas by a skillful combination of particular words suitable for the context of the situation. (2) علم البديع (Stylistics), i.e. the aesthetic values. It is also called المحسنات اللفظية (the beautifiers of the utterance) which is a way of making the utterances and meanings beautiful and elegant. (3) علم البيان (Pragmatics) also known as figures of speech, which is concerned with allegorical and non-allegorical significations, linguistic allusion, and linguistic signaling. It is worth noting that simile, metaphor, and metonymy come under this discipline.

Arabic rhetoric is also related to semantics in many areas because it is logical, cognitive and with denotative content and can be tested and marked like other branches of linguistics. Its meaning is affective because it expresses the feeling and emotions of the language producer. Stylistically speaking, it plays a prominent role in expressing social or other circumstances of language use. It is the way to express an opinion by employing imagery, simile, metaphor, or metonymy. This may even be expressed in an unacceptable manner to another social group. Arabic has its freedom of word order, uses repetition to enhance and clarify the meaning,



employs figures of speech to show its aesthetic values and its talk shows are full of ornamental oratory features.

### The Relationship between Metaphor and Metonymy

For metaphor, the issue is more complicated as many scholars deeply questioned the relationship between the two concepts throughout history. It is generally accepted that metaphor and metonymy are fundamentally different (Warren 2006). However, the Arabic Scholar Ibn-Kathir (in Tabanah (1988: 549) argues “metonymy is, in fact, a part of metaphor”, but he goes on to say that there is a key difference between the two concepts: metaphor uses direct expressive words to convey the intended meanings while metonymy employs indirect symbolic words to communicate its message. On the contrary, Aristotle does not recognize the distinctive character of metonymy and he reduced it to a subtype of metaphor. However, some modern scholars such as Lakoff and Johnson (2003) disagree with this argument by saying that metaphor and metonymy are different kinds of processes. They (Ibid.36) argue “metaphor is principally a way of conceiving one thing in terms of another. Metonymy, on the other hand, has primarily a referential function, that is, it allows us to use one entity to stand for another”. The two authors also admit that the distinction between metaphor and metonymy is real but often confusing. Metaphor has two domains: the target and the source. The target domain is formed by the immediate subject matter, and the source domain, in which important metaphorical reasoning takes place and that provides the source concepts used in that reasoning whereas “in a metonymy, there is only one domain: the immediate subject matter. There is only one mapping; typically, the metonymic source maps to the metonymic target (the referent) so that one item in the domain can stand for the other” (Lakoff and Johnson 2003: 185). They (Ibid.) add that a metaphoric mapping is multiple, i.e. two or more elements are mapped to two or more other elements.

Two lines are extracted from a poem by the pre-Islamic poet Amr Bin Khalthoum are considered by Arab scholars and poets alike as the most comprehensive lines said about courage, and pride. These lines metonymically refer to the bravery of the Arabs in the pre-Islamic era (the era of Ignorance or the medieval era):

ملأنا البر حتى ضاق عنا      وماء البحر نملؤه سفينا

(We occupied the lands until they became small for us.      And we filled the sea with warships)

إذا بلغ الفطام لنا صبي      تخرُّ له الجبابرُ ساجدينَا

(When our infant is weaned away from milk. Titans submissively fall down to him).

The poet states, in a metonymic way, that when our infant is two years old, titans fear him. It is worthwhile to mention that the three figures of speech, simile, metaphor, and metonymy, are separately discussed due to the vital role they play in Arabic rhetoric.

### التشبيه Simile

Although they are widely used in literature, figures of speech might lead to ambiguity owing to their figurative meaning. The two most common figures of speech are metaphor and simile. Similes can be identified easily since they use distinctive markers such as مثل/شبهه (like/ as) which are employed to express comparisons. English similes can be recognized via various





indicators such as (a) Adjectives: *the same as, similar to*; (b) Verbs: *act like, look like, resemble, seem, sound like*; (c) Conjunctions: *as though/if*; (d) Nouns: *some kind of, a sort of*; and (e) Prepositions: *as/like*. Such indicators can assist the translator to identify similes. Therefore, identifying similes may not be considered as hard as translating them (Pierini 2007). The importance of Arabic rhetoric is also perceived in many areas in the Qur'ān. It indicates how the Qur'ān uses simile for tangible things to describe abstract concepts in order to facilitate understanding. Verse (64:35) reads:

{ الله نور السموات والارض مثل نوره كمشكاة فيها مصباح المصباح في زجاجة } { God is the light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His light is as if there were a Niche and within it a lamp: The Lamp enclosed in Glass }. Here, *physical light* is but a reflection of the true light in the world of reality, and that true light is the light of God, (Ali 1982). At the beginning of this verse, God uses the simile device مثل (as if) to describe His abstract true parable light as if it is a Niche in a bottle.

Unlike metaphor, the simile is much more straightforward and it is another tool in the literature that is nearly identical to metaphor with a remarkable distinction that is observed in the strength of metaphor. However, the simile is less forceful than a metaphor in terms of meaning and effect and less powerful than a metaphor because it explicitly compares two things by means of the words *like* or *as*. It can be said, that simile is a metaphor differing merely by the addition of an item, then it is less aesthetic as it is longer; it does not say this *is* that it rather says this *is like* that. In addition, simile has less ornamental value than a metaphor in terms of effect because the addition of the devices *like* or *as* to form a simile enhances and clarifies the intended meaning, yet it reduces the reader's pleasure. It also facilitates the native reader's task because it is direct and usually sets no burden on the literary translator.

A simile is divided into three major components: (a) topic/tenor is the object of similarity, (b) image is the value compared with the topic, and (c) similarity point is the established relationship between the topic and the image (Larson 1984). For instance, *Sam is as blind as a bat*, where *Sam* is the topic, *bat* is the image and *blindness* is the similarity point. According to Kane (2000: 302), "similes build an open similarity between X and Y by literally saying X is *like* Y, or X is *as* Y, whereas metaphors do not state that X is *like* Y but rather that X *is* Y". This gives an indication that metaphor can invent new and unusual connections between items, while similes merely denote resemblance between concepts. For example, to indicate how brave John is, this could be expressed metaphorically as *John is a Lion which* draws a strange link between *John* and *Lion*. Whereas the simile *John is like a Lion* merely approximates the characteristics of John to those of a Lion. Like simile, metaphor involves comparison but the only difference between them is that in a simile the comparison is explicitly stated, usually by a word such as *like* or *as*, while in a metaphor the comparison is just implied. For example, *she is like a rose* is a simile. *She is a rose* is a metaphor/metonymy. An example of a simile taken from a poem by the pre-Islamic poet A<sup>C</sup>shaa Qays when he describes his lover:

كأن مشيتها من بيت جاريتها مر السحاب لا ريث ولا عجل (When she always visits her neighbors. She walks in a leisurely manner like a cloud neither in a hurry nor very slowly). Unlike English, Arabic has four major components/elements of simile exemplified in the above line as follows: (a) the image: *his lover and how she walks*; the point of similarity: *the movement of the cloud*; (c) the topic: *the cloud*; (d) Instrument: *like*. It is worth noting that this type is called the complete/comprehensive simile because it comprises the four components. Arabic has five different patterns of simile:



- |       |                        |                                    |
|-------|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| (i)   | وجهها مشرق كالشمس      | (Her face is shining like the sun) |
| (ii)  | وجهها كالشمس           | Her face is like the sun)          |
| (iii) | وجهها الشمس في اشراقها | (Her face is the sun shining)      |
| (iv)  | وجهها الشمس            | (Her face is the sun)              |
| (v)   | الشمس وجهها            | (The sun is her face)              |

In (i) all the elements of simile are mentioned, the subject that simile is applied to *her face*, the point of similarity *shining*, the syntactic device *like*, and the term of simile *the sun*. Both Arabic and English consider sentence (i) as a simile. However, in (ii) the point of similarity is not mentioned, in (iii) the syntactic device is not mentioned, in (iv) both the point of similarity and the syntactic device are not mentioned, and in (v) which is similar to (iv) except in the sense that in (v) the simile is inverted for the sake of overstatement. From the five patterns mentioned above, English deals only with patterns (i) and (ii) as kinds of simile, but the other three are considered metaphors in English.

### الاستعارة Metaphor

A metaphor is a figure of speech in which an expression literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a resemblance or analogy between them. Similarly, "the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (Lakoff and Johnson 2003:5). Metaphor is primarily conceptual in nature. It is not merely a matter of words, but also a matter of thought. The Arabic scholar Al-Jurjani (1983:29) defines metaphor as "a word which is in the language, has a known basic meaning, is temporarily lent as it were, to something other than the original object". Arlow (in Haartman 2006:189) sees metaphor as "a linguistic process whereby aspects of one object are carried over or transferred to another object so that the second object is spoken of as if it were the first". The points of similarity are established without mentioning explicitly the similarity between the two objects. They are often found to have a shocking and dramatic effect like describing the laziest person by saying *he is a total couch potato*.

While the general procedure of transferring the meaning can accommodate most of the cases, surely the number of objects involved can vary. Aristotle acknowledges the importance of metaphor by saying that "the greatest thing, by far, is to be a master of metaphor. Through resemblance, metaphors make things clearer." This process of transference enables the user of the language to produce new, wider, or more accurate meaning. It widens his freedom of expression and word selection, opening up a new horizon of imaginative forms of speech that seek, for different reasons, (i.e. rhetorical, poetic, or critical) to go beyond the direct semantic meaning of the single word. Like other figures of speech, metaphor involves deviation from the normal way of using language. In view of that, the meaning of any figurative expression can be successfully rendered through figurative interpretation.

In this regard, Ibn Qutayba (in Cohen and Berlin 2016: 68) illustrates this claim with examples of figurative language in the Qur'an and demonstrates that "they cannot be fully conceptual in translation. Even if one could successfully determine and render the primary intention of a figure of speech in the Qur'an its overtones are inevitably lost in translation". The Qur'an is the most common root of metaphor and translators dealing with religious metaphors, especially



the conceptual ones, have encountered serious problems with respect to finding the most appropriate equivalence in the target language. The question of how to deal with metaphor raises the thorny, sensitive issue of whether liberty can be taken in rendering the word of God. Within religion, a metaphor has been viewed as an odd predilection for assigning a thing for what is not. The following verses taken from the three Divine Religions are examples. First from the Qur'an:

{إن الذين كذبوا بآياتنا واستكبروا عنها لا تفتح لهم أبواب السماء ولا يدخلون الجنة حتى يلج الجمل في سم الخياط }

Those who reject Our Signs and treat them with arrogance, no opening will there be of the gates of heaven, nor will they enter the Garden, until the **camel** can pass through the eye of the needle: such is Our reward for those in sin". (7:40). Similar verses are found in both the Bible and the Talmud.

**The Bible** "The eye of a **needle**" is **scripture** quoting **Jesus** recorded in the synoptic gospels: I tell you the truth, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a **camel** to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God". Matthew 19:23-26.

**Judaism** The Babylonian Talmud applies the aphorism to unthinkable thoughts. To explain that dreams reveal the thoughts of a man's heart, the product of reason rather than the absence of it, some rabbis say, "They do not show a man a palm tree of gold, nor an **elephant** going through the eye of a needle" (Baba Metzia, 38b).

The similarities between these three religious verses in using metaphoric expressions are evident as both the Qur'an and the Bible used the Arabic noun *camel* whereas the Talmud used the noun elephant. By doing so, they make the text more powerful, emphatic, and more colorful and appealing (for stylistic effect). However, I would like to stretch a point here, in the English translation of the Quranic verse by Ali (1986) above, the metaphoric expression *until the camel can pass through the eye of the needle* the noun الجمل is rendered into English as *the camel* which could be mistranslated. This is because the Arabic noun *camel*, in the above verse, refers to *the mooring line* (very thick rope used to secure the bow of a boat or ship to a wharf) but not to the camel as an animal. Al-Zawi (1980:114) states that the noun *camel* in Arabic also means حبل المرسى (the mooring line) which logically means it is impossible for such a thick rope to enter the tiny eye of a needle. However Ibn-Kahtir (1984:168) claims that some Muslim predecessors such as Al-Mujahid and Bin-Abi Abbas pronounced الجمل, in the previous Verse, (the camel) as الجُمْل /Al-Jummal/ instead of /Al-Jamal/ to indicate the mooring line. The notion of change as we may realize is of key importance to the understanding of the phenomenon of metaphor. For instance, another metaphor is taken from a poem by the poet Amr Bin Abi Rabi'a during the Islamic period reads بعيدة مهوى القوط (literally, her earrings are hanging away from her shoulders). At that time, the long-necked woman was considered an important sign of beauty.

Metaphors are often used to make a strong impact, i.e. the more appropriate and original the metaphors, the more powerful will be their impact. A figurative comparison should be distinguished from a literal (nonfigurative) comparison. In a figurative comparison, there is usually an element of exaggeration (Mollanazar, 2005). In Arabic, metaphors can be seen as an eloquent simile in which one of its principal elements (tenor and vehicle) has to be





mentioned. If tenor is not mentioned it is considered استعاره تصريحية (declarative metaphor), and if its vehicle is not mentioned it is considered استعارة مكنية (metonymic metaphor). For example يا ضبيه البان ترعى في خمائله ليهنك اليوم أن القلب مرعاك

(Oh beautiful deer pasturing between the trees I hope my heart is your grassland). The highlighted phrase is considered a declarative metaphor because the poet replaces the tenor (the girl) with a beautiful deer. In another example: وقف التاريخ في محرابها وقفة المرتجف المضطرب (History stood in its shrine trembling and shuddering). In this line, the highlighted phrase *history stood* is a metonymic metaphor because Jerusalem, the tenor in this context, is not mentioned but indicated anaphorically. In addition, the phrase itself is considered personification because the attribution of human characteristics *stood* to something nonhuman (history).

### الكناية Metonymy

Metonymy is defined as a figure of speech in which the name of an object or concept is replaced by a word closely related to or suggested by the original. For instance, the term *crown* to mean *king* as in *the power of the crown was extremely weakened*. Metonymy is also defined as something referred to by a word that describes a quality or feature of that thing. It is worth noting here that metonymy sometimes plays the role of euphemism. The meaning of euphemism is similar to the Arabic كناية (metonymy) which means to speak about something but you mean something different, or to use words or expression that relate to the meaning allegorically. The English sentence: *he said he had committed adultery* is rendered into Arabic metonymically/euphemistically as قال انني أقمت علاقة ائمة (he said he had a sinful relation). Not only *adultery* is changed to (sinful relation) but also the evaluative verb *committed*, meaning اقترف, is changed into the Arabic neutral verb أقام (had/made) (Almijrab 2020:10).

Gibbs (1994) pays special attention to the linguistic effect of metonymy as he considers the ability to draw metonymic inferences, i.e. to infer whole from parts or parts from wholes, is one of the special characteristics of the poetics of mind. Metonymy occurs when the speaker wants to give a certain meaning but without using the relevant direct word, which is designated naturally for that intended meaning in the language. He, instead, opts for using another word that is closely related to or suggested by the original to communicate his message. An example by Imru' al-Qays, a great Arab poet from the pre-Islamic era, describing a rich woman as الضحى (a late riser) because she sleeps until forenoon. This metonymic expression refers to a rich woman who employs a retinue of servants and leads a luxurious lavish life. Metonymy is classified according to the metonymic meaning into three categories:

(1) metonymy of quality means to attribute a certain trait to the described object with the aim of conveying a message or highlighting a deep meaning that is associated with, or understood from, that trait. Two examples from this category read: first, the Arabic poetic line,

ومايك فيا من عيب فاني جبان الكلب مهزول الفصيل (And what a disadvantage to me is that the coward of a dog is a mocked platoon). Most of the Arabs used to live in tents in the desert and had dogs to look after their tents and keep strangers away from them. However, the generous person is the one whose dog did not bark when strangers came to his tent due to the fact that the dog was familiar with them. At that time, the generous person is nicknamed جبان الكلب (the owner of the cowardly dog). As to مهزول الفصيل (his baby camels are lean), it is also an indication of his



generosity because he sometimes kills even the she-camels in order to feed his guests and leaves the baby camels without their mothers which is the reason for their leanness.

Second, the famous Arab female poet *Al-Khansa* describes her brother's generosity as كَثِيرُ الرَّمَادِ (his house become full of ashes). Metonymically speaking, the presence of so many ashes in his house refers to his considerable and keen efforts for consistently providing food and all kinds of hospitality to his passersby. Another metonymic expression reads: خرساء الأساور (literally, her bracelets are deaf) which is a sign of beauty refers to the roundness and thickness of a woman's arms. This means that the bracelets she is wearing do not have any sound while moving her arms. Historically speaking, it is a fact that the Arabs consider overweight women to be more beautiful than slim ones. This impression still exists now. In Mauritania, for example, girls who approach the age of marriage are trying to gain weight in order to win the heart of the grooms. Slim ones are often nicknamed featherless chickens.

(2) كناية عن موصوف (metonymy of the described which means to mention the quality and attribution but omit the described object). The verse from the Qur'an reads { وحملناه على ذات ألواح } (And We carried him upon a thing of planks and nails) (2019). The two Arabic terms ألواح و دسر (planks and nails) in the aforementioned Quranic verse metonymically refer to the described noun *ship*. In this particular verse, they refer to Noah's Ark. The Qur'an uses figures of speech in order to send more eloquent, articulate, and communicative messages.

(3) كناية عن نسب (metonymy of attribution, in this type of metonymy, the quality and the described object are mentioned while the attribution is entirely omitted: الخيل معقود في نواصيها الخير الى يوم القيامة (Horses are bound in their corners of good until the Day of Resurrection). Here, the adjective *good* is declared, but it is attributed to the horses' corners. This means that the described (horses) are ascribed to the adjective *good*. It is worth mentioning here that this category is the least used in Arabic.

According to Hawkes (2018), figurative language is usually descriptive because its transfer involves pictures or images; however, he admits that the term imagery is essentially misleading especially when it is used to refer to figurative language. This is because it presupposes that its main appeal is with the eye, but may appeal to many things including the visual sense that it is an essential domain in linguistics. To illustrate this, the Quranic سُورَةُ النَّصْرِ (the Victory Sura) is explained:

إذا جاء نصر الله والفتح (1) ورأيت الناس يدخلون في دين الله أفواجا (2) فسبح بحمد ربك وأستغفره انه كان توابا (3)

{ 1 When comes the help of God, and victory And thou dost see, 2 The People enter God's Religion In crowds 3. Celebrate the Praises Of Thy Lord, and pray For His Forgiveness: For He is Oft-Returning (In Grace and Mercy)}. This Surah was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad while He was in the city of Al-Madinah, in the Arabian Peninsula). The date of this Divine Revelation was only a few months before the passing way of the Prophet who was in Mecca for his Farewell Pilgrimage. As stated in the Surah above, Muslims turn out to be victorious under the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad as He and His Companions conquered His homeland Mecca and entered the city without any bloodshed. Although this Surah is about the victory achieved by the Prophet Muhammad and His army, the whole Quranic Surah is also كناية an indication that the Prophet had completed his mission and consequently His passing was approaching. After the revelation of this verse, His companions well were aware of this fact to the extent that they were overcome with grief and even the Prophet himself said that this



Surah announced His death (Ibn-Kathir 1984: 395-398). This Short Quranic Surah made it clear that the Holy Qur'an cannot be translated but can only be explicated. This is because Qur'anic discourse is notorious for the use of rhetoric as a tool to draw the attention of the reader/hearer by creating dramatic, witty, and colorful texts.

Warren (2006:5) makes a distinction between different types of metonymy: "those metonymies that relate one entity with another and those that relate to two propositions. The former kind will be referred to as referential, the latter as propositional". Referential metonymy is based on relations such as to cause and effect whereas propositional metonymy is based on antecedent-consequent relations. It is worth mentioning that propositional metonymy can be explicit or implicit:

(1) Explicit proposition: He *raised his eyebrows*, gives rise to the proposition that *he was surprised*. (2) Implicit proposition: How did you get to the airport? Explicit proposition *I waved down a taxi*, gives rise to the implicit proposition *a taxi took me there*.

(3) Explicit proposition: *they went to the altar*, gives the implicit proposition that *they were married* Warren (Ibid.) gives examples of the differences between propositional and referential metonymy: (1) I will put *you* on the governor's report. (Here not the person but his behaviour)

(2) Maria is *a divine voice*. (person with a divine voice)

(3) *Table 13* is complaining. (The customer(s) at table 13).

Referential metonymy, as illustrated above, has a tendency to violate truth conditions because one cannot literally include a person in a report nor can a woman be a voice or tables complain.

### Concluding Remarks

Based on what we have just discussed, it is anticipated that the translation of literary texts in general and figures of speech in particular, seems a far-fetched challenge. In rare cases, though, translation is only possible with partial semantic and stylistic loss. This paper takes an investigative assessment towards the possible approaches to the translation of the Arabic rhetoric with particular reference to Arabic-English translation. The issues raised by almost all the above rhetorical devices and their translations are cultural in origin. Simile, metaphor, and metonymy tend to reveal profound conceptual problems closely related to such factors such as competence in the source language and an awareness of the target culture. These problems could be attributed to the fact that Arabic concepts may not exist in the English culture and vice versa. However, these concepts could be expressed in a way or another in the target language. This means that almost everything could be translatable. Translatability here refers to sense whereas untranslatability takes place where form begins to contribute to sense. The extent to which a text is translatable varies with the degree to which it is embedded in its own peculiar culture.

In the process of rendering from Arabic into English or vice versa, we must take into account that the two realities are very different and that their cultures have sometimes opposite views on certain matters; so the search for equivalent words is more complex. Some ideas or characteristics are not even known or practiced in the other culture. The practice of literary translation has changed as a matter of globalization: texts have become more exotic, and these translations should contribute to a better and more correct understanding of the source culture



of a country. When this is the case, the translator must find expressions in his own language that express almost with the same fidelity the meaning of the original language.

An appropriate rendering of the above-mentioned figures of speech would be one that combines all aspects of meaning whenever necessary. However, each of them has to be treated according to the values of the TL culture. In this respect, the translator has to transfer the source language image with a target language image that does not conflict with that of the target language culture. Translators suffer twice when dealing with Arabic rhetorical expressions that are religiously oriented because they are loaded with culture-specific items. Even native speakers are not always able to comprehend the figurative meaning of the messages in their own language, let alone foreigners. It is advised that translators should be trained to deal with cultural mismatch not only in the foreign language but also in their native language. In translating a figure of speech, the translator must understand the meaning as intended by the writer, not as seen from the target language point of view.

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