

Lexical Gaps in Arabic -to-English Translation

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Abstract

The present paper addresses itself to study how lexical gaps constitute a thorny area for Arabic- to -English translators to encounter and to overcome. It is based on the hypothesis that lexical gaps in religious translation seem to be rather problematic to get around. Due to space necessity, the paper is limited to the investigation of morpho- lexical and semantico-lexical gaps. First of all, the treatment of lexical gaps from a linguistic point of view has been introduced. Then, the realization of such gaps in religious texts has been investigated. Translation data for analysis is taken from three published renditions of the Glorious Qurân where ayahs involving morpho-lexical and semantico-lexical gaps have been discussed along with alternative translations for the inadequately translated ayahs. The assessment of the translations of Quranic ayahs under study has yielded that lexical gaps are too thorny in religious translation to overcome unless appropriate translation techniques are utilized to process them. .

Keywords: gaps, holes, inaccuracy, alternative translations, ayah, surah.

1. Lexical gaps

1.1 An Introduction

'Lexical gaps or lexical holes' are two terms alternatively used in the literature available on the topic. However, a lexical gap as a term is in more currency than a lexical hole. There is a unanimous agreement between linguists and translation specialists of what a lexical gap means. According to Trask(1993:157), the term refers to" the absence of a hypothetical word which would seem to fit naturally into the pattern exhibited by existing words" . Lehrer (1974:95), as a semanticist, states that the term 'lexical gap' is multiply ambiguous in the sense that it has been applied to all sorts of instances where a word, in one way or another, is missing. Gaps are of various types; realized at phonological (e.g.*pkly/pkli/), morphological (e.g.*ungood), syntactic (e.g.*informations) or semantic (e.g. *male dog) levels.

It is beyond dispute that the lexical framework of any language is often built in terms of semantic fields (e.g. kinship relations, colour terms,

military ranks etc), sense relations (e.g. hyponymy, synonymy, antonymy etc), collocation, idioms and relational opposites. The basic principle behind the availability of certain lexis in a given language is its users' need. So, it is possible to find a lexical item referring to a particular object or concept in one language, but it is absent in another. Bentivogli and Pianta(2009) underline that a lexical gap occurs whenever a language expresses a concept with a lexical unit whereas another language expresses the same concept with a free combination of words. Lyons (1977:303(see also Kiekema 2009) maintains that lexical gaps are attributed to unlexicalized concepts or objects across languages. For instance, due to the cultural institutionalization of the distinction between dead humans and dead animals, two lexical items are coined referring to both as 'corpse' and 'carcass', respectively. However, there is no word referring to dead plants. The same holds true of the distinction in English between 'shelling' and 'bombardment' where both are translated into Arabic as **القصف** *Qaṣif* "unless the former collocates with artillery" **مدفعية** *maddfaḍiah* " to be distinguished from the latter when co-occurring with aircraft fighters *طائرات* *ṭaai?rat*". Thus, such lexical mismatches will lead to the absence of adequate translations where the translator must decide between straight borrowing, neologism and providing an explanation.

1.2 Lexical gaps and Semantic fields

Semantic field theory was first introduced by German linguists (e.g. Trier) where it refers to word-groups that exhibit semantic relatedness and sameness of word class (Löbner, 2002:94). It is often common for lexical gaps to come to the fore within semantic fields where there is a hole in the pattern i.e. " the absence of a lexeme at a particular place in the structure of a semantic field"(Lyons, 1977:301). For instance, the semantic field of temperature in English, as introduced by Conner (1983:43), consists of four terms: *cold, cool; warm, hot*. In some contexts these terms turn to be synonyms (e.g. *cold/ cool water*) and in other they are antonyms (e.g. *cold/ *cool outer space*). In Arabic, on the other hand, the semantic field of temperature involves three terms where a lexical gap is easy to recognize. This could be shown diagrammatically as follows:

In English	cold	cool	warm	hot
In Arabic	بارد (bârid)	-----	دافى (dâfi?)	حار (hâr)

Diagram 1: Semantic field of Temperature in English and Arabic

This lexical gap has its negative impact on translation from English into Arabic where *cool* and *cold* are rendered the same in contexts where they turn to be antonyms.

1. He fell into the cool waters of the lake.

سقط في مياه البحيره الباردة

Saqatâh fii almiah albuḥayrah albâridah

2. The winners were given a cold welcome when they arrived home.

لقي الفائزون أستقبالا باردا عند عودتهم للوطن

Laqiah alfa?zuun istiqlallan bâridan 6indah 6awdatihim lilwaṭan

It is worth noting that in sentence (2) the word *cool* is not correct to use. The same holds true of the semantic field of kinship relations where there is a huge gap between both languages in that in Arabic eight kinship relations (i.e. أبن العمه، بنت، بنت الخال، أبن الخال، أبن عم، أبن خال، أبن خاله، أبن عمه) are inadequately matched in translation by one lexical kinship term 'cousin'. This lexical gap can only be bridged by paraphrasing written in form of footnotes or comments within the body of the text under translation. Two examples are given below

1. تزوج أبن خالتي البارحه.

Tazawaja ibnu khalatii albarihah

My cousin (my maternal aunt's son) got married yesterday.

2. تزوجت بنت عمي البارحه.

Tazawajat bintu 6amii albarihah.

My cousin (my parental uncle's daughter) got married yesterday.

Altha6alibii (d.430H, 2007:356) introduces the Arabic semantic field of gifts consisting of six terms: alhudyya(a gift given to a good news teller),al6urdah(a gift given by a passenger coming back home),almuṢna6ah(a gift given to a worker),alatawah(a gift given by a king) alshshakad(a gift given to somebody before he does his work) and shukm(a gift given to somebody in turn of what he did). These are not necessarily lexically matched in English as shown in the following diagram:

In Arabic	Alhudyya الهديا	al6urdah العرضه	almuṢna6ah المصنعه	Alatawah الأتاوه	Alshshakad الشكد	Shukm الشكم
In English	Gift or present	-----	-----	Prize	-----	reward

Diagram 2: Semantic field of Gifts in Classical Arabic and Standard English

Thus, in translating a text from classical Arabic into English, there is no any other alternative at the translator's disposal but to explain such unlexicalized concepts between the languages concerned. Moreover, it is not necessary that lexical gaps arise only within semantic fields: for instance the word *nerd* is found in English to refer to a person who is highly well-versed in computer science and lacks social skills, yet this word is not found in Arabic where paraphrasing is the only choice for translators to make. Yet, this word does not fall within a particular semantic field in English.

1.3 Lexical gaps: Reasons and Treatment

Lexical gaps, as referred to in (1.1 and 1.2 above), are attributed to a variety of reasons such as the absence of the lexicalization of some concepts in a given language. The lexicalization of the same concepts in another language constitutes translation problems and difficulties. Owing to the very close relationship between language and culture where cultural differences are mirrored by linguistic ones, Teleoaca(2009) speaks of cultural gaps specially realized in technical terminology. This

makes translators permanently face the problem of how to treat the cultural aspects implicit in a source text(ST) and how to find the most appropriate techniques for successfully conveying these aspects in the target text(TT). These problems may vary in scope depending on whether the two languages (or more) concerned are linguistically and culturally related or not. Lyons (1981:310) takes the same position in saying that "differences of lexical structure (including most obviously, lexical gaps...) make exact translation between languages difficult and at times impossible". This could lead to two types of untranslatability: linguistic and cultural. The former is ascribed to the non-existence of a syntactic or lexical substitute in the TT for an ST item whereas the latter, on the other hand, is due to the absence in the TT culture of a relevant situational feature for the SL text (McGuire, 1980:32).

The physical environment of a speech community is also involved in creating lexical gaps in the sense that words are coined by speakers to refer to objects or animals found in their surroundings, but not necessarily found elsewhere. The true realization of such influence of environment on language is the coinage of one hundred names for the camel in the Arabian Peninsula. The lack of a particular word in a language for a particular concept or object could be compensated by adding a new word when speakers become familiar with the concept. Speakers have four ways opened to them to bridge such gaps: semantic extension, blending, combination of old existing words or borrowing (Wikipedia, 2009). As to translation, Weise (1988:190) maintains that any gap either in the form of one-to-zero or one-to-many equivalents must be compensated by the translator's skill.

To take examples from Arabic, semantic extension is true of the word "قطار" *Qiṭâr* (train) which originally denoted a caravan of camels, in modern standard Arabic it refers to a train. Blending, although not that productive in Arabic, plays a minor role in deriving new words such as "الزمكان" *azamakan* referring to place-time and "جيوسياسي" *geosiasy* referring to *geopolitics* while borrowing is more vividly seen in political register and scientific terminology such as البرلمان, ديمقراطييه، الراديكاليين, سيناريو, دكتاتوريه, *desktop, mouse, clutch, gear* where they are loan-translated in modern Arabic and the last four words are naturalized in the

colloquial Arabic dialects. As far as borrowing in the political discourse is concerned, some calls were voiced to update the classical Arabic political terms where *الرادكاليين* (radicals), *الديمقراطية* (democracy) *الدكتاتورية* (dictatorship) *الأيدولوجية* (ideology) are supposed to be respectively replaced by *العقيدة*, *الاستبداد الشورى*؛ *الاصلاحيون* (hafyydh,1989:78). Nevertheless, the voices concerned have not rung a bell in the minds of politicians because the borrowed terms have got currency in the formal and informal modern Arabic political discourse.

1.4 Gaps in the Translation of Idioms

Although much has been written on the translation of idioms from Arabic into English and vice-versa, some idioms have remained controversial among translation professionals to be adequately rendered. This is owing to the fact that such idioms have one- to –zero equivalents in the TL. Proverbs are no exception in this regard since they are classified as a subcategory of idioms and they are culture-bound. However, this does not mean that this applies to all proverbs, on the contrary, some have one-to-one or one -to -many equivalents (Awwad, 2009) (see also Ghazala, 1995:142-149).

Awwad(ibid) maintains that when the expressions and functions of idioms differ in both SL and TL, the translator's task becomes extremely difficult. In such a situation, the mastery of the culture and the way of life besides that of the linguistic system become prerequisites if functionally adequate renderings of such idioms (including proverbs) are sought (e.g. Between the devil and the blue sea *بين فكي كماشه*: *bayna fakky kamaṣah'* (between the two jaws of a pair of pincers').

Being a native speaker of Iraqi Arabic, the researcher relies on his intuition in citing some proverbs whose origin is attributed to the cultural Islamic heritage i.e. either they are Qurân- based or Hadyth-based where the cultural gap is easily recognized.

1. ماعلى الرسول ألا البلاغ المبين (24: 54)

Ma'ala alrasuul ila albalagh almubyn(literally it means:The messenger is not concerned, but to convey the message). It is said to exonerate one's

responsibility, but telling what he was entrusted with. This proverb is a Quranic ayah.

2. بين العين والحاجب فرج

Bayna al'ayn walhajib faraj (literally it means: Between the eye and its brow is a hope). It is said on critical occasions and it is based on the following Quranic Ayah: "أن مع العسر يسرا" (94:6) which means: 'verily, along with every hardship is relief.'

3. رحم الله أمرء عرف قدر نفسه

Raḥama Allahu ?mri?in 'arafa qadara nafsih (literally it means: Mercy of Allah on the one who knows his position). It is one of the Prophet's (P.B.U.H) sayings normally pronounced to show that a man should not claim or speak more than he can or deserves.

4. الصدق نجاة

AlṢidiq Najjat (literally it means: telling the truth is a rescue). This proverb is based on the Quranic ayah "ياايها اللذين آمنوا أتقوا الله وكونوا مع الصادقين" (9: 119) *ya?uha alladyna ?manu ?taqu Allâh wakunu ma'a alṢadiqiin* "O, you who believe be afraid of Allâh and be with the truthful". This ayah urges people to be true in words and deeds.

It is not easy to give idiomatic translations in English to the above-quoted proverbs due to the cultural gap between both languages.

1.5 Lexical Gaps in the Translation of the Qurân

When one makes a survey of the existing English renditions of the Qurân, he distinguishes the fact that the translations aim at the communication of the message without considering the idiosyncrasies and the prototypical features of the Qurân. This could take a variety of challenges: lexical, structural, morphological or rhetorical (Abdelwali, 2009). The following subsections are concerned with discussing and assessing English translations of the Qurânic ayahs which involve morphological and semantico-lexical gaps. Three translations of the Qurân have been chosen for assessment where translators' names are abbreviatedⁱ and page numbers are indicated opposite each ayah. In

addition, surah names will be first referred to by numbers, and then followed by ayah numbers.

1.5.1 Morphological Gaps in Quranic Translations

As it is well-known that Arabic is an inflectional language and the classification of verbs is morphologically based where affixes give rise to paramount change in the meaning of the verbs derived from the same trilateral or quadrilateral stems. Some ayahs involve such verbs as they pose semantic challenges (resulting from morphological gaps) to translators. This is clearly seen in the following ayahs:

(3:3) نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَأَنْزَلَ التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ

Nazzala 6alayka alkitab bilhaqqi muṢaddiqan limma bayna yadayhi waʔanzala alttawrat walinjiil

Ali (p.52) It is He Who sent down to thee (step by step), in truth, the Book, confirming what went before it; and He sent down the Torah(of Moses) and the Gospel (of Jesus)

Sh. (p.83) He has revealed to you the book with truth, verifying that which is before it, and He revealed the Tawrat and the Injeel.

Hi-Kh(p.67) It is He Who sent down the Book(the Qurân) to you (Mohammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) with truth, confirming what came before it. And He sent down the Taurât(Torah) and Injeel(Gospel).

The verb *Nazzala* signifies the gradually repetitive revelation of the Qurân which lasted for 23 years whereas the verb *ʔanzala* to reveal one time and at once. Sh.'s and Hi-Kh's translations proved failure in conveying the semantic difference found between both verb forms. In contrast, Ali's translation is somehow accurate in the sense that he paraphrases the difference (i.e. sent down step by step) in meaning between both verb forms.

(104:1) وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ

Waylun likulli humazatin llumazah

Ali(p.600)Woe to every (kind of) scandal-monger and backbiter.

Sh.(p.702) Woe to every slanderer, defamer.

Hi-Kh(p.853) Woe to every slanderer and backbiter

The noun *Waylun*(Woe) is in the nominative case, not in the subjunctive case, because the former means that the sentence is nominal while the latter indicates a verbal sentence. The ayah is used for threatening those who gather money greedily without paying Zakatⁱⁱ or charities, expecting that they will be immortal. Those money gathers will be everlastingly tortured. Accordingly, unlike the subjunctive case of the nominal sentence indicating its non-continuity, the nominal sentence in the nominative case refers to the non-stop torture of the money gathers who pay no rights as Allah recommends. This difference in meaning is signalled by the morphological case-marking (As-Sammar'ay, 2007:33).

The three translations given are inadequate in the sense that they did not signal the sense of the everlasting woe that results from the morphological case marking found in the original. It could be translated more accurately as follows: *Everlasting woe to every slanderer and backbiter.*

"فَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوا أَنْ يَظْهَرُوهُ وَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوا لَهُ نَقْبًا" (18:97)

Fama *aṣṭa'u* an yadharwhu wam *aṣṭaṭ'u* lahu naqqba

Ali (p.297) Thus, were they made powerless to scale it or to dig through it.

Sh.(p.359) So they were not able to scale it nor could they make a hole in it.

Hi-Kh.(p.399) So they[Ya'juj and Ma'juj(gog and Magog)] could not scale it or dig through it.

The above ayah contains two verbs *aṣṭa'u* and *aṣṭaṭ'u* are morphologically derived from the same stem (*ṭaba*), yet the latter, unlike the former, is inflected with the letter "t". This gives rise to difference in meaning in that *aṣṭa'u* means *to ascend* or *to scale* whereas *aṣṭaṭ' u* means *to become with much difficulty able to do something*

(As-Sammar'ay, 2007: 75).The three translators' renditions are inaccurate in that they did not indicate the sense of difficulty to do something

involved within the meaning of *aṣṭaʿu* which is the resultant of the morphological infix.

" وَقَالَ نِسْوَةٌ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ " (12:30)

Waqala niswatun fi almadinah

Ali (p.232) Ladies said in the city.

Sh. (p.288) And women in the city said.

Hi-Kh.(p.306) And women in the city said

" قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ آمَنَّا " (49:14)

Qalat al?'rab amanna

Ali (p.508) The desert Arabs say, "We believe"

Sh.(p.595) The dwellers of the desert say: We believe.

Hi-Kh.(p.703) The Bedouins say "We believe"

The above two ayahs involve the same verb *qâla* but it is inflected for masculine gender in the first ayah while for feminine gender in the second. The masculine verb form implies the sense of paucity in that *a few* women in the royal palace of pharaoh say that his wife has become verily in love with her slave. On the other hand, the feminine verb form *qâlat* indicates the sense that *a lot of* desert people claim that they are true believers, but in fact they are but only Muslims. This morphological gap is attributed to the fact that verbs in Arabic, unlike in English, are inflected for gender which resulted in this difference in meaning. As to the translations, neither the sense of paucity nor that of plenty is lexically signalled. Following are two alternative renditions for both ayahs.

A few women in the city said.

A plenty of the Bedouins say "We believe".

1.5.2 Semantico-lexical gaps in Qurânic Translation

As mentioned in (1.2 above), lexical gaps are the resultants of the unlexicalized concepts in a given culture. Language and culture are so intimately related in the sense that the latter is part of the former, which is

why some regard language as the mirror of culture .Since the Arabic language has got a long cultural heritage behind it and the Qurân enriched its lexical framework, many Quranic lexis have no one-to-one equivalents in English. In fact, culture causes" many more severe complications for the translator than do differences in language structure"(Nida, 2000:130). So, some Qurânic ayahs will be discussed and their translations will be assessed to prove how semantico-lexical gaps are present and treated.

"سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا" (17:1)

Subhâna alady asara bi'abdihy laiylan.

Ali (p.274) Glory to (Allah)Who did take His Servant for a journey by night.

Sh. (p.335) Glory be to Him Who made His Servant go on a night.

Hi-Kh.(p.368) Glorified(and Exalted) is He(Allâh)Who took His slave (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) for a journey by night.

The present ayah contains the verb *Asra* which *means to go on a journey by night or to travel by night* does not have a one-word verb equivalent in English unless it is explained in a comment or a footnote. The translations above have proved accurate in conveying the same sense of the verb by doing some sort of paraphrasing.

"وَدَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ إِذْ يَحْكُمَانِ فِي الْحَرْثِ إِذْ نَفَشَتِ فِيهِ غَنَمَ الْقَوْمِ" (21:78)

Wa Dawood wa Sulaiman id yahkuman fi alharthi id nafashat fiyhy ghanamu alqawm.

Ali (p.323) And remember David and Solomon, when they gave judgement in the matter of the field into which the sheep of certain people had strayed by night.

Sh. (p.387)And Dawood and Sulaiman when they gave judgement concerning the field when the people's sheep pastured therein by night.

Hi-Kh.(p.436) And(remember) Dâwûd (David) and Sulaimân(Solomon)when they gave judgement in the case of the field in which the sheep of certain people had pastured at night.

The underlined verb in the above ayah *nafashat* means to fan out at night (Al-Zamakhshary, d.538H. 2002:683).It could be said that the accurate

translation for the ayah is Hi-Kh.'s. However, it needs the following addition: "fan out" to reflect the exact meaning of the verb *nafashat*.

And(remember) Dâwûd (David) and Sulaimân(Solomon)when they gave judgement in the case of the field in which the sheep of certain people had fanned out and pastured at night.

"(1:43) وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ"

Wa?qymu alŞalat waâtu alzakât wa?rka'u ma'a alraki'yn

Ali (p.7)And be steadfast in prayer: give Zakat, and bow down your heads with those who bow down (in worship).

Sh. (p.37)And keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and bow down with those who bow down.

Hi-Kh.(p.10) And perform As-Salât and give Zakât, and bow down(or submit yourselves with obedience to Allâh) along with Ar-Râki'un.

The present ayah contains the word Zakât which does nether neither a lexical equivalent nor a cultural one. Therefore, it should be transliterated within the translation of the ayah and explained in a footnote as shown in endnote no II below.

"يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نَكَحْتُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ثُمَّ طَلَقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ فَمَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ عِدَّةٍ" (33:48)

Ya?uuha alđyna ammanu ida nakahtum almunnat thuma ŧalqtumuhinna min qabi tamassuhinna famalakum 'alahunna min idda

Ali(p.461) O ye who believe! When you marry believing women, and then you divorce them before ye have touched them, no period of 'Iddat have ye to count in respect of them.

Sh.(p.490) O you who believe! When you marry the believing women, then divorce them before you touch them, you have in their case no term which you should reckon.

Hi-Kh.(p.570)O you who believe! When you marry believing women, and then you divorce them before you have sexual intercourse with them, no'Iddah[divorce prescribed period] have you to count in respect of them.

According to the Islamic jurisprudence, a divorcee woman cannot get married once more unless her *Iddah* becomes over. *Iddah* is a one-hundred day period following a woman's divorce. This word does not have a cultural or a lexical equivalent in English. Ali's and Hi-Kh.'s translations are more accurate than Sh.'s because the latter involves the word *term* being regarded as an equivalent to *Iddah* which is not.

"(49:6) يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن جَاءكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا"

Ya?yyha ?aldynu ?in ja?akum fâsiqun binabin fatabyyannu.

Ali(p.507) O ye who believe! If a sinner comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth.

Sh.(p.593)O ye who believe! If an evil-doer comes to you with a report, look carefully into it.

Hi-Kh(p.701) O you who believe! If Fâsiq(liar-evil person)comes to you with any news, verify it.

The lexical item *Fâsiq* in the Islamic jurisprudence refers to the one who commits one of the Major Sins(eg committing adultery ,notoriety of telling lies etc), and whose evidence is not accepted in an Islamic court. A sinner, on the other hand, denotes any one who commits any kind of a sin and even a very minor one, thus every human being is a sinner. Accordingly, every *Fâsiq* is a sinner, but the reverse does not hold true (Sirriyya, 1998:27).

So this cultural gap can be bridged in translation by paraphrasing it. It is better to transliterate it and add a comment between two brackets.

O you who believe! If Fâsiq(a Major-Sin committer) comes to you with any news, verify it.

"(4:43) فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوْهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ"

Falam tajidu ma?n fatayammum Şa'ydan tayban fa?imsahu biwijuhikum waaydukum

Ali(p.89)and ye find water, then take fore yourselves clean sand(or earth),rub therein your faces and hands.

Sh.(p.122) and you cannot find water, betake yourselves to pure earth, then wipe your faces and hands.

Hi-Kh(p.114)and you find no water, perform *Tayammum* with clean earth and rub therein your faces and hands *Tayammum*ⁱⁱⁱ.

The lexical item *Tayammum* has been transliterated and then footnoted in the last translation since this word has not been lexicalized in English because it is absent in the Christian culture . Ali's and Sh.'s translations involve some sort of paraphrasing to convey the sense of *Tayammum*.

It is to be noted that many other lexical items (e.g. *Sunna* سنه : it refers to the Messenger's sayings and actions to be taken as examples to follow), *خارجي kharijji* : a person who violates God-enacted laws yet he cannot be considered a disbeliever) found in Qurânic ayahs and literature available on jurisprudence are untranslatable but they are explainable in form of footnotes or comments.

1.6 Conclusions

The present study has yielded some conclusions. First, although lexical gaps are more vivid to recognize within semantic fields, such gaps are not necessarily confined to come out within such fields as the majority of scholars think. Second, cultural differences between languages constitute the main reason behind the rise of lexical gaps. Third, lexical gaps are more frequent in religious texts and scientific texts than other text-types. This is due to the fact that religious texts have got long cultural heritage behind them where cultural differences become wider between languages involved in translation. Scientific texts, on the other hand, involve continually increasing lexis referring to the new discoveries and inventions which are not quickly lexicalized across the world's languages. Fourth, explanation, loan-translation and transliteration are the only resort for translators to get around the problem of lexical gaps. Fifth, religion-based proverbs in Arabic are difficult to translate into English owing to the cultural gaps that give rise to lexical gaps. Finally, voices to update the Classical Arabic political terminology have not rung a bell to people concerned because the loan-translated political terms have got currency in modern Arabic political discourse.

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Endnotes

ⁱAbdullah Yusuf Ali is abbreviated as Ali., M. H. Shaker as Sh. and M. Hilali & M. Khan as Hi-Kh

ⁱⁱ Zakât is one of the pillars of Islam where each Muslim should pay 2% of the extra money of his annual income for those who are in need of. Zakât is handed over to the most knowledgeable Muslim scholar who will be responsible for distributing Zakât to those who are in need of.

ⁱⁱⁱ Strike your hands on the earth and then pass the palm of each on the back of the other and then blow off the dust from them and then pass(rub) them on your face, this is *Tayammum*