

Problems of Translating the Deleted Possessed in the Holy Quran

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ABSTRACT

This study aims at identifying the grammatical and semantic problems when translating the situations wherever the (possessed- Almudhaf) is deleted in the Holy Qur'an. Deleting of the possessed and content with the (possessor- Almudhaf ileihi) is considered to be one of the rhetorical miracles in the Holy Qur'an. Grammarians and Arabic scholars have specified purposes and conditions for deletion in the Arabic language in many spots where the omission is more eloquent. The study compares three translations by Muhammad Abdel Haleem Saeed, Abdullah Yusuf Ali and Saheeh International. The importance of the topic comes from the fact that it sheds light on the translators' ability to find the exact equivalent grammatically and semantically in some places of deleting the possessed and limit to the possessor in order to achieve the objectives of deletion in the Holy Qur'an and its rhetorical goals by comparing the texts of the three translations, studying the words and phrases used by the translators, and clarifying their strengths and weaknesses. The study included two translations for Arabic nonnative speakers and a third for Arabic native speaker to know the grammatical and semantic effect of the mother tongue on translation. Based on the nature of the study, the descriptive and analytical approach is followed besides making use of other approaches if necessary. The study reached into a number of findings, including: Translators vary in terms of applying the proper strategies when translation the meaning of the Holy Quran. Reading the interpretations (Tafaseer) of the Holy Quran; like those of Ibn Kathir, Tabari, Qurtubi, Assadi, ... etc. play vital role in understanding and translating the meaning of holly Quran in a proper way.

Keywords: Possessed, possessor, deletion, Saheeh International, Interpretation.

Significance and the problems of the study:

This research is premeditated to be extremely noteworthy as it endeavours to diagnose the proposed problems of translating the deleted possessed in the Holy Quran that may encounter translators, consequently, the following questions were raised:

1. To what extent do translators apply the proper strategies?
2. To what extent are the translators able to render the appropriate equivalent meaning when translating the deleted possessed?
3. To what extent does mother tongue of translators affect providing the précised meaning when translating the deleted possessed?
4. In what way can the imprecise rendering be reduced?

Objectives of the study

The study aims at:

1. Investigating problems of rendering the deleted possessed in Holy Quran into English
2. Finding the causes of the difficulty in translating the deleted possessed in the Holy Quran into English in particular.
3. Identifying the strategies used in the three translations.

Literature Review:

Quiet Limited researches were done approximately around this particular study of the deleted possessed. Al Haj, (2019) and (2020), in his two studies tackled Pragma-stylo-Semantic Obstacles and the Cultural and Lexical Constrains whereas this study is about the deleted possessed in the Holy Quran. On the other hand, in the two studies, he tackled three translations of the Holy Qur'an by Mohammed Abdel-Hakeem, Khan and Hilali, and Mohammed Pickthall, whereas two out of three of his selected versions are different from the current study.

The ancient grammarians were concerned with studying the phenomenon of deletion, but we can hardly find it in the books of Grammarians defined the term ellipsis, but some of them define it by explaining its divisions, and mentioning one of its conditions. Ibn Jinni says "The Arabs omitted the sentence, the singular, the letter, and the vowel, and he says: "Nothing of that except on the basis of evidence for it, otherwise it would be a kind of the knowledge of the unseen in it"., so that some of them used another term, which is al-idmar. Abu Hayyan, (1993, P: 643) says: "It is found in the terminology of the grammarians, I mean that the omission is called a pronoun" الإضمار, but each of the deletion and implication has its own meaning. Ibn Hisham, (1985, P: 853), drew limits to this grammatical phenomenon, and differentiated between grammatical, and rhetorical deletion; he mentioned that the

purposes of deletion is related to art of rhetoric not the grammar”. The deletion that the grammarian must consider is what it required by structure.

Deletion in the Holy Quran

The grammarians were interested in the ancient phenomenon of "deletion", enumerated its places, gave the possible aspects in it, and explained some of the reasons behind it. This is what was mentioned by the author of “Al-Bahr Al-Moheet” while commenting on Ibn Attia’s statement during his parsing of verse: (يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ) [البقرة: 165] (They love them as they love Allah).

This research talks about the establishment of the genitive position in the book (Explanation of the Qur’an) by Abu Jaafar Al-Nahhas (388 AH). It is a kind of expansion in Arabic and a form of brevity as well, and is not limited to the Qur’an alone, but extends to include eloquent texts of Arab speech, both poetry and prose. It does not stop at the limits of the pronunciation, but goes beyond it to others. It also comes for purposes related to the meaning, and the addressee’s knowledge of the situation.

In dealing with the issues of establishing the accusative of the accusative, we found ease in tasting the meaning, and speed in understanding the text, and the denominator led us to analyze the units of speech, and clarify their functions, The situation here includes the speaker and the listener, the circumstances and social relations, and the events in the past and the present, and had it not been for this position and what the social element presents from the current prepositions, we would not be able to comprehend them at the time.

The majority of grammarians accepted the permissibility of establishing the maqam al-addaf, and they protested against that with the Holy Qur’an, and with the words of the Arabs, its poetry and prose.

Addimyati, (2009, P:241), stated that: Sibawayh saw that this is a kind of elaboration in the words and a shortened for it at the same time, and he presented an evidence from the Qur’an and the words of the Arabs, and he presented what Almighty Allah said: (وَاسْأَلِ الْقَرْيَةَ الَّتِي كُنَّا فِيهَا، وَالْعِيرَ الَّتِي أَقْبَلْنَا فِيهَا): (“And ask (the people of) the town where we have been, and the caravan in which we returned; and indeed we are telling the truth.) The people of the village, so he abbreviated it, and the verb works in the village, as it would have worked in the people if it was here.

Deletion of the “Mudhaf” Possessed:

The grammarians explained that the (المضاف), may be omitted if the meaning indicates it. According to Sibaweih, (3/269) “You say if you look in the book: This is Amr, but the meaning is: This is the name of Amr, and the like, but this is permissible according to the capacity of speech and if the ambiguity is avoided”.

Azzamakhshari, (1/134 -135), says “If there is no the ambiguity, the (possessed- Almudhaf) is deleted in the Holy Qur’an. Deleting of the possessed and content with the (possessor- Almudhaf ileihi) e.g. Allah says (And ask the village in which we were) Yusuf (82) because there is no doubt that what is meant is its people,”

Deletion of the Mudhaf is also mentioned in Surat Annisaa, (Verse 23)

{Prohibited to you [for marriage] are your mothers, your daughters, your sisters} Abu Hayyan (3/18) said in his explanation of this verse, the possessed is omitted because the meaning indicates it. If it is said: alcohol is forbidden to you, it is only understood from it drinking it is prohibited.

This idiomatic definition doesn’t differ from the linguistic definition, but rather it matches it and runs in its course. Omission is one the important researches that all the grammarians and rhetoricians paid attention to and devoted chapters to it in their writings and books despite their disagreement about the way of interpretation and analysis; the grammarians proceeded from the syntactic logic, averaging some grammatical interpretations; Such as: inflectional estimation, pronoun الإضمار, and hidden pronouns الاستتار. to search the case. Their purpose was to study the structure and grammatical relations, and to find aspects of interpretation for a specific movement or parsing included in the grammatical structure of a sentence.

As for the rhetoricians, they studied deletion from the semantic side, and tried to prove the beauty and the forms of artistry and creativity in speech, and they made it clear that it is one of the secrets of rhetoric - as will come during the talk about the words of Al-Jurjani and other past and present Arab rhetoricians.

What is meant by this speech is that the statement and analysis, and the study of the secondary and underlying causes behind the omission, and the finding of grammatical conclusions for that, is the core of research and the field of study for the grammarians. As for the rhetoricians, their role in this chapter is to explain the rhetorical purposes of omission, and to find places where this omission is more effective, and most informative of clarification and enjoyment for the recipient; In order to reach his desired goal, attack his intention with the most wonderful representation, and innovate construction and illustration, and thus achieve the rhetorical purpose that writers and poets seek, which is the enjoyment that Arabic rhetoric envisages; As persuasion may not be intended in this aspect; Because that is what is meant by rhetoric and debate - even if we include something of enjoyment.

Methodology

Based on the nature of the study, the researcher will follow the descriptive and analytic method to achieve the objectives of this study.

According to Aljarim and Amin, (1999, p:241), Deletion is dropping or subtracting part of speech; for an evidence that indicates it, or for the knowledge of it and for being known

Research approach: Based on the nature of the study, the researcher will follow the descriptive and analytic method to achieve the objectives of this study. Text analysis was adopted to evaluate the quality of translating the possessed in the Holy Quran.

The Qur'anic translations explored in the study are: (i) Mohammed A.S Abdel Haleem (2005) (a native Arabic speaker), (ii) Saheeh International (1997) (a native English speakers), and (iii) Abdullah Yusuf Ali 2004 - 11 ed. (a native English speakers).

The samples of this study were ten verses taken from 8 different Sura's (chapters). In each those Ayahs, the mudhaf (possessed) is omitted without affecting the meaning.

Data Collection and procedures

This study aims at describing, analyzing and evaluating, methodologies and procedures of rendering the meaning of the Holy Quran, specifically, focusing on the problems of conveying the deleted possessed in three translations mentioned above. The most important instrument is analyzing and contrasting the translated text of selected samples by the three different translators.

Sample 1

”إنما حرم عليكم الميتة : أي أكل الميتة .

The Verse	M. A. Haleem	A. Yusuf	Saheeh International
Albagara (173)	He has only forbidden you carrion, blood, pig's meat, and animals over which any name other than God's has been invoked	He hath only forbidden you dead meat, and blood, and the flesh of swine	He has only forbidden to you dead animals,50 blood, the flesh of swine, and that which has been dedicated to other than Allah

Ibn Kathir, Allah commands His believing servants to eat from the pure things that He has created for them and to thank Him for it, if they are truly His servants. Eating from pure sources is a cause for the acceptance of supplications and acts of worship, just as eating from impure sources prevents the acceptance of supplications and acts of worship, as mentioned in a Hadith recorded by Imam Ahmad that Abu Hurayrah said that Allah's Messenger said:

(O people! Allah is Tayyib, (Pure and Good) and only accepts that which is good. Allah has indeed commanded the believers with what He have commanded the Messengers, for He said: (O (you) Messengers! Eat of the Tayyibat and do righteous deeds. Verily, I am well-acquainted with what you do) (23:51), and: (O you who believe! Eat of the lawful things that We have provided you with) He then mentioned a man, (who is engaged in a long journey, whose hair is untidy and who is covered in dust, he raises his hands to the sky, and says, 'O Lord! O Lord!' Yet, his food is from

the unlawful, his drink is from the unlawful, his clothes are from the unlawful, and he was nourished by the unlawful, so how can it (his supplication) be accepted") It was also recorded by Muslim and At-Tirmidhi

Discussion:

The meaning of this lexeme “Meita” is that “the soul has left without being slaughter”. Alwahidi, (1995, 2:173). Muslims are prohibited to eat “meita مَيْتَة” dead animals without being slaughtered. The word “eating” is deleted in the Ayah as the context understood.

Abdul Haleem rendered the meaning laterally (forbidden you carrion). Yusuf translated the meaning into: (forbidden you dead meat) which is contextually appropriate and accurate translation that conveys the intended meaning of the Ayah.. S. International rendering is (forbidden to you dead animals) which is relatively acceptable.

Sample 2

”أي: ليس من أهل ديني. فمن شرب منه فليس مني“

The Verse	M. A. Haleem	A. Yusuf	Saheeh International
”فمن شرب منه فليس مني“ (Al –Bagarah: 249)	“...it will not belong with Me”	“...he goes not with my army”	“...So whoever drinks from it is not of me”

Discussion:

The meaning of the expression “ليس مني” in this Ayah needs to be understood within the context to mean not to accompany me as part of my army. Ibn Khathir (Volume 1, p:668) says “So whoever drinks thereof, he is not of me; meaning, shall not accompany me today”.

Abdul Haleem used the expression (not belong with me) which is more or less, not perfect. Yusuf put it into: (he goes not with my army) which is absolutely precise and on-target. S. International turned in into (So whoever drinks from it is not of me) that is wholly literally and doesn’t pass on the intended meaning of the Ayah..

Sample 3

”أي: من ترك ذكر الله فويل للقاسية قلوبهم من ذكر الله“

The Verse	M. A. Haleem	A. Yusuf	Saheeh International
فويل للقاسية قلوبهم من ذكر الله (Azzumar:22)	“...at the mention of God!”	“against celebrating the praises of Allah!”	“...against the remembrance of Allah”.

Discussion:

The diction (من ذكر الله), in this Ayah, means being away or distanced themselves from the remembrance of Allah. As Attabari says:” So woe to those whose hearts have dried up and distanced themselves from the remembrance of Allah and turned away,

meaning the Qur'an that the Almighty sent down, reminding His servants of it, but they did not believe in it and did not believe in what is in it". Being away is not embodied in Quranic text as the meaning is quite clear.

Abul Haleem converted it into an inconvenient rendition "at the mention of God", that entirely ignores the deleted Mudhaf, "distanced themselves". Yusuf rendered it into "against celebrating the praises of Allah" which is reasonably deciphers the equivalent meaning. S. International, on the other hand, "against the remembrance of Allah" hit the target with providing absolutely identical equivalence.

Sample 4

" أي من بعد إضلال الله إياه يطبعه على قلبه جزاء بأعمالهم الخبيثة. فمن يهديه من بعد الله "

The Verse	M. A. Haleem	A. Yusuf	Saheeh International
"فمن يهديه من بعد الله" (Aljathia:23)	"...after God [has done this]?"	"...after Allah (has withdrawn Guidance)?"	So who will guide him after Allah

Discussion:

According to Assadi, (2005), {Who will guide him after God} that is: "no one will guide him, and Allah has closed the doors of guidance for him and opened the doors of deception for him, and Allah did not wrong him, but he is the one who wronged himself and caused to prevent Allah's mercy upon him.

This meaning is mention in one more Ayah:

(مَنْ يُضِلِّ اللَّهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ وَيَذَرُهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ)

(Whomsoever Allah sends astray, none can guide him; and He lets them wander blindly in their transgressions.) (7:186).

Abdul Haleem rendered it as "after God [has done this]?" which is fairly ambiguous because the word "done" doesn't state the implied meaning of the Quranic context in this Ayah. Yusuf, on the contrary, "after Allah (has withdrawn Guidance)", provided the perfect contextual meaning of the missing Mudhaf. S. International used the very literal translation to convey the meaning of this Ayah, "So who will guide him after Allah" which is, more or less, a weak rendition to the meaning.

Sample 5

" أي: كراهة أن تضلوا ولئلا تضلوا. يبين الله لكم أن تضلوا "

The Verse	M. A. Haleem	A. Yusuf	Saheeh International
يبين الله لكم أن تضلوا (Annisa:176)	God makes this clear to you so that you do not make mistakes	"Thus doth Allah make clear to you (His law), lest ye err"	Allah makes clear to you [His law], lest you go astray

Discussion:

((Thus) does Allah make clear to you...) His Law and set limits, clarifying His legislation, (Lest you go astray.) from the truth after this explanation. Assaadi, (P: 106, 4: 176), {God makes it clear to you that you may go astray}: In a way that guarantees you His rulings that you need, and clarifies and explains them in addition to His kindness and benevolence, so that you are guided by His statement and acted upon by His rulings, and so that you do not stray from the straight path because of your ignorance and lack of knowledge.

Abdul Haleem translated it as “God makes this clear to you so that you do not make mistakes” which is absolutely perfect. Yusuf and S. International, “Thus doth Allah make clear to you (His law), lest ye err” “Allah makes clear to you [His law], lest you go astray” respectively, managed to recall the deleted Mudhaf hence, they used the word (lest) which conveys the intended meaning.

Sample 6

”ترى الظالمين مشفقين مما كسبوا وهو واقع بهم“ : أي: جزاؤه واقع أي: جزاء الكسب

The Verse	M. A. Haleem	A. Yusuf	Saheeh International
وهو واقع بهم (Ashoora:22)	“...punishment is bound to fall on them”	“...and (the burden of) that must (necessarily) fall on them”	“...and it will [certainly] befall them”.

Discussion:

According to Albagawi, (P:485), (You will see the wrongdoers) the polytheists on the Day of Resurrection, (fearful) and fearful (of what they earned, and it will fall upon them), the recompense of their earnings will fall upon them. (And believe and do righteous deeds in the meadows of the gardens. They will have whatever they want with their Lord. It is the great bounty).

Abdul Haleem rendered the deleted mudhaf (جزاؤه) into “punishment is bound to fall on them” because the English equivalent “punishment” precisely discloses the Quranic context of the Ayah. Yusuf used “and (the burden of) that must (necessarily) fall on them” which is entirely accurate and completely precise as he used the word (burden) for the deleted word جزاؤه. On the other hand, S. International “and it will [certainly] befall them”, failed to recall the deleted mudhaf جزاء. Consequently, his translation is considered weak and inaccurate.

Sample 7

فاجلدوهم ثمانين جلدة " أي: فاجلدوا كل واحد منهم. "

The Verse	M. A. Haleem	A. Yusuf	Saheeh International
فاجلدوهم ثمانين جلدة (Annoor:4)	“...strike them eighty times”	“...flog them with eighty stripes”	“...lash them with eighty lashes”

Discussion:

Meaning “If the accuser cannot prove that what he is saying is true, then three rulings apply to him: (firstly) that he should be flogged with eighty stripes, (secondly) that his testimony should be rejected forever, and (thirdly) that he should be labelled as a rebellious who is not of good character, whether in the sight of Allah or of mankind.” Ibn Kathir, (p:350, 24:4).

The three translators, Abdul Haleem, Yusuf and S. International rendered the deleted *mudhaf* كل واحد info: “...strike them eighty times”, “...flog them with eighty stripes”, “...lash them with eighty lashes” respectively; the three of them failed to work it out as they used the literal meaning of the Ayah (them) instead of (each of them).

Sample 8

"واسأل القرية" أي: أهل القرية.

The Verse	M. A. Haleem	A. Yusuf	Saheeh International
"واسأل القرية" (Yusuf:82)	"...Ask in the town where we have been;"	"...Ask at the town where we have been"	"...And ask the city in which we were"

Discussion:

Albaghawi, (12:82) says (And ask the village in which we were) meaning: the people of the village, which is Egypt. Ibn Abbas said: A village from the villages of Egypt, from which they traveled to Egypt.

Abdul Haleem translated the deleted word أهل القرية into (in) the town “...Ask in the town where we have been;” which is contextually clear and expressive. On the contrary, Yusuf and S. international renditions are “...Ask at the town where we have been” “...And ask the city in which we were” correspondingly, which are entirely literal and don’t provide the contextual meaning of the Ayah as they focus on the word قرية and neglected the deleted one أهل “the people of the village”.

Sample 9

فليدعوا نادية" أي: أهل نادية

The Verse	M. A. Haleem	A. Yusuf	Saheeh International
فليدع نادية (Al alag:17)	"Let him summon his comrades;"	"Then let him call (for help) to his council (of comrades)"	"Then let him call his associates;"

Discussion:

Assaadi, (96:17), what is meant this Ayah: the people of his council, his companions, and those around him, so that they may help him in what he sent down with him.

The three translators, Abdul Haleem, Yusuf and S. International, rendered the deleted (possessed- *Almudhaf*) into “Let him summon his comrades;” , “Then let him call (for help) to his council (of comrades)” “Then let him call his associates;” respectively.

The words they used, comrades and associates, typically convey the contextual meaning of the deleted possessed in this Ayah. That is to say: the three of them precisely managed to provide the equivalent context and meaning perfection of this Ayah.

Sample 10

"إني أراي أعصر خمرأ " أي: عنب خمر فحذف المضاف. "

The Verse	M. A. Haleem	A. Yusuf	Saheeh International
"...إني أراي أعصر خمرأ (Yusuf:36)"	"...I was pressing grapes";	"...I see myself (in a dream) pressing wine"	"...I have seen myself [in a dream] pressing wine."

Discussion:

Ibn Kathir(12:36), Al-Dahhak said that his saying: {I see myself pressing wine} means: grapes. He said: And the people of Oman call grapes Khamr.

Abdul Haleem used the word grapes "I was pressing grapes";" which is the perfect and accurate meaning of the (possessed- Almudhaf) عنب, so he managed to recall the origin of the word خمر (wine) which is عنب (grapes). On the other hand, Yusuf and S. International, "...I see myself (in a dream) pressing wine" "...I have seen myself [in a dream] pressing wine." Respectively, used the literal meaning of the word خمر wine. Consequently, they failed to bring the intended meaning of the deleted (possessed- Almudhaf).

Conclusion and Findings:

The table shows samples perfection of the deleted possessed (mudhaf).

	Abdul Haleem	Yusuf	S. International
Perfect	5- 6- 8 – 9 10	1 – 2 -3 -4 – 5 -6 - 9	3 – 5 - 9
Acceptable	2		1
Literal	1 -3 -4 - 7	7 – 8 - 10	2 – 4 – 6 -7 – 8 - 10

Based on the theoretical part and data analysis, the study has reached into the following conclusions: The study has responded to the key questions initiated in the introduction of this study.

In translating Holy Quran, translators differed in applying the proper strategies when translating Ayahs of the Holy Quran which imply situations wherever the (possessed- Almudhaf المضاف) is deleted. Deleting of the possessed and content with the (possessor- Almudhaf إليه المضاف) is considered to be one of the rhetorical miracles in the Holy Qur'an. Yusuf ranked first, since he managed to render 7 out of 10 samples perfectly in terms of recalling the missed مضاف Mudhaf. Whereas he failed in

three others. Abdul Haleem came in the second position as he precisely translated 5 out of ten samples. In contrary, he improperly, rendered 4 samples in a literal way that does satisfy the Quranic context. One more sample is, more or less, classified acceptable. On the other hand, S. International ranked the third as he conveyed only 3 out ten samples accurately, which are contextually clear and expressive. However, it used literal translation in 6 samples in which he failed to provide and summon the appropriate equivalence of the Quranic meaning. One of its renditions considered acceptable.

As far as mother tongue is concerned, the study included two translations for Arabic nonnative speakers namely, Abdullah Yusuf Ali and S. International and Arabic native speaker; Abdul Haleem, to investigate the grammatical and semantic effect of the mother tongue on translation. On the basis of this study, mother language of Abdul Haleem didn't make a big difference in terms of recalling the deleted words مضاف as Yusuf (non-native speaker), successfully managed to compensate the ellipsis in most of the study samples and ranked first.

Findings:

- 1- Translators vary in terms of applying the proper strategies when translation the meaning of the Holy Quran.
- 2- Translators are not equal in rendering the appropriate meaning of the deleted possessed. They successfully, managed to convey the intended meaning of some samples. However, they failed to process others.
- 3- Mother tongue didn't give the native speaker the privilege to be the best translator among three of them in providing the précised meaning when translating the deleted possessed.
- 4- Reading the interpretations (Tafaseer) of the Holy Quran; like those of Ibn Kathir, Tabari, Qurtubi , Assadi, ... etc. play vital role in understanding and translating the meaning of holly Quran in a proper way.
- 5- Proficiency in grammar and rhetoric in Arabic language contribute effectively in translation process in general and translating the places where the possessed (مضاف) is omitted.

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