ASSESSING INTERPRETIVE USE OF LANGUAGE IN ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF *AL-FATIHA*

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Abstract

This article investigates the interpretive use of language in English translations of *Al Fatiha* taken from *The Koran Interpreted* by Arthur Arberry and *The Qur'an: a New Translation* by Abdel Haleem. This descriptive qualitative study uses Gutt's relevance approach in assessing the choices made for interpretively communicating *Al Fatiha*'s message. The finding shows that Haleem's translation is more interpretive with more fashionable and familiar structures and words requiring lower processing efforts. The choices imply that Arberry's version is a scholarly translation while Haleem's work is for popular use. Translating sacred texts should also consider translator's cultural background and contextual knowledge.

Keywords: *relevance, interpretive use of language, sacred text*

Abstrak

Artikel ini meneliti penggunaan bahasa secara interpretif dalam terjemahan bahasa Inggris surah Al Fatihah yang diambil dari *The Koran Interpreted* karya Arthur Arberry dan *The Qur'an: a New Translation* karya Abdel Haleem. Penelitian kualitatif deskriptif ini menggunakan pendekatan relevansi Gutt dalam mengkaji opsi-opsi penerjemahan yang digunakan untuk menyampaikan pesan Al Fatihah secara interpretif. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan terjemahan Haleem lebih interpretif dengan penggunaan struktur dan kata yang lebih populer dan mudah dipahami. Temuan tersebut juga berimplikasi bahwa terjemahan Arberry bersifat akademis sementara karya Haleem bersifat populer. Menerjemahkan teks sakral juga perlu memperhatikan latar belakang budaya serta pemahaman kontekstual penerjemah.

Kata kunci: *relevansi, penggunaan bahasa secara interpretif, teks sakral*

I. INTRODUCTION

Whether or not a translation is accurate, it should be viewed as a mode of communication. It is a process by which what we said or wrote in a language is expressed in another language. In translation studies, it is known as transforming Source Text (ST) into Target Text (TT). And as a kind of communication, then translation needs to comply with communication principle as to establish a successful communication, one should make utterances or sentences as clear and understandable as possible. It means that a TT should be able to represent the message or meaning of the ST as accurate as possible. In pragmatics, such concept refers to the principle of interpretive use of language which is then also adopted in translation studies. As interpretive use deals with how accurate the TT to represent or convey the message of the ST, it would be perfectly achieved if both texts share resemblance as much as possible (Gutt, 1998: 44). Hence, the interpretiveness of a TT is determined by its degree of resemblance to the ST in any relevant aspect. As far as the rendering is relevant enough to the readers in representing the message of the ST, the TT can therefore be deemed interpretive.

However, like other sacred texts, there will always be a dilemma to translate *Al Quran*. Translators may have to choose to reproduce the content but sacrifice the style, do the reverse or maybe retain both of them. Written in Arabic, *Al Quran*'s sophisticated stylistic features are considered complex even by native Arabic speakers. Quranic language is a sort of rhymed prose with literary structures and devices. Translating *Al Quran* does not only require phonetic competence in Arabic and English but also an advanced knowledge in Arabic syntax and rhetoric and most importantly, major Quran exegeses as the source of reference in order to provide the accurate meaning of a given Quranic

expression, a simple particle or even a preposition (Abdul-Raof, 2001: 2).

Rather than analyzing the translation of *Al Quran* as a whole, this study attempts to compare, assess and draw out the implications of the choices made by two translations in an attempt to interpretively convey the meaning of *Al Fatiha*. This opening *sura* (chapter) of *Al Quran* is called the Mother of the Scripture or *Ummul Kitab* due to its fundamental content as well as its critical role in Islamic rituals.

The first *Al Fatiha* translation is taken from *The Koran Interpreted* by Arthur Arberry, a British orientalist. Originally published in 1955, this is the first English translation of *Al Quran* by a bona fide non-Muslim scholar of Islamic studies and has been widely acclaimed by intellectuals - particularly for its attempt to closely conveying the parallel impression made by *Al Quran* - and seems to remain the reference of choice for most academics for the foreseeable future (Mohammed, 2005). The second *Al Fatiha* translation is taken from *The Qur'an: a New Translation* by M.A.S. Abdel Haleem which represents the latest approach to English translation of *Al Quran*. As an Arab Muslim who has surely been familiar with *Al Quran* earlier, Haleem's translation title "*A New Translation*" must certainly represent a new perspective in Quranic translation. His work also becomes one of the latest mass-market attempts to publish English translations of *Al Quran* (Mohammed, 2005). Reflecting on those factors, the study finds it interesting to figure out which translation is more interpretive in communicating the meaning of *Al Fatiha*.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE
2.1. Relevance Theory

The notion of interpretive mode in translation is rooted in the relevance theory in pragmatics. Therefore, in order to arrive at the adequate understanding of how to assess the interpretiveness of translation,

this study would like to propose the essentials of relevance theory as the theoretical foundation.

Relevance theory principally concerns how to establish a successful communication by means of relevant stimuli (either verbally or non-verbally) which then help the communication participants mutually arrive at the intended understanding. This theory then sees communication as the result of the interplay between context of a communicative stimulus and the processing effort required to infer meaning from that stimulus (Palumbo, 2009: 100). Processing effort refers to the mental or cognitive resources required to process stimuli, that is, the degree of relevance depends on the effort a stimulus would require to process and on the cognitive or contextual effects that would be gained (Allott, 2010: 166). The more precise recipients' interpretation about the intended meaning of a stimulus, the more relevant the stimulus is. A verbal input can be optimally relevant when: (1) it enables recipients to find the intended meaning without unnecessary effort; and (2) the intended meaning provides adequate benefits to the recipients, i.e. modifying recipients' knowledge known technically as positive contextual effects (Gutt, 1998: 43).

Accordingly, relevance theory is relevant enough to be adopted in translation studies in the light of translation as an interlingually written communication. Developed by Ernest-August Gutt in his book *Translation and Relevance: Cognition and Context* (1991), the relevance approach becomes significant on the basis that the success of translation is determined by how it communicates the ST message in an optimally relevant way to the TT readers and, above all, succeeds in guiding them to gain the intended interpretation of the ST.

As the relevance approach in translation allows modifications such as addition or omission in the TT to be optimally relevant to the readers who have different cognitive backgrounds from the ST readers, it is therefore interesting to see how such issue is met in the translations of a chapter of Al Quran; the scripture which the content and form become its inherent and thus essential elements.

2.2. Interpretive Use

As relevance theory deals with how to pursue an optimal relevance in communication, it is therefore concerned with how the communication participants use language in an optimally relevant way. According to this theory, there are two modes of using language:

1) Descriptive use when it is intended to be taken as true of a state of affairs;
2) Interpretive use when it is intended to represent what someone said or thought (Gutt, 1998: 44).

Descriptive use occurs when, for example, someone produces an utterance to relevantly represent a particular situation according to what he/she factually grasps. On the other hand, interpretive use occurs when someone uses an utterance to relevantly represent or resembles another's thought or utterance without being distorted by his/her own thought. Accordingly, when both are employed to represent another's thought or utterance, interpretive utterance would be more unbiased than descriptive one since the latter would provide an utterance as an ostensibly factual description of the way it is but most probably fail to convey the intended interpretation.

Based on the notion above, translation falls naturally under the interpretive use as it is intended to restate what someone said or thought in one language into another language (Gutt, 1998: 46). This process is done so that the TT resembles the ST in relevant ways. Hence, the keyword is the degree of "resemblance" between the ST and the TT. Such

resemblance can be assessed by the degree of explicit and implicit contents or *explicature* and *implicature* they share (Gutt, 1998:45).

As stated earlier, the resemblance cannot be precisely alike unless the original utterance is represented by a direct quotation. Hence, the degree of resemblance in interpretive use would vary as there might be addition, omission, paraphrasing or even literal reproduction in the TT. This notion has then led to the dichotomy of translation strategy: direct translation and indirect translation. The former pays much attention to the resemblance (faithfulness) as closely as possible to the ST whereas the latter allows more elaboration to meet the relevance to the TT readers. Such characterization corresponds with Vinay and Darbelnet's categorization of translation procedures in which direct translation takes the forms of **borrowing**, **calque** (borrowing the expression form but translating its elements literally) and **literal translation** while oblique (indirect) translation includes **transposition** (replacing word class), **modulation** (change of point of view), **equivalence** (use of completely different stylistic and structural methods) and **adaptation** (creating new situation/expression that can be considered as being equivalent) (1995: 30-39).

Although both can be employed under interpretive framework, in practice, Hatim and Munday propose that they are not an either clear-cut choice but rather the two ends of a continuum (2004: 62). That is a logical consequence of the relevance variability in translation. In order to be optimally relevant to the ST, that is, the full commitment to total interpretive resemblance, particularly when dealing with a sensitive or sacred text in which form and content are equally crucial, direct translation ought to work well in this respect (Gutt in Hatim and Munday, 2004: 63). However, it is important to bear in mind that the essence of translation is to convey the intended meaning (interpretation) of the ST as closely as possible. Therefore, it is interesting to see how the two English translations of *Al Fatiha* anticipate the form-content dilemma.

III. METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

This study is a descriptive qualitative research since it attempts to collect, categorize, describe and assess data of a study in the forms of groups of word indicating interpretive use in translations of a chapter of Al Quran. The data are two translation versions of the seven verses contained in *Al Fatiha*.

The data sources are the *sura Al Fatiha* consisting of seven verses and its two translation versions in English each taken from The Koran *Interpreted* by Arthur Arberry and *The Qur'an; A New Translation* by M.A.S. Abdel Haleem. As relevance theory recognizes translation as naturally a kind of interlingual interpretive use, all translation verses in the TTs are considered the data of the research since they are the outputs of interpretive use of language.

The data are then analyzed by employing comparative technique. Each verse of the TTs is compared to identify the differences in rendering the corresponding verse of the ST. Next step is assessing the choices made in each verse of the TTs in order to ensure that it relevantly and interpretively translate the corresponding verse of the original. It would also involve the identification of translation strategies used by each TT. Since translating a single verse may involve more than one strategy, a verse may be divided into smaller parts where each of them can stand as a single meaningful unit. It can take forms of word, phrase, clause or even sentence. Hence, the differences between two translators in communicating the propositions of a verse can be discovered. Final step is drawing conclusions about which translation

optimally utilizes the interpretive use to relevantly communicate the intended meaning of the original and also the implications of the choices they make to interpretively translate *Al Fatiha*.

IV. FINDING AND DISCUSSION
4.1. Finding

As stated in Section 3, the table below presents the comparison between the ST and the TTs on the verse basis. The differences occur between TT 1 and TT 2 in rendering the corresponding original verses are typed in bold.

Table 1. Comparison of each verse of the ST and the TTs

ST (Arabic)	TT 1 (Arberry's Translation)	TT 2 (Haleem's Translation)
بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ	In the name of God, **the Merciful**, **the Compassionate**	In the name of God, **the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy!**
ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ	Praise belongs to God, **the Lord of all Being**,	Praise belongs to God, **Lord of the Worlds**,
ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ	**the All-merciful, the All-compassionate**,	**the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy**,
مَٰلِكِ يَوْمِ ٱلدِّينِ	**the Master of the Day of Doom**.	**Master of the Day of Judgement**.
إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ	**Thee only we serve, to Thee alone we pray for succour.**	**It is You we worship; it is You we ask for help.**
ٱهْدِنَا ٱلصِّرَٰطَ ٱلْمُسْتَقِيمَ	Guide us **in** the straight path,	Guide us **to** the straight path:
صِرَٰطَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ ٱلْمَغْضُوبِ	the path of those **whom Thou hast blessed**, not of	the path of those **You have blessed**,
عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا ٱلضَّآلِّينَ	**those against whom Thou art wrathful, nor of those who are astray**.	**those who incur no anger and who have not gone astray**.

The table shows that the translation differences always occur in every verse encompassing lexical and syntactic choices which suggest different semantic meaning. To recognize how those differences influence the degree of interpretive use, below are the detailed analyses of the translations of each verse.

a) Verse 1

If the first part (بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ) is rendered word for word, it would mean "with/in name of God". It looks equivalent to the Trinitarian formula in Christianity (i.e. *in the* name *of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit*). Arberry and Haleem seem to agree with their functional parallelism as opening prayer. Thus, both translators adopt the initial structure of the Trinitarian formula (*in the name of*) so that it would be easily recognized by the English speaking people instead of other unfamiliar structures. Although the prefixed preposition بِ in Arabic has a range of meanings: by, with, in, at, and so on, *in the name of* formula is the closest equivalent which best represents the meaning and function of the original. The addition of definite article before *name* is then the consequence of relevance consideration to the TTs readers even though the original does not use definite article ال before اِسْم. Both translators also use the word *God* as the equivalent of *Allah* which consists of two units: definite article *al-* and *ilah* (god) so that the literal meaning is *the god.* The word *God* is a relevant choice in order to let the TTs readers know that Muslims also worships the same deity as the Jews and Christians and that Islam is the continuation of God's revelation after Jesus (Mohammed, 2005). Hence, in this

part, both employ equivalence (indirect translation) by adopting fixed expression.

Difference occurs when translating the subsequent part. Arberry looks ٱلرَّحۡمَـٰنِ and ٱلرَّحِيمِ as two synonymous words. Although they function as nouns (as the names of God), they are both adjectives. Hence, he chooses adjectival equivalents in English (*merciful* and *compassionate*) with definite articles *the* like the original has. In this way, there is a formal correspondence between the ST and the TT. In fact, *rahmān* and *rahīm* are cognates which derive from the same root رَحِمَ (rahīma) whose meaning in dictionary is "to be merciful" or "have mercy upon" (Penrice, 1991: 56). It indicates that they are etymologically related. Semantically, *rahmān* is a kind of mercy owned by God only for every being in every world while *rahīm* is an attribute can be either possessed by God or any being to show or have mercy upon (Shihab, 2007: 38). Consequently, Arberry's choice of not using the parallel cognates in English would be semantically problematic. The word *compassionate* denotes feeling or showing sympathy for people who are suffering (Hornby, 2005: 307). Such word would limit the range of mercy shown by the word *rahīm.* It would imply that God's mercy is only upon those who are suffering or have misfortune.

In this case, Haleem agrees that the semantic relationship between رَحۡمَـٰنِ and رَحِيم would be lost if they are rendered into pairs of words from different roots such as *merciful-compassionate, gracious-merciful or beneficent-merciful* despite their synonymous meanings (2001: 16). Accordingly, he transposes the word class of adjectival words *Rahmān* and *Rahīm* into nominal phrases *Lord of Mercy* and *Giver of Mercy.* Such choices more comprehensively accommodate the cognate relationship between *Rahmān* and *Rahīm*. He also adds an exclamation mark (!) indicating that reciting this verse acts as an invocation to God. Here, Haleem represents the intended interpretation of *rahmān* and *rahīm* more interpretively.

b) Verse 2

Literally, the original verse reads *the praise and thanks (be) to God, Lord of the worlds.* Arabic linguists perceive the two letters (ا) and (ل) as the prefix to حَمۡدُ do not merely act as a definite article but also function as *al-istighraq* which denotes "all" (Shihab, 2007: 27). Yet, both translators seem to consider the aspect of relevance to the TTs readers. They omit the definite article along with *al-istighraq* concept and apply biblical style. Every time the word *praise* occurs in the Bible, no matter what function and meaning it carries, it always stands on its own and never to be accompanied by any determiner, for examples: *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ* (Ephesians 1:3); *Praise the Lord, my soul, all my inmost being, praise his holy name* (Psalms 103:1) (Popular Bible Verses about Praise, 2009). Such translation strategy is also included as an equivalence procedure as it deals with fixed expression.

As stated above, حمد in Arabic means praise and thanks. That is why orthodox translation of Al Quran renders it as *all the praises and thanks be to Allah* (Khan and Al-Hilali, 1998: 1). Yet, such kind of rendering looks redundant in English. Arberry and Haleem realize this dilemma and do not compel to do the same way. They seem to realize that the most relevant way is to narrow the word into one single sense: praise (Haleem, 2011: 17). Then, the use of *belongs to* instead of *be to* indicates that the intended meaning of ل in ﷲ is "belongs to" or "is due to" which implies the verse as a declaration and/or affirmation, rather than a tentative wish like the subjunctive "be" in "praise be to him" (Haleem, 2011: 17). In this case, both translators apply modulation procedure (semantic modification).

As for the second part of the verse (رَبِّ ٱلۡعَٰلَمِينَ), both literally render رَبِّ literally as *Lord.* Yet, there is a slight difference in rendering العلمين. Arberry renders it as *all being* which may imply that God's authority over animate and invisible creatures only, not including inanimate things such as air, earth, oceans, solar system, etc. In fact, the original semantically means *worlds*; the plural form of عَالَمٌ meaning *a world* (Penrice, 1991: 99). In this case, Haleem's translation is much more interpretive by using literal translation: *Lord of the worlds*. The addition of definite article in front of the word *Lord* in Arberry's translation intentionally wants to signify or emphasize that it is God as the Lord. On the other side, Haleem does not see it as necessary since the word Lord with the letter "L" capitalized has clearly conveyed such concept. Moreover, the ST itself does not attach definite article ٱلْ to the word رَبِّ either.

c) Verse 3

Although this verse repeats the second part of verse 1, each translator treats it differently. Haleem immediately repeats the whole phrases of the first verse: *the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy*. He proposes that the repetition functions to emphasize this epithet which is central to the description of God in this *sura* (Haleem, 2011: 18). There is no option but to repeat it completely. Hence, the transposition strategy is repeated.

On the other side, Arberry sees this verse more than just a repetition for emphasis. Rather, this verse specifies the most fundamental attributes of God in more detail. God's mercy and compassion are in the highest degree that nothing compares to His. Hence, God is *the all-Merciful, the all-Compassionate*.

Both options might bring different implications. In Arberry's version, this verse becomes a bit different from verse 1 by adding the combining form *all-*. Here, there is a modulation of semantic feature of the verse (from abstract to more concrete or detailed description). Yet, contextually, even without addition of any corresponding combining particle like *all-* in English, *al-Rahmān al-Rahīm* in Arabic already imply the incomparability of God's mercy and compassion. Therefore, it is not necessary to add or modify the rendering of *al-Rahmān al-Rahīm* as already appear in the first verse. In addition to semantically problematic choice made by the word *compassionate*, Arberry seems to less interpretively resemble the original verse structurally.

d) Verse 4

Both translators agree to literally translate the word مَٰلِكِ as *Master* since the Arabic word in this context refers to the one who is able to control or is lord over something (Penrice, 1991: 140). Yet, Arberry perceives that it is necessary to add definite article *the* in order to more highlight the implication that it is God who is the Master. For Haleem, this verse acts the same as the previous one: the use of capital letter of "M" for *Master* already signifies such interpretation besides the fact that the original verse in Arabic does not use definite article ٱلْ either.

The difference occurs in dealing with the noun phrase *yaumi al-dīn.* This phrase consists of two words: يَوۡم (*yaumi*) literally means "day" and ٱلدِّين (*al-dīn*) means "the Judgment." The latter has the same root with the word دَيۡنٌ means a debt and دِيۡنٌ means obedience or judgment (Penrice, 1991: 50). While Haleem renders it as *the Day of Judgment*, Arberry opts to translate it as "the Day of Doom." Either of them contextually refers to the same object: the Doomsday or the Day of Judgment or the end of all material and spiritual worlds followed by resurrection from the dead and every being will be judged by God. Such parallel eschatological concept between Judaism, Christianity and Islam is recognized by both translators. In this case, Haleem

opts to use a direct (literal) translation while Arberry employs indirect translation (modulation). Despite using different approach, both succeed to represent the intended meaning of the original verse in relevant way to the TTs readers.

e) Verse 5

The noticeable difference in translating this verse is the syntactic choice. In Arberry's translation, the TT attempts to closely resemble the syntactic structure of the original in Arabic. He applies the lexical calque procedure by placing the direct object at the beginning of the clauses: ***iyyā-ka** na'budu wa **iyyā-ka** nasta'inu*.

Thee only we serve**, to **Thee** alone we pray for succour.

The suffix pronoun ***ka*** means "you" as the direct object is attached to the bound particle ***iyyā*** to syntactically help the suffix pronoun function as the direct object. The ***iyyā*** itself does not have a true semantic meaning in Arabic (Abu-Chacra, 2007: 94). It means that what the original verse conveys is to emphasize that it is God that we serve or worship. To make the TT really convey the intended interpretation, Arberry adds the word *only* to the first clause and the word *alone* to the second one to highlight the importance of the word "Thee" in the intended meaning of this verse. On the other hand, Haleem opts to apply the *clefting structure* i.e. ***It is You we worship; It is You** we ask for help.* Either Arberry or Haleem exactly represents the same meaning and conveys the intended interpretation. Yet, stylistically, the options Arberry takes are typically represent literary structure and archaism which sounds old-fashioned whereas Haleem's cleft structure is more fashionable. In terms of translation strategy, Arberry obviously employs direct translation, i.e. borrowing the expression form but then translating each of its element literally (calque) while Haleem uses indirect one (transposition or change of syntactic structure).

Arberry's choice (*we serve*) and Haleem's choice (*we worship*) in translating *na'budu* does not make ambiguity since the original word is indeed rooted from the word عَبَدَ which has a range of meaning, but primarily means "to worship, to serve, to adore" (Penrice, 1991: 94). The problematic aspect is the difference in translating *nasta'inu.* It is rendered as "we seek for succour" in Arberry's and "we ask for help" in Haleem's. Although the use of "succour" is more poetic than "help", it does not assure that it would convey the precise interpretation. *Succour* semantically means help to somebody who is suffering or having problems (Hornby, 2005: 1533). Using such word would then limit God's help which is only given to those who are suffering while in fact every being does need His help in any circumstance. Therefore, the use of "ordinary word" like "help" would encompass any situation and condition, in hardship or prosperity. In other words, Haleem renders this verse more interpretively (by being more literally) while Arberry - using modulation - tends to emphasize the prettiness of words which a bit distorts the meaning.

f) Verse 6

In Arabic, the word اِهْدِنَا is derived from the root هَدَي meaning "to lead in the right way" or "direct aright" when it is paired with the preposition لِ (to) or اِلَى (into) (Penrice, 1991: 153). The word اِهْدِنَا is the second person masculine singular imperative verb whose implicit subject is God (The Quranic Arabic Corpus, 2009). And the suffix pronoun نَا denotes "us". Hence, the word اِهْدِنَا implies a request to God for guidance to the straight/right path (ٱلصِّرَاط ٱلْمُسْتَقِيَم). However, the original verse does not use prepositions لِ (to) or اِلَى (into) after the word اِهْدِنَا (guide us). It suggests that the requesters (i.e. Muslims) have already been on the straight path (Islam) but they still need guidance all the way through until

they ultimately and safely enter its end: heaven (Shihab: 2007: 66).

The choices made by Arberry and Haleem in translating this verse then make the difference. Although both attempt to render the verse literally (directly), Arberry cleverly copes with the absence of the preposition إِلَىٰ in the original. He adds the preposition *in* after the phrase *guide us* to convey the intended interpretation to the readers in English. On the contrary, Haleem pairs the verb *guide* with the preposition *to.* Such option would consequently imply that embracing Islam has not been on the right path. Such interpretation deviates from the original. Therefore, in terms of interpretative use, Arberry exceeds Haleem in this verse.

g) Verse 7

Stylistic difference occurs in translating صِرَاطَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ where Arberry tends to apply archaic style while Haleem comes with more fashionable words. They also omit the prepositional phrase عَلَيْهِمْ literally means *on them* in order not to be so redundant and thus meet the relevance to English style. However, both translations syntactically and semantically appropriately represent the original: using perfect tense construction صِرَاطَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ = *the path of those Thou hast blessed = the path of those You have blessed.* In this case, they both employ direct translation with the spirit of faithfulness.

Meanwhile, they treat the next part differently. While being more archaic, Arberry attempts to literally resemble the structure of the original and follow the semantic point of view (negation). It begins with the word *not* as the equivalence to غَيْر to make the subsequent noun phrases: *al-maghdhūbi* (*those against whom Thou art wrathful*) and *al-dhāllīn* (*those who are astray*) as the clear opposites of what is mentioned earlier: *alladzīna an'amta alayhim* (*those Thou hast blessed*). On the other hand, Haleem omits the word *not*

(غَيْر) at the beginning of the phrase and changes such point of view into *those who incur no anger and who have not gone astray*. With this rendering, Haleem's translation still refers to the kind of people mentioned earlier in this verse (people who have been blessed). In fact, this verse style actually attempts to make opposition between those who receive God's grace and wicked and lost people whose path must never be followed. Hence, Haleem's rendering indirectly overlooks the other groups of people (those who incur wrath and those who have gone astray).

However, the use of *Thou* to refer to God in Arberry's translation in rendering *al-maghdhūbi* remains problematic. In Arabic, it is a passive participle literally means those who earn angry which does not exactly mention who exactly gets angry. That is why in Islamic theology, any negative attribute is not supposed to be attributed to God (Shihab, 2007: 75). In this case, adding second pronoun *Thou* or *You* as in Arberry's version would distort the intended interpretation while Haleem's translation goes in line with the original (omitting the subject *Thou* or *You*). Overall, both translators fail to perfectly represent the meaning of this verse in interpretive way since each employs problematic choices (the use of *Thou* and point-of-view modulation).

4.2. Discussion

In general, the finding shows that Haleem's translation of *Al Fatiha* is more interpretive than Arberry's. Of the seven verses, Haleem only fails to be interpretive in translating verse 6 and 7. In terms of translation strategy, the finding also reveals that whatever strategy they use (either direct or indirect) does not determine the degree of interpretiveness. Both approaches can be used in order to interpretively represent the intended meaning of the ST. The point is how exact

the information is communicated to the readers.

In quantity, Arberry applies more indirect translation (6 times) than Haleem (5 times). He also uses direct translation (5 times) more than Haleem (4 times). However, the finding shows that Haleem's work is more appropriate to represent the meaning of *Al Fatiha.* Semantically, Haleem's translation can be more easily interpreted by the English speaking readers. This corresponds with the principle of relevance in translation. It is primarily the consequence of Haleem's fashionable style in translating the seven verses.

Compared to Arberry's archaic style and literary minded approach, Haleem's choices (structures and word choices) would be more accessible to the readers to grab the intended meaning with lower processing effort. Words such as *Lord of the Worlds* instead of *Lord of all Being* and *help* instead of *succour* more closely represent what *Al Fatiha* means to say.

Another difference between these two translators is the way they interpretively translate the verses. Considering his approaches, particularly for verse 1, 5 and 7, it is clear that Arberry moves towards the formal correspondence end. He uses the parallel adjectives for ٱلرَّحِيم ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ: the Merciful, the Compassionate although morphologically such choices would loose the connection between the two words in Arabic. He also attempts to replicate the ST syntactic structure. For example, *iyyā-ka na'budu wa iyyā-ka nasta'inu* is rendered in English as ***Thee*** *only we serve, to **Thee** alone we pray for succour*. The direct object is placed at the beginning of the clauses, similar to the original verse. The same case also happens to translating verse 7 in which Arberry uses negation structure. With those sophisticated choices, this translation would need much higher processing efforts to comprehend, particularly for the masses. Arberry's approach is relatively intended for

scholarly purpose. That is why his work is widely acclaimed by intellectuals (Mohammed, 2005).

On the other hand, Haleem chooses to move away from the formal correspondence. It cannot be disconnected from the fact that his work is one of the most recent mass-market attempts to publish an English translation of the Al Quran (Mohammed, 2005). By transposition and modulation, he is assertive that the structural constructions of the original should not be necessarily reproduced in English as they would generate alien structures. As far as the intended meaning can be well conveyed, Haleem is willing to apply word class transposition, structural changes and even semantic point of view modulation. It appears in the translations of verse 1, 3, 5 and 7. However, his modulation choices for verse 6 and 7 might distort the intended interpretation.

The finding also leads to the notion that actually those translations represent different segments of people. Arberry's version seems to translate *Al Fatiha* from the non-Muslim and non-Arab perspective while Haleem's translation much carries Islamic theological principles as well as Arab point of view. For instance, in translatingٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ, Haleem's rendering is based on Arabic morphological aspect so that the connection between *al-Rahmān* and *al-Rahīm* would be retained, the aspect which Arberry has overlooked.

In other crucial cases, Arberry also fails to accommodate the meaning of *nasta'inu* in verse 5. The word *succour* he uses would then narrow the grace of God to those who are suffering. It can be understood that as a Christian, Arberry may be influenced by Christian theological values in which Jesus is perceived to much champion the poor or lowly people rather than the rich ones; things that Jesus preached during the historical Sermon on the Mount. In fact, such value is contradictory to Islamic principles which

believe that anyone is equal before God and the degree of piety is the only factor that makes the difference. The same case also occurs in translating the word ٱلْعَـٰلَمِينَ in verse 2. In verse 7, Arberry also assigns the attribute *wrath* on God as if the one who is angry is God while in fact, Quranic exegeses as well as Haleem himself maintain that any negative attributes must not be assigned to God.

Despite Haleem's less interpretive approach in rendering verse 6 and 7, his cultural background is influential for his benefit. As an Egyptian native, Haleem has internalized Arab culture including its language and religion. Having been a *hafiz* (*Al Quran* memorizer) since childhood, he was educated at Al Azhar University, Cambridge University and received professorship of Islamic Studies at University of London (Haleem, 2005). With such CV, Haleem's credentials are complete. On the other side, in addition to studying and receiving professor of Arabic title at Cambridge University, Arberry is a British orientalist who spent some years serving as professor of Classics at Cairo University (Mohammed, 2005). However, as a Muslim, Haleem has acquainted with Islam and *Al Quran* earlier than Arberry. Such factor seems to be crucial enough that eventually makes a difference to the translations they produce.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

From the finding and discussion, there are some conclusions to draw. First, the comparison shows that Haleem's English translation of *Al Fatiha* is overall more interpretive than Arberry's version. Although indirect translation is more dominantly used by both translators, the study reveals that any kind of translation strategy (either direct or indirect) does not determine the degree of interpretiveness as long as the rendering exactly conveys the information and meaning to the readers.

Second, with more fashionable and familiar structures and words, Haleem's choices closely adhere to the principle of relevance as his rendering needs much lower processing efforts than Arberry's archaism and literary style. This point has led to the implication that Arberry's translation moves towards formal ends yet in some aspects overlooks the intended meaning of the original. On the contrary, Haleem's fashionable choices indicate his translation moves away from formal correspondence with the ST but are able to precisely communicate the message of the original, except the verse 6 and 7.

Third, the finding also has implication that each translation targets different segment of readers. Arberry's archaic and literary style would rather be suitable for those with sufficient knowledge background and information in theology, particularly Islam, such as academics, theologians, courtesy of the choices like the word *succour*, *all Being*, *Merciful and Compassionate* which most probably generate biases or broad interpretation. Such translation can therefore be categorized as a scholarly translation. As for Haleem's translation, its light and fashionable choices might be intended for mass-market purpose and ordinary people. Therefore, his translation can be categorized as a popularized translation.

In relation to the critical value of sacred or sensitive texts such as *Al Quran*, this study suggests that translating such texts should consider two factors that potentially influence the translators. First is cultural background. Although Arberry and Haleem are both bona fide scholars who excel at Islamic Studies and Arabic, their religious background respectively as a non-Muslim British and an Egyptian-born Muslim are depicted in the translations of *Al Fatiha* they produce. As far as the rendering keep up with relevance principle and convey the message accurately, it should not be a

concern. It would just be worrying when it leads to distortion of the message.

Another factor is contextual knowledge. Translation of *Al Quran* should not be loosely connected with Islamic theology. As the supreme source of Islamic teachings, its single verse can have general meaning and may need to be interpreted by another verse and/or prophetic tradition (*hadith*). Hence, any attempt of translating the holy book would better consult reliable Quranic exegeses. Otherwise, the intended meaning of *Al Quran* would not be represented interpretively.

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