



Translating Qur'anic Hand Movements : A Descriptive Analysis

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Abstract: The present paper goes around a basic idea that human communication crosses the borders of spoken words. It rather goes beyond that to include body movements, such as the facial expressions, eyes, and limbs movements. People gesture as they speak. Therefore, such movements convey meanings to others and affect them deeply. Moreover, gestures are important as they have the ability to depict the inner signals of the mind sent to the parts of the body without any external control of the individual in many cases. It is thus an important factor in the process of human communication. Muslims think that Qur'an is the main source of all the sciences, and they consult it unremittingly. This research examines one type of body language in the Holy Qur'an, reviews and analyzes some examples that utilized hand movements and their translations. A descriptive model of analysis is utilized as a theoretical framework for tackling the subject under consideration. Five English translations along with their Quranic SL counterparts comprised data analysis section. One of the main outcomes of the present paper is that hand movements were effective means for conveying Quranic meanings. They are

mostly metaphorical. Translators responded differently to the translation of such meanings. Valuable meanings need to be added to the translation.

الخلاصة: تدور الورقة الحالية حول فكرة أساسية مفادها أن التواصل البشري يعبر حدود الكلمات المنطوقة. بل يتجاوز ذلك ليشمل حركات الجسم ، مثل تعبيرات الوجه والعينين وحركات الأطراف. إيماءة الناس وهم يتكلمون. لذلك ، تنقل هذه الحركات معانيها وتؤثر عليها بعمق. علاوة على ذلك ، فإن الإيماءات مهمة لأنها لديها القدرة على تصوير الإشارات الداخلية للعقل المرسل إلى أجزاء الجسم دون أي سيطرة خارجية على الفرد في كثير من الحالات. إنه بالتالي عامل مهم في عملية التواصل البشري. يعتقد المسلمون أن القرآن هو المصدر الرئيسي لجميع العلوم ، وهم يتشاورون دون كلل. يتناول هذا البحث نوعًا واحدًا من لغة الجسد في القرآن الكريم ، ويستعرض ويحلل بعض الأمثلة التي استخدمت حركات اليد وترجماتها. يستخدم النموذج الوصفي للتحليل كإطار نظري لمعالجة الموضوع قيد الدراسة. خمس ترجمة باللغة الإنجليزية مع نظرائهم SL القرآنية تتألف قسم تحليل البيانات. إحدى النتائج الرئيسية لهذه الورقة هي أن حركات اليد كانت وسيلة فعالة لنقل المعاني القرآنية. معظمهم مجازي. رد المترجمون بشكل مختلف على ترجمة هذه المعاني. يجب إضافة المعاني القيمة إلى الترجمة.

1-Introduction

As the cultural dialogue continues, it is vital for all of us to be attentive to gestures, and body language used by other people. Moreover, it would be appropriate to be aware of the valuable meanings conveyed by gestures. It is conspicuous that people widely use their body parts to express ideas. Gestures make our life colorful. Sometimes, body language conveys ideas more effectively than words. People within the same culture differ in using gestures and body language. In addition to the recognition that people gesture as they converse, their gestures regularly present significant information for decoding the oral message of the communicator/addresser. The addressee/receiver should instantly merge the verbal information with the body language to reconstruct the meaningful message of the speaker. The psychologist Mehrabian (1972) maintains that, on average, fifty-five percent of our communication is realized by body language. Paralinguistic

information represents thirty-eight percent. The least of communication goes for verbal communication which stands for only seven percent of the message conveyed.

As gestures are part of our daily life, people differ in using them and that is one of their salient features. Some gestures are universal. One obvious example is the shoulders' shrugging which is generally accepted to mean "I do not know". There are other universal gestures such as shaking or nodding the head to say "yes" or "no".

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (2000) defines "gesture" as follows: 1.a. A motion of the limbs or body made to express or help express thought or to emphasize speech. b. The action of making such a motion or motions: communicated solely by gesture. 2. An act or a remark made as a formality or as a sign of intention or attitude: sent flowers as a gesture of sympathy.

The above mentioned definition reveals that the term "gesture" is taken to cover a variety of body behaviors such as posture, facial expressions, head movements in addition to limbs movements. It also implies that gesture not only accompanies speech but also goes in harmony with it.

Gesture is mostly initiated during articulation, but more specifically during filled pauses in real dialogue (Aboudan and Beattie, 1996: 271). It is seen as part of the speech production process, as part of global communicative intent, or as an integral reflection of thoughts. In this view, gestures occur as the result of speech failure, but they also help the speaker access the word sought (Gullberg, 1998: 64).

Kita and Ozyurek (2003) conduct a study to find out the coordination between "speech and gesture across different languages". They (ibid: 18) come to the conclusion that gestures are generated from "spatio-motoric processes that interact on-line with the speech production process". This confirms the sensitivity of gestures and their importance to speech.

Gestures can be distinguished and categorized with regard to how closely related they are to speech, and how rule-governed they are. When gestures are classified as non- rule-governed speech-associated movements of body parts, regretfully "little appears to be known about them, despite the extensive literature on nonverbal/non-vocal behaviours" (Gullberg, 1998: 58).

Gestures are unlimited in number. Therefore, it is legitimate to classify them and focus on them separately. It can be concluded that gestures are

very important to communication, and studying them enhances deciphering speech.

2- The importance of gestures and hand gesticulation

The importance of studying gestures increased as the global communication is required among people. Understanding the body language of others can decrease misunderstanding and enhance relationships among people. Moreover, it can reduce irritation. Different people need communication for different purposes and gestures help conveying the meaning in an easy and short way.

Gullberg (1998) investigates the use of gestures as a communication strategy in second language discourse. She (ibid: 2) thinks that “an integrated theory of Communication Strategies has to consider that gestures operate as global communication enhancement for speakers and listeners alike”.

Surveying the literature of gestures, it can be noted that very few studies focused on this subject. They mostly tackled political gestures (Atkinson, 1984; Patterson, 1991). Such studies underlined how gestures are utilized to manage the addressees' responses. It can also be noted that hand movements and messages carried by them are rarely mentioned in the study of gestures. Translating the meaning conveyed by such gestures is also neglected by researchers.

“Hand gestures that spontaneously accompany speech convey information coordinated with the concurrent speech” (Beattie and Shovelton, 1999: 438). Hand represents the most prominent element of the pantomime activity, movements of body parts and sign language. Every single movement performed by the hand can be considered a gesture that carries certain significance for a communicative message (Ahmed, 2003: 22). It is the most important means to communicate between the deaf and dumb as well as among sports teams. It is also the method of communication in the crowded and noisy places. Stock exchange workers signs are good example in this regard. Moreover, businessmen use specific signals in order to hide their intent for others during the conversation.

Gestures, hand in particular, provide valuable information for listeners. Consequently, gestures can be conducted to facilitate the interlocutor and addressers can utilize them to improve their performance (Ragheb, 1999: 59).

Bulwer (1975:1) considers “hand” as being the busiest part of the body. Its message is decoded and understood easily. He imagines hand to be the second “mouth” which delivers a “fountain of discourse”.

Hand gesticulation in communication operates as a dependable sign to turn-taking (Duncan and Fiske, 1985). Discontinuation of hand gesticulation or the resting of a stressed hand position indicates that the role is terminated. On the contrary, commencement of hand gesturing is a clear sign that an individual intends to speak. Finally, continuation or non-resting of the hand indicates a hanging on sign. Likewise, Streeck and Hartege (1992) argue that listeners gesture as they intend to initiate a new talk before the termination of the earlier discourse without coincidence. Gestures can also be used to indicate consent or support.

3-Methodology and theoretical framework

Hand movements are always mentioned in the descriptions of Qur’anic discourse, yet they have not been sufficiently investigated. To the best knowledge of the researcher no separate study has been conducted to tackle hand gesticulation in the Quran from a translation point of view. Thus, this paper tries to shed light on the uses of hand movements in the holy Quran with the aim of categorizing them and probing procedures followed to translate them.

For analyzing the Qur’anic texts under consideration, the present paper follows the descriptive translation studies (DTS) approach proposed by Toury. His approach is followed for being objective and comprehensive. Lambert and van Gorp’s (1985) model for describing translation is followed. For focusing the analysis, only the macro and microstructure levels are analyzed.

As for the translation procedures adopted by translators, Vinay and Darbelnet's (1958) classification known as “A methodology for translation” is followed. Venuti (2004: 114) affirms that Vinay and Darbelnet's “contributions to the field were of noticeable impact, offering many theoretically-based translation methods and strategies that have been used till today”.

To ensure a thorough and systematic analysis for the data, five well-known translations are considered for analyzing the way of conveying Qur’anic hand movements into English. This paper does not aim to make value judgments, rather it describes translations and a suggested way for conveying the meaning is possibly presented. Consistency will also be tested to see how translators rendered similar expressions. As all the expressions

under consideration contain the word “hand”, an attempt is made to note how the translators differentiated between the similar expressions in translation.

As gestures are indefinite as human behavior, it is imperative to limit the study to a certain form of human behavior of such gestures. Without devaluing the importance of other gestures, it is justifiable to focus the research on one type of gestures, i.e., hand movements, so that more depth and more details are attained. This narrows the scope of the study considerably, and excludes all other bodily movements.

A final note here before embarking the practical part of the research is that we should accept that there is a difference among cultures regarding the meaning of body movements. Cultural differences are among the most difficult barriers in translation. Another study should be performed to probe the ability of the TL readers to understand the literal translation of these movements. Undoubtedly, more explanations in this regards are required to obtain better results.

4-Data analysis of Qur’anic verses

Gestures are indefinite in number that any attempt to categorize them would be futile as it is personal. For every individual, there is his/her own way for using gestures. The holy Qur’an is a standard in Arabic. It is believed that everything mentioned in this Book is generally accepted. Qur’anic gestures are not exceptions. Verses of the holy Qur’an are abound with many uses of hand movement as a way of conveying full messages without the use of oral communication. Moreover, “hand” emerged as the most important part of such activities in the words of the Almighty Allah. Many verses utilized this type of communication and they are categorized as follows:

4-1 The Miserly hand

Example (1):

﴿وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ يَدُ اللَّهِ مَغْلُولَةٌ غُلَّتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَلُعِنُوا بِمَا قَالُوا﴾ المائدة: 64

Pickthall: The Jews say: Allah's hand is fettered. Their hands are fettered and they are accursed for saying so.

Ali: The Jews say: "God's hand is tied up." Be their hands tied up and be they accursed for the (blasphemy) they utter.

Hilali-Khan: The Jews say: "Allah's Hand is tied up (i.e. He does not give and spend of His Bounty)." Be their hands tied up and be they accursed for what they uttered.

Shakir: And the Jews say: The hand of Allah is tied up! Their hands shall be shackled and they shall be cursed for what they say.

Arberry: The Jews have said, 'God's hand is fettered.' Fettered are their hands, and they are cursed for what they have said.

Ibn Kathir (1994, vol.2:94) contends that the Almighty Allah tells us about the Jews- on them, Allah's consecutive curses be until the Day of Resurrection- that they described the Almighty Allah as miser, Allah is far above that. Moreover, they described Him as impoverished. Ibn Kathir also cites Ibn Abbas as saying: they expressed their stinginess that they do not mean the hand of Allah is tied, but they say: "niggard" which means that He ceased what He has, the Almighty is far above that.

Ibn Ashour (2000, vol.4: 310) affirms that the meaning of "Allah's hand is tied" is to say that He is parsimonious because Arabs use "hand" to express "giving", and make stretching of the hand a metaphor for generosity, the opposite of which is the withholding the hand metaphorically for miserliness. They say: "fettered his hand" and "withhold his hand", and we did not hear from them: "tied His hand", except in the Qur'an as here in this verse.

The literal meaning for (مغلولة) is (tied, shackled, chained). All the translations focused on the literal meaning except Hilali-Khan (henceforth H-K) who added "He does not give and spend of His Bounty" along with the literal meaning. The translators attempted to follow the original literally as recommended by Islamic clerics. The literal translation, as approved by H-K, would not convey the metaphorical meaning accompanying the literal one of the ST. The Qur'anic text used "hand" to signify one of the features used by Arabs to express generosity or miserliness. The effect of the message is strengthened by using "hand" instead of using the direct meaning (i.e. miser). Hence, the holy Qur'an underlined the negative connotation of this meaning by rejecting it using another phrase (غُلَّتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ) (their hands are chained) which is a threat by torture in the Day Of Judgment and deporting those people from the mercy of Allah. As commented by Ibn Ashour above that this is a metaphor for miserliness, it is recommended that H-K translation has represented the metaphorical meaning in addition to the powerful message represented by "hand" as the means of spending and holding. The other translations have only underlined the literal meaning. The TL reader may only notice the surface meaning if the metaphorical meaning is not represented in the translation. H-K underline the need for the TL reader to observe the metaphorical meaning and at the same time to keep the

beautiffulness expressed by the original. Moreover, H-K avoided the direct use of the words “niggard” or “miser” as they are unsuitable descriptions for Allah.

Example (2):

﴿وَلَا تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلَىٰ عُنُقِكَ وَلَا تَبْسُطْهَا كُلَّ الْبَسْطِ فَتَقْعُدَ مَلُومًا مَّحْسُورًا﴾ الإسراء: 29

Pickthall: And let not thy hand be chained to thy neck nor open it with a complete opening, lest thou sit down rebuked, denuded.

Ali: Make not thy hand tied (like a niggard's) to thy neck, nor stretch it forth to its utmost reach, so that thou become blameworthy and destitute.

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

Shakir: And do not make your hand to be shackled to your neck nor stretch it forth to the utmost (limit) of its stretching forth, lest you should (afterwards) sit down blamed, stripped off.

Arberry: And keep not thy hand chained to thy neck, nor outspread it widespread altogether, or thou wilt sit reproached and denuded.

Al-Tabari (2000, vol. 17: 433) comments that this verse is an example given by the Almighty Allah for abstaining of spending in rights which enjoined the affluent people symbolizes them as clenching their hands to their necks, which prevents them from taking and giving.

It is clear that translators avoided the use of the words “niggard” or “miser” in example (1) and used them in example (2) as the first describes Allah while the latter describes humans. It is noticed that the “hand” is used metaphorically to express the intensity of miserliness by portraying the “hand” as tied or chained to neck for the one who refuses to spend his money in the ways prescribed by Allah. The reader can notice the powerfulness of the message by imagining someone whose hands are tied to his neck, so how can he spend money! Ali and H-K stress the TL reader's need for more explanation as the literal translation will not be optimal to provide the total meaning. They add “like a niggard's” and “like a miser” respectively. As in the previous example, the “hand” is used to express miserliness and generosity. This use reflects the way Arabs use the language as well as the powerful message conveyed by using body language to convey meaning. If plain words are used, the power of the message will be lost. Another verse which utilizes “hand” metaphorically to express miserliness is:

Example (3):

﴿الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ مِّن بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمُنْكَرِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَقْبِضُونَ أَيْدِيَهُمْ﴾
التوبة: 67

Pickthall: The hypocrites, both men and women, proceed one from another. They enjoin the wrong, and they forbid the right, and they withhold their hands (from spending for the cause of Allah).

Ali: The Hypocrites, men and women, (have an understanding) with each other: They enjoin evil, and forbid what is just, and are close with their hands.

Hilali-Khan: The hypocrites, men and women, are from one another, they enjoin (on the people) Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief and polytheism of all kinds and all that Islam has forbidden), and forbid (people) from Al-Ma'ruf (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do), and they close their hands [from giving (spending in Allah's Cause) alms, etc.].

Shakir: The hypocritical men and the hypocritical women are all alike; they enjoin evil and forbid good and withhold their hands;

Arberry: The hypocrites, the men and the women, are as one another; they bid to dishonour, and forbid honour; they keep their hands shut; Commenting on this verse, Ibn Ashour (2000, vol.10: 144) says: “withholding hands is a metonymy for stinginess. It is a description of dispraise signifying cruelty, because stinginess is meant to abstain giving the poor”. While Al-Nisaburi (2002, vol.5: 66) says: “ceased or hold their hands from charity and expenditure in its due and do not stretch them in goodness. Originally, the giver stretches out his hand in goodness, and those who scrimp and prevent grab their hands”.

Similar to example (2), “hand” is used metaphorically to express miserliness. In Arabic, stretching the hand signifies generosity while withholding it or clenching it would express the behavior of miserliness. All translations rendered this hand movement literally except Pickthall and H-K who added the note (from spending for the cause of Allah) to explain more the meaning of this movement. Adding this phrase entails that the literal translation is not sufficient and more explanation is required to cover the meaning of this body movement. Without adding this phrase, the TL reader would still require more information to understand the meaning of this movement. This description for the hypocrites is so strong showing disrespect for them as it is one of their distinguished behaviors. Contextually speaking, the negative connotation of the phrase “withholding their hands” is enhanced as the verse describes hypocrites and their detrimental characteristics.

To summarize the analysis for the above examples, it can be said that the use of the “hand” to describe spending in the first verse is a metaphor. Arabs used hand to express generosity or stinginess, because expenditure is performed through which. The expression embodies a physical condition used for human beings, used by Jews- the enemies of Allah- to describe Allah as a niggard- God far above what they say. The holy Qur’an used this expression as sign of stinginess through physical movement representation in the second and third examples. Allah forbids the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and the faithful people from being niggards. Moreover, Allah proves the existence of this peculiarity in the hypocrites. The expression is influential with a great significance, as it used the word “tied”, borrowed from the shackles that restrict movement. The expression is a divine guidance for people with the purpose of preventing themselves from falling into the trap of stinginess and self fortunes. The use of “hand” metaphorically shortens the space used to express the meaning of miserliness as well as presented a powerful expression for the situation.

4-2 The humiliated and oppressed hand

Example (4):

﴿ حَتَّىٰ يُعْطُوا الْجِزْيَةَ عَنْ يَدٍ وَهُمْ صَاغِرُونَ ﴾ التوبة: 29

Pickthall: until they pay the tribute readily, being brought low.

Ali: until they pay the Jizya with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued.

Hilali-Khan: until they pay the Jizyah with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued.

Shakir: until they pay the tax in acknowledgment of superiority and they are in a state of subjection.

Arberry: until they pay the tribute out of hand and have been humbled.

Al-Razi (2000, vol. 15: 8-9) comments that the motive of taking the tribute “Jizyah” from the People of the Book, and perform it in such a humiliation and smallness manner is actually not to be superior and arrogant on the part of Muslims, but it is to provoke the humanity motives of those who perform tribute, and to trigger the desire for them to get rid of this disgraceful situation by reviewing their faith on the one hand and to consider the call of Islam on the other. This, if they did, will correct their faith, and open their minds and hearts to the true religion. It can be noticed that the physical movement used in this verse carries a clear indication of deep oppression for the giver of this tribute who refused to submit and be acquiescent to the orders of Allah. The context of this verse seems to portray an image of an

individual walking with humble head, stretching his hand, carrying the money to pay tribute to the Muslims in a hypostatic submissive manner. In this verse, the “hand” is used to express an image of the people of the Book who are under the Islamic ruling and paying the tribute. A gloss translation for the verse can be: “until they pay the tribute **on hand** in a low state”. “Hand” is used to express something different from the above mentioned verses. It is used here as a sign of submission and acknowledgment of superiority as clearly stated by Shakir. All translators except Arberry avoided representing the hand in their translations. They resorted to use equivalence procedure to achieve the effect of message. The TL reader needs to understand the meaning of the expression as well as to recognize the beauty and powerfulness of the message. Exegetes stated plainly the incentive for Islam to take tribute from the people of the Book in this manner. The use of the hand in drawing an image for the tribute giver would not be strong enough if the words “subjected” or “submitted” are plainly stated. This proves the strong effect of the “hand” as a powerful body language tool to express such effective messages. The other translations avoided any mention or reference to “hand” as it seems that the TL reader would not understand the message if rendered literally.

4-3 The regretting hand

Example (5):

﴿وَلَمَّا سَقَطَ فِي أَيْدِيهِمْ وَرَأَوْا أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ ضَلُّوا﴾ الأعراف: 149

Pickthall: And when they feared the consequences thereof and saw that they had gone astray,

Ali: When they repented, and saw that they had erred,

Hilali-Khan: And when they regretted and saw that they had gone astray,

Shakir: And when they repented and saw that they had gone astray,

Arberry: And when they smote their hands, and saw that they had gone astray,

The meaning of this metaphorical verse is that the remorse of the people of Moses regarding the worship of the calf became greater. Al-Razi (2000, vol. 15: 8-9) has mentioned several ways to explain the meanings of this metaphorical expression. Firstly, it is said for the one who repented because the one who shows severe regret would bite his hand with chagrin. Secondly, the meaning of the word “سَقَطَ” is taken from “السَّقَطُ” “soft snow”, and the meaning is that “soft snow fell in his hand”; which melts with the lowest temperature. Catching soft snow means catching nothing. This

became an example for the consequences of losing and the quest becomes useless and ends with regret.

Al-Tabari (2000, vol. 13: 118) says that Arabs describe an individual who regrets something passed, or being helpless as: “has fallen into his hands” originally from “captivity”. A person who beats another or throws him/her to the ground will take him/her as captive. The one defeated becomes incapable and will be under the mercy of the “hands” of the victorious.

It is noticed that the holy Qur’an commentators presented several views regarding the form of such a physical movement. Yet, they agreed on the significance of the extreme regret. When the individual discovers that his/her work is sin, regrets it. This, in fact, is what the people of Israel experienced after Moses left them to meet his Lord. He returned and found them worshipping the body of a calf mooing, made by the infidel Samri. When Moses reminded them with God, they regretted and returned to their senses. Here, the Qur’an utilized a physical movement to indicate the impressive state of mental decline, which extends to the impact of the body, to deliver a clear message about the state of those who disobeyed the orders of Allah.

This verse represents one of the most difficult gestural structures to translate into English. An expression involving “hand” is used here to express a state of great regret and remorse. This Quranic phrase can be glossed as follows: “when it is fallen in their hands”. Arberry has given an interpretation involving the use of “hand”. His translation portrays hitting one hand with the other. Other translators avoided any mention of the word “hand” in their translation and here adaptation procedure is followed as the expression is missing in the TL. As noted, there are many explanations as to what is the meaning of this expression. Yet, most commentators, as shown above, agreed on the meaning of deep regret. The above translations focus either on the aesthetic value of the text or the effect of the message. Loss of meaning in translation is expected. Wilss (1982) admits the idea of loss in translation. He asserts the impossibility of perfection in translation. He (ibid: 32) states that “immutability and absolutes belong perhaps to mathematics and not to translation”. As a suggestion “smote their hands (to show deep regret)” could be suggested or a footnote can be inserted for all translations to show the other missing side of the message.

4-4 The powerful hand

Example (6):

﴿وَاذْكُرْ عِبَادَنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ أُولَى الْأَيْدِي وَالْأَبْصَارِ﴾ ص: 45

Pickthall: And make mention of Our bondmen, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, men of parts and vision.

Ali: And commemorate Our Servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, possessors of Power and Vision.

Hilali-Khan: And remember Our slaves, Ibrahim (Abraham), Ishaque (Isaac), and Ya'qub (Jacob), (all) owners of strength (in worshipping Us) and (also) of religious understanding.

Shakir: And remember Our servants Ibrahim and Ishaq and Yaqoob, men of power and insight.

Arberry: Remember also Our servants Abraham, Isaac and Jacob - men of might they and of vision.

Ibn Mandhur (1992, vol.15: 419) maintains that “hand” in Arabic is intended to mean power. Al-Tabari (2000, vol.21: 216) argues that “if someone says 'what is the relation between 'hand' and 'power'?' The answer is: It is a metaphor. Thus, one can oppress using hand. The oppression can reflect the brutality of a person. Therefore, the strong person is called (ذو يد) of a hand”.

In this verse, another image for the “hand” as a tool for power is underlined. In our daily life, it can be clearly noticed that the sign of fist refers to power and strength. Hands can be used to beat. One can shoot or use weapons with his/her hand. All translators, except Pickthall, used expressions lacking any reference to the word “hand”. Pickthall did not use the word “hand” directly, but used the word “parts” without specific reference. Pickthall neither used the word “hand” nor used the effect of the message similar to the other translators. This can give indication that there is something missing in the translation. H-K, in addition to rendering the effect of the message by saying (owner of strength) specified the message by stating (in worshipping us) which is not stated in the original neither by Qur'an exegetes. As a suggestion for being close to the optimal rendering, Ali's translation can be modified to add the word “hand” as it is the central theme of the message. A suggested modified translation can be "possessors of (hands) power" to retain the original message. The use of the hand to signify “power” is best known by Arabs over time. The hand is a symbol of power and oppression. Hence, it is employed to denote this meaning. This reflects the deep remarkable Qur'anic rhetoric which regales us with manifestations of miracles in all corners of this Book.

4-5 The angry hand

Example (7):

﴿جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَرَدُّوا أَيْدِيَهُمْ فِي أَفْوَاهِهِمْ﴾ إبراهيم: 9

Pickthall: Their messengers came unto them with clear proofs, but they thrust their hands into their mouths,

Ali: To them came apostles with Clear (Signs); but they put their hands up to their mouths,

Hilali-Khan: To them came their Messengers with clear proofs, but they put their hands in their mouths (biting them from anger)

Shakir: Their apostles come to them with clear arguments, but they thrust their hands into their mouths

Arberry: Their Messengers came to them with the clear signs; but they thrust their hands into their mouths

The Qur'an exegetes differ in the meaning of “فَرَدُّوا أَيْدِيَهُمْ فِي أَفْوَاهِهِمْ” “put their hands in their mouths”. Al-Tabari (2000, vol.16: 536) presents some views of commentators regarding the meaning of this verse. One view would maintain that biting on fingers is to show anger towards the apostles as they call to Allah. Another view claims that when those people heard the Book of Allah, they were surprised, and they put their hands into their mouths. It also means that they expressed their denial using their mouths. Al-Tabari also presents the view of Abu Ja'afar who said that the strongest of these interpretations regarding this verse is mentioned by Abdullah bin Masoud who said that: they responded with their hands in their mouths by biting them to express their fury on the apostles, as Allah described their brothers of hypocrites. Allah says: “and if they were alone bite their fingertips of rage”. Alu-Imran: 119.

Qutb (1987, vol. 4: 2090) deduces a new meaning of this verse. He contends that those people responded with their hands in their mouths, as done by one who wants to ripple voice to be heard from a distance by moving his/her hand in front of his/her mouth. Voice is raised back and forth in rippling sound to be heard. The context draws this movement that indicates their extreme denial and doubt which is impolite. Putting the hand-to-mouth carries a sign of rage, as the unbelievers to their severity of anger and resentment on the messengers of Allah bite their hands. Lack of taste and decency with God's prophets is the central point in this verse.

Whatever the case, the movement of the “hand” in this Qur'anic verse carries a profound impact on the human heart. This and other verses confirm the role of body language, especially (hand) in conveying the message of Allah through the words of the Qur'an. It also gives the impression that people would get the message faster when body language is used. Here, this

movement indicates anger and indecency. All translations provide renderings including the word “hand”. Yet, they differ in the way hands are contacted with mouth and it seems that the movement is used metaphorically to denote anger. H-K added (biting them from anger) to indicate the metaphorical meaning of the phrase. All translators used the word “hand” in their translations as the structure of the phrase would not allow omitting it. Exegetes agreed on the expression representing fierce anger for disbelieving the messengers. So, they made such a savage movement to show their anger.

4-6 The requesting hand

Example (8):

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ لَا يَسْتَجِيبُونَ لَهُمْ بِشَيْءٍ إِلَّا كَبَاسِطٌ كَفَّيْهِ إِلَى الْمَاءِ لِيَبْلُغَ فَاهُ وَمَا هُوَ بِبَالِغِهِ ۚ﴾
الرعد: 14

Pickthall: Those unto whom they pray beside Allah respond to them not at all, save as (is the response to) one who stretcheth forth his hands toward water (asking) that it may come unto his mouth, and it will never reach it.

Ali: any others that they call upon besides Him hear them no more than if they were to stretch forth their hands for water to reach their mouths but it reaches them not

Hilali-Khan: And those whom they (polytheists and disbelievers) invoke, answer them no more than one who stretches forth his hand (at the edge of a deep well) for water to reach his mouth, but it reaches him not,

Shakir: and those whom they pray to besides Allah give them no answer, but (they are) like one who stretches forth his two hands towards water that it may reach his mouth, but it will not reach it;

Arberry: and those upon whom they call, apart from Him, answer them nothing, but it is as a man who stretches out his hands to water that it may reach his mouth, and it reaches it not.

In this verse, stretching the palm of hand is a gesture used to request water. Al-Mawardi (n.d. vol. 3:103) says that the one who calls a god besides Allah is like a thirsty who calls for the water to reach his/her mouth from afar, trying fruitlessly to drink it with his/her tongue, and points to it with hand. The water will never come to him/her, because it does not respond to him/her, and it does not reach him/her.

Ibn Kathir (1994, vol. 4:446) argues that the one who does not benefit from the water, which was not up to one's mouth, is like those infidels who worship another god beside Allah. Thus, they do not benefit in this world or in the Hereafter.

Qutb (1987, vol. 4:2051) asserts that the scene here is speaking and moving. The true “Call” is one, which is to be answered. It is a call of Allah and going to Him and requesting His help, His mercy and His guidance. Everything else is null and in vain. This verse describes an individual who is deprived and thirsty extends the palms of hands and the mouth is open. The individual is praying and asking desperately and fruitlessly for water to reach the mouth, after efforts, eagerness and suffering. This applies to the unbelievers who ask the gods.

This verse is an example for those who ask whom they have nothing to give. Everything other than Allah has nothing to do in deciding the fate of creatures. All translators used the word “hand” along with the verb “stretch” as in the original following literal procedure except H-K who added “at the edge of a deep well” which is neither in the original nor in the exegetes’ comments trying to portray the message for the TL reader. The translators did not explain the significance of this movement and its relation to the previous phrase. Exegetes explained clearly the significance of this movement and it is recommended that their explanation is included in a footnote. One would not drink the water until bring it by hand to the mouth. Without doing so, one cannot drink.

The movement in this verse represents a unique manner of description. It is a case of someone who calls other deities with God, and asks the one who is unable to give anything. A trial to drink by stretching the palms of hands and pointing to the water is a seriously impressive physical movement, indicating obtaining things using incorrect and ineffective means.

4-7 The brutal hand

Example (9):

There are many verses in which the hand is used to signify the brutal killing as in the following verse.

﴿إِذْ هَمَّ قَوْمٌ أَنْ يَبْسُطُوا إِلَيْكُمْ أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَكَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنْكُمْ﴾ المائدة: 11

Pickthall: how a people were minded to stretch out their hands against you but He withheld their hands from you

Ali: when certain men formed the design to stretch out their hands against you, but (God) held back their hands from you: so fear God.

Hilali-Khan: when some people desired (made a plan) to stretch out their hands against you, but (Allah) withheld their hands from you. So fear Allah.

Shakir: when a people had determined to stretch forth their hands towards you, but He withheld their hands from you, and be careful of (your duty to) Allah;

Arberry: when a certain people purposed to stretch against you their hands, and He restrained their hands from you; and fear God;

Example (10):

﴿إِنْ يَنْقُوكُمْ يَكُونُوا لَكُمْ أَعْدَاءً وَيَبْسُطُوا إِلَيْكُمْ أَيْدِيَهُمْ وَأَلْسِنَتُهُمْ بِالسُّوءِ وَوَدُّوا لَوْ تَكْفُرُونَ﴾
الممتحنة: 2

Pickthall: and will stretch out their hands and their tongues toward you with evil (intent),

Ali: they would behave to you as enemies, and stretch forth their hands and their tongues against you for evil:

Hilali-Khan: and stretch forth their hands and their tongues against you with evil

Shakir: and will stretch forth towards you their hands and their tongues with evil,

Arberry: and stretch against you their hands and their tongues, to do you evil.

Example (11):

﴿لَنْ يَسُطَ إِلَيَّ يَدُكَ لِتَقْتُلَنِي مَا أَنَا بِبَاسِطٍ يَدِيَ إِلَيْكَ لِأَقْتُلَكَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾ المائدة: 28

Pickthall: Even if thou stretch out thy hand against me to kill me, I shall not stretch out my hand against thee to kill thee, lo! I fear Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.

Ali: If thou dost stretch thy hand against me, to slay me, it is not for me to stretch my hand against thee to slay thee: for I do fear God, the cherisher of the worlds.

Hilali-Khan: If you do stretch your hand against me to kill me, I shall never stretch my hand against you to kill you, for I fear Allah; the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists)."

Shakir: If you will stretch forth your hand towards me to slay me, I am not one to stretch forth my hand towards you to slay you surely I fear Allah, the Lord of the worlds:

Arberry: Yet if thou stretchest out thy hand against me, to slay me, I will not stretch out my hand against thee, to slay thee; I fear God, the Lord of all Being.

Al-Qurtubi (2006, vol.18:55) argues that "stretching the hand", in the previous verses, signifies the meaning of oppression and murder. Al-Zamakhshari (n.d., vol.2: 45) contends that the expression means: "discharge your souls from your body to us". These verses indicate violence and urgency as well as emphasis on exhaustion without any relief or grace, and

taunts in the claim. The expression also means “stretching their hands in torment” as affirmed by Al-Zamakhshari (ibid).

Qutb (1987, vol. 2:855) asserts that the image of hand movement is more dynamic to express the situation than plain words. The Qur’anic expression utilizes hand gesturing because this method launches powerful expression as if it is mentioned for the first time accompanying the incident. That is the way of the Qur’an which depicts the event as a moving live image.

This meaning is considered as one of the main metaphorical meanings of “hand” which signifies killing. It is used here to denote "brutal" killing. As for the translations under consideration, it can be noted that most translators used the expression “stretch+hand” along with different structures without any reference as to what is meant by this expression. There is a link between this expression and killing brutally as “hand” is the main means for killing. Literal procedure is followed in the translations of the three examples. The preposition “against” is used in most translations to show negative impression of this use. Yet, this gives no reference to killing or murder. In Example (11) , there is a direct reference within the SL text as to what is meant by “stretching hand” in this context. Similarly the literal procedure is followed in all translations. Yet, there is a need in Example (9) and Example (10) for a reference to “brutal killing”. While in Example (11), the reference is direct and already specified in the SL and the translation.

Considering the context of the above verses, it seems that “stretching the hand” here differs from the previous verses. In these verses the stretching the “hand” indicates murder, death, taking the soul and oppression, and all refer to the similar meanings. This meaning is metaphorical. “Hand” is used here precisely because it is truly the means of oppression and murder. Moreover, the movement of the “hand” in these verses is more effective to the listener than the plain description.

4-8 The sorrowful hand

Example (12):

﴿وَأُحِيطَ بِثَمَرِهِ فَأَصْبَحَ يُقَلِّبُ كَفَّيْهِ عَلَىٰ مَا أَنْفَقَ فِيهَا﴾ الكهف : 42

Pickthall: And his fruit was beset (with destruction). Then began he to wring his hands for all that he had spent upon it

Ali: So his fruits (and enjoyment) were encompassed (with ruin), and he remained twisting and turning his hands over what he had spent on his property,

Hilali-Khan: So his fruits were encircled (with ruin). And he remained clapping his hands with sorrow over what he had spent upon it

Shakir: And his wealth was destroyed; so he began to wring his hands for what he had spent on it,

Arberry: And his fruit was all encompassed, and in the morning he was wringing his hands for that he had expended upon it,

Turning the hands, as commented by Al-Razi (2000, vol. 21: 109), is “a metaphor for remorse and sorrow. The person whose sorrow is great, claps hands or wipes them one over the other”.

The verse encloses a sign of remorse and bemoaning by someone who makes an effort or spends money in order to get something. Finally, he/she is disappointed and the result is the opposite of his/her desire. A body movement known among people is performed by twisting and clapping hands to signify remorse and wasted effort. Once this movement is made, people understand that the person concerned is regretful and sorry without uttering a single word.

Hence, the movement of “turning hand” is to signify regret and remorse. This situation recurs in our daily life when someone makes efforts and waits for the results, and counter to expectations everything is vanished. The hand movement is more expressive to portray the situation. Translators used the literal procedure to preserve the beauty of the original as well as the aesthetic value of the SL. The translators used different structures to render the hand movement. Pickthall, Shakir and Arberry used similar structures to render the movement. Ali gave two movements “twisting and turning”, while H-K used “clapping his hand with sorrow”. The word “sorrow” expresses the state of that person while turning hands. It is to be noted that “كف” is “palm” rather than “hand” which are different.

4-9 The bemoaning Hand

Example (13):

﴿وَيَوْمَ يَعْضُ الظَّالِمُ عَلَى يَدَيْهِ﴾ الفرقان: 27

Pickthall: On the day when the wrong-doer gnaweth his hands,

Ali: The Day that the wrong-doer will bite at his hands,

Hilali-Khan: And (remember) the Day when the Zalim (wrong-doer, oppressor, polytheist, etc.) will bite at his hands,

Shakir: And the day when the unjust one shall bite his hands

Arberry: Upon the day the evildoer shall bite his hands,

Ibn Kathir (1994, vol. 6:108) argues that Almighty Allah tells about the compunction of the oppressor who went astray away from the guidance of the Prophet who leads to the uncontroversial right path of Allah. When the

Doomsday comes, the wrong-doer will be in compunction where remorse is useless, biting on both hands with heartbreak and regret.

Qutb (1987, vol. 5: 260) maintains that one hand is not enough to bite but both. The wrong-doer is interchangeably biting this and that, or combines them to express the severity of suffering and great remorse. It is unusual movement symbolizes a psychological state of the inner soul.

This verse describes a situation in the Day of Judgment for someone who did actions unacceptable by Allah and did wrong to other people. The Qur'an portrays a state of bemoaning to the effect that it is not enough to bite one hand but biting two hands. The translators literally rendered the movement which shows deep bemoaning. It is suggested here that a note denoting "deep bemoaning" be added to the translation so that the connotative meaning of the expression is represented in the TL. All translators literally rendered the expression without any extra information for the TL as to what is meant by biting both hands. It is to be noted that what is meant by (يوم) "day" here in this context of Ayah is the day of judgment; it is in the hereafter and not in this world. No reference is made by translators in this regard.

4-10 The bewildered hand

Example (14):

﴿ فَأَقْبَلَتْ امْرَأَتُهُ فِي صَرَّةٍ فَصَكَّتْ وَجْهَهَا وَقَالَتْ عَجُوزٌ عَقِيمٌ ﴾ الذاريات: 29

Pickthall: Then his wife came forward, making moan, and smote her face, and cried: A barren old woman!

Ali: But his wife came forward (laughing) aloud: she smote her forehead and said: "A barren old woman!"

Hilali-Khan: Then his wife came forward with a loud voice, she smote her face, and said: "A barren old woman!"

Shakir: Then his wife came up in great grief, and she struck her face and said: An old barren woman!

Arberry: Then came forward his wife, clamouring, and she smote her face, and said, 'An old woman, barren!'

Another movement of hand signifies exclamation for unprecedented event. Ibn Manzoor (1992, vol.10: 456) says: "الصَّكَّ" is "severe beating". Ibn Adil (n.d., vol.18: 86) cites Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) as saying: They differed in describing the meaning of "slapped her face". It is said: beating by outstretched hand. It was also said: hitting the face with fingertips to signify exclamation. It is usually done by women when they deny something. The origin of this word is to hit a thing with something wide.

Evidently, this movement of slapping cheeks carries an indication of exclamation and disbelief of something unprecedented. How can an infertile old woman give birth to a child?! This physical movement accompanies disbelieving, wonder and amazement of this great matter to the effect of slapping cheeks. The Quranic image depicts live scene despite being afar in time and place.

The literal translation for the expression can be “smote her face” as rendered by all translators. Moreover, all translators added the exclamation mark to denote exclamation. Smoting the face in Arabic culture denotes exclamation for unbelievable event. It is suggested that a footnote be added to notify the TL reader with the meaning of this body movement.

5- Conclusion

Communication among individuals is not confined to spoken words only. Rather, it goes beyond that to include other ways, foremost of which is the body language, represented by physical movements, whether they are independent or accompanying spoken language. Gestures play vital role in influencing others and communicating ideas to them, thus shortens effort. Recruitment of the sense of sight in support of the sense of hearing would accelerate the process of understanding and receiving information and ideas by humans. The body language, despite its significant association with spoken language, may work independently and convey its full meaning as shown in this research. Evidently, the sign language in deaf and dumb can be a substitute for the language spoken.

The holy Qur'an shows diversification of ways of delivering meanings to the addressees. It is not limited to the spoken words but also includes situations employing gestures. Several Qur'anic verses underlined the importance of this type of communication. In this research, ten different types of uses for hand gesturing are identified. The Qur'anic examples, mostly metaphorical, evidenced the importance as well as the optimal way to employ body language in the communicative process among people. Moreover, the outcomes show that hand movements are effective means for conveying Quranic meanings. Body language can be utilized in all social, educational, political, and economic areas of life in addition to sermons.

As regards Qur'anic translations, literal procedure is mostly followed by translators. This procedure is followed as most Islamic clerics recommended that the translation should be as literal as possible so that the Qur'anic text retains its original meaning and structure. Some exceptions are noted. Literal procedure preserves the beauty of the SL message. Yet, the metaphorical

meaning of the message will not be optimally represented in the TL. Notes and footnotes are possible means to convey such valuable meanings. Moreover, translators managed to present some structures that achieve the function of the message rather than focusing on the beauty of the original. Qur'anic exegetical comments presented valuable information to support the literal interpretation.

As a recommendation, the subject of body language, in particular methods of communication in the Holy Qur'an, can be given a particular importance by directing researchers to conduct specialized studies in this subject which may include the study of one method of communication or the comparison between two methods of communication utilizing body language. Another recommendation is the need to draw the attention of those in charge of the educational community to the importance of employing body language in the educational process because of their role in achieving the goals with minimal effort and time.

The Qur'an urges to use and employ some physical movements that would spread a positive atmosphere in the community. Therefore, Muslims in general should employ body language through their dealings with each other, because it plays a role in promoting friendship, love and cohesion among members of the nation.

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