

## **Translating Denial Rhetorical Questions in the Holy Quran: Reiss' Text Typology Perspective**

Lubaba Anis and Shehdeh Fareh  
*University of Sharjah, UAE*

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**Abstract:** This paper aims to analyze the informative, operative, and expressive functions of the Quranic denial rhetorical question following Reiss' (1981) text typology. It also aims at investigating the extent to which three English translations of the meanings of the Quran can reflect these functions. The sample consists of ten denial questions randomly selected from five suras according to a list of admissibility conditions. The translations of each question were examined lexically, grammatically, and stylistically to determine the extent to which they conform to the functions expressed in the source text. The analysis revealed that the English translations vary in their fidelity in rendering the Quranic functions primarily because of inappropriate grammatical and lexical choices that may be ascribed to linguistic differences between English and the Quranic language.

**Keywords:** denial rhetorical question, *Quran* translation

### **1. Introduction**

Translating religious texts is fraught with difficulties at the lexical, syntactic, pragmatic, and discursal levels. This is because religious texts are sensitive and may not be clearly understood without the context in which a verse was revealed. Any faulty transfer of meaning can jeopardize the understanding of essential religious concepts. The Holy *Quran* is a religious text that challenges translators because of its inimitable content and form. Therefore, the process of translating the meanings of the *Quran* requires a careful analysis of the intended meanings and functions of each verse. In this respect, Lehrberger (1982:214) stated that religious texts are "associated with specific contexts or situations and with specific functions of language in those contexts."

Reiss (1981) argued that the translator has to identify the functions of the source text to create functional equivalence in the target text. She suggested three text types: informative, expressive, and operative. The function of the informative type is to communicate content, whereas the expressive type is concerned with the aesthetic aspects of the text, and the operative type seeks to evoke a persuasive response in the receiver (Reiss 1981). The Quranic verses serve informative, operative, and expressive functions. Therefore, the translation of the meanings of the *Quran* should reflect these functions to maintain fidelity in the target text.

The frequent use of questions in the *Quran* should be accorded appropriate attention in translation due to their functional and aesthetic importance. Al-Mutaani (2011:6) reported that there are 1260 questions in the *Quran*. Questions

are of two types: interrogative and rhetorical questions. Abu Al-Addus (2007:76-78) asserted that rhetorical questions have a variety of functions that can be determined from the context. On the other hand, Al-Mutaani (2011) suggested only two classifications of rhetorical questions into which all other types are subsumed. He stated that assertion and denial questions are the two main types that include other subtypes.

This paper proceeds as follows: Section two presents the objectives of the study. Section three provides a brief theoretical background of Reiss' text typology model and Arabic denial rhetorical questions. Section four presents a review of the related literature. The research methodology is explained in section five. The analysis and findings are discussed in section six. Finally, section seven presents the discussion and the conclusion of the study.

## **2. Objectives of the study**

The study aims to examine the extent to which three English translations accommodate the informative, operative, and expressive functions of ten denial rhetorical questions in the *Quran* by applying Reiss' text typology. In other words, the study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent is Reiss' text typology applicable to the Quranic text?
2. What are the informative, operative, and expressive functions of the denial rhetorical questions in the *Quran*?
3. To what extent do the English translations of the meanings of the *Quran* adequately reflect these functions?

## **3. Literature review**

### **3.1. Theoretical background**

#### **3.1.1 Reiss' text typology model**

Reiss developed her text typology model that is based on the Organon model that Bühler (1934) proposed. Bühler (1934/2011:35) suggested that human language has three functions: "expression, appeal, and representation." Reiss (2014:25) pointed out that these functions are not necessarily expressed in every single linguistic expression, but they can be represented in a "single text (or portion of text)" where one function dominates the text.

She suggested that producing a functionally equivalent text is carried out through two phases: the analysis of the source text and the reverbalization of the target text, i.e. the process of translation. The first stage is determining the functions of the source text, i.e., identifying the text type. Reiss (1981:124) distinguished three main text types:

1. The informative type describes the text that exclusively communicates content and is devoid of rhetorical or artistic features.
2. The expressive type refers to the text that provides content in artistic language.
3. The operative type includes texts whose content seeks to influence the receiver through the frequent use of rhetorical devices.

In the phase of reverbalization, Reiss (1981) stated that translators should approach their translation according to the text type. The content of an informative

text should be adequately conveyed in the target text. The artistic value of an expressive text needs to be maintained in the translation. Finally, the translation of an operative text should communicatively yield the same impact of the original on the target readers.

### 3.1.2 Denial rhetorical questions in Arabic

A question is described as rhetorical when the question goes beyond its literal meaning to convey a figurative meaning that can be understood from the context (Abu Al-Addus 2007). Al-Maraghi (1993:68-69) stated that among the major types of rhetorical questions is the denial question, which can be of two types.

1. A rebuke denial question that
  - a. rebukes someone for doing something in the past (e.g. *أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنفُسَكُمْ* /*ʔataʔmuru:nanna:sa bilbirri wa tansawna ʔanfusakum*)( Do you order righteousness of the people and forget yourselves), or
  - b. rebukes someone for doing something in the present or intending to do it in the future (e.g. *أَتُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطَانًا مُبِينًا* /*ʔaturi:du:na ʔan tajʔalu lilla:hi ʔalaykum sulṭa:nan mubi:na:ʔ*)( Do you wish to give Allāh against yourselves a clear case?). The purpose of such a question is to warn the recipient of something.
2. A repudiating denial question that
  - a. repudiates something in the past (e.g. *أَفَأَصْنَأَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِالْبَنِينَ وَاتَّخَذَ مِنْ أَفْصَافِكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِالْبَنِينَ وَاتَّخَذَ مِنْ أَفْصَافِكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِالْبَنِينَ وَاتَّخَذَ مِنْ أَفْصَافِكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِالْبَنِينَ* /*ʔafaʔasfa:kum rabbukum bilbani:na wattakhadha minalmala:ʔikati ʔina:than*)(Then, has your Lord chosen you for [having] sons and taken [i.e., adopted] from among the angels daughters?), or
  - b. repudiates something in the future (e.g. *أَنْزَلْنَاكُمْ مِنْهَا وَأَنْتُمْ لَهَا كَارِهُونَ* /*ʔanulzimukumu:ha waʔantum laha ka:rihu:n*)( should we force it upon you while you are averse to it?).

Abu Al-Addus (2007:78-79) observed 21 types of rhetorical questions out of which he identified four types of denial questions, as illustrated below:

1. A denial question denying a past event

(*أَتَّخَذْتُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدًا*) (البقرة:80)

(*ʔattakhadhtum ʔinda ʔalla:hi ʔahdan*)

{Have you taken a covenant with Allah?} (2:80)

Allah denies that He made a covenant with the addressees.

2. A denial question that rebukes the recipient for doing something in the past:

(*أَفْتَأْتَنَافْسًا زَكِيَّةً بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ*) (الكهف:74)

(*ʔaqtalta nafsanzakiyyatan bighayri nafs*)

{Have you killed a pure soul for other than [having killed] a soul?} (18:74)

The speaker (Prophet Moses) does not ask the addressee about the reason for killing the boy but condemns his act.

3. A denial question repudiating something in the present or the future, i.e., something does not exist:

﴿أَتَأْخِذُ مِنْ دُونِهِ آلِهَةً﴾ (يس:23)

(ʔaʔattakhidhu min du:nihi ʔa:lihatan)

﴿Should I take other than Him [false] deities?﴾ (36:23)

The speaker means that he will never take another god other than Allah and strongly deprecates this act.

4. A denial question denying the occurrence of something in the form of a positive question:

﴿أَصْطَفَى الْبَنَاتِ عَلَى الْبَنِينَ﴾ (الصافات:153)

(ʔastafa ʔalbana:ti °ala ʔalbani:n)

﴿Has He chosen daughters over sons?﴾ (37:153)

Allah refutes the allegation that He has preferred daughters to sons and rebukes the addressees for such a false claim.

On the other hand, Al-Mutaani (2011) illustrated that a rhetorical question is divided into two classifications: assertion and denial questions. He explained that a denial question occurs in two forms (Al-Mutaani 2011:5):

1. When the statement following the question particle is unreal:

﴿أَجْعَلْنَا مِنْ دُونِ الرَّحْمَنِ آلِهَةً يُعْبَدُونَ﴾ (الزخرف:45)

(ʔa ja°alna min du:ni ʔarraḥma:ni ʔa:lihatan yu°badu:n)

﴿Have We made besides the Most Merciful deities to be worshipped?﴾ (43:45)

The question particle is *ʔa* (have) and the denied statement is *ja°alna min du:ni ʔarraḥma:ni ʔa:lihatan yu°badu:n* (We made besides the Most Merciful deities to be worshipped). In this question, Allah denies that there are deities besides Him.

2. When the statement following the question particle is a fact, but Allah denounces it:

﴿لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ﴾ (الصف:2)

(lima taqu:lu:na ma: la: taf°alu:n)

﴿Why do you say what you do not do?﴾ (61:2)

The question particle is *lima* (why) and the denounced fact is *taqu:lu:na ma: la: taf°alu:n* (you say what you do not do). Here, Allah rebukes the addressees because what they say contradicts what they do.

Yusuf (2000) conducted an analytical study of questions in the *Quran* in which he collected all the instances of the Quranic questions and identified the type of each instance. Although he followed a narrower classification than that of Abu Al-Addus', his analysis remarkably revealed that the instances of denial rhetorical questions are the most frequent, and they amount to 524 occurrences.

### 3.1.2.1 Denial rhetorical questions in Arabic: A working definition

The definitions of denial questions offered by Al-Maraghi (1993), Abu Al-Addus (2007) and Al-Mutaani (2011) form all-inclusive criteria to identify denial questions in the *Quran*. Furthermore, we investigated the first 50 instances of the Quranic denial questions that Yusuf (2000) collected by consulting the exegeses of Ibn Ashur (1984), Al-Baghawi (1989), Al-Baydawi (1997), Tantawy (1997/1998), Ibn Kathir (1999) and Al-Sa'di (2000). The following working definition of denial questions will be adopted in collecting data:

A denial question is a rhetorical question that denies something or expresses disapproval at something or someone. More specifically, denial questions serve one of the following functions:

1. denying the occurrence of something
2. repudiating a false claim
3. rebuking or reprimanding the recipient for doing something in the past or in the present
4. deprecating something in the present or the future (i.e., something does not exist)

### **3.2. Review of related studies**

The language of the Holy *Quran* is characterized by certain linguistic features that render it a genre per se. Its style is unparalleled; its eloquence is inimitable, and its rhetoric is matchless. Quranic Arabic demonstrates a unique organization of morphological and syntactic constructions that are semantically and pragmatically distinguishable. It employs aesthetically and pragmatically sophisticated rhetorical devices and prosodic patterns. Thus, it constitutes a great challenge to translators. Driven by this view, several studies addressed the English translation of the *Quran* and tackled various translational issues. An example of a broadly scoped study is that of Abdul-Raof (2018), who provided a comprehensive and thorough analysis of the linguistics of the Quranic discourse. He further discussed the untranslatability of the *Quran* from theoretical and practical perspectives. He concluded that “the flavor and feel of the Qur’anic message” are lost in English translations of the *Quran* (Abdul-Raof 2018:262). He ascribed this to the incongruity between English and the Quranic Arabic in terms of syntactic, morphological, lexical, stylistic, phonological and cultural aspects.

Some studies focused on the Quranic rhetorical devices such as those of Omar (2016), Mayuuf (2017), Muhammad (2017), Wasfy (2018), Hussain, Shahzad, Sadaf, Farman and Sarwat (2020), and Qassem (2021), to name but a few. For example, Qassem (2021) adopted Nord’s (2005) model and analyzed the English rendering of seven Quranic stylistic variations (e.g. ellipsis, collocational violation, etc.) in seven English translations. He asserted that understanding the meanings and functions of the Quranic rhetorical devices must be preceded by stylistic and exegetical analysis to avoid translation voids.

Although a number of analytical and contrastive studies investigated rhetorical questions in the *Quran*, this does not obviate the need for further research since none of these studies provided an in-depth analysis of this issue. The previous studies did not accord due attention to the English translation of the Quranic rhetorical questions. The present study seeks to shine more light on one type of the Quranic rhetorical questions (i.e. the denial questions) and their English translations.

Khalil (2012) investigated the functions of rhetorical questions in both English and Arabic, focusing on the Quranic rhetorical questions. She identified 13 functions such as exclamation, strong assertion, introductory function, concluding function, giving a command, rebuke, surprise, wishing, etc. She

provided 35 examples of Quranic rhetorical questions but did not critically analyze them in light of their English translations. The lack of a comparative analysis of the source and target texts can be noted in Faysal's (2013) study that aimed at verifying the hypothesis that rhetorical questions in Arabic, particularly in the *Quran*, have more functions than those in English. Faysal identified 27 functions in Arabic and 14 in English and provided only one example for each. He neither discussed these functions in detail nor did he evaluate them in relation to their English translations. Nevertheless, he called attention to the lack of one-to-one functional equivalence between Arabic and English rhetorical questions.

Alnaeim (2015) examined the equivalence of functionality between the Quranic rhetorical questions and their English translations. She identified 10 functions, including affirmation, arousing interest, awe, etc. However, only one example of each function was compared and contrasted with one English translation. She concluded that the translation can sometimes maintain, to some degree, the functions of Arabic rhetorical questions. Nonetheless, her findings cannot be generalized due to her non-exhaustive analysis. Furthermore, she did not focus on denial rhetorical questions.

Najjar, Kwee, and Abu al-Haj (2019a) conducted a more systematic analysis to examine the effect of the grammatical shifts that occur in the translation of Quranic rhetorical questions on the mode of these questions. They analyzed five examples, representing the functions of denial, assertion, testing, equalization, and negation. They examined the translations of Arberry (1955) and al-Hilali and Khan (1996). Their analysis revealed that the grammatical shifts in the selected translations significantly affected the rhetorical meanings, and thus the mode of the Quranic rhetorical questions. Similarly, Najjar, Kwee, and Abu al-Haj (2019b) conducted another study to investigate the extent to which the same two translations can maintain the tenor of the denial, assertion, testing, negation, and exclamation rhetorical questions. These functions were compared with the two English translations by using one example for each. Their findings, which lend validity to their previous work, indicated that the translations did not successfully maintain the tenor of the rhetorical questions. Such evidence for translation loss in reproducing Quranic rhetorical questions was also corroborated by the findings of Al-Smadi (2022) whose linguistic analysis of fifteen examples showed that translators resorted to the use of explication and elaboration as compensation strategies.

The translation of the Quranic rhetorical question was not approached exhaustively in these studies but was broadly dealt with. A further in-depth study is therefore recommended. Unlike the previous works, the present study will focus on the English translation of the Quranic denial rhetorical question. The concept and functions of these questions will be discussed. We will analyze the informative, operative and expressive functions in 10 examples according to Reiss' text typology model, which no study has so far adopted in investigating the Quranic discourse. To see to what extent the translations convey these functions, we will examine three English translations of each example.

## 4. Methodology

### 4.1 Data collection

The data consist of 10 denial rhetorical questions collected from five suras of the *Quran*. We randomly selected these questions and examined them according to the admissibility conditions stated earlier in the working definition.

The three translations of Pickthall (1930), Ali (1938), and Saheeh International (1997) were selected because of the following: (1) Pickthall's translation gained considerable popularity and has more than one hundred and sixty editions (Kidwai 2017:235), (2) Ali's translation also achieved great popularity since its editions reached more than two hundred (ibid.), and (3) Saheeh International is considered among the most authentic translations of the meanings of the *Quran* (Abul-Majd 2012).

### 4.2 Data analysis

The informative function is concerned with the content or information entailed in a particular question. The operative function deals with the main purpose that the question serves and the impact it creates on the recipient. The expressive function lies in the aesthetic features of the question. We first examined the informative function, then the operative function, and finally the expressive function because the informative function enlightens the reader about the meaning and context of the given question, and the expressive function cannot be explored without knowing the other two functions. To achieve this, we referred to the exegeses of Ibn Ashur (1984), Al-Baghawi (1989), Al-Baydawi (1997), Tantawy (1997/1998), Ibn Kathir (1999), and Al-Sa'di (2000) due to their popularity. We then examined the three translations to determine the extent to which they reflect these functions. We followed the following steps in the analysis:

1. Identifying the three functions of each denial rhetorical question in the source text in accordance with the above-mentioned exegeses,
2. Examining the translations of each question lexically, grammatically and stylistically to determine the extent to which each translation reflects each function,
3. Identifying the areas of weakness in each translation, and
4. Proposing relevant recommendations for future translators of the *Quran*.

## 5. Analysis and findings

Ten examples of denial rhetorical questions will be analyzed, and three English translations of each will be examined according to Reiss' (1981) text typology below.

### Informative function

In this question, Allah rebukes the disbelievers for disbelieving in Him. This question reveals the facts of creation, death, and resurrection. The adjective *أَمْوَاتًا* /*ʔamwa:tan* refers either to the state of non-existence or that of being sperm-drops in the wombs ; *فَأَحْيَاكُمْ* /*faʔahya:kum* refers to the first creation; *ثُمَّ يُمَيِّتُكُمْ* /*thumma*

*yumi:tukum* refers to death after life; and *ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ* / *thumma yuhyi:kum* refers to the resurrection.

Table 1. Example 1

Verse (2:28)	<p>كَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَكُنْتُمْ أَمْوَاتًا فَأَحْيَاكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمَيِّتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ (البقرة: 28)</p> <p>Kayfa takfuru:na billa:hi wa kuntum ?amwa:tan fa?ahya:kum thumma yumi:tukum thumma yuhyi:kum thumma ?ilayhi turja°u:n</p>
Ali	How can ye reject the faith in Allah?- seeing that ye were without life, and He gave you life; then will He cause you to die, and will again bring you to life; and again to Him will ye return.
Saheeh	How can you disbelieve in Allah when you were lifeless and He brought you to life; then He will cause you to die, then He will bring you [back] to life, and then to Him you will be returned.
Pickthall	How disbelieve ye in Allah when ye were dead and He gave life to you! Then He will give you death, then life again, and then unto Him ye will return.

### Operative function

Al-Sa'di (2000) stated that this question expresses the functions of denial, rebuke and astonishment. Allah denounces the act of disbelievers and expresses astonishment at their unreasonable disbelief.

### Expressive function

Tantawy (1997) explained that this verse involves enallage style where a switch occurs from third-person in the previous verse (2:27) *أُولَئِكَ* (*?ula: ?ikal/ those*) to the second-person *تَكْفُرُونَ* / *takfuru:n* (*you disbelieve*). Enallage style in the *Quran* refers to the change of style to express different rhetorical functions; for example, switching in the point of view from first-person, second-person, or third person to another point of view (Seabocker 2017:25). This style is employed to intensify the functions of rebuke and astonishment at the addressees' disbelief despite the evident proofs of Allah's existence (Tantawy 1997).

Alsamerai (2007:115) explained the use of the particular plural pattern *أَمْوَاتًا* / *?amwa:tan* rather than *الموتى* / *?almawta* or *المتينين* / *?almayyiti:n* (the dead). The plural *الموتى* / *?almawta* refers literally to the dead (e.g. see the verse 2:260), *المتينين* / *?almayyiti:n* addresses the living and describes their state of being dead in the future (e.g. see the verse (39:30)), whereas *الأموات* / *?al?amwa:t* refers abstractly to the state of death (ibid.). This accounts for the particular use of *أَمْوَاتًا* / *?amwa:tan*, which matches the context in this example. This linguistic feature that allows certain nouns to have different plural patterns with different meanings seems to be a distinctive characteristic of Arabic (Al-Shukri and Fareh 2017).



### Analysis of the English translations

The translations of كَيْفَ /kayfa into How can ye/you and How disbelieve ye do not maintain the denial function. Besides the denial function, the question entails a sense of surprise. Thus, a more accurate translation would be How could you. In the context of reproaching, saying, How could you do that would convey a stronger sense of disapproval and surprise than saying How did you do that. Using how could in questions emphatically expresses a strong feeling about something bad that someone has done (Collins Online Dictionary, n.d.).

Lexically speaking, *disbelieve in Allah* is more accurate than Ali's translation *reject the faith in Allah*. Besides, Saheeh's translation of فَأَحْيَاكُمْ /faʔahya:kum into *brought you to life* conveys the meaning of the first creation more accurately than *He gave you life* or *He gave life to you*. Adding *again* or *back* in rendering ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ /thumma yuhyi:kum in the translations indicates the resurrection. However, أَمْوَاتًا /ʔamwa:tan is translated into *without life, lifeless, and dead*, respectively. These translations do not convey the accurate meaning of the state of non-existence before creation. *Lifeless* is rather vague because it means "dead or appearing to be dead" (Oxford Learner's Dictionary, n.d.). Therefore, the intended meaning of أَمْوَاتًا (i.e. *nonexistent*) should be indicated between brackets or through explicitation.

Placing the question mark correctly is essential in indicating that the statement is a question. In this example, the question consists of the whole verse, but the three translations failed to highlight this. Ali pre-positioned the question mark, and it is omitted in Saheeh's translation. Pickthall incorrectly replaced it with an exclamation mark and misplaced it. Using an exclamation mark in English at the end of rhetorical questions is unacceptable since it indicates an exclamation rather than a question.

Table 2. Examples 2-3

Verse (2:44)	﴿اتَّامُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ﴾ (البقرة: 44)
Ali	ʔataʔmuru:nanna:sa bilbirri wa tansawna ʔanfusakum wa ʔantum tatlu:nalkitab ʔafala: ta° qilu:n
Saheeh	Do you order righteousness of the people and forget yourselves while you recite the Scripture? Then will you not reason?
Pickthall	Enjoin ye righteousness upon mankind while ye yourselves forget (to practise it)? And ye are readers of the Scripture! Have ye then no sense?

This verse contains two questions that will be discussed separately.

**Example 2** ﴿ أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ ﴾

**Informative function**

This question addresses a group of Jewish scholars who used to exhort people to do righteous deeds that they themselves ignore. However, Allah indirectly informs the Jewish scholars and others that it is irrational and unreasonable to advise others to do good things that they themselves neglect.

**Operative function**

This question conveys the functions of assertion, rebuke, and astonishment (Al-Baydawi 1997). Allah rebukes the addressees for ordering people to do righteous deeds while they themselves do not do the same and deprecates this behavior as an indirect call for the recipient to avoid such a wicked deed.

**Expressive function**

The interrogative particle *ʾi/ʔa* eloquently delivers three pragmatic functions: denial, rebuke, and astonishment (Abdul-Raof 2018:93).

The contextual meaning of *تَنْسَوْنَ* /*tansawn* (forget) is *تتركون* /*tatruku:n* (abandon) (Tantawy 1997). Allah describes the addressees' behavior as *تَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ* /*tansawn ʔanfusakum* to emphasize how bad and ignorant this behavior is.

A noteworthy expressive feature is the use of the plural form *أَنْفُسَكُمْ* /*ʔanfusakum* instead of *نُفُوسٍ* /*nufu:s*. Ad-Douri (1971:255) clarified that the use of different plural forms of the same noun in the *Quran* indicates different shades of meanings. There are, for example; forms for the plural of paucity (*jami qillah*) and the plural of multitude (*jami kathrah*) (ibid). The plural *أَنْفُسَكُمْ* occurs in the form of a plural of paucity (*ʔaf<sup>c</sup>ul*) (Ad-Douri 1971:265). This feature accounts for the context-specific use of *أَنْفُسَكُمْ*, which refers to a certain group of people.

**Analysis of the English translations**

Due to the pragmatic non-equivalence between Arabic and English, the interrogative auxiliary *do* does not provide a functional equivalent for the particle *ʾi/ʔa*. In Pickthall's translation, the absence of an interrogative even lessens the functional effect of the question.

The verb *تَأْمُرُونَ* /*taʔmuru:n* in this context does not mean to give an official command but to urge people to do righteous deeds. Thus, the verbs *order* and *enjoin* are not appropriate equivalents. *Order* is to “give instructions that [something] should be done” (Collins Online Dictionary, n.d.). *Enjoin* is “to legally force someone to do something or stop doing something” (Cambridge Online Dictionary). It is, therefore, quite formal and associated with law. A suggested translation could be *exhort*, which means to “try hard to persuade or encourage [someone] to do [something]” (Collins Online Dictionary, n.d.).

Ali's and Pickthall's translations of *تَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ* are more accurate than Saheeh's because they clarified the meaning by adding *to practise it* between brackets. Pickthall's translation places more emphasis on the behavior of the addressees by foregrounding *yourselves*, yet it does not follow the original order.

The translation of *الناس* /*anna:sa* into *the people* by Saheeh and Ali is better than Pickthall's translation, *mankind*, which is very general in this given context. Regarding the verb *تَتْلُونَ* /*tatlu:n*, it goes beyond simply reciting or reading; rather, it means reading carefully and having deep knowledge of the Torah. This is best conveyed in Ali's translation, *study*. Saheeh's translation *recite* does not convey the exact meaning because *recite* means "to repeat or read aloud something memorized or prepared" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Pickthall shifted from the verb into the noun, *readers*, which is slightly ambiguous. It also deviates from the morphological harmony of the original question and sacrifices the pragmatic function of continuity that is peculiar to the present tense. The feature of the plural pattern *أَنْفُسَكُمْ* /*anfusakum* is not maintained in the English equivalent *yourselves* in the three translations.

### Example 3 (أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ)

#### Informative function

The meanings that this question conveys are hinged upon the context it occurs in. This verse implies that the behavior of preaching about righteous and virtuous deeds while not practicing them is an act of complete ignorance and insanity.

#### Operative function

Tantawy (1997) stated that Allah, in this question, uses the most elevated style of rhetoric and kindest way of guidance and advice. Allah indirectly reminds the addressees of one of their good features, which is discernment, indicating that what they do contradicts this feature of them (ibid). This style of speech also involves 'targhi:b' (inspiring to do righteousness) and 'tarhi:b' (warning against committing evil deeds).

#### Expressive function

The expressive features of this question lie in the verb *تَعْقِلُونَ* *ta<sup>c</sup> qilu:n*. Al-Baghawi (1989:28) stated that *عقل* /*aqil* is derived from *عقال الدابة* /*uqa:l ?adda:ba* (animal tether), which is used to restrain a camel and prevent it from running away. He added that, likewise, *العقل* /*al<sup>c</sup> aqil* (*the brain*) prevents one from going astray and from disbelief (ibid.). The question *أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ*, with all its embedded meanings, consists of two words. This eloquent conciseness per se can well reflect its aesthetic value.

#### Analysis of the English translations

None of the English translations preserved the functions of this question, simply because these functions are achieved by the distinctive syntactic structure of the Quranic question and the word *تَعْقِلُونَ* / *ta<sup>c</sup> qilu:n*. The meanings of the verbs *understand* and *reason* or the noun *sense* in the translations are very limited compared to the profound meaning of the original. Besides, the three translations, particularly Pickthall's, seem to express a strong rebuke or a sarcastic function rather than a denial, and do not entail any sense of kindness as in the original. *Are not you mindful?* may be suggested as an alternative translation because its

meaning (to “think about [something] and consider it when taking action (Collins Online Dictionary, n.d.)) reflects some shades of the original meaning, and as *تَعْقِلُونَ* is derived from *العقل* so is *mindful* derived from *mind*.

Table 3. Example 4

Verse (2:77)	(أَوَلَا يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ) (البقرة: 77) ʔawala: ya <sup>o</sup> lamu:na ʔanna ʔallaha ya <sup>o</sup> lamu ma: yusirru:na wa ma: yu <sup>o</sup> linu:n
Ali	Know they not that Allah knoweth what they conceal and what they reveal?
Saheeh	But do they not know that Allah knows what they conceal and what they declare?
Pickthall	Are they then unaware that Allah knoweth that which they keep hidden and that which they proclaim?

### Informative function

In this question, Allah not only tells the Jews but all mankind that He is the All-Knowing, who knows whatever we do, speak, or feel whether we declare it or hide it within ourselves.

### Operative function

Allah addresses all mankind and warns them of His infinite knowledge of all things. The question also serves the function of denouncement of the addressees' complete ignorance of Allah's knowledge of what they concealed.

### Expressive function

The simple present tense in this denial question reflects the infinite continuity and omnipotence of Allah's knowledge of all things. Furthermore, the affirmation particle *أَنَّ* /ʔana substantiates this fact. The verb *يُسِرُّونَ* /yusirru:n implies that Allah's knowledge encompasses our deepest secrets that we conceal because it indicates the complete and careful concealment of something. The question also displays assonance in the verbs *يَعْلَمُونَ* /ya<sup>o</sup>lamu:n, *يُسِرُّونَ* /yusirru:n and *يُعْلِنُونَ* /yu<sup>o</sup>linu:n.

### Analysis of the English translations

Pickthall's translation of *أَوَلَا يَعْلَمُونَ* /ʔawala: ya<sup>o</sup>lamu:n into *Are they then unaware* is semantically more accurate than the more general verb *know*. However, the other two translations are stylistically closer to the original. The English conjunction *that* does not equally deliver strong affirmation as *أَنَّ* /ʔana. This reflects how difficult it is to transfer the meanings of the Quranic verses and preserve their aesthetic and pragmatic features.

The expressive meaning of *يُسِرُّونَ* /yusirru:n is not completely conveyed in the translations *conceal* and *keep hidden*. However, *keep hidden* is better in emphasizing the intentional and careful concealment. The verb *يُعْلِنُونَ* means *يُبْدُونَ* /yubdu:n (Al-Baghawi 1989:136). *Reveal* is “to make (something secret or hidden)

publicly or generally known” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.), whereas *declare* and *proclaim* convey a degree of formality that may not suit the context. Thus, *Reveal* seems to be a more appropriate translation. Moreover, using *reveal*, Ali could re-create the assonance in the verbs *يُسِرُّونَ* (*yusirru:na*) and *يُعَلِّونَ* (*yu<sup>o</sup>linu:n*) into *conceal* (/kən'si:l/) and *reveal* (/ri'vi:l/).

Table 4. Example 5

Verse (3:83)	﴿ أَفَعَيَّرَ دِينَ اللَّهِ يَبْغُونَ وَلَهُ أَسْلَمَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا وَإِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ ﴾ (آل عمران: 83) ʔafaghayra di:nilla:hi yabghu:na wa lahu ʔaslama man fissama:wa:ti wal ʔardi taw <sup>o</sup> an wa karhan wa ʔilayhi turja <sup>o</sup> u:n
Ali	Do they seek for other than the Religion of Allah?-while all creatures in the heavens and on earth have, willing or unwilling, bowed to His Will (Accepted Islam), and to Him shall they all be brought back.
Saheeh	So is it other than the religion of Allah they desire, while to Him have submitted [all] those within the heavens and earth, willingly or by compulsion, and to Him they will be returned?
Pickthall	Seek they other than the religion of Allah, when unto Him submitteth whosoever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and unto Him they will be returned.

### Informative function

Allah states that the heavens, earth, and whatever and whoever therein are subject to Him willingly and unwillingly.

### Operative function

Allah rebukes the disbelievers for turning away from the true religion despite the conclusive proof of its truthfulness. In addition, Allah warns the addressees from turning away from His religion.

### Expressive function

Marked word order is employed to achieve various rhetorical functions (Farghal and Kalakh 2017). This question displays a marked phrase order (i.e. foregrounding) where the verb *يَبْغُونَ* /*yabghu:na* is backgrounded and its direct object *عَيَّرَ دِينَ اللَّهِ* /*ghayra di:nilla:h* is foregrounded to make turning away from the religion of Allah more salient. The genitive construction in *دِينَ اللَّهِ* /*di:nilla:h* attributes majesty and glory to the religion of Islam (Ibn Ashur 1984). It also reinforces the truthfulness of this religion and gives a feeling of security because this religion belongs to Allah, to Whom the whole universe has submitted and will be returned, as indicated in the verse.

### Analysis of the English translations

This question comprises the whole verse. The question mark is important to indicate the interrogative form of the verse. In Saheeh’s translation, the question

mark is successfully placed at the end of the verse. However, the length of the question might be confusing for the English reader. Ali misplaced the question mark, and Pickthall did not add it at all. Consequently, the denial and rebuke functions may not be fully expressed in the translations since the interrogative mood is not clearly indicated.

The three translations of the conjunctive *وَ* /*wa* (and) into *or* lead to ambiguity. It should have been translated into *and*. Having reviewed all the interpretations of the verse, we can conclude that the conjunctive *وَ* /*wa* (and) is additive rather than alternative in the given example. The verb *يَبْغُونَ* / *yabghu:na* was better translated into *seek* than Saheeh's translation *desire* because religion is something that people instinctively need and look for more than desire. Ali's choice of *bowed to* is inappropriate because it has a negative connotation as it means "to agree *unwillingly* to do something because other people want you to" (Oxford Learner's Dictionary, n.d.). Hence, the verb *submitted/ submitteth* is more accurate. According to the exegeses we referred to, this verse has multiple interpretations. Ali's translation of *لَهُ* *lahu* into *to His Will (Accepted Islam)* greatly restricts the original intended meaning, which is extremely broader and deeper than simply Allah's *will*. Thus, the other two translations, *to/unto Him*, are more successful.

Concerning the aesthetic value of foregrounding, Saheeh's translation preserved the original order, whereas Ali followed the typical English order (SVO), and Pickthall fronted only the verb *seek* but not the direct object.

Table 5. Example 6

Verse (3:160)	﴿إِنْ يَنْصُرْكُمُ اللَّهُ فَلَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ وَإِنْ يَخْذَلْكُمْ فَمَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَنْصُرْكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ﴾ (آل عمران: 160) ʔin yansurukum ʔalla:hu fala: gha:liba lakum wa ʔin yakhdhulkum faman dha ʔalladhi yansurkum min ba° dihi?
Ali	If Allah helps you, none can overcome you: If He forsakes you, <u>who is there, after that, that can help you?</u>
Saheeh	If Allah should aid you, no one can overcome you; but if He should forsake you, <u>who is there that can aid you after Him?</u>
Pickthall	If Allah is your helper none can overcome you, and if He withdraw His help from you, <u>who is there who can help you after Him?</u>

### Informative function

Allah tells the addressees that no one can defeat them as long as He is with them. Allah also tells all mankind that it is only by His favor and help victory is achieved.

### Operative function

Here, the question is not to rebuke the addressees but to assert that no one can aid them if Allah abandons them. This comforts the addressees and encourages them to put their trust in Allah and warns them of relying on others than Him.

### Expressive function

The question particle مَنْ /*man* (*who*) is used to ask about people (Abu Al-Addus 2007:74). The use of مَنْ encompasses everyone in the universe, and thus, as a denial rhetorical question, it simply means no one. This enhances the concept of the oneness of Allah in granting victory. This meaning is further substantiated with the eloquent succinctness of the phrase مِنْ بَعْدِهِ / *min ba<sup>c</sup>dih*.

### Analysis of the English translations

In the three translations, مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي /*man dhallathi*: is rendered as *who is there*, which does not strongly stress Allah's absolute exclusiveness. A more accurate translation could be *whoever can* since the use of *whoever* in questions expresses surprise in a more emphatic way than *who* (Collins Online Dictionary n.d.).

The rendering of the phrase مِنْ بَعْدِهِ /*min ba<sup>c</sup>dih* in the three translations may be inaccurate. The adverb of time مِنْ بَعْدِهِ /*ba<sup>c</sup>dih* is not only used to indicate the sequence of events but mainly to assert that there is no helper other than Allah. *After Him* is a literal translation that may fail to transfer the intended meaning to the English reader. *After that*, on the other hand, leaves the meaning ambiguous. A possible translation could be *whoever can help you other than Him*.

Table 6. Example 7

Verse (6:122)	﴿ أَوْ مَنْ كَانَ مَيِّتًا فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ كَمَنْ مَتَّلَهُ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِنْهَا ﴾ (الأنعام:122) ʔawaman ka:na maytan faʔahyayna:hu wa ja <sup>c</sup> alna lahu nu:ran yamshi bihi finna:si kaman mathaluhu fiTHHuluma:ti laysa bikha:rijin minha
Ali	Can he who was dead, to whom We gave life, and a light whereby he can walk amongst men, be like him who is in the depths of darkness, from which he can never come out?
Saheeh	And is one who was dead and We gave him life and made for him light by which to walk among the people like one who is in darkness, never to emerge therefrom?
Pickthall	Is he who was dead and We have raised him unto life, and set for him a light wherein he walketh among men, as him whose similitude is in utter darkness whence he cannot emerge?

### Informative function

The word نُورًا *nu:ran* refers to the *Quran* or Islam as the guidance that enables the believers to distinguish between truth and falsehood, and الظُّلُمَاتِ /*ʔaTHuluma:ti* refers to the state of disbelief in Allah. Accordingly, in this simile, the *Quran* or the religion of Islam is like the light that has guided the believers to the straight path of life after they were in manifest error, whereas the disbelievers are still stuck in the darkness of disbelief and misguidance.

### Operative function

This verse presents an expressive simile that calls for believing in Allah and dissuades from the darkness of disbelief. It also encourages believers to remain faithful to Islam because it is the light that leads them to the truth.

### Expressive function

The semantic, stylistic, rhetorical and aesthetic features of this simile are unique. Allah likens the state of believers before Islam to death. Allah's guidance to them is likened to life, and their state after Islam is likened to light. The state of disbelievers is likened to darkness. The description of نُورًا /*nu.ran* implies how Islam or the *Quran* illuminated the way for believers so they became aware of what they should and should not do. The phrase لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِنْهَا /*laysa bikha:rijin minha* impressively describes the state of disbelievers as being lost and astray. It likens them to the one who is lost in a dark place with no way to get out.

### Analysis of the English translations

The rhetorical, stylistic, and semantic richness of this denial question makes the rendering thereof into any language almost impossible. The functions discussed above, especially the operative and expressive functions are achieved through the distinctive Quranic language and style, and therefore are difficult to be attained in a different language.

The rendering of مَيِّتًا /*maytan* into *dead* and the three translations of فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ /*fa?ahyayna:hu* (see translations above) are far from reflecting the intended meaning. This Quranic expression is metaphorically used, whereas the English translations are quite literal. The word مَيِّتًا refers to the state of disbelief, and فَأَحْيَيْنَاهُ means *guided him to Islam*. However, rendering this expression into non-metaphorical words to elucidate the meaning will sacrifice the expressive and aesthetic quality of the original. Moreover, نُورًا /*nu.ran* is a Quran-specific concept that is not adequately reflected in the English equivalent *light*. The profound meanings and the figurative language in the phrase وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ /*wa ja?alna lahu nu:ran yamshi: bihi finna:si* are not vividly conveyed in the literal English translations.

The three translations are literal and consist of long sentences in which several phrases are embedded. Thus, they do not accurately convey the rhetorical mood of the original question nor can they satisfactorily maintain the original aesthetic features.



Table 7. Examples 8-9

Verse (16:17)	(أَفَمَنْ يَخْلُقُ كَمَنْ لَا يَخْلُقُ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ) (النحل:17) <u>ʔafaman yakhluqu Kaman la: yakhluqu ʔafala: tadhakkaru:n</u>
Ali	<u>Is then He Who creates like one that creates not? Will ye not receive admonition?</u>
Saheeh	<u>Then is He who creates like one who does not create? So will you not be reminded?</u>
Pickthall	<u>Is He then Who createth as him who createth not? Will ye not then remember?</u>

The verse consists of the two underlined denial questions.

**Example 8:** (أَفَمَنْ يَخْلُقُ كَمَنْ لَا يَخْلُقُ)

### Informative function

Allah emphasizes His exclusive omnipotence in creation, and thus His exclusive singularity in divinity and of being worshipped alone (Al-Sa'di 2000).

### Operative function

The question rebukes the polytheists and deprecates their behavior because they worship helpless and powerless creatures and make them equal to Allah despite all the sufficient proofs of His absolute worthiness of being worshiped alone.

### Expressive function

This question concisely delivers the essential notion of monotheism. The verb *يَخْلُقُ* /*yakhluq* is repeated twice, yet gives completely contrastive meanings, simply by adding *لَا* (the la: of negation) to the second verb. The first occurrence indicates Allah's absolute power of creation, whereas the second one, preceded by *لَا/la:*, indicates the complete powerlessness of idols.

### Analysis of the English translations

The translations are quite similar and achieve semantic and stylistic equivalence to some degree. The aesthetic element of using the same verb twice to indicate different meanings is still preserved in the three translations by using the English verb *create* and the equivalent negative word *not*. Although the Arabic verb *خَلَقَ* /*khalafa* is often associated with Allah whereas *create* has a neutral sense and is quite normally used with human subjects, it remains stylistically more appropriate. Nevertheless, it is preferred to explicate the meaning by adding, for example, *bring into existence* between brackets.

**Example 9** (أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ)

### Informative function

The verb *تَذَكَّرُونَ* /*tadhakkaru:n* implies that the addressees are aware of the truth but insist on polytheism. As Tantawy (1998) suggested, Allah says *تَذَكَّرُونَ* /*tadhakkaru:n* rather than *تَفَكَّرُونَ* /*tafakkaru:n* because they already know this and

so Allah reminds them of what is already known and does not need thinking and contemplation.

### Operative function

This question reinforces the rebuke and denial functions of the first question. It also indirectly calls the addressees to return to their natural disposition that does not accept associating another god with Allah by evoking their belief in the oneness of Allah.

### Expressive function

The expressiveness of this question is mostly demonstrated in the verb *تَذَكَّرُونَ* /*tadhakkaru:n* whose occurrence is context-dependent. Alsamerai (2006) highlighted the remarkable Quran-specific difference between *تَذَكَّرُونَ* /*tadhakkaru:n* and *تَتَذَكَّرُونَ* /*tatadhakkaru:n* that simply lies in the letter *تاء ta:ʔ* (t). He pointed out that *تَذَكَّرُونَ* /*tadhakkaru:n* occurs when the previous statement is a completely obvious and straightforward fact and does not require deep thinking or long recall (Alsamerai 2006:17). However, *تَتَذَكَّرُونَ* /*tatadhakkaru:n* precedes statements in which the addressees need some mental effort and time to take in (ibid.). Hence, in the given example, *تَذَكَّرُونَ* is used since the preceding statement (*أَفَمَنْ يَخْلُقُ كَمَنْ لَا يَخْلُقُ*) is a straightforward fact that tells about Allah's singularity in creation.

### Analysis of the English translations

The verb *تَذَكَّرُونَ* /*tadhakkaru:n* is translated by Saheeh and Pickthall into *be reminded* and *remember*, respectively. However, *تَذَكَّرُونَ* /*tadhakkaru:n* does not literally mean to remember something forgotten but to be awakened and admonished. Ali attempted to clarify this meaning, but his translation (*receive admonition*) seems to connote a stronger sense of rebuke than the original and does not maintain the concise style of the original. Herein lies the problem. To strike a balance between the stylistic and semantic characteristics while preserving the intended meaning is hardly attainable in *Quran* translation.

The unique semantic and pragmatic feature attributed to the verb *تَذَكَّرُونَ* /*tadhakkaru:n* is only peculiar to the Quranic Arabic. This meticulous difference made by simply omitting or adding a letter is a rhetorical feature of the Quranic language that is difficult to maintain in other languages.

Table 8. Example 10

Verse (21:52)	(إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا هَذِهِ التَّمَاثِيلُ الَّتِي أَنْتُمْ لَهَا عَاكِفُونَ) (الأنبياء:52) ?idh qa:la li?abi:hi wa qawmihi ma: ha:dhihi ?attama:thi:lu ?allati ?antum laha:°a:kifu:n
Ali	Behold! he said to his father and his people, " <u>What are these images, to which ye are (so assiduously) devoted?</u> "
Saheeh	When he said to his father and his people, " <u>What are these statues to which you are devoted?</u> "
Pickthall	When he said unto his father and his folk: <u>What are these images unto which ye pay devotion?</u>

Prophet Ibrahim addresses this question to his father and people.

### Informative function

This question tells us that the people of Ibrahim worshipped idols. The question also represents the sensible conduct, wisdom and intelligence of Prophet Ibrahim despite his young age back then because he bravely confronted his people with this question.

### Operative function

Through this question, Prophet Ibrahim provided decisive and cogent evidence of his people's ignorance and expressed his condemnation of what they were doing. Moreover, he indirectly intended to alert them to the corruption of their conduct because they worshiped what they made with their own hands.

### Expressive function

Some of the aesthetic aspects of this question are manifest in the lexical choices of التَّمَاثِيلُ /?attama:thi:l and عَاكِفُونَ / °a:kifu:n. Prophet Ibrahim described the idols as التَّمَاثِيلُ /?attama:thi:l rather than الأصنام /?al?a sna:m to reinforce the disdain and contempt for them because the former implies that something is merely made of rocks and connotes a lifeless image (Tantawy 1998; Al-Baydawi 1997). The word عَاكِفُونَ / °a:kifu:n connotes assiduity and persistence and also implies restraining one's self from doing normal things (Tantawy 1998). Hence, this accentuates their ignorant conduct.

Another expressive aspect herein is foregrounding. The phrase لَهَا /laha: is foregrounded to accentuate the fact that they reduced themselves to worshipers of powerless rocks that they themselves made.

### Analysis of the English translations

The connotations of the words التَّمَاثِيلُ /?attama:thi:l and عَاكِفُونَ / °a:kifu:n are not perfectly rendered in the English equivalents *images* / *statues* and *are devoted* / *pay devotion*, respectively. *Images* is somewhat vague and can be used to describe an abstract thing rather than a concrete object. Besides, it does not bear any negative connotation as the original word does. *Statues* is more specific, however, it

contradictorily acquires a positive connotation generally in English because it is associated with arts and famous statues. Since a literal translation leads to this expressive loss, an explanatory translation, such as *stony idols* could be better.

The translations of عَاكِفُونَ / °a:kifu:n into *are devoted* and *pay devotion* are appropriate, especially Ali's translation because he modified *devoted* with the adverb *assiduously* to highlight the meaning of persistence. Nevertheless, the religious connotation of the word عَاكِفُونَ / °a:kifu:n, and, thus, the expressive meaning are missing in these translations.

## 6. Discussion and conclusion

The analysis of the study showed that the Quranic denial rhetorical questions do adequately fulfill informative, operative and expressive functions. This finding confirms that Reiss's text typology proves applicable to the Quranic text.

Quranic denial rhetorical questions serve an informative function that can be realized from the meaning and interpretation of the verse and the context where a question occurs. The operative function of these questions lies in the effect that the addresser aims to have on the recipient's feelings, behavior, beliefs or attitudes. This effect is achieved through the pragmatic functions of the questions that are generally denying something, deprecating something or rebuking the addressees for something. The expressive function is manifest in the distinctive grammatical, lexical, pragmatic, stylistic and rhetorical characteristics of the Quranic language. This also contributes to achieving the informative, and, particularly, the operative functions thereof.

The problem of grammatical, lexical, pragmatic, and stylistic non-equivalence between English and Quranic Arabic may stand behind the inaccuracy in delivering the three functions. Generally, the informative, operative, and expressive functions were not sufficiently reflected in the English translations of the examples discussed above. The English translations do not effectively present the profound meanings, eloquent stylistic structures, prosodic features, and peculiar syntactic constructions of the Quranic language. This inadequacy can also be attributed to the inappropriate grammatical and lexical choices in the translations.

Although the informative function of denial questions in the translations depends on the recipient's awareness of the interpretation and the context of a given question, grammatical and lexical choices in translation can play a role in conveying the original message. In addition, the English translations could not effectively deliver the operative function due to the untranslatability of the pragmatic and stylistic features typical of the Quranic language. The expressive function was also largely sacrificed in the translations because it is particularly achieved through the aesthetic language and style of the Quran-specific language. Furthermore, the interrogative mood of the translated rhetorical questions was obscured by missing or misplacing the question mark or erroneously replacing it with an exclamation mark, which does not express a question but an exclamation.

Translating the meanings of the *Quran* requires a deep and rigorous analysis of the source text in terms of the informative, operative, and expressive functions.

To clarify the intended meanings or compensate for the loss in translation, translators may use explicitation and paratexts or resort to explanatory translation. Although such strategies may affect the stylistic aspects of a translation, accuracy of meaning in a sacred text is accorded more importance than aesthetic and stylistic features since the translations of the *Quran* are indeed translations of its meanings. Moreover, a *question* mark should be added at the end of a rhetorical question to accentuate the interrogative form thereof. An abbreviation, such as *RQ* (rhetorical question) can also be used to alert the reader to the rhetorical interrogative mood of such questions.

Having compared the 10 instances in three English translations, we can conclude that the functions in the selected translations were not appropriately maintained. Therefore, a comprehensive analysis of the Quranic text to be translated serves as an essential prelude to the process of translation. The techniques of paratexts and explicitation should be adequately used to illustrate these functions and compensate for the loss. In light of the above, the translation of the *Quran* has to be revised and evaluated in other linguistic notions other than rhetorical questions. Tremendous and unrelenting collective efforts need to be exerted by professional translators specialized in the translation of the *Quran*, Muslim scholars specialized in the interpretation of the *Quran* as well as Arab and English grammarians and rhetoricians.

Lubaba Anis (MA) – Corresponding Author  
Department of Foreign Languages  
The University of Sharjah  
ORCID Number: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4627-4520>  
Email: [lubaba.anees6@hotmail.com](mailto:lubaba.anees6@hotmail.com)

Prof. Shehdeh Fareh (PhD)  
Department of Foreign Languages  
The University of Sharjah  
ORCID Number: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1196-9250>  
Email: [shfareh@sharjah.ac.ae](mailto:shfareh@sharjah.ac.ae)

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