Lexical Synonyms in the Holy Qur'an and their Translations: A Case Study

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Abstract: *Synonymy is one of the fundamental linguistic phenomena influencing the structure of lexicon. This paper examines the intricate nature of synonymy in an attempt to investigate its problematic nature in relation to translation. Types of synonyms are examined, with special emphasis paid to the translation of synonyms in the Holy Qur'an, where the translator is expected to achieve a high level of accuracy in rendering the exact meaning of the lexical items. The main focus of the study is on the translation of the near synonyms of the Arabic lexical item 'khawf' (خوف) (meaning 'fear') within the Holy Qur'an. In this comparative descriptive study, componential analysis is used to evaluate the semantic aspects of the synonymous lexical items. The meaning of each lexical item is also analyzed according to its context in the verses of the Holy Qur'an. The study is limited to three translations: those of Pickthall, Yusuf Ali and Shakir. It highlights the challenges that Qur'an translators encounter in the translation of near synonyms. It also aims to enhance the field of Qur'an translations with suggestions for achieving increased accuracy.*

1. Introduction

Every language has a set of semantic relations among its words. Synonymy is one of the fundamental types of sense relations. Though it has been regarded in the past two decades as one of the most significant phenomena that influence the structure of lexicon, it has been given less attention in linguistics, semantics, and lexicography than the equally fundamental and much studied polysemy (Edmonds and Hirst 2002:106). Whatever the reasons are, synonymy is one of the main issues in linguistics and translation that need further attention.

Various points of view have been expressed about its definition, typology and translation particularly in sensitive texts such as religious or legal texts where accuracy is required. Synonymy has long been a controversial issue amongst European and Arab linguists. In the case of Arabic, it is important to note that this language is characterized by the use of synonymous lexical items. The richness of synonyms in Arabic can be ascribed to a wide range of factors which are beyond the scope of the present study. The existence of synonyms is relevant to Arabic rhetoric, eloquence and figures of speech. There are two opposing points of view concerning synonymy. The first is to accept the idea and hence create collections of synonyms. Al-'sma'i (216/831), for instance, has compiled a list of seventy names for 'stones' in Arabic; others have collated fifty names for 'sword' whilst others have documented five hundred names for 'lion' and one hundred names for 'snake' (Al-Munajid 2007:36). The second group of

scholars reject the notion of synonymy outright, claiming that language contains no synonyms. Ibn Al-ʾarabi (231/845) and Ibn-Faris (395/1004) maintain that it is illogical to have two or more words in a language with one reference. They also assert that the different synonymous names compiled in books are not synonyms, but rather one name with various different attributes (Abdel-Tawab 1987:311). Accordingly, 'the lexical items "جواد" (fast horse), and "أدهم" (completely black horse) are attributes rather than synonyms of "حصان" (horse) (Shehab 2009:870). The second group of scholars appears to reject the idea of having complete or absolute synonyms. This is one of the main concerns of contemporary scholars (Al-Munajid 2007:75-76).

Like Arabic, English is rich in synonyms. Palmer (1981:88) notes that English tends to have synonyms because it is derived from different linguistic sources: Anglo-Saxon, French, Latin and Greek. There are two points of view regarding synonymy: the strict and the flexible. The former denies the existence of synonymy entirely. The flexible view, on the other hand, maintains that any two words sharing some semantic properties in common are synonymous (Cruse 1986:270). Edmonds and Hirst (2002:106) claim that synonymy has often been thought of as a 'non-problem': i.e. that there are either synonyms that are completely identical in meaning and hence easy to deal with, or there are no synonyms, in which case 'each word can be handled like any other'. Some scholars including Palmer (1981), Larson (1984), and Cruse (1986), adopt a compromise position. They maintain that the phenomenon of synonymy exists in language, but they also point out that there are no real, identical, absolute or total synonyms. Cruse (1986:268), for example, notes that absolute synonyms do not exist at all, and that even if they exist they are extremely uncommon. He adds that 'there is no obvious motivation for the existence of absolute synonyms in a language and one would expect either that one of the items would fall into obsolescence or that a difference in semantic function would develop' (270). He refines this idea and suggests peripheral traits. Even if absolute synonymy were possible, pragmatic and empirical arguments show that it would be very rare. More formally, Clark (1992:172) indicates that language works to eliminate absolute synonyms. An absolute synonym would either fall into disuse or would take on a new nuance of meaning. In general, near-synonyms can differ with respect to any aspect of their meaning, be it: denotational, stylistic, expressive or structural variation (Cruse 1986:291). In short, those scholars focus their efforts on the investigation of differences among synonymous lexical items.

From a linguistic perspective, Nida and Taber (1969: 73) define synonymy in language as 'words which share several (but not all) essential components and thus can be used to substitute for one another in some (but not all) contexts without any appreciable difference of meaning in these contexts'. Cruse (1982: 285) and Lyons (1995:199) have attempted to define near-synonymy by focusing on 'propositional' meaning. Cruse, for example, contrasts cognitive synonyms and plesionyms. According to Cruse, the former are words that, when inter-substituted in a sentence, preserve its truth conditions but may change the expressive meaning, style, or register of the sentence or may involve

different idiosyncratic collocations (e.g. violin and fiddle). By contrast, inter-substituting the latter changes the truth conditions but still yields semantically similar sentences (e.g. misty and foggy) (285). The following explanation is given by Edmonds and Hirst (2002: 107):

> Indeed, near-synonyms are pervasive in language; examples are easy to find. *Lie*, *falsehood*, *untruth*, *fib*, and *misrepresentation*, for instance, are near-synonyms of one another. All denote a statement that does not conform to the truth, but they differ from one another in fine aspects of their denotation. A *lie* is a deliberate attempt to deceive that is a flat contradiction of the truth, whereas a *misrepresentation* may be more indirect, as by misplacement of emphasis, an untruth might be told merely out of ignorance, and a *fib* is deliberate but relatively trivial, possibly told to save one's own or another's face (Gove 1984). The words also differ stylistically; *fib* is an informal, childish term, whereas *falsehood* is quite formal, and *untruth* can be used euphemistically to avoid some of the derogatory implications of some of the other terms.

Shiyab (2007) has indicated that the Arabic words *'hisaan'* (حصان),*'faras'* (فرس), *'jawaad'* (جواد), and *'agarr'* (أغر) stand for the English word 'horse'. Although these words can be used interchangeably in most contexts (since they all refer to the word horse), they are not interchangeable in all contexts. If we take all these words for *horse*, we may find the following meanings that are synonymous and used in a context related to that word:

1. The word '*hisaan*' has the components of horse and male.
2. The word '*faras*' has the components of horse and male or female.
3. The word '*jawaad*' has the components of a particular horse, which is fast, and male or female.
4. The word '*agarr'* has the components of a particular horse, which has a white patch on its forehead and is male or female.

Newmark (1981:101-102), on the other hand, discusses two aspects of synonymy: synonymy in grammar and lexical synonymy. In the latter, which is the main focus of our discussion, different lexical items share certain semantic properties and refer to the same topic. Lőbner (2002:46) indicates that synonymy is labelled 'total synonymy' in the strict sense, includes all meaning variants for two polysemous lexemes and also includes all meaning elements, i.e. descriptive, social and expressive meaning. While this condition is rarely fulfilled, there are many examples of partial synonymy. Two lexemes may have one meaning variant in common. For example, 'spectacles' and 'glasses' may denote the same sort of object worn by people on their noses to improve their oversight, but 'glasses' may also be the plural of 'glass' in one of its meanings.

The above discussion indicates that synonymous lexical items will not be identical and that there are plenty of variable aspects amongst them. Therefore, adopting the notion of near synonyms might be more appropriate, as it emphasizes the differences and dissimilarities among synonymous lexical items, which is the main focus of this paper. For our purposes, it is sufficient simply to

say that we will be examining sets of words that are very similar in meaning but which in most contexts cannot be inter-substituted without changing some semantic or pragmatic aspects of the message**.** Implementation of this has an impact on the translation of near synonyms. Assuming that synonymous lexical items are neither identical nor inter-substituted challenges the translator to be very accurate in finding out the right choice in translation. Accuracy may be even more essential when dealing with religious texts, where fidelity is of the utmost importance. This is the main focus of this paper. We aim to investigate the translation of near synonyms in the Holy Qur'an. Before proceeding, a brief outline view will be provided of near synonyms in the Holy Qur'an.

2. Near-synonyms in the Holy Qur'an

The holy book of Islam is held by Muslim scholars to be inimitable not only in terms of its content but also in its language. The Qur'an, as it has been maintained, embodies linguistic and literary beauty which exceeds anything of human origin. The language of the Holy Qur'an combines all the features of perfection and beauty, whether in the choice of words in a sentence, the grammatical structures, or the rhetorical expressions. This is achieved in such a way that it presents the most elevated degree of accuracy in expressing meanings, achieving the aim of the utmost persuasion and phonetic enjoyment, affecting feelings, and arousing resolution.

The Holy Qur'an has a number of lexical items that are related in meaning. Various points of view have been proposed concerning the existence of synonyms or near synonyms in the Holy Quran. Al-Munajid (2007:109) has indicated that, like linguists, scholars of Qur'an studies and exegesis have different points of view concerning synonyms. Some accept the idea of having synonyms in the Holy Qur'an, whilst others reject the idea completely. Al-Munajid notes that each lexical item in the Holy Qur'an is selected precisely to convey a certain meaning different from other related lexical items. He believes that there are no complete synonyms in the Holy Quran. An analysis of the words in the Holy Qur'an which are closely related in meaning indicates that there are no synonyms in the Holy Qur'an, and this is one of its miracles (Bint-Ash ati' 1966:14). Ghali (1997:5) has identified differences among near synonymous lexical items in the Holy Qur'an. He has noted that although some words are interpreted by some translators as having the same meaning, the context shows their differences, however slight these might be. Abdul-Wali (2007) asserts that the versatility of Qur'an lexemes and styles has not been captured in most English versions of the Qur'an.

This paper, therefore, aims to highlight the challenges that Qur'an translators encounter at the lexical level. It also aims to suggest ways of enhancing the field of Qur'an translation with a view to reproducing adequate translation both in form and content. The question is this: how can the translator render these words in translation with their shared meanings into other languages without any change in meaning? This is an area in which more research needs to be conducted. The present paper seeks to shed light on the

translation of near synonyms in the Holy Qur'an by examining a number of existing translations. To achieve this, the following methodology is implemented.

3. Research methodology

The Holy Qur'an has several lexical items denoting the emotional feeling of 'fear' as their core meaning. These include: *'khawf'* (خوف), *'khashya'* (خشية), *'rahba '*(رهبة), *'faza '* (فزع), *'wajal'* (وجل), *'khushu''*(خشوع) etc. The first four near synonymous lexical items are selected for analysis. The semantic component of each lexical item is decided upon according to its Qur'an verse. The meaning of each near synonymous lexical item is analyzed in relation to its context. Their meanings are picked up from books on exegesis of the Holy Qur'an such as Al-Qurtubi (617/1273) (2003) and Ibn Kathir (774/1372) (1999). They are also examined using dictionaries of the meaning of the words of the Holy Qur'an, dictionaries of Arabic language, and commentary books. In addition, there are a number of linguists whose models are used in the analysis of the semantic features of the selected lexical items, such as Cruse (1986), Edmonds and Hirst (2002).

The translation of the selected near synonymous lexical items is then traced in three translation versions of the Holy Qur'an: those of Pickthall (1930), Yusuf Ali (1937), and Shakir (1982). These are among the most popular translations of the Holy Qur'an. M. M. Pickthall's *'The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an'* has at least 27 editions. It is one of the most widely used translations, completed by an English man of letters who accepted Islam and faithfully represented the sense of the original text. Another extremely popular translation is '*The Holy Qur'an: Translation and Commentary*' by the Indian Muslim scholar Abdullah Yusuf Ali (1937). There are at least 35 editions of his work, and this translation stands out from others as being a highly readable rendering of the Holy Qur'an. His translation is one of the most widely-known and used in the English-speaking world. Finally, the title of English translation of the Qur'an attributed to M. H. Shakir is '*Holy Qur'an'*. It has been widely available since the 1980s. Shakir was an Egyptian judge, born in Cairo and a graduate of Al Azhar University.

4. Analysis and discussion

It has been observed that books providing exegesis of the Holy Qur'an do not indicate the differences among the selected lexical items because the writers are mainly interested in explaining the meaning of the verses and causes of their revelation. However, Muslim scholars, compilers of dictionaries and linguists have traced the occurrence of the most related lexical items in their contexts in the Holy Qur'an and have identified a number of findings. Ibn Qaym Al-Jawzia (751/1349), for instance, indicates that these near synonymous lexical items are related in meaning but are not total synonyms because each has its own distinctive meaning in the Holy Qur'an (1970:431). They have common semantic features as well as their own different peripheral features. In the Holy

Qur'an, 'khawf' (خوف) is mentioned (in all its parts of speech) 124 times, 'khashya' (خشية) 48 times, 'faza'' (فزع) 6 times, and 'rahba' (رهبة) 12 times. This study limits itself to the noun form of each selected lexical item. It does not consider their other parts of speech. According to the Dictionary of the Holy Qur'an (1996), the noun form of 'khawf' (خوف) occurs 37 times in the Holy Qur'an. Al-'askari (395/1005) has mentioned that the word 'khawf' (خوف) is related to the expectation of bad things such as illness, death etc (1997:241). Al-Fairuzabadi (817/1414) has added that 'khawf'(خوف) indicates the expectation of punishment (1970:545). It also implies anxiety. Al-Zain (2001:294) defines it as being a feeling of disordering agitation which overcomes one in the presence of danger. Thus, the semantic components of the word 'khawf' (خوف)include the following features: anxiety, flight, expectation of punishment, expectation of bad things, and quickening heartbeat. When we examine *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of Synonyms* (1973), we find that the English word with similar semantic features is 'fear'. It is defined as the most general term to imply anxiety and apprehension and also frequently suggests a loss of courage.

One of the lexical items related to the word 'khawf' (خوف) is 'khashya' (خشية). The latter occurs eight times (in its noun form) in the Holy Qur'an. 'Khashya'(خشية) is more specific than 'khawf' (خوف). It is usually connected to scholars, so indicates a kind of fear connected with knowledge. Thus, 'khawf' (خوف)means fear with movement but 'khashya' (خشية)denotes calmness and motionlessness. 'Khawf' (خوف) is also related to all people but 'khashya' (خشية) is only related to pious scholars who have knowledge. Thus, 'khashya' (خشية) protects you and forbids you from doing bad things because of your fear of punishment. Ibn Qaym Al-Jawzia (1970:432) has indicated that when someone sees an enemy, he will be either in 'khawf' (خوف) and then escape from the enemy, or stay in a place where the enemy cannot reach him and this is 'khashya'(خشية). Enaya (1996:125) points out that the two lexical items are thought to be synonyms but in fact they are not. They are actually different from one another, because 'khashya' (خشية) happens because of the fear of our Lord's majesty and greatness. However, 'khawf' (خوف) implies weakness on the part of a person even if he is afraid of simple things. Al-Duri (2006:181) mentions that 'khashya' (خشية) is fear with reverence and inner peace which makes one very cautious while 'khawf' (خوف) is an expectation of bad things. In addition, 'khashya' (خشية) occurs because of a strong faith, belief and knowledge; hence, it usually relates to true believers who have a strong faith. Thus, 'khashya' (خشية) is largely mentioned in the Holy Qur'an in relation to Allah the Almighty, whereas 'khawf' (خوف) describes a state of weakness through looking at one's own deeds and thus fearing punishment. 'Khashya' (خشية) occurs because of reverence of someone even if you are strong, whereas fear happens because of your weakness even if the other thing is weak. According to the *Dictionary of Exegesis of Lexicon of the Holy Qur'an* (2001), its semantic components are as follows: 'khashya' (خشية) is fear but with reverence and knowledge, usually related to true believers and those who have knowledge; 'khawf' (خوف), on the other hand, is a feeling inside your heart due to expecting bad things. The English word which

has similar semantic features is 'awe', defined in the Collins Cobuild English Dictionary (1995) as being the feeling of respect and amazement when one is faced with something wonderful and often rather frightening.

The third near synonymous lexical item investigated is the Arabic word *'rahba'* (رهبة). Al-Zain (2001) indicates that it means too much fear and thus flight from bad things. It is fear combined with nervousness, anxiety and caution. Al-'askari (395/1005) points out that *'rahba'* (رهبة) is a constant continuous feeling of fear; it takes a long duration (1997:241). Al-Fairuzabadi (817/1414) asserts that *'rahba'* (رهبة) implies too great willingness to run away because of excessive fear (1970:545). This lexical item can be rendered as 'terror' in English, since the latter denotes the meaning of extreme fear.

The fourth lexical item examined is *'faza''* (فزع). It occurs twice in its noun form within the Holy Quran. It implies fright awakened by a sudden awareness of imminent danger. It is a sudden sharp apprehension and fear resulting from the perception of imminent danger (Al-'askari 1997:242). The English word which conveys these semantic properties is 'panic', which is used to describe a state of sudden uncontrollable and rapidly spreading fear.

Generally speaking, the semantic components of the Arabic lexical items examined can be analyzed as shown in table 1.

Table 1: Componential analysis of the Arabic lexical item examined

Arabic lexical item	The semantic components					
	Quickening heartbeat/anxiety	Flight	Reverence	Calmness	Sudden feeling	Expectation of bad things
khawf خوف	+	+	_	_	_	+
khashya خشية	+	_	+	+	_	_
faza' فزع	+	+	_	_	+	_
rahba رهبة	+	+	+	_	_	+

Hence, the above lexical items are closely related but not total synonyms. Each one is used in a certain verse in the Holy Qur'an to indicate a specific meaning which is different from those of other related words. Each word in the Holy Qur'an is selected and used accurately and precisely. Thus, the role of translators of the Holy Qur'an is to look for the accurate equivalent for each synonymous lexical item and not to use them interchangeably as if they were identical. Translators also have to avoid selecting a very general word to refer to all of the lexical items, for example using the word 'fear' to refer to all of its related synonyms. Thus, translators are supposed to translate these words *accurately*. However, after examining the three selected translations of the Holy Qur'an, we have found that these near synonymous lexical items are translated as if they were complete synonyms. In most verses of the Holy Qur'an,

whenever one of the synonymous lexical items is mentioned, it is either translated into the general lexical item 'fear' (which might not be its accurate English equivalent) or translated into some other less accurate lexical item.

In our investigation, for all the 37 verses in which 'khawf' (خوف) is mentioned, no problem with translating this general lexical item is observed because the general lexical item 'fear' is selected as its equivalent, which in this instance is the correct choice. The translators are accurate and precise in their translation of this word. Table 2 gives us an example.

However, when we examine the translation of the eight verses where the word 'khashya' (خشية) is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, we find that in 7 verses, the three translators have rendered this word as 'fear'. Thus, the lexical item 'khashya' (خشية) is translated into 'fear' in nearly all the versions examined. Though the lexical item 'awe' is more appropriate for use in this context, the more generic word 'fear' is used by the three translators. Translating the lexical item 'khashya' (خشية) into 'fear' in English leads to some slight changes in meaning. The reader of the English translation will not be able to understand the precise meaning of the verse. The meaning of reverence, respect, and greatness (which is usually associated with fear of Allah) is not conveyed when the English word 'fear' is used. An example is presented in table 3.

Table 2: Translation of the Arabic word 'khawf'

Qur'anic sura	Yusuf Ali	Pickthall	Shakir	Transliteration	Arabic script
Al-Baqra:155	Be sure we shall test you with something of **fear** and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere,	And surely We shall try you with something of **fear** and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives and crops; but give glad tidings to the steadfast,	And We will most certainly try you with somewhat of **fear** and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits; and give good news to the patient,	Walanabluwan nakum bishay-in mina alkhawfi waaljooAAi wanaqsin mina al-amwali waal-anfusi waalththamarat i wabashshiri alssabireena	وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُم بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ **الْخَوْفِ** وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ

Table 3: Translation of the Arabic word 'khashya' (1)

Qur'anic verse	Yusuf Ali	Pickthall	Shakir	Transliteration	Arabic script
AL-HASHR (EXILE, BANISHMENT):21	Had We sent down this Qur'an on a mountain, verily, thou wouldst have seen it humble itself and cleave asunder for **fear** of Allah. Such are the similitude which We propound to men, that they may reflect.	If We had caused this Qur'an to descend upon a mountain, thou (O Muhammad) verily hadst seen it humbled, rent asunder by the **fear** of Allah. Such similitudes coin We for mankind that haply they may reflect.	Had We sent down this Quran on a mountain, you would certainly have seen it falling down, splitting asunder because of **the fear** of Allah, and We set forth these parables to men that they may reflect.	Law anzalna hatha alqur-ana AAala jabalin laraaytahu khashiAAan mutasaddiAAan min khashyati Allahi watilka al-amthalu nadribuha li**l**nnasi laAAallahum yatafakkaroon**a**	لَوْ أَنزَلْنَا هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَىٰ جَبَلٍ لَّرَأَيْتَهُ خَاشِعًا مُّتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ **خَشْيَةِ** اللَّهِ ۚ وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

There is only one verse which can be seen as an exception in translation where Yusuf Ali and Pickthall have translated '*khashy*a ' (خشية) as 'awe', whereas Shakir has translated it as 'fear'. This is the only verse where the two translators, Yusuf Ali and Pickthall, have used another equivalent. Table 4 reveals this point.

'*Rahba*' رهبة has been variously translated as terror and another as fear. The better choice might be the word 'terror' which implies the meaning of great fear. Translating the lexical item '*rahba*' (رهبة) as 'fear' is not an incorrect translation equivalent, but it is not a selection that accurately conveys the precise meaning of the Arabic word. Tables (5&6) provide examples of the translation of the word '*rahba*'.

The fourth near synonymous lexical item '*faza''* (فزع) occurs twice in the Holy Qur'an in its noun form. Yusuf Ali has translated it in both verses as 'terror'. Pickthall has rendered it in one verse as 'fear' and in the other verse as

'horror'. Shakir has translated it in one verse as 'terror' and in the other as 'fear'. Thus, it can be observed that the examined lexical item is variously translated as 'fear', 'terror' and 'horror'. None of the three translations have used the word 'panic' which conveys the meaning of sudden fear. The word 'horror', which is used by Pickthall, might be a better translation equivalent for the other Arabic synonymous lexical item, i.e. 'ru'b' (رعب). Tables (7&8) clarify this point:

Table 4: Translation of the Arabic word 'khashya' (2)

Qur'anic sura	Yusuf Ali	Pickthall	Shakir	Transliteration	Arabic script
AL-ANBIYA (THE PROPHETS): *28*	He knows what is before them, and what is behind them, and they offer no intercession except for those who are acceptable, and they stand in **awe** and reverence of His (Glory).	He knoweth what is before them and what is behind them, and they cannot intercede except for him whom He accepteth, and they quake for **awe** of Him.	He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they do not intercede except for him whom He approves and for **fear** of Him they tremble.	YaAAlamu m*a* bayna aydeehim wam*a* khalfahum wal*a* yashfaAAoona ill*a* limani irta*da* wahum min khashyatihi mushfiqoon**a**	يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يَشْفَعُونَ إِلَّا لِمَنِ ارْتَضَى وَهُم مِّنْ **خَشْيَتِهِ** مُشْفِقُونَ

5. Conclusion

The analysis has shown that the Holy Qur'an has many related lexical items which can be called near but not total or complete synonyms. They have their differences which must be considered by translators. However, the translations examined herein have revealed that the translation of these related items is not accurate, except for the lexical item '*khawf*' خوف, and that they are usually translated into more general words in the target language.

Translating the meaning of the Holy Qur'an into other languages demands the precise selection of synonyms. That is to say there is a distinction between the minute differences of meaning such that if a word were to be replaced with its synonym, it would lose its deep significance and delicate representation.

Faithful translation therefore requires a sophisticated lexical selection process to determine which of the synonyms provided for a word in one language is the closest or most appropriate for a particular situation in another language. This is why translators need to carefully investigate contextual synonyms in order to arrive at their precise intended meanings in a particular context. When dealing with synonymous words, we must look at the different componential features of the meanings of these synonyms. It is very important that the translator is aware of the very minute differences in meaning among words and near synonyms so as to choose the word that has the right denotation, connotation, and stylistic and other semantic features. Table (9) summarizes the results.

Table 5: Translation of the Arabic word 'rahba'(1)

Qura'nic verse	Yusuf Ali	Pickthall	Shakir	Transliteration	Arabic script
AL-HASHR (EXILE,BANI SHMENT:13)	Of a truth ye are stronger (than they) because of the **terror** in their hearts, (sent) by Allah. This is because they are men devoid of understanding	Ye are more awful as a **fear** in their bosoms than Allah. That is because they are a folk who understand not.	You are certainly greater in being **feared** in their hearts than Allah; that is because they are a people who do not understand	13. Laantum ashaddu rahbatan fee *s*udoorihim mina All*a*hi *tha*lika bi-annahum qawmun l*a* yafqahoon**a**	لَأَنتُمْ أَشَدُّ **رَهْبَةً** فِي صُدُورِهِم مِّنَ اللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ

Table 6: Translation of the Arabic word 'rahaba' (2)

Qur'anic verse	Yusuf Ali	Pickthall	Shakir	Transliteration	Arabic script
AL-QASAS (THE STORY, STORIES) : 32	Move thy hand into thy bosom, and it will come forth white without stain (or harm), and draw thy hand close to thy side (to guard) against **fear**. Those are the two credentials from thy Lord to Pharaoh and his Chiefs: for truly they are a people rebellious and wicked."	Thrust thy hand into the bosom of thy robe it will come forth white without hurt. And guard thy heart from **fear**. Then these shall be two proofs from your Lord unto Pharaoh and his chiefs. Lo! they are evil-living folk.	Enter your hand into the opening of your bosom, it will come forth white without evil, and draw your hand to yourself to ward off **fear**: so these two shall be two arguments from your Lord to Firon and his chiefs, surely they are a transgressing eople.	Osluk yadaka fee jaybika takhruj bay*da*a min ghayri soo-in wa*od*mum ilayka jan*ah*aka mina a**l**rrahbi fa*tha*nika burh*an*ani min rabbika il*a* firAAawna wamala-ihi innahum k*a*noo qawman f*a*siqeen**a**	اسْلُكْ يَدَكَ فِي جَيْبِكَ تَخْرُجْ بَيْضَاء مِنْ غَيْرِ سُوءٍ وَاضْمُمْ إِلَيْكَ جَنَاحَكَ مِنَ **الرَّهْبِ** فَذَانِكَ بُرْهَانَانِ مِن رَّبِّكَ إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَاسِقِينَ

Table 7: *Translation of the Arabic word 'faza''(1)*

Quranic verse	Yusuf Ali	Pickthall	Shakir	Transliteration	Arabic script
AL-NAML (THE ANT, THE ANTS) :89	If any do good, good will (accrue) to them therefrom; and they will be secure from **terror** that Day	Whoso bringeth a good deed will have better than its worth; and such are safe from **fear** that Day	Whoever brings good, he shall have better than it; and they shall be secure from **terror** on the day	Man j*aa* bial*h*asanati falahu khayrun min*h*a wahum min fazaAAin yawma-i*th*in *a*minoona	مَن جَاء بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ خَيْرٌ مِّنْهَا وَهُم مِّن **فَزَعٍ** يَوْمَئِذٍ آمِنُونَ

Table 8: *Translation of the Arabic word 'faza'' (2)*

Quranic verse	Yusuf Ali	Pickthall	Shakir	Transliteration	Arabic script
Surah Al-Anbiya (the prophets):103	The Great **Terror** will bring them no grief: but the angels will meet them (with mutual greetings): "This is your Day,-(the Day) that ye were promised	The Supreme **Horror** will not grieve them, and the angels will welcome them, (saying): This is your Day which ye were promised;	The great **fearful event** shall not grieve them, and the angels shall meet them: This is your day which you were promised.	L*a* ya*h*zunuhumu alfaza*AA*u al-akbaru watatalaqq*a*hu mu almal*a*-ikatu h*atha* yawmukumu alla*th*ee kuntum tooAAadoona	لَا يَحْزُنُهُمُ **الْفَزَعُ** الْأَكْبَرُ وَتَتَلَقَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ هَذَا يَوْمُكُمُ الَّذِي كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ

Table 9: Translations of the selected synonymous lexical items of the three translation versions

Translator	Khawf خوف	Khashya خشية	Rahbah رهبة	Faza' فزع
Yusuf Ali	Fear	Fear/awe	Terror/fear	Terror
Pickthall	Fear	Fear	Fear	Fear/horror
Shakir	Fear	Fear/awe	Fear	Terror/fearful event
Suggested Translation	Fear	Awe	Terror	Panic

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