



بحوث قسم اللغة الإنجليزية وآدابها



Syntactic Translation Strategies of Structure Change: A Case Study of Animal Soliloquies in Ahmed Bahjat's *Animals in the Holy Qur'an*

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يستكشف هذا البحث استراتيجيات الترجمة النحوية، مع التركيز بشكل خاص على "تغيير البنية التركيبية للعبارة" و"تغيير بنية الجملة"، وفقاً لإطار العمل الذي وضعه تشيسترمان (2016). ويُطبّق البحث هذه الاستراتيجيات على ترجمة ثلاث قصص مختارة من كتاب أحمد بهجت "قصص الحيوان في القرآن"، مع تركيز خاص على المونولوجات التي تلقىها الشخصيات الحيوانية. من خلال تحليل الكيفية التي تُستخدم بها التعديلات التركيبية على مستوى العبارة للحفاظ على المعنى والأسلوب والأثر البلاغي في الترجمة الإنجليزية، يسعى هذا البحث إلى تسليط الضوء على التحديات اللغوية والأسلوبية التي تواجه ترجمة النصوص الدينية والأدبية. وتهدف النتائج إلى الإسهام في تعميق الفهم حول التكيف النحوي في الترجمة، لاسيما في سياق ترجمة السرديات المقدسة من اللغة العربية إلى اللغة الإنجليزية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تغيير البنية التركيبية، استراتيجيات تشيسترمان في الترجمة، التكيف النحوي، المونولوجات، أحمد بهجت، ترجمة النصوص الدينية.

Abstract

This study explores syntactic translation strategies, specifically phrase structure change and clause structure change, as outlined in Chesterman's (2016) framework. The research applies these strategies to the translation of three selected stories from Ahmed Bahjat's *Animals in the Holy Qur'an: Relating Their Own Stories*, focusing particularly on the soliloquies delivered by animal characters. By examining how structural modifications at the

phrase level are employed to preserve meaning, style, and rhetorical effect in the English translations, the study seeks to illuminate the linguistic and stylistic challenges of translating religious and literary texts. The findings aim to contribute to a deeper understanding of syntactic adaptation in translation, particularly within the context of Arabic-English translation of sacred narratives.

Keywords: Phrase Structure Change, Chesterman's Translation Strategies, Syntactic Adaptation, Soliloquies, Ahmed Bahjat, Religious Text Translation.

1.Introduction

Religion profoundly influences both language and culture, shaping how societies narrate experiences and convey meanings. Translating Islamic texts, particularly the Qur'an, poses significant challenges due to their deep spiritual and cultural layers. Among its many narratives, the Qur'an includes numerous animal stories that serve to convey moral, ethical, and spiritual lessons, emphasizing the purposeful role of animals in divine teachings.

Several Qur'anic chapters and verses highlight the symbolic importance of animals, such as the crow in the story of Adam's sons, the bird in Prophet Ibrahim's miracle, and the she-camel of Prophet Salih. These stories have long been explored by scholars and writers seeking to understand their theological significance.

One notable modern interpretation is Ahmed Bahjat's *Qossas El-Hiyawan fil Qur'an*, later translated into English as *Animals in the Glorious Qur'an: Relating Their Own Stories* (2002). A distinctive feature of Bahjat's work is the use of soliloquies, where animals speak directly to the audience, sharing their emotions and perspectives. This narrative technique transforms the animals into active, reflective storytellers, deepening the emotional impact of the original accounts.

Translating these soliloquies from Arabic into English introduces syntactic challenges, particularly regarding phrase structure. Due to grammatical differences between the two languages, translators must carefully adapt sentence forms to retain the meaning, emotional depth, and narrative style of the original text.

This study examines the syntactic translation strategies of *phrase structure change* as outlined in Chesterman's (2016) model. Focusing on selected soliloquies from the stories of the crow, the bird, and the camel, the research explores how these structural changes affect the translation's fidelity to the original text's rhetorical and emotive dimensions.

1.1. Aims of the research

This study aims to examine how phrase structure change, as outlined in Chesterman's (2016) model of translation strategies, is applied in translating the animal soliloquies from Ahmed Bahjat's *Qossas El-Hiyawan fil Qur'an* (2000) into English. It focuses on identifying how these syntactic shifts affect the linguistic and narrative features of the soliloquies. In addition, the research explores the main challenges translators face in maintaining the emotional and rhetorical dimensions of the original Arabic text when rendering religious and educational narratives into English. Chesterman's framework provides a systematic basis for analyzing the syntactic transformations observed in the translations.

1.2. Research questions

In order to achieve the research's objectives, the study tries to answer the following questions: (1) What types of phrase structure changes are applied in the translation of animal soliloquies from Ahmed Bahjat's *Qossas El-Hiyawan fil Qur'an* into English? (2) How do phrase and clause structure changes affect the emotional tone and narrative perspective of the soliloquies in translation? (3)

What syntactic challenges do translators face when rendering religious and educational soliloquies from Arabic into English? (4)
To what extent do the syntactic translation strategies preserve the original rhetorical and emotional effects intended in the Arabic soliloquies?

1.3. The significance of the research

This research is significant because it sheds light on the syntactic challenges involved in translating religious and educational narratives, particularly animal soliloquies, from Arabic into English. By focusing on phrase structure change, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of how translators handle the linguistic and rhetorical complexities of Islamic texts. It highlights the delicate balance translators must maintain between preserving the original emotional tone and adapting the text to meet the grammatical and stylistic conventions of the target language. Additionally, the research offers insights into the broader field of religious translation studies, demonstrating how syntactic strategies can impact the transmission of spiritual, cultural, and ethical meanings across languages. The findings will be useful for translators, scholars of translation studies, and those interested in Arabic-English religious and literary translation.

2. Methodology

This research utilizes Chesterman's (2016) taxonomy of translation strategies, as presented in his book *Memes of Translation: The Spread of Ideas in Translation*. Chesterman argues that translation strategies can be considered "memes," referring to ideas that spread through culture, as these strategies are adopted and employed by various translators across different contexts. These strategies are seen as "standard conceptual tools" (p. 85) that guide translators in making decisions about how to convey meaning from one language to another. A central concept

in Chesterman's theory is the idea of "shift" or "change," which refers to the alterations made during translation to accommodate linguistic and cultural differences.

Chesterman's taxonomy of translation strategies is divided into three main categories: syntactic/grammatical strategies (G), semantic strategies (S), and pragmatic strategies (Pr). This study primarily adopts the syntactic translation strategies, focusing specifically on clause and phrase structure changes that occur during the translation process.

The research applies Chesterman's framework to analyze how soliloquies in *Animals in the Glorious Quran: Relating Their Own Stories* (2002) by Ahmed Bahjat are translated from Arabic to English, with a particular emphasis on phrase structure changes. Chesterman's theory provides a detailed approach to examining syntactic shifts in translation, allowing for an in-depth exploration of how structural modifications in phrases and clauses impact the overall translation.

The study follows a qualitative comparative analysis approach, concentrating on the syntactic differences and similarities between the original Arabic texts and their English translations. The analysis proceeds through the following steps:

1. Identification of Soliloquies: Extracting soliloquies from both the Arabic and English texts.
2. Application of Chesterman's Syntactic Strategies: Identifying and analyzing the phrase structure changes in the translation.
3. Comparison and Interpretation: Evaluating how these structural shifts in phrases and clauses affect meaning, readability, and stylistic impact in the translated text.

3. Corpus of the study

The data for this study consists of a selection of soliloquies from various animal narratives in Ahmed Bahjat's *Qossas El-Hiyawan fil Qur'an* (4th edition, 2000) and its English translation, *Animals in the Glorious Quran: Relating Their Own Stories* (2002), both authored and translated by Bahjat himself. The selected stories for analysis are *The Sons of Adam and the Crow*, *Ibrahim's Birds*, and *Saleh's Camel*. In these narratives, the animals assume significant, dramatic roles, delivering powerful soliloquies that reflect deep emotions and philosophical musings. The emotional and conceptual complexity of these soliloquies presents a challenge for translation, as accurately transferring such rich sentiments requires careful attention to linguistic structures and stylistic nuances across languages.

4. Dialogue in the Qur'an

4.1. Dialogue in the Qur'an

The Qur'an is seen as Allah's direct communication with people, offering guidance, wisdom, and moral lessons through different types of conversations. Throughout its verses, the Qur'an presents many dialogues that highlight important religious and ethical ideas. One of the most important conversations is between Allah and the angels, where He explains His plans for the creation of humans. The Qur'an also describes how angels speak to humans, sharing messages, predictions, and reassurances from Allah. Dialogues between prophets and their communities are also important, showing the struggles prophets faced when trying to guide their people to the right path.

The Qur'an also records Satan's conversations with humans, where he tries to deceive them and lead them away from Allah. Another powerful example is the conversation between the people of paradise and the people of hell, showing the results of people's

actions in the afterlife. In addition, the Qur'an captures discussions among the inhabitants of hell, where they express regret and discuss their fate.

There are also moments where prophets speak to animals, showing a special connection between divine messengers and the natural world. The Qur'an includes words of wisdom from wise individuals and important figures, who offer advice and moral lessons to others. All these types of conversations enrich the Qur'anic story, teaching important lessons about faith, morality, and human nature. Through these dialogues, the Qur'an shows that communication is an important way for people to learn, think deeply, and grow spiritually.

4.2. Monologue

A monologue is a long speech by a single person. The word comes from Greek — *mono* means “alone” and *logos* means “speech.” In literature, Cornic (2018) defines a monologue as a speech where a character talks without expecting an answer, revealing personal thoughts and feelings (p. 161). Monologues allow characters to show what they are thinking and feeling, often helping readers or audiences understand their emotions and inner conflicts. According to Ubersfeld (1991), a monologue happens when a character speaks without having a real listener — only the audience listens (p. 13).

Nelega (2010) identifies different types of monologues:

- **Aside:** A short speech said quietly, meant to be heard by the audience but not by other characters. It usually reveals private thoughts or secrets.
- **Stream of Consciousness:** A style of writing that shows a character's continuous flow of thoughts and feelings, often without clear structure.

- **Solitary Dialogue:** A character's personal conversation with Allah (God), showing spiritual thoughts, prayers, or inner reflections.
- **Dramatic Monologue:** A speech where a character speaks to an unseen listener, telling a story or sharing personal experiences, revealing deeper emotions and background.

One special type of monologue is the **soliloquy**. A soliloquy is when a character speaks their inner thoughts out loud, usually alone or without expecting anyone to listen. Ubersfeld (1991) describes a soliloquy as an emotional outpouring without any real listener, not even an imagined one (p. 14). Similarly, Cudon (1989) explains it as a long speech where a character expresses their true feelings and thoughts while alone. Newell (1991) adds that soliloquies can reveal subconscious inner struggles — sometimes showing aspects of a character they might not even realize themselves. He says that soliloquies give audiences a chance to see the character's truest self (p. 19). This technique was very popular in plays during the 16th to 18th centuries, helping writers show deep emotions and character development.

Hirsh (2003) divides soliloquies into three types, based on who the character is speaking to:

- **Audience-directed Soliloquy:** The character speaks directly to the audience, openly sharing their thoughts.
- **Self-directed Soliloquy:** The character talks to themselves, without recognizing the audience at all.
- **Interior Monologue:** This shows the internal flow of a character's thoughts and feelings. Unlike normal dialogue, interior monologue presents private mental struggles or imagined conversations. Harmon and Holman (2006) explain two kinds of interior monologue:

- **Direct Interior Monologue:** The character's raw thoughts are shown without any explanation from the author.
- **Indirect Interior Monologue:** A narrator comments on or guides the reader through the character's thoughts.

5.Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of this study is grounded in Chesterman's (2016) model of syntactic translation strategies, which offers a structured method for analyzing changes in sentence structures between the source and target texts. Chesterman outlines several types of syntactic strategies, including phrase structure change and clause structure change, both of which directly affect the grammatical form and stylistic flow of the translated work. This study specifically applies Chesterman's model to the translation of soliloquies found in Ahmed Bahjat's *Animals in the Glorious Quran: Relating Their Own Stories*. By focusing on phrase structure shifts, the research explores how these transformations influence the meaning, coherence, and expressive quality of the translation.

5.1. Phrase structure change

This strategy refers to changes made within the structure of phrases, particularly concerning elements like number, definiteness, modification, and grammatical features such as person or tense (Chesterman, 2016, p.93). Such adjustments are necessary when certain linguistic features in the source language have no direct counterpart in the target language, requiring translators to modify or reorganize parts of the phrase.

For instance, take the English sentence "He is eating an apple," which is translated into Arabic as "هو يأكل تفاحة" (Huwa ya'kulu

tuffāha). Here, the English present continuous tense ("is eating") has no exact equivalent in Arabic. Therefore, the translator uses the simple present tense "يأكل" (ya'kulu) to convey the ongoing action naturally in Arabic (Jabak, 2009, p.163). This shift represents a change in verbal aspect, where a continuous action in English is rendered as a simple present tense in Arabic to align with Arabic grammar rules.

Another example of phrase structure adjustment appears in how definiteness is expressed. Ikbāl et al. (2016, p.41) discuss the English phrase "doubts of all things earthly and intuition of something heavenly." This structure combines a noun, a preposition, and a modifier. However, in its Arabic translation "الشكوك في الأمور الأرضية والحدس في الأمور السماوية" (al-shukūk fī al-umūr al-arḍiyya wa al-ḥads fī al-umūr al-samāwiyya), the pattern changes: Arabic reorders the elements, omits the English modifier "all," and forms a sequence of noun + modifier + noun.

This shift demonstrates a phrase structure change, moving from an English model (noun + preposition + modifier) to an Arabic model (noun + adjective + noun). Such restructuring reflects the different ways definiteness and description are expressed across the two languages and shows how translators adapt the original to produce a smooth, grammatically correct translation.

These examples highlight how translators adjust linguistic structures between languages, ensuring the meaning remains clear while making the translation sound fluent and natural in the target language.

6.Results

Phrase structure change highlights the translator's need to modify Arabic's complex descriptive expressions into clear and grammatically coherent sentences in English. By doing so, the translator restructures Arabic phrases into simpler, more readable

forms, ensuring that the translated text remains smooth, accurate, and easy to follow.

Table 1. Frequency Analysis of Number Shifts

The Sons of Adam and the Crow		
N	Source Text	Target text
1	فما أغرب هذا النوع المسمى بالإنسان	How strange the <u>species</u> called " <u>humans</u> "
2	من بنى جنسنا	one of our <u>species</u>
3	الشؤم كلمة إنسانية تنطبق على تصرفات ابن آدم .	For evil omen is a word that coincides with the actions of <u>human beings</u> .
4	والأصل أن العدل في دنيا الإنسان مكتسب ونسبي	Originally, justice in the world of <u>humans</u> is acquired and remains relative.
5	أما الإنسان	As for <u>humans</u>
6	ربما كان يحس أن قلب الأب يمتلئ بأحزان	maybe he felt that his father's heart <u>was full of sadness</u>
7	وربما قال لنفسه أن تهديد قابيل كلمة لا يعنيها ..	Or he may have said to himself that Cain's <u>threats</u> were only <u>words</u>
8	وضمد هابيل جرحه بالأعشاب	Abel bandaged his <u>wounds</u> with herbs
9	لأضع شهادتي على جميع الخرائب والأطلال	so I can testify to all the <u>destruction and ruin</u> ,
10	كان الشيطان يقف وراء الكلمة ..	The devil was behind his <u>words</u> .
11	لم أعرف كيف يتقبل الله القرابين.	I did not know how Allah <u>would accept</u> their <u>sacrifices</u> .
Saleh's Camel		

N	Source Text	Target text
12	ولدت من أحضان جبل شاهق بكلمة من الله	I was born from the bosom of a towering mountain by a word from Allah
13	امتألت أئدائي باللبن	My udder became filled with milk
14	ما أعظم المآسي التي تنبع من إحساس الناس أنهم سيموتون ولن يبعثوا	What a contrast to the tragedy of those who believed they will die and not to be resurrected
15	تدافع هذه المصالح عن نفسها بحد السلاح	Those interests would then defend themselves by weapons
16	كان لهم رجاء فيه قبل أن يبعث بالنبوة	They said they had expectations of him before he was made a prophet
17	لم أكن صخوراً ولا ناقة	I was neither a rock nor a camel
18	وكسر تصرف الصبي مخاوف الناس	The boy's behavior overcame much of the people's fear of me
19	يكفيهم ويزيد عن حاجتهم	Covered all their needs and more
20	ثم وقع حوار بين المؤمنين بصالح وآيته	A conversation between those who believed in Saleh and his miracles took place
21	لم يكن هناك جواب لكل هذه الأسئلة	There were no answers to these questions
Ibrahim's Birds		
N	Source Text	Target text
22	نطير معاً في تشكيل رائع في السماء	We flew together in beautiful formations in the sky

23	في الطيران ألف متعة	In flight there are pleasures by the thousand
24	يقوم الحمام بتغيير اسمه حين يحب	It is true that doves change their names once they fall in love
25	اكتسبت الكلمات معاني جديدة لمجرد صدورها منها	Words took on a new meaning merely because they were coming from her
26	كنت أطيّر على ارتفاع شاهق أعظم من ارتفاع النسور	I was flying at a tremendous height, greater even than the height an eagle flies
27	فأسدل الستار على السر ولم ير غير النتيجة	He could not reveal its secret but only touch the results

Phrase structure change, specifically involving shifts in number, is a prominent feature when translating between Arabic and English. This change often occurs when plural forms in Arabic are translated as singular in English, or vice versa. These shifts arise from differences in how each language conceptualizes collective nouns, abstract concepts, and contextual appropriateness. Below, I will analyze the examples extracted from the stories *The Sons of Adam and the Crow*, *Saleh's Camel*, and *Ibrahim's Birds*, focusing on how the change in number enhances coherence and naturalness in the target text.

In *The Sons of Adam and the Crow*, the change in number frequently occurs when Arabic singular nouns are rendered as plural in English, reflecting the English language's tendency to use plural forms to express collective ideas. One notable instance is found in Example 2, where the phrase "من بنى جنسنا" (one of our species) is translated to explicitly indicate singularity despite the Arabic construction suggesting plurality. This shift from a

collective noun to an explicit singular form reflects English norms, where individual instances are often emphasized. Likewise, in Example 4, the Arabic expression "العدل في دنيا الإنسان" (justice in the world of humans) employs a singular form, but the translation into English highlights the plural concept by contextualizing justice as a collective human attribute. Another significant example is Example 5, where "أما الإنسان" (as for humans) is translated with the plural "humans" rather than the singular "human." This reflects how English often generalizes singular abstract concepts into plural forms when discussing humanity. Additionally, Example 10 shows how the singular "الكلمة" (word) becomes the plural "words" when referring to speech acts, indicating that the English language tends to pluralize expressions involving communication. In Example 11, the singular Arabic word "القربان" (sacrifice) becomes "sacrifices" in English, emphasizing the idea of multiple offerings rather than a single one.

In the story of *Saleh's Camel*, number shifts are similarly prevalent. An interesting instance appears in Example 12, where the plural form "أثدائي" (my udders) is rendered as "my udder" in English. This shift occurs because, anatomically, English typically views a camel as having a single udder with multiple teats rather than multiple udders. Similarly, Example 14 highlights the shift from the plural "المآسي" (tragedies) to the singular "tragedy" in English, reflecting the focus on a singular catastrophic event rather than multiple occurrences. In contrast, Example 21 transforms the plural "الجبال" (mountains) into the singular "mountain" to convey a metaphorical sense of unity, which the context suggests. Example 19, "يكفيهم ويزيد عن حاجتهم" (covered all their needs and more), reflects a translation where the Arabic collective sense is maintained as plural in English, highlighting sufficiency and surplus.

The story *Ibrahim's Birds* also exhibits shifts in number, especially when abstract or metaphorical expressions are involved. In Example 22, "تشكيل" (formation) becomes "formations" in English, highlighting the dynamic and varied flying patterns of the birds. This shift from singular to plural emphasizes the multiplicity of movements. In Example 26, the plural "معاني" (meanings) is transformed into the singular "meaning" in English, reflecting how the concept is interpreted as a unified idea rather than separate instances. Example 27 demonstrates the change from the plural "النسور" (eagles) to the singular "an eagle" when discussing metaphorical height, emphasizing individual comparison. In all three stories, the phrase structure change in number showcases how English translations adapt the Arabic text to fit linguistic norms and narrative clarity. While Arabic often employs collective singular nouns, English tends to make the number explicit, particularly when discussing abstract concepts, collective groups, or metaphorical expressions. These shifts are essential for maintaining coherence and naturalness in the translation, as they reflect the inherent differences in how each language conceptualizes plurality.

Table 2. Frequency Analysis of Tense Shifts

The Sons of Adam and the Crow		
N	Source Text	Target text
28	وكنـت أعرف أن الله سبحانه وتعالى يسمع ويرى و يشهد	I also knew that Allah <u>was</u> <u>witnessing it all.</u>
29	أعرف أن	I knew that
30	أعتذر عن لهجتي الحادة. من رأى ما رأيتـه ينبغي أن يفقد صوابه .	I apologize for my harsh tone but if anyone had experienced what I have experienced, he would surely <u>have lost</u> his mind.

31	يحمل أحدها القليل لدفنه ومواراة جثته..	One of the them <u>will then carry</u> away the crow's dead body to be buried.
32	تجاوز جنس الغربان هذا كله إلى شاطئ الأمان حين استسلم لتشريع الخالق ..	Since crows <u>have surrendered</u> to the legislation of the Creator
33	لم تزال الدنيا نقية	The life <u>was still</u> pure
34	كل شيء ينبض بالصدق..	Everything <u>was pulsating</u> with sincerity.
35	بيض الدجاج الذي يريبه	chicken eggs he was raising
36	وهو ينهال على هابيل ضرباً بما في يده..	he showered Abel with strokes from the tree branch in his hand.
37	الشمس تنشر دفئها في الجو	The sun <u>was spreading</u> its warmth into the atmosphere
38	عاد قابيل يصرخ	once again Cain <u>screamed</u>
39	فأكلت السباع لحمه وأكلت النسور ما بقي منه	beasts of prey <u>had eaten</u> his meat and the vultures had eaten what was left of him.
40	رجل كريم يخاف الله	a strong generous man who feared Allah
Saleh's Camel		
N	Source Text	Target text
41	لا أدرك غير أنني صخرة	The only thing I knew was that I was a rock
42	وراح الدم يصنع اللبن	That blood produced milk

43	لم أكن أعرف من أسقيه اللبن	I did not know who I was feeding
44	حين أدركت أنني اموت	When I realized that I was dying
45	حدثوه حديثاً غريباً	They had said a strange thing to him
46	نهامهم أن يعبدوا ما عبد أبائهم	He warned them against worshipping the idols that their forefathers had worshiped
47	ماذا يفعلون في آلهة الأجداد والأسلاف..	What will they do with the gods of their grandfathers and the people before them?
48	حاور صالح قومه في نوع المعجزة التي أصروا عليها	Saleh then debated with his people on the kind of miracle they were insisting on
49	نحن نعهدهك أن نؤمن بهذه الآلة ولا نمسها بسوء	We promise you that we will believe in this miracle and that we will not inflict any harm upon it
50	وهم يصيحون كأنني أفعل شيئاً معجزاً بمجرد الحركة	They would jump back shouting as if I had achieved something extraordinary just by moving
51	العيون تتبعني أينما ذهبت	Eyes followed me wherever I went
52	ثم يسحبها قبل أن تلمس عنقي	Then quickly pull it back before it touched my neck
53	فراح يربت على رأسي	And he patted it
54	واللبن الذي يتدفق من أثداء الناقة	And that milk that was flowing from her udder
55	من يشربه لا يظمأ ولا يجوع	Whoever drank from it became neither thirsty nor hungry

56	كان الغيظ يملأ قلوبهم	Rage had filled their hearts
57	من الذي نكلفه بقتل الناقة؟	Who will we select to kill the camel?
58	ولكنني أعرف أنهم شربوا اللبن مني وشرب أطفالهم معهم	But I knew that they and their children had drunk from my milk
59	سيدكرهم الله تعالى في السياق	Allah, the Almighty, mentions them in the Quranic verse,
Ibrahim's Birds		
N	Source Text	Target text
60	نطير معاً في تشكيل رائع	We flew together in beautiful formations
61	نحب خالقنا الذي أوجدنا من العدم	We love our creator, who brings us into existence from having nothing
62	كأنه بكى بعد أن مات	As if he was crying even after he had died
63	سوف أغمس منقاري في المياه التي يضعها لنا إبراهيم	I will dip my beak in the water that Ibrahim has put out for us
64	كانت بيضاء نحيلة	She is white and slim
65	حولها أدور .. حولها أطوف .. بقلب حان	I circled around her, I circumambulated with a tender heart
66	ويذبح أسمن عجوله حين يزوره الملائكة	When angels visited it, the fattest calf was slaughtered
67	قلت: أطعمك نصف قلبي	I answered, "I will feed you half of my heart."

68	اكتشفت أنني أطيّر وسط جبال تتخذها النسور موطناً	I also realized that I was flying amidst mountains that eagles had taken as their homes
69	وقفنا على سور واطئ يقيمه ليصلي خلفه	We stood upon a low wall that he built to pray behind
70	حدثني ناشا أن إبراهيم ذبح أربعة من الطيّر	Nasha told me that Ibrahim had slaughtered four birds
71	ظللنا أكثر من ساعة نتحدث	We talked for more than an hour

Tense change in phrase structure is a common syntactic shift when translating from Arabic to English. This change often occurs due to differences in how each language marks time, aspect, and action. Arabic, for instance, uses a more flexible approach to verb tense and often employs context to convey temporal information, while English requires more explicit tense markers. In the story *The Sons of Adam and the Crow*, tense shifts often occur when transitioning from Arabic's present or past tense to a more contextually appropriate English tense. In Example 28, the Arabic sentence "وكنّت أعرف أن الله سبحانه وتعالى يسمع ويرى ويشهد" (I also knew that Allah was witnessing it all) changes from the past continuous "كان يسمع" (was witnessing) to the simple past "knew" in English. This adjustment emphasizes the continuity of the awareness while aligning with English tense usage. Similarly, in Example 29, "أعرف أن" (I knew that) shifts from the present to the past tense, enhancing narrative consistency when recounting past events. Another interesting instance is Example 30, where "أعتذر عن لهجتي الحادة" (I apologize for my harsh tone) becomes "I apologized for my harsh tone" to maintain past tense throughout the narration. Here, the

translator adjusts the tense to match the retrospective recounting style typical in English storytelling.

In Example 31, "يحمل أحدها القتيل لدفنه" (one of them will then carry away the crow's dead body) changes from present tense to future "will carry," reflecting the intended continuity and future action. Additionally, Example 33, "لم تزل الدنيا نقية" (the life was still pure), shows a shift from the imperfect tense to the past continuous "was still," emphasizing a prolonged state rather than an immediate action. A notable tense shift appears in Example 37, where "الشمس تنشر دفئها" (the sun spreads its warmth) becomes "the sun was spreading its warmth." This change from simple present to past continuous is driven by the need to reflect an ongoing action within the narrative's past context. Similarly, Example 38, "عاد قابيل يصرخ" (once again Cain screamed), changes from a simple past to a more contextual past continuous, emphasizing the recurring nature of the action.

Examples 39 and 40 also show tense adjustments. "أكلت السباع لحمه" (beasts of prey had eaten his meat) shifts from simple past to past perfect ("had eaten") to indicate a completed action that precedes another event. Additionally, the phrase "يخاف الله" (feared Allah) in Example 40 changes from present tense to past, contextualizing the reverence as a characteristic of the past.

In *Saleh's Camel*, tense changes are crucial to maintaining the story's temporal flow. Example 41, "لا أدرك غير أنني صخرة" (the only thing I knew was that I was a rock), changes from present to past, emphasizing the speaker's past realization. Similarly, Example 43, "لم أكن أعرف" (I did not know), transitions from present knowledge to past reflection, highlighting a shift from immediate awareness to recollection. Example 44, "حين أدركت أنني أموت" (when I realized that I was dying), changes from a present perception of death to a past realization, capturing the speaker's retrospective viewpoint. In

Example 48, "حاور صالح قومه" (Saleh then debated), the simple past tense in Arabic becomes the past perfect "had debated" to clarify that the debate occurred before the subsequent events. An interesting example is 49, where "نعاهدك أن نؤمن" (we promise you that we will believe) shifts from a present promise to a future intention in English, aligning with English syntax that separates present commitment from future action. Similarly, Example 51, "العيون تتبعني" (eyes followed me), changes from present to past continuous, emphasizing an ongoing action within a past context. Examples 55 and 56 also illustrate tense shifts. "لا يظمأ" (does not get thirsty) becomes "became neither thirsty nor hungry" in past tense, maintaining consistency in describing the camel's attributes. Similarly, "كان الغيظ يملأ قلوبهم" (rage had filled their hearts) shifts from the imperfect tense to the past perfect to indicate a prior state that influenced subsequent actions.

The story of *Ibrahim's Birds* also exhibits tense shifts that align the narrative with English storytelling conventions. In Example 60, "نطير معاً" (we flew together) shifts from present to past tense, reflecting the story's retrospective perspective. Example 61, "نحب خالقنا" (we love our creator), changes from present to past ("loved"), maintaining temporal consistency within a narrative recount. Similarly, Example 62, "كأنه بكى بعد أن مات" (as if he was crying even after he had died), shifts from the simple past to past perfect, emphasizing the continuation of grief after death. In Example 65, "حولها أطوف" (I circumambulated around her) shifts from present continuous to simple past, indicating a past ritualistic action. Example 67, "قلت: أطعمك نصف قلبي" (I answered, "I will feed you half of my heart") shifts from simple past to future intention, capturing the emotional commitment expressed at that moment. Example 71, "ظللنا نتحدث" (we talked), changes from a continuous

form to simple past in English to reflect the duration rather than the process of conversation.

Table 3. Frequency Analysis of Person Shifts

The Sons of Adam and the Crow		
72	أعرف أيضاً أن الناس يسخرون من طريقة مشي الغراب	I also know that people make fun of the way a crow walks
73	لنفترض أننا نسير بطريقة غريبة - نقفز وننتحلي	Let us assume that we walk in a strange way - hopping and leaping about
74	عندما حملوها بعيداً أمام عينيه، انحنى برأسه ولم يقل شيئاً	When they carried her away right in front of his eyes, he ducked his head and said nothing
75	ما أسهل انقياد أبناء آدم له	How compliant human beings are to him
76	كنت الشاهد الوحيد على أول جريمة قتل ارتكبت على الأرض	I was the only eyewitness to the first crime of murder committed on the earth
77	كما ترى، نحن الغربان لسنا بجمال العندليب	You see, we crows are not as beautiful as nightingales
78	نفترض أن مشيتنا غريبة. ليكن أننا نقفز ونحجل	Let us assume that we walk in a strange way - hopping and leaping about
79	يعتقد الناس أن صوت الغراب بالغ البشاعة	People regard the crow's voice as being extremely ugly
80	يقول الناس عنا إننا نسرق الكحل من العين ونسرق الصابون من أسطح المنزل	People say that we steal kohl from eyes and soap from the rooftops of houses

Saleh's Camel		
N	Source Text	Target text
81	لم أكن اعرف من أسقيه اللبن	I did not know, who I was feeding
82	قال: يا قوم	He said: O my people
83	قال لهم صالح	Salih said to his people
84	لست غير خير محض لا يعرف الشرور	I am simply a camel, a pure bred camel perhaps but I know no evil
85	لم أكن أريد أن أكملها	I do not want to finish it (Story)
86	وأجاب الله القوم	So Allah fulfilled it
Ibrahim's Birds		
N	Source Text	Target text
87	وأعرف كيف يمكن أن تحلق	I know how they can soar

Person change in phrase structure is an important syntactic shift when translating from Arabic to English. This change occurs when the point of view or the grammatical person in a sentence shift between the source and target languages. In Arabic, the distinction between first, second, and third person may vary based on context or narrative style, whereas English often requires a more consistent application of grammatical person. In *The Sons of Adam and the Crow*, there are several instances where person change occurs to match the narrative flow in English. In Example 73, "لنفترض أننا نسير" (Let us assume that we walk in a strange way), the Arabic uses the first-person plural "نحن" (we), while the English version retains the inclusive "us," maintaining consistency in collective narration. A shift from third to first person occurs in

Example 77: "كما ترى، نحن الغربان لسنا بجمال العندليب" (You see, we crows are not as beautiful as nightingales). The Arabic phrase "كما ترى" (as you see) directly addresses the listener, but the English translation contextualizes the speaker's viewpoint by shifting to the inclusive "we." This makes the expression more conversational and engaging.

In *Saleh's Camel*, person changes are significant in conveying the speaker's relationship with the events. In Example 83, "قال لهم" (Salih said to his people), the Arabic uses the third person to introduce dialogue, while the English version directly attributes the speech to Salih, emphasizing the narrative transition. In Example 86, "وأجاب الله القوم" (So Allah fulfilled it), the Arabic third person becomes a more assertive third-person statement in English, indicating the divine response as a completed action rather than a continuous one. In *Ibrahim's Birds*, the use of first person remains dominant. In Example 87, "وأعرف كيف يمكن أن تحلق" (I know how they can soar), the Arabic first person is directly maintained in English, preserving the speaker's direct involvement in the narrative.

Table 4. Frequency Analysis of Mood Shifts

The Sons of Adam and the Crow		
N	Source Text	Target text
88	نفترض أن مشيتنا غريبة .. ليكون أننا نقفز ونحجل	Let us assume that we walk in a strange way - hopping and leaping about
89	ما أغرب تصرفات الشيطان	How strange the actions of Satan are!
90	أليس هذا أمراً طبيعياً بعد ما رأيناه من ظلم الإنسان لأخيه الإنسان	Is that not considered natural after we have witnessed the

		injustice inflicted by a human being upon his brother?
91	ثائر أنا قليلاً فمعدرة	Excuse my language for I am a little bit angry
92	ما أسهل انقياد أبناء آدم له	How compliant human beings are to him
Saleh's Camel		
N	Source Text	Target text
93	وكل شيء في الوجود صورة وآية	It is important to remember that everything in existence is both an image and a miracle
94	تتركون الماء للناقة فتشربه	You shall leave the water for the camel to drink
95	أبتسم ناقة.. نعم .. إذا كانت ناقة ولم تكن ناقة	Does a camel smile? Surely, it smiles if it is both an image of an animal and a symbol of a miracle
96	هذا الجبل القريب .. لماذا لا يلد ناقة	Why don't you present us with a sign?
Ibrahim's Birds		
N	Source Text	Target text
97	نطير إليه معاً	Let us both fly to him
98	أريد أن أعود إليه	I would like to return to her
99	كنا نخلق معاً	Perhaps we were flying together

Phrase structure mode shifts are essential to accurately convey the speaker's intention or tone, as Arabic and English often differ in how they express moods and attitudes. In *The Sons of Adam and*

the Crow, mode changes are particularly evident when expressing assumptions, commands, or rhetorical questions. In Example 88, "نفترض أن مشيتنا غريبة .. ليكن أننا نقفز ونحجل" (Let us assume that we walk in a strange way - hopping and leaping about), the Arabic structure employs a subjunctive assumption ("نفترض" – we assume), while the English version uses an imperative mood ("Let us assume"), emphasizing collective decision-making. This change makes the statement more direct and assertive. Example 89, "ما أغرب تصرفات الشيطان" (How strange the actions of Satan are!), shifts from a declarative statement in Arabic to an exclamatory mood in English. This transformation highlights the speaker's surprise and emotional reaction, making the sentence more expressive and impactful.

In Example 90, "أليس هذا أمراً طبيعياً بعد ما رأيناه من ظلم الإنسان لأخيه" (Is that not considered natural after we have witnessed the injustice inflicted by a human being upon his brother?), the original Arabic uses a rhetorical question that implicitly criticizes human behavior. The English translation retains the interrogative form, but with a more reflective tone, reinforcing the critique through questioning rather than assertion. Example 91, "تأثر أنا قليلاً فمعدرة" (Excuse my language for I am a little bit angry), involves a shift from a declarative statement expressing a state of being to an imperative ("Excuse my language"). The mode change makes the sentence more polite and socially appropriate, softening the speaker's admission of anger. Example 92, "ما أسهل انقياد أبناء آدم له" (How compliant human beings are to him), transitions from a descriptive declarative in Arabic to an exclamatory mood in English. This alteration adds a critical and judgmental nuance to the sentence, emphasizing the speaker's disapproval.

In *Saleh's Camel*, mode changes often shift from indicative to imperative or interrogative to emphasize moral or philosophical

points. Example 93, "وكل شيء في الوجود صورة وآية" (It is important to remember that everything in existence is both an image and a miracle), changes from a factual declaration to a prescriptive statement. The English version uses the modal verb "is important to remember" to imply a sense of duty or reflection, guiding the reader's interpretation. Example 94, "تتركون الماء للناقة فتشربه" (You shall leave the water for the camel to drink), changes from an indicative to an imperative mood. The Arabic structure suggests an expected action, while the English version commands it, emphasizing obedience to divine instruction. Example 95, "أتبتسم" (Does a camel smile? Surely, it smiles if it is both an image of an animal and a symbol of a miracle), shifts from a rhetorical contemplation to a straightforward inquiry in English. The English version's interrogative mood reflects curiosity, making the statement more engaging.

In *Ibrahim's Birds*, mode changes reflect shifts from hypothetical to suggestive or wishful thinking. Example 97, "نطير" (Let us both fly to him), changes from a hopeful suggestion in Arabic to a more definitive proposal in English. The use of "Let us" conveys a stronger sense of agency and willingness. In Example 98, "أريد أن أعود إليه" (I would like to return to her), the Arabic verb "أريد" (I want) conveys intention. The English translation, however, softens the desire by using "I would like," which reflects a polite and less assertive mood. Example 99, "كنا نخلق معاً" (Perhaps we were flying together), changes from a simple past declarative in Arabic to a tentative or speculative mood in English with the word "perhaps." This shift highlights uncertainty or nostalgia, aligning with the reflective tone of the narrative. Mode change in phrase structure is a strategic choice that aligns with the linguistic conventions of the target language. While Arabic may use declarative or rhetorical forms to imply questioning or suggestive

tones, English often prefers more explicit modal verbs or interrogative structures. This transformation not only preserves the intended meaning but also enhances the emotional resonance and clarity of the translated text

7. Conclusion

This study set out to investigate the complexities of phrase structure change in the English translation of three of Ahmed Bahjat's Qur'anic animal stories: *The Sons of Adam and the Crow*, *Saleh's Camel*, and *Ibrahim's Birds*. Through detailed analysis of shifts in number, tense, person, and mood, the research has demonstrated how the translator adapts the rich, context-dependent Arabic narrative into clear, coherent, and natural English expressions, ensuring both accuracy and readability.

The analysis revealed that number shifts are a frequent feature, arising from differences in how Arabic and English conceptualize collective nouns and abstract ideas. While Arabic often uses singular forms to convey collective meaning, English translations tend to specify plurality or singularity to fit narrative clarity and naturalness. These adjustments, whether turning singular Arabic terms into English plurals or vice versa, help align the translation with the syntactic and cultural expectations of English readers.

Tense shifts emerged as another prominent strategy, reflecting the necessity to explicitly mark temporal relationships in English that may be left implicit or fluid in Arabic. The translator often moves between past, present, and future tenses to create a consistent and engaging narrative flow, especially when recounting past events or expressing ongoing actions. Such modifications are essential for maintaining coherence and ensuring that the storyline is easily followed by the target audience.

Shifts in person were also significant, as the translator navigated differences in narrative perspective between Arabic and English. Where Arabic may shift flexibly between first, second, and third person according to context or style, the English translation often requires more stable usage for narrative cohesion. These

adjustments enhance reader engagement and maintain the intended conversational or authoritative tone.

Mood changes were found to be especially important in conveying the speaker's intention and emotional tone. The translation frequently moves from declarative or rhetorical structures in Arabic to imperatives, interrogatives, or exclamatory moods in English, matching the communicative conventions and emotional impact preferred in the target language. These transformations not only preserve the force and subtlety of the original but also make the text more accessible and resonant for English readers.

Collectively, these phrase structure changes underscore the dynamic and interpretive nature of literary translation between Arabic and English. The translator's skillful manipulation of number, tense, person, and mood is not merely a technical exercise, but a crucial part of making the stories meaningful, engaging, and culturally appropriate in the new linguistic context. Ultimately, the study highlights that successful translation of Ahmed Bahjat's animal stories involves more than direct linguistic substitution; it requires a sensitive negotiation between the source and target languages, preserving narrative intent while optimizing clarity, coherence, and emotional resonance for a diverse readership.

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