

Exploring English Translations of Quran, Chapter Al-Falaq with an Explanatory Model of Word Selection via take a look at Google Translate Chosen Words

Authors: Hasan Alimi Baktash¹, Mohammad Hussein Amiri²

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Abstract

Background and objectives: This study demonstrate the impact of cyberspace and its facilities, such as Google Translate, on the boundless realm of English translations. Particularly English translations of the most sophisticated text like a chapter (Al-Falaq) of Quran has been targeted to analyze cyberspace role in this regard.

Methods: In form of tables, 57 translation of Quran including the one offered by Google Translate has been gathered. These translations were being compared in tables with four section:

1. Translasion,
2. Translators,
3. Number of translations,
4. Percent of frequency.

Then section 2 eliminated and delivered to the references. Considering the numbers and percentages after each table a discussion about the meaning and regulations of words in Arabic language is appeared and offered the best equivalence for each word. In comparison with the Google Translate suggestions these discussions indicate how much it is efficient,

1. Professor of AL-Mustafa International University,
alimihasan@gmail.com

2. Researcher of The Howzeh Language Center of Qom,
m.h.a.i.f.sh@gmail.com

reliable and qualified to use Google translate as a tool of cyberspace for convey the meanings.

Result and conclusion: Based on findings of the article and comparable tables, the preferred translation for Chapter Al-Falaq is as following:

In the name of Allah, the All- merciful, the Gracious.

1. Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of daybreak.
2. and from the evil of whatever He has created.
3. and from the darkness when it falls.
4. and from those who blow in the knots.
5. and from the envier when he envies.

In conclusion according to preferred translation above and its analogy with Google Translate suggested words it seems that Google translate is yet to be a perfect machine capable of giving the suitable translations and a translator with a reasonable sense of distinction between similar conditions and parts of speech cannot yet be replaced by a translation machine with no senses.

Key Words: English Translations of Quran, Chapter Al-Falaq, Model of Word Selection, Google Translate, Chosen Words

Introduction

Google Translate is a free multilingual machine translation service developed by Google, to translate text, speech, images, sites, or real-time video from one language into another.

Google Translate supports over 100 various languages at different levels and as of May 2013, serves over 200 million people daily.

Rather than translating languages directly, it first translates text to English and then to the target language.

During a translation, it looks for patterns in millions of documents to help decide on an equivalence which is the best and the most accurate fit for phrases.

Since its accuracy has been criticized and ridiculed on several occasions, In November 2016, Google tend to switch the Google translate to a neural machine translation engine - Google Neural Machine Translation (GNMT) - which translates “whole sentences at a time, rather than just piece by piece. It uses this broader context to help it figure out the most relevant translation, which it then rearranges and adjusts to be more like a human speaking with proper grammar”.

Islam according to its content is not just a religion for one region of earth like Mecca and its surrounding, but it speaks to the whole world.

It claims that has a lifestyle for mankind or in other words it means that Islam has a universal program and it is a universal religion.

Islam talks to humans through the Quran, its sacred book, which definitely should be universal as well as the religion.

You see, to be universal is to have association with global items and issues and finally a global language like English. In other words, to reach Islam's message all over the world it should be translated into other widespread languages.

English language as an international language could be one other thing that matters here. In this regard, English language, consider as a suitable tool to spread this worldwide way of thinking and living.

It seems that a book like Quran is so complex in term of linguistic, so there should not be an expectation of translations in which bring into our minds the exact meaning of Quran or the whole meanings of it, as each part might consist of numerous meanings.

Even Arab people cannot notice the deep meaning of it. Other factors like: the long time from when Quran was brought to us and today's world and different way of conveying the meanings in Arabic and English, have a huge impact on making our problem deeper.

As Quran was sent for common sense, what the majority of translators were deciding for one word could expose what human minds understand from that particular word, And considering the fact that Quran “was” sent for humankind it could be the best translation which has a lot in common with purpose of its sender.

Nevertheless, may be some say that other particular translation, according to scholars opinion, is better but it is not what the common sense or human minds understand from Quran - The Quran which was sent for human minds.

Through our search, near 57 English translation of Quran was found, in exploration for the best one.

In some cases similarity were seen in huge or small scales, And other time, world of differences between translations.

This comparison tries to reveal the best translation of Quran and what is the majority of people would rather to be an equivalence for one word, And how much cyberspace and its tools like Google translate could help us through this journey.

These result could help English researchers who's looking for best translation of the Holy Quran, Islamic researchers and also linguistics that interested in such issues as it can help them with new ideas or clues pop up in their minds, worthy to be used for solving linguistics issues.

Review of Literature

It can comfortably be concluded that the Quran as a central text tends to cause very serious problems and difficulties for translators in terms of understanding, interpreting and translating certain theological concepts due to the linguistic sophistication of the Arabic language used

in the text on the one hand, and the theological, sociocultural, psychological, spiritual and melodic dimensions of the Quranic word.¹

As an international language, English translations need more investigation in order to reduce its mistakes in compare with Quran's translation in other languages.

Due to the existence of the British Empire which after the Ottomans had the largest number of Muslim subjects, English was deemed the most important language for the Muslim purpose.²

About more than eighty percent of about 1.5 billion population of the Muslims do not know Arabic and use translation as a means to understand the meanings and messages of the Holy Quran.

A considerable amount of these Muslims read the *English* translations of this Holy Book. So it seems necessary to pay due attention to the way these translations are done.³

It's been told that there is still a need for more fluent translation of Quran in English even though a remarkable number for Quran's translations exist.

Although there is a spate of volumes on the multi-faceted dimensions of the Quran, no substantial work has so far been done to critically examine the mass of existing English translations of the Quran.⁴

The Muslim Scripture is yet to find a dignified and faithful expression in the English language that matches the majesty and grandeur of the original.

1. Halimah.

2. Kidwai, 1987

3. Asadi Amjad, 2013.

4. Kidwai, Ibid.

The currents of history, however, seem to be in favor of such a development; Even English is acquiring a native Muslim character and it is only a matter of time before we have a worthy translation of the Qur'an in that tongue.¹

Despite the immediate need for an acceptable English translation of Quran, there are some problems which most of the translators are dealing with. Firstly, there is no complete equivalence between the corresponding linguistic items of the two language systems, Arabic and English in the case of this study.

The problem is even aggravated as the Quranic Arabic is a Quranic-specific language.²

The difficulty and problem in translating from one language into another is posed by the concept of non-equivalence, or lack of equivalence (Baker).

Since the Holy Quran has many beautiful features in terms of both form and content, no single translated version can ever encapsulate all these features; Even no combination of all translated versions can ever cover all the beautiful features of the original text.

Therefore, it can be suggested that it cannot suffice to read only one translated version of the Holy Quran for those who do not know the original language; Although the non-native speakers of Arabic cannot receive the same effect as that created on the original readers, the more successful translated versions they read, the more approximate they become to the original text.³

1. Kidwai, 1987.

2. Asadi Amjad, 2013.

3. Ibid.

Saffarzadeh, argues that the greatest values of the Holy Quran which many commentators and translators have failed to translate justly and accurately are Divine Names known as *Asmā ul Hosnā* in Arabic.¹

This factor, she believes, is the major flaw which has caused confusion and brought about an evident sign of incompleteness of the meanings of the Words of Revelations throughout the Holy Quran.

She maintains that “any translation void of attention to these meanings which usually confirm and complete each verse loses a substantial part of its validity”.²

Except syntactic and semantic confusions, culture-bound expressions raise various translation problems.³

Translation of cultural expressions is problematic, for the fact that the formation of such expressions is highly influenced by culture.

It should be pointed out that certain expressions can be similar in different cultures, but are observed and viewed differently by people belonging to those cultures.⁴

In the Qur’anic discourse, the divine text reflects some social activities of Arabs in the pre-Islamic period; the expressions that denote such social acts and events are hard to fully obtain in translation because of their cultural idiosyncrasies.⁵

It can be said that culture-bound expressions in the Qur’an can pose translation difficulties. What made some expressions difficult to convey is their historical, cultural, social, and regional grounds.⁶

1. Saffarzadeh, 2001, P. 1542.

2. Asadi Amjad, 2013.

3. Catford, 1965.

4. Bakri Al-Azzam, Mohammed Al-Ahaydib, Eman Al-Huqail, 2015.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

Methodology

The first step is to find related translations - in this project it is *FLAGH* chapter - of Quran as much as possible.

The more translation you can find the more thorough your research would be, because the wider statistical population the more details will be covered.

57 is the number of translation which through our search was found from various translators from early 17th century up to more recent ones.

Then all have been organized in a table in form of an excel files so we can sort each translators terms for each verse in groups; So that we have a group of translation for each verse.

In order to give a number for frequency of each translation of each word, it should be provide a specific table with four columns:

1. Translation term,
2. Translators name,
3. Number of same translation,
4. Percent of frequency.

This table help us decide which term is a better translation base on statistical information and to provide it, the translation group in excel file that have been mentioned was a remarkable help.

In this tables in some cases it have been provide a very precise distinguish between terms, for instance the word (say) is in different group from (SAY) due to its different effect on the meaning in professional translation world.

It's been tried to imply issue that this article going to speak of in the introduction.

So the basic bone of what the introduction supposed to express is: The very state of Quran in world, importance of an international language and specifically English, the problem we are encounter with and what is the point of this article.

Then to have record of what had been done on same issue by previous researchers and experts, several article have been gathered and studied.

After studying different articles on a related subject, a group of quotations which belongs to linguistics and researchers, was gathered to form a section entitled “review of literature”.

Note: In fact, this study is based on literal and superficial meaning of text rather than its interpretation based on the Holy Quran exegeses or Islamic narrations.

Analyzing the Translation of the Chapter FALAQ (The Daybreak)

- Bismillahi rrahmani rrahim

This part is not considered as a verse, except in the first chapter of Qur'an – al-Fatiha. It, however, has two basic parts:

Bi-smi-llāh (preposition + noun + noun; *Bi-* is a preposition meaning by, with, etc.; *Ism* – meaning name; *Allah* – meaning God in Islam) and *Rahmānir-rahīm* (two adjectives widely used as two qualities of God, both mean merciful but in different ways).

The word *Rahman*, as it is popularly recognized among some commentators, refers to the General Mercy of *Allah* which is bestowed upon all creatures - among them are the believers and the disbelievers, good-doers and evildoers. So, the preferred equivalent for *Rahman* could be “the All-merciful” and the word *Rahim* referring to that Specific Mercy which is endowed upon the believing, obedient servants alone.

Christian Trinitarian formula is “*In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit*”.

So the phrase 'In the name' is the exact equivalent for *bism-i* in Arabic.¹

The word *Allah* mainly used by Muslims to refer to God in Islam, and it's the most complete and comprehensive name among the God's many names.

This is because each of *Allah's* names, which are found in the Holy Qur'an, truly reflects one particular aspect of *Allah's* Attributes.

In other words, the only name that refers to all of His attributes is *Allah*.

There is no god but *Allah*; and each of the other phrases such as "Creator", alone, is not sufficient enough to proclaim as evidence of Monotheism in Islam and that is why in religions other than Islam, the God of Muslims is referred to as *Allah*.

The words *Rahman* and *Rahim* are adjectives, both derived from *Allah* which means mercy and grace.

Two vital religious terms whose meanings are often misunderstood?

According to the Bible exegesis, mercy is when God doesn't give us what we do deserve (as punishment) and grace is when God gives us what we don't deserve (as extra reward).²

In Habakkuk 3:2, the prophet asks the Lord to "*in wrath remember mercy*".

Despite God's judgment, He asked for God to relent and not pour out the full wrath they deserved. King David sought this mercy in Psalm 51:1-2 in confessing his sin:

"Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin."

1. <http://www.al-islam.org>

2. <http://www.compellingtruth.org/mercy-grace.html>

Despite his many failures, David asked God to relent and not bring upon him the full consequences of his sin. Grace, on the other hand, is God's extending favor toward us that we do not deserve. Both Ephesian 2:5 and 2:8 state it is “*by grace you have been saved*”.

God's salvation comes from His grace. Some describe grace as an unmerited or unearned favor.

In theology, two types of grace are often distinguished: common grace and saving grace.

Common grace is defined as God's grace given to all humanity regardless of their response to Him.

This can include the beauty of creation, the provision of food and other essentials, and every good thing that happens to a person regardless of whether the person is a believer or unbeliever.

Saving grace is grace from God which provides salvation to a person. This is the grace described in Ephesians 2:8-9 that states:

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

According to *Lane* (Arabic-English Lexicon Dictionary), *rahmān* has the more intensive meaning, taken to include as objects of sympathy both the believer and the unbeliever and may, therefore, be rendered as “the All-merciful” and *rahīm*; on the other hand, is taken to include as objects the believer in particular, may be rendered as “the Gracious”, And no need to add the word “All”, because the *rahim* has not that intensive meaning.¹

1. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basmala>

1. Qul aAoothu birabbi alfalaq / قل اعوذ برب الفلق

Table 1

<i>Qul</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Say:	28	49.12%
Say,	17	29.82%
SAY:	4	7.01%
Proclaim (O dear Prophet Mohammed – peace And blessings be upon him),	2	3.5%
Say [Prophet],	1	1.75%
Say thou;	1	1.75%
(Muhammad), say,	1	1.75%
Beseech:	1	1.75%
Declare:	1	1.75%
Say you,	1	1.75%

Discussion

Qul (imperative verb meaning say). The verb “Qul” as in English is one of the most used verbs in Arabic. It means to say or to tell; But the verb “tell” needs an object which is not found in the verse. So the best equivalent here is “say”.

The chosen equal for this phrase suggested by Google translate is: “Say”.

Table 2

<i>AAAoothu</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
I seek refuge	36	63.15%
I take refuge	10	17.54%
I seek protection	3	5.26%
I seek the protection	2	3.5%
I commit myself	1	1.75%
I SEEK refuge	1	1.75%
I seek shelter (and security)	1	1.75%
I look for protection	1	1.75%
I fly for refuge	1	1.75%
I betake me for refuge	1	1.75%

Discussion

A'udhu (present verb, meaning I seek refuge). The Arabic preposition *bi* before *Rabb* here called *harf'ul jarr*. It comes before a noun and always places the noun into in the genitive case *majrūr*.

According to the famous Arabic grammarian Ibn Hisham al-Ansari (D.761), the preposition “*ba*” has 14 meanings, inter alia, *ta'diyah*, *isti'anah*, *sababiyyah*, *musahabah*, *zarfiyyah*, *badal*, *mujawarah*, *isti'la*, *tab'idh*, *qasam*, *ghayah*, *tafdiyah*, *ta'kid ve za'idah*.

A'udhu is an intransitive verb and *bi* has made it transitive. And as mentioned above, one of the functions of this preposition is “*ta'diyah*” which means to make intransitive verb transitive.

Then, the collocation *audhu billah* or *audhu birabb* called *Isti'adha*, which is the state of seeking refuge to God.

The word *a'udhu* literally is derived from the Arabic verb *a-a-dh*. Its essential meaning is to flee from that which you fear will harm you to that which will safeguard you.

This is why in Arabic the one or thing you seek refuge in or protection with is named *ma'adh*.

Therefore the meaning of a'udhu is: I seek refuge, protection, guard myself and take precaution (with...).

There are two views concerning the basis of this verb a-dh: The first is that it is derived from the meaning of satara meaning: to conceal/ hide/protect.

So when you say the Isti'adha (a'udhu billahi minesha-Shaytanir-rajim), it is if you're saying "O Allah, conceal me from the gaze of the Satan/conceal me such that I am protected so that no Satan can influence me".

The second meaning is that of Luzum al-Mujawarah meaning: sticking on to/firmly adhering to; So when say the Istiadha it is as if you want to cling on to the One who you're seeking refuge/protection with.

Your heart attaches itself to Him [not physically but in terms of the state of the heart] and holds firm just as the child sticks close to its mother when threatened by an enemy.

The chosen equal for this phrase suggested by Google translate is: "I seek refuge".

Table 1

<i>Birabbi</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
with the Lord of	22	38.59%
in the Lord of	15	26.31%
of the One Who creates	2	3.5%
with the Sustainer of	1	1.75%
to Allah the Creator of	1	1.75%
of the Lord of	1	1.75%
with The Lord of	1	1.75%
from the Lord of	1	1.75%
with the Lord (Rab , the Cherisher)	1	1.75%
with the Rabb of	1	1.75%
with (Allah), the Lord of	1	1.75%
with the Guardian Evolver of	1	1.75%
of the Master of	1	1.75%
in Lord of	1	1.75%
in the Lord (Who makes)	1	1.75%
with/by Lord/master/owner (of)	1	1.75%
with (Allah) the Lord of	1	1.75%
unto the Lord of	1	1.75%
to the Lord of the	1	1.75%
of the Fosterer of	1	1.75%
with Rabb of	1	1.75%

Discussion

Bi-Rabbi'l Falaq (preposition+ noun + noun. bi means by/with/in; Rabb means Lord).

The word Rabb originally means the owner of something who proceeds to train and improve it.

This word is absolutely applied to Allah, alone, and if it is applied, in Arabic, for other than Him, it is certainly used in a possessive form, as rabb-ud-dar the landlord. In any case, the word, itself, conveys the meaning of fostering, bringing up and training.

There is another idea mentioned in *Majma'-ul-Bayan* that says: Rabb means an important person whose orders are obeyed; However, Rabb covers such a wide meaning that other languages lack an equivalent of the word.¹

Considering the Torah and the Bible, and comparing them with the Holy Quran it can be concluded that the sense and feeling that they have toward the word “Lord” is as same as our feeling and impression about the word Rabb.

Moreover, according to Longman Dictionary, Lord is a title of God, used when praying, exactly like rabbana for Muslims, and also he is someone who must be obeyed, as it mentioned above to be one of rabb’s meanings.

The chosen equal for this phrase suggested by Google translate is: “in the Lord of”.

Table 4

<i>Alfalag</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
the dawn	9	15.78%
the daybreak	7	12.28%
the Daybreak	6	10.52%
Daybreak	6	10.52%
the Dawn	5	8.77%
daybreak	3	5.26%
the rising dawn	2	3.5%
day-break	2	3.5%
the rising day	2	3.5%
Divinity	1	1.75%
Dawn	1	1.75%
the dawn and the incipient gleam	1	1.75%
rising day	1	1.75%
the Daybreak, (Literally: the Splitting “of the day”)	1	1.75%
the Rising Dawn	1	1.75%

1. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basmala>

the nascent dawn	1	1.75%
daybreak (or Who brought the universe into existence with an explosion extremely fast)	1	1.75%
the Master of the morning twilight	1	1.75%
the Down (appear from the depth of darkness)	1	1.75%
the daybreak/creation	1	1.75%
the day break, and the plain appearing and emergence of truth	1	1.75%
the DAY BREAK	1	1.75%
the Day break	1	1.75%
the day break	1	1.75%

Discussion

Falaq means daybreak/dawn.

Falaq has a lot of meanings. It literally means a break or a slot between two things. It derived from f-l-q meaning to split an object in two halves.¹

Then, used for daybreak and dawn – the time at the beginning of the day when light first appears.

According to Allameh Tabatabai: *Falaq* is a *sifat-i mushabbaha* which used here as an *ism-i maf'ul*. Thus, it means the part of night that has broken by the light.

This word is often used in this meaning, because the darkness is broken.²

Longman Dictionary has the same definition for “daybreak” and “dawn” as following: It is the time at the beginning of the day when light first appears.

1. Look: Lisan al Arab, Ibn Manzur; Mujam alfazu'l Qur'anil Karim. Article F-L-Q.

2. Tabatabai, 1397, C. 12, P. 344.

So, they are both correct; But the word “daybreak” has something in its external structure that denotes the literal meaning of *falaq* which is something has broken.

There is some sensitiveness about using punctuation in the Arabic version of Qur'an. But as long as it's being translated into the other languages and, it's a common rules to use a punctuation marks in translated text.

Which one is correct: to take refuge “*in*” or “*with*”?

To take refuge has both literal and figurative meanings. Among the literal meanings are to seek safety in a place and to seek safety in the company of another person or persons. With the former native people tend to use “*in*”: In the storm, they took refuge in a train station.

When referring to the latter, they tend to use “*with*”: Homeless people take refuge in subway shelters.

I have emphasized tend because these are not absolute divisions. You will find in religious writing, for example, “*in*” and “*with*” used almost interchangeably: Take refuge in the Lord. Take refuge with the Heavenly Father.¹

The article 'the' before Lord is necessary, because Lord is an infinite word. Plus, it should be written in capital, because any noun or pronoun refers to God should be written in capital.²

The article 'the' before daybreak is necessary, because it is an infinite word has come with “*al*” And, there is no reason to capitalize daybreak at all, if we don't pay attention to the different interpretations.

The chosen equal for this phrase suggested by Google translate is: “Divinity”.

So, the preferred translation is following: **“Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of daybreak”**.

1. <https://english.stackexchange.com>

2. Manafi Anari, 2006.

2. Min sharri ma khalaq/ من شر ما خلق

Table 5

<i>Min sharri</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
From the evil of	20	35.08%
from the evil of	13	22.80%
From the mischief of	3	5.26%
From the evils	2	3.5%
from the mischief of	2	3.5%
From the evil	2	3.5%
from the worst of	1	1.75%
from the mischief	1	1.75%
from the evil in	1	1.75%
Counter to the evil generated by the spiritual	1	1.75%
against the harm in	1	1.75%
against the evil of	1	1.75%
From the evil aspects of	1	1.75%
From the evil Influence (and harmfulness) of	1	1.75%
against the evil-effect of	1	1.75%
From the harm of	1	1.75%
from the harm of	1	1.75%
from the evil caused by	1	1.75%
From bad/evil/harm (of)	1	1.75%
that He may deliver me from the mischief of	1	1.75%
Against the mischiefs of	1	1.75%

Discussion

in sharri (preposition + noun; *Min* – meaning from. *Sharr* – Meaning evil).

The chosen equal for this phrase suggested by Google translate is: “From the evil of”.

Table 6

<i>Ma khalaq</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
what He has created	13	22.80%
created things	5	8.77%
that which He has created	5	8.77%
all that He created	3	5.26%
that which He created	2	3.5%
among His creation	2	3.5%
what He has created, zoom	2	3.5%
whatever He has created	2	3.5%
what He created	2	3.5%
His entire creation	2	3.5%
ought that He has created, zoom	1	1.75%
things that He created	1	1.75%
which He has created	1	1.75%
the animate and the inanimate among those created by Him, the Supreme	1	1.75%
that which He hath created	1	1.75%
everything He has created	1	1.75%
the created things; zoom	1	1.75%
all that He has created	1	1.75%
He has created	1	1.75%
everything that He has created	1	1.75%
whatever He created	1	1.75%
anything that He has created	1	1.75%
that which HE has created	1	1.75%
among His creations. zoom	1	1.75%
all creatures	1	1.75%
those things which He hath created	1	1.75%
his creation	1	1.75%
His creation	1	1.75%
what He hath created	1	1.75%

Discussion

Ma Khalaq (conjunctive nouns + verb; *Ma-* Meaning what/whatever. *Khalaq* – Meaning created).

Not much to say in this verse, because there is no such difference in choice of many equivalents for words in the verse. Except it can be pointed out in terms of structure of sentence that the verb *khalaq* is an act that did not happen in a certain time, so technically it should be translated as present perfect tense, not simple past tense.

And since the conjunctive noun 'what' usually used in conditional states or question form, so, 'whatever' is clearer to convey the exact meaning of the verse.

The chosen equal for this phrase suggested by Google translate is:

“What He has created”.

So, the preferred translation is following: ***“and from the evil of whatever He has created”***.

3. Wamin sharri ghasiqin ithawaqab / ومن شر غاسق اذا وقب

Wamin sharri

For frequency rate look at table 5.

Table 7

<i>Ghasiqin</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
darkness	17	29.82%
the darkness	6	10.52%
the night	5	8.77%
the dark night	3	5.26%
Darkness	2	3.5%
the darkness (of night)	2	3.5%
night's darkness	2	3.5%
the matter that darkens	2	3.5%
the black darkness	1	1.75%
the utterly dark night	1	1.75%

the darkness of the night	1	1.75%
dusk	1	1.75%
the night or “to aheavenly body”	1	1.75%
the harm in the night	1	1.75%
the darken	1	1.75%
evening darkness	1	1.75%
a dusky night	1	1.75%
the murky night	1	1.75%
murkiness	1	1.75%
the darkness of night	1	1.75%
intense darkness	1	1.75%
intense dark night/moon	1	1.75%
the darkening one	1	1.75%
the darkening (night)	1	1.75%
the darkness of Ignorance	1	1.75%
the oppressor	1	1.75%

Discussion

Ghāsiq'in (noun, meaning darkness). The word *ghāsiq* is derived from *ghāsaq*. Some experts believe that it means “to harm”.

Thus, *ghāsiq* is who attacks and harms. According to Allamah Tabarsi *ghāsaq* means “harmful movement” and *ghāsiq* means who attacks to harm. Although the origin of the word is understood to mean harm, but he says, in this verse it means “night”.¹

Ghāsaq has been used in another verse in the Holy Quran in the meaning of darkness: “Maintain the prayer from the sun's decline till the darkness of the night”.²

According to the Classic Arabic dictionaries *ghāsaq* means “the darkness of the beginning of night” and thus, *ghāsiq* means “beginning of night, after the disappearance of light”.³

1. Tabarsi, 1380, Chapter Falaq, V. 3.

2. Isra: 78.

3. Mukhtar al-Sihah, Article: *gh-s-q*.

We have three words to discuss here: "twilight", "dusk" and "darkness".

According to Longman twilight is the small amount of light in the sky as the day ends or the time when day is just starting to become night, And dusk is the time before it gets dark when the sky is becoming less bright. And the darkness is when there is no light.

So, although the twilight and dusk are so close to the *ghāsiq* in Arabic, they also imply the meaning of a little light midst night time which is not considered in *ghāsiq*.

The chosen equal for this phrase suggested by Google translate is: "the oppressor".

Table 8

<i>Ithawaqab</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
when it gathers	5	8.77%
when it overspreads	4	7.01%
when it comes	3	5.26%
as it overspreads	3	5.26%
when it settles	3	5.26%
when it cometh on	3	5.26%
when it sets	3	5.26%
as it falls	2	3.5%
when it spreads around	2	3.5%
whenever it descends, zoom	1	1.75%
when it is intense	1	1.75%
when the dark intensified	1	1.75%
as it descends	1	1.75%
as it settles down	1	1.75%
if it happens to explode within or beyond one's sight	1	1.75%
as it comes with its darkness; (or the moon as it sets or goes away)	1	1.75%
when it overtaketh me	1	1.75%
when she spreads her darkness	1	1.75%
when it spreads (and intensifies)	1	1.75%

when it overtaketh	1	1.75%
the oppressor	1	1.75%
when it cometh	1	1.75%
when it overspreads, zoom	1	1.75%
when it overspreads (its gloom)	1	1.75%
invading	1	1.75%
when it penetrates	1	1.75%
whenever and wherever it is encountered	1	1.75%
as it spreads over; zoom	1	1.75%
as it deepens (during the night)	1	1.75%
when (its) darkness prevails	1	1.75%
when it has fully set	1	1.75%
as it gathers	1	1.75%
when it sets in	1	1.75%
when God covers the earth with	1	1.75%
when/if (it) penetrated through body pores/ spread/ approached	1	1.75%
as it falls. zoom	1	1.75%
when it overspreads (at night)	1	1.75%
when darkness gathers	1	1.75%

Discussion

Idhā waqab (*Idhā* is adverb– Meaning when/whenever; *Waqab* is verb– Meaning settle/come/enter/overspread, prevail, etc.).

Since the conjunctive noun 'when' here is not used in question form, rather, it is used in an affirmative way. Plus, 'whatever' has something more (what + ever) which is not considered in this verse.

Waqab is a past verb meaning “entered”.¹

This word especially used about the darkness of night when it covers everywhere.²

1. Mu'jam'ul alfazil Quran'il Karim: Article W.Q.B.

2. Look: Mukhtarus-Sihah; Mu'jam'ul alfazil Quran'il Karim: Article W.Q.B.

Although the literal meaning of *waqab* is to come and enter, the collocation of (darkness + enter) is not match so. Considering Longman dictionary and other sources the pair (darkness + fall) is much better than other options.

The chosen equal for this phrase suggested by Google translate is: “the oppressor”.

Actually this is the Google equivalence for the entire following phrase: “ghasiqin ithawaqab”.

So, the preferred translation is following: “*and from the darkness when it falls*”.

4. Wamin sharri annaffathatifee alAAuqad /

ومن شر النفاثات فى العقد

Wamin sharri/ For frequency rate look at table 5.

Table 9

<i>Annaffathatifee alAAuqad</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
those who blow on knots	4	7.01%
The women who blow on knots	4	7.01%
those who practice secret arts	3	5.26%
those who practice witchcraft	3	5.26%
women who blow on knots	2	3.5%
those who practice sorcery	2	3.5%
the witches who blow into knots	2	3.5%
all human beings bent on occult endeavours, zoom	1	1.75%
malignant witchcraft	1	1.75%
the malignant witchcraft	1	1.75%
the women who practice magic, blowing on the knots	1	1.75%
women spitting on knots	1	1.75%
the witches who stand in the way of concord and blow over entangled knots to fan the flow of discord	1	1.75%
witches when they blow on knots	1	1.75%

Table 10

<i>Annaffathatifee alAAuqad</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
the women blowers upon knots	1	1.75%
sorceresses who blow incantations on knots	1	1.75%
the witches who blow on knots (to cast a spell),zoom	1	1.75%
the witches who blow on knots	1	1.75%
the women who spit on the knots, (i.e., perform malignant witchcraft)	1	1.75%
the women who blow on the knots	1	1.75%
the covert activities of people who try to put knots and complicate the simple	1	1.75%
those who practice secret (and evil) arts as they blow Into knots (riddles);zoom	1	1.75%
the blowers in knots	1	1.75%
those who blow on knots (black magic)	1	1.75%
(women practicing) witchcraft and blowing (spells) over Knotted ropes.zoom	1	1.75%
those personalities who try to create sabotage in a commitment	1	1.75%
those who whisper in convictions	1	1.75%
the blowers into the knots (who practices witchcraft)	1	1.75%
those who cast (evil suggestions) in firm resolutions	1	1.75%
the troublemakers.zoom	1	1.75%
The female magicians/sorceresses /dischargers in the knots	1	1.75%
the blowers on knots	1	1.75%
the jets in the contract	1	1.75%

Table 11

<i>Annaffathatifee alAAuqad</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
those who blow upon the knots of mutual relationships to undo them	1	1.75%
those women who blow in the knots	1	1.75%
those who try (and whisper evil suggestions) to deter (people) from doing their duty	1	1.75%
the witchcrafts when they blow in the knots, zoom	1	1.75%
the blowers upon knots	1	1.75%
women blowing on knots	1	1.75%
weird women	1	1.75%
conjuring witches	1	1.75%
the conjuring witches	1	1.75%
women blowing in the knots (practicing witchcraft)	1	1.75%
those women (and men) who practice magic on knots by blowing	1	1.75%

Discussion

Naffathāt (plural noun- meaning blowers) *Fi'l uqad* (preposition + noun. *Fi* meaning in. *Uqad* plural of *uqdah* - Meaning knots).

Naffathāt is derived form of *Naffāsah*, which is *sighah al-mubalagha* (exaggeration patterns) of the noun *nafth* – meaning “blowing “.

A very important point here is that the Arabic suffix “*āt*” at the end of *Naffathāt* is for exaggeration, not to denote feminine form of noun. Thus, there is no such implication in verse to refer to the women.¹

1. Look: Tabatabai, 1397, Surah al-Falaq, V. 4.

Uqad is the plural form of *uqdah* which means "knot". And to blow into the knots is an Arabic metaphor meaning practicing magic.

This is because one of the ways of witchcraft is tying a knot and blowing in it. Zamahshari, al-Kashaf Interpretation.

The chosen equal for this phrase suggested by Google translate is: "The jets in the contract".

So, the best translation is: "***and from those who blow in the knot***".

5. **Wamin sharri hasidin itha hasad / ومن شر حاسد اذا حسد**

Wamin sharri

For frequency rate look at table 5.

Table 12

<i>Hasidin</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
the envier	20	35.08%
the envious	11	19.29%
an envier	7	12.28%
the envious one	6	10.52%
an envious	3	5.26%
one who is jealous	1	1.75%
some envier	1	1.75%
envy	1	1.75%
the envious ones	1	1.75%
the grudgeful	1	1.75%
every envious person	1	1.75%
the envious person	1	1.75%
those who envy	1	1.75%
an envious with jealousy	1	1.75%
an envious one	1	1.75%

Discussion

Hāsid'in (noun meaning envier). Not much to say in this verse, because there is no such difference in choice of equivalence for words in the verse. Except it can be pointed out that the word Hāsid is an ism-I fail which literally means doer of a verb. Accordingly, envier is better than envious here.

Hāsid is an indefinite noun, because it's used here without the article 'al'. This means every envier – not specific one. In this situation we can use some determiners like a, an, some, any, every, the, etc; But in my opinion “an” here is not a good choice, because it refers to a single envier, while the verse is talking generally.

So, if we use “the” to convey general state of being envious – as English grammar books say - it would be much more better.

The chosen equal for this phrase suggested by Google translate is: “envy”.

Table 13

<i>Itha hasad</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
when he envies	34	59.64%
when he envieth	5	8.77%
as he practises envy	4	7.01%
when they envy	2	3.5%
when he is envious of me	2	3.5%
when jealous	1	1.75%
when he feels envy at the superior advantages of others	1	1.75%
when he envies (and tries to harm)	1	1.75%
as he turns green with jealousy	1	1.75%
when he envied	1	1.75%
those who envy	1	1.75%
when/if he envied with jealousy	1	1.75%
if envy	1	1.75%

when he envies me	1	1.75%
the envious ones (Without translation Equal to phrase)	1	1.75%

Discussion

Idhā hasad (*Idhā* is adverb– Meaning when; *hasad* is verb– Meaning envies).

About the verb *hasad* which has come after *Idhā*, there is a rule in Arabic Grammar that whenever a verb of past tense comes after *Idhā* it would mean present time. For example the translation of: “*Idhā jā'a ra'sush-shahri...*” would be: “When the beginning of the month shall come...”¹

The chosen equal for this phrase suggested by Google translate is: “**if envy**”.

So, the preferred translation is following: “**and from the envier when he envies**”.

Conclusion

After all, it seems that suggested translation by Google translate is not quite reliable. However there are many equivalence that were selected similarly by both Google and the majority of other translators; but what it suggests, is still so far from what it seems to be the perfect translation for verses.

Expressing reason in this regard, it must be said that, however Google switch Google translate to a neural machine translation engine to get more accurate outcomes, it is yet a “machine” that is going to translate the text, And it has not the sense to prefer or decide among various translation base on specific conditions.

1. White, C2, P28.

In other word, sometimes it is needed to prefer a phrase over the other because of its particular place among sentence or particular kind of text that you are dealing with or because of other outside knowledge about the topic which is needed to consider their association while you are translating, And that is the kind of tasks in which Google translate cannot conduct successfully, And that's why sometimes Google offer an equivalence that doesn't make sense at all.

This study concludes that the translation of the Qur'an is not an easy task and not everyone is able to do that, but those possess a great deal of knowledge about Arabic language, and know rhetorical and syntactic points, in addition to the greater knowledge of the target language, in this case English, with the importance of the accuracy and honesty in translation, so things would be bearing fruit.

In brief, the following table would express some bases which form the findings of the article:

الرحيم	الرحمن	الله	بسم
<i>Special mercy</i>	<i>Comprehensive mercy</i>	<i>The One who deserves worship</i>	<i>to make a connection with God</i>
الفلق	بربّ	أعوذ	قل
<i>Day-break</i>	<i>Trainer</i>	<i>by support</i>	<i>Deliver the message</i>
خلق	ما	شر	من
<i>creation</i>	<i>whatever is</i>	<i>evil</i>	<i>To avoid</i>
وقب	إذا	غاسق	ومن شر
<i>attacks</i>	<i>whenever</i>	<i>dusk</i>	<i>Evil army</i>
في العقد		النفاثات	ومن شر
<i>witchcraft</i>		<i>The whisperer</i>	<i>Evil army</i>
حسد	إذا	حاسد	ومن شر
<i>Use the power</i>	<i>Release of evilness</i>	<i>The jealous</i>	<i>Evil army</i>

Based on findings of the article and the table above, the preferred translation for Chapter *Al-Falaq* is as following:

In the name of Allah, the All-merciful, the Gracious.

1. *Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of daybreak.*
2. *and from the evil of whatever He has created.*
3. *and from the darkness when it falls.*
4. *and from those who blow in the knots.*
5. *and from the envier when he envies.*

This case study can be used as an example to improve further works about Qur'an's translation, by bilingual and multilingual scholars, who work on Islamic studies in English.

This study has not gone beyond literal meaning of the words, to the extent possible, and therefore the circumstances of revelation of every single verse and its variable interpretations have not been mentioned; However, further researches can be done in the field of interpretation or other lexical and rhetorical aspects of the Qur'an's verses.

Also, it can be done, whether in this way or not, through the other chapters of the Holy Qur'an.

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