
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Training Translators for a Better Translation of the Meaning of the Qur'anic Text

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ABSTRACT

The translation of religious texts, particularly the Holy Qur'an, is one of the most challenging tasks. Despite the experts' efforts to come out with insightful theories and strategies, the translation of the meanings of the Holy Qur'an is still a difficult task. The present research aimed to reveal the importance of training future translators and experts in the field by offering a 20-hour training program to familiarize a target group with the specificities of Qur'anic Texts and the challenges its translation involves. The study attempted to answer three main research questions related to (i) the specificities of the Qur'anic Text and the main challenges its translation poses; (ii) the quality and value of the training program and its efficiency and (iii) the trainees' views and evaluations of the training program. The study opted for a mixed approach using a questionnaire and an interview to elicit the trainees' views about the efficiency of the training program. Eighty participants from three Master's programs in Islamic studies and translation were involved. The findings revealed that the training was an added value for the trainees who realized that awareness of Arabic rhetoric and Islamic exegetical works is crucial for a faithful translation of the meanings of the Holy Qur'an. Some recommendations were formulated for Master Programs in Islamic studies and translation.

KEYWORDS

Challenges, exegesis, qualifying translators, Qur'anic-specific, Qur'anic Text, stylistic features

ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

The translation from one language into another is a very challenging task due to the linguistic, structural, and cultural differences between human languages. Sapir-Whorf's theory of linguistic relativity states that one's native language influences thought and the way speakers of different languages look at the world (Regier & Xu, 2017). Sapir-Whorf's linguistic relativity hypothesis stipulates that language and its particularities influence how one perceives reality. This leads to the question of translatability, which concerns how easy or difficult it is to find an accurate and direct faithful translation of a text from one language into another. The issue of translatability creates two problems, namely (i) that not every word in all languages has an exact translation into another, and (ii) that whatever is produced in a language is so steeped in cultural significance, which makes it hard to articulate the clear sense of any phrase in a language that is not its own. If this is the case for the words of men, what about the religious text of the Holy Books?

The Holy Qur'an is perceived as the revealed Word of Allah verbatim that no one is allowed to alter. Given its highly sensitive discourse, the translation of the meanings of the Holy Qur'an is very challenging. The translator must be careful as the transfer of meaning must be very accurate. Errors and ambiguous meanings may lead to a different understanding of the text. For example, Abdel Haleem (2004) and Abdul-Raof (2006, 2018) affirm that the rhetorical styles of the Holy Qur'an have often been a classic example of ambiguity meaning transfer.

Hence, the present study aims to raise awareness about the challenges faced in the translation of the meanings of the Holy Qur'an, highlight its specificities, provide the strategies and steps to be adopted in its translation, and discuss the participants' views towards the value of the training program. Its main objective is to contribute to the efforts made by other experts to overcome the challenges translators of the Holy Qur'an face in the process of its translation. The critical stylistic challenges lie in the inability to recognize the exact meanings of the vocabularies, concepts, and styles as they are used in the Arabic exegesis books. This often results in semantic ambiguity and transfer. Two key examples of these complexities were addressed in the training program the present study is based on, namely the rhetorical style dubbed al-iltifat (shift), more precisely, and the complexity relates to lexis. The pseudo-iltifat differs from the phenomenon of al-iltifat in that the latter is limited to changes in pronouns, while the rest of shifts, e.g., verbs, aspects, etc., are all subsumed under the pseudo-iltifat type. Trainees were introduced to the differentiations between vocabularies in the Holy Qur'anic contexts with the aim to make them aware of these rhetorical forms and the challenges their translation into English involves.

In order to reach the objectives of the present study and investigate the effectiveness of the training program, the study adopted a mixed approach using both quantitative and qualitative research instruments. A questionnaire was administered to all the trainees, while an interview was conducted with a selected group of trainees with the aim to get their direct views and opinions. To set the ground for the study, a brief overview of the literature about the need for the training of experts and translators of the meanings of the Holy Qur'an is provided. The main objective is to reveal the need for the initiative undertaken in this study, which involves training translators, as argued for by Nida (1982), Newmark (1988), and Massey & al. (2019) who highlight the need and value of training translators.

2. Literature Review

The translation of the Qur'anic Text has been the subject of research in both traditional and modern studies. They all refer to the challenges translators face with translating the meanings of the Holy Qur'an. Most of the conventional studies reviewed referred, either implicitly or explicitly, to the challenge of conveying the meanings of the Holy Qur'an from one language into another. So, Muslim scholars have developed an understanding of the interpretation of the Holy Qur'anic discourse rather than a translation. Al-Farrā' (1983, vol. 2) analyzed the initial linguistic and cultural aspects of the pseudo-iltifat in number from dual to plural in the Holy Ayah: 19 of Surat al-Haj (هَذَا خَصْمَانِ اخْتَصَمُوا فِي رَبِّهِمْ), where he showed how the meaning becomes accurate and clear when its rhetorical purposes are revealed.

Based on this study, Ibn Qutaybah (1973) conceptualized this style by contrasting the surface meaning of forms with their pure meaning. His study concluded that this style involves a rhetorical change that occurs for specific rhetorical purposes. In the same line, Ibn Mu'taz (2012), one of the most reliable references that investigated topic, argued that the shift is a rhetorical style used to beautify the speech. After classifying the shift as a rhetorical style whose meanings are difficult to convey in another language apart from Arabic, Al-Jurjani (1984) went further in his theory, inquiring about the inimitability of the Holy Qur'an, wondering about what makes the Qur'anic Text miraculous to the extent that the disbelievers could not imitate it and ended up admitting its consistency, systematicity, and well-governed cohesion.

Based on previous accounts, Al-Suyuti (1426 H), supported Ibn Mu'taz's (2012) previous view. Al-Suyuti (cited in Qadhi, 1999), the pioneer who introduced the 19 main conditions of exegesis, claimed that they must be respected by the interpreter (*al-mufassir*) who seeks a deep interpretation of the Holy Qur'an. According to Al-Suyuti's (as cited in Qadhi, 1999) view, the interpreter must be a strong believer in Islam with good intentions in attempting to interpret the text. Moreover, Al-Suyuti argues that the Holy Qur'an requires looking back to the Quran itself as "what has been narrated succinctly in one place might be expounded upon in another place and what is summarized in one place might be explained in another (cited in Qadhi (1999, p. 300)). Thus, as it appears from the previous views, traditional Muslim scholars took the Qur'anic Text as something miraculous that cannot be reproduced and did not go beyond this.

Modern studies about the translation of religious texts have, however, gone beyond the limits of translation to attract the attention of scholars to the process of constructing translations and qualifying translators. To start with, Nida (1982) adopts an analytical componential procedure to investigate the challenges of the translation of the Holy Discourse and the requirements of its translation. He presents many visions about translation and argued that a translator should be aware of the differences between the source language and the target language. Nida (1982) argued for the need to qualify the translator and recommended that "the translator must attempt to reproduce the meaning of a passage as understood by the writer." (p. 8).

In an earlier study published in (1945), Nida claimed that "the translator must of necessity compare the phonological systems involved in the two languages" (p. 203). This amounts to the fact that altering the form is a consequence of trying to preserve the content of the message. Nida (1945) also offered practical insights about how to qualify the translator of the Holy Texts by stating that "the person who is engaged in translating from one language into another ought to be constantly aware of the contrast in the

entire range of culture represented by the two languages" (p. 194). Lefevere (cited in Snell-Hornby, 2006, p. 6) argued that "the translator should either leave the reader in peace and move the author towards him or vice versa". Lefevere (1977) insists on the principle of text honesty and argues that "the translator would go wrong if he were to introduce, of his own accord, an explanation which disfigures the character of the text" (p. 43).

In the same context, Abdul-Raof (2001) contributed to the field by producing a collection of valuable books on the science of the Holy Qur'an discourse, discussing several issues related to the rhetoric of the Holy Qur'an and the difficulties and challenges of its translation. His books are key references for professionals in the field of translation. Abdul-Raof (2001) views the challenges that face the translator of the meaning of the Holy Qur'an as an insurmountable challenge, and declares that "the translation of the Qur'an, like all other acts of translation, will inevitably involve loss of meaning" (p. 110). He also argues that the loss of meaning in the translation of the Holy Qur'an "can be compensated by exegesis", (p. 110).

As it appears from the discussion of the previous studies, both traditional Muslim scholars and modern researchers agree that the translation of the Holy Text is a very challenging task. In light of this, the present study tries to find out about the importance of training translators and the extent to which their training and initiation to the exegesis, rhetoric, and other sciences can help them produce a more accurate translation of the meanings of the Holy Text.

3. Methodology

The present study investigates the impact of training translators for a better translation of the meaning of the Qur'anic Text. Its main objective is to determine how the initiation of translators and the development of their awareness of the specificities of the Qur'anic Text and the challenges its translation poses, as well as their familiarization with the different interpretations of the Holy Text, can lead to a more accurate translation. The study involves a 20-hour training program in the form of workshops involving eighty students from four Master's programs specializing in translation or Islamic studies in two Moroccan universities. The training was designed in light of three main research questions: (i) What are some of the specificities of the Holy Qur'anic Text and what are the main difficulties and challenges their translation poses? (ii) To what extent has the training program been efficient and able to make the trainees aware of the critical issues and help them deal with the Quranic text? and (iii) What are the trainees' opinions and evaluations of the training program? The study adopts a mixed approach using a questionnaire and an interview to elicit the trainees' views about the training program and its effectiveness.

3.1 Training Program

The training program sought to prepare and qualify the students specializing in translation and Islamic Studies to make them aware of the specificities of the Qur'anic Text and how to overcome the challenges they may face in its translation. The training aspired to equip the trainees with some skills and strategies required to translate the Holy Text. The training examined the translation of the rhetorical aspects of the Holy Qur'an with a focus on Pseudo-iltifat and lexis. The program insisted on the need to possess some knowledge of the sciences of the Holy Qur'an and a mastery of the Arabic language. The training focused on the students still being trained as translators, namely Master's and Doctoral students from three master programs. The training included a theoretical part that aimed to focus on the specificities of the Qur'anic Text and the different types of its interpretations. The organization of the training conducted is summed up in Table 1.

Table 1: Training Program organization

Programs	Presentation of project	Theoretical Introduction	Practical part (Workshops)	Assignment & personal work	Trainees' assessment and course evaluation
Four programs	2 hours	2 hours	10 hours	4 hours	2 hours

The training focused on the Ayats which include pseudo- iltifat in number (e.g., shifts from singular to plural, dual to singular, plural to singular, etc.) for rhetorical purposes, and those with the lexis difference in prepositions, verbs, and nominals. A sample of the Ayats that contain Pseudo-iltifat and lexis have been carefully selected, based on the aspects they include and the focus of the training program to help the trainees see and grasp the aspects introduced and spot their styles. The training also insisted on the need to be aware of the rhetorical purpose of these styles in Arabic rhetoric and the exegesis books as a significant step before embarking on any translation. The selected Ayats are listed in Table 2.

Table 2: List of Ayats used in training

Surat Name & Number	Stylistic Aspect	Text of Ayah	Translation & Name of translator
Sūrat al-Ṭalaq: 65; Ayah: 1	<i>Pseudo-iltifat</i> (singular to plural & vice versa)	يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ [...] لَا تَذَرُنَّ [...]]	Al-Hilali & Khan (1417H): O Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) When you divorce women, [...] You (the one who divorces his wife) know not [...] (p. 765-6).
Sūrat Yūnus: 10; Ayah: 87	<i>Pseudo-iltifat</i> (dual to plural & plural to singular)	وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ وَأَخِيهِ أَنْ تَّبَوِّءَا [...] [...] وَتَنْبِئَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ	Al-Hilali & Khan (1417 H): And We revealed to Mūsâ (Moses) and his brother (saying): [...], and make your dwellings [...], and give glad tidings to the believers" (p. 282).
Sūrat : al-Raḥman: 55; Ayah: 33-4	<i>Pseudo-iltifat</i> (Plural to the Dual)	[...] لَا تَنْفَعُونَ إِلَّا بِسُلْطَنِ (33) قِيَامِيَّ ءِالَاءِ رَبِّكُمْ تُكذِّبَانِ	Al-Hilali & Khan (1417 H): But you will never be able to pass them, except with authority (from Allah)! Then which of the Blessings of your Lord will you both (jinn and men) deny? (p. 729).
Sūrat :al-Tawbah:9; Ayah: 60	Lexis difference: Transition in prepositions	﴿ إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ [...] وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغُرَمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَأَبْنِ السَّبِيلِ (Al-Hilali & Khan (1417 H): As-Sadaqat (here it means Zakât) are only for the Fuqarâ' (poor) [...], and to free the captives; and for those in debt, and for Allah's Cause (i.e. for Mujahidûn-those fighting in a holy battle), and for the wayfarer ..., [...] (p. 254).
Sūrat :al-Tahrīm: 66; Ayah: 3	Transition in Verb Forms	﴿ وَإِذْ أَسَرَّ النَّبِيُّ إِلَىٰ بَعْضِ أَزْوَاجِهِ حَدِيثًا فَلَمَّا نَبَّأَتْ بِهِ وَأَظْهَرَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ عَرَفَتْ بَعْضَهُ وَأَعْرَضَ عَنْ بَعْضٍ فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ أَنَّهُ مِنَ النَّبِيِّ هَذَا قَالَ نَبَّأَنِي الْعَلِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ	Al-Hilali & Khan (1417 H): [...], then she told it (to another i.e. 'Aishah). [...], Then when he told her (Hafsah) thereof, she said: "Who told you this?" He said: "The All-Knower, the All-Aware (Allah) has told me " (p. 768).
Sūrat : al-'Ankabut: 29; Ayah: 64	Transition in nominal categories	﴿ وَمَا هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَهُمْ وَلَعِبٌ وَإِنَّ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ لَهُمْ الْحَيَاةُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ	Al-Hilali & Khan (1417 H): And this life of the world [...] is the life indeed (i.e. the eternal life that will never end), [...] (p. 538).

The approaches adopted during the training are presented in the order they were used in the workshops.

- Semantic approach: a technique used to extract the intended meaning of the Holy Ayah as it is intended in the Holy Qur'an, according to exegesis and Arabic rhetoric sciences.
- Analysis and discussion: an analytical and comparative technique applied to help the trainees compare their understanding of the text with the intended meaning and the other translations, and as it appears in other studies (viz. Hatim Basil & Mason Ian (1997)).
- Back-translation strategy: one of the most common techniques used in cross-cultural research, which involves looking for equivalents through (i) the translation of items from the source language to the target language, (ii) the independent translation of these back into the source language, and (iii) "the comparison of the two versions of the items in the source language until ambiguities or discrepancies in meaning are clarified or removed" (Ercikan, et al., cited in Birbili, 2020). The same view is endorsed by Baker (2018).
- Suggested translation strategy: the study aspires to provide and highlight the appropriate translation by relying on the rhetorical and exegetical approach, as there is a consensus that translation represents one's understanding of the source text.

3.2 Research Instruments

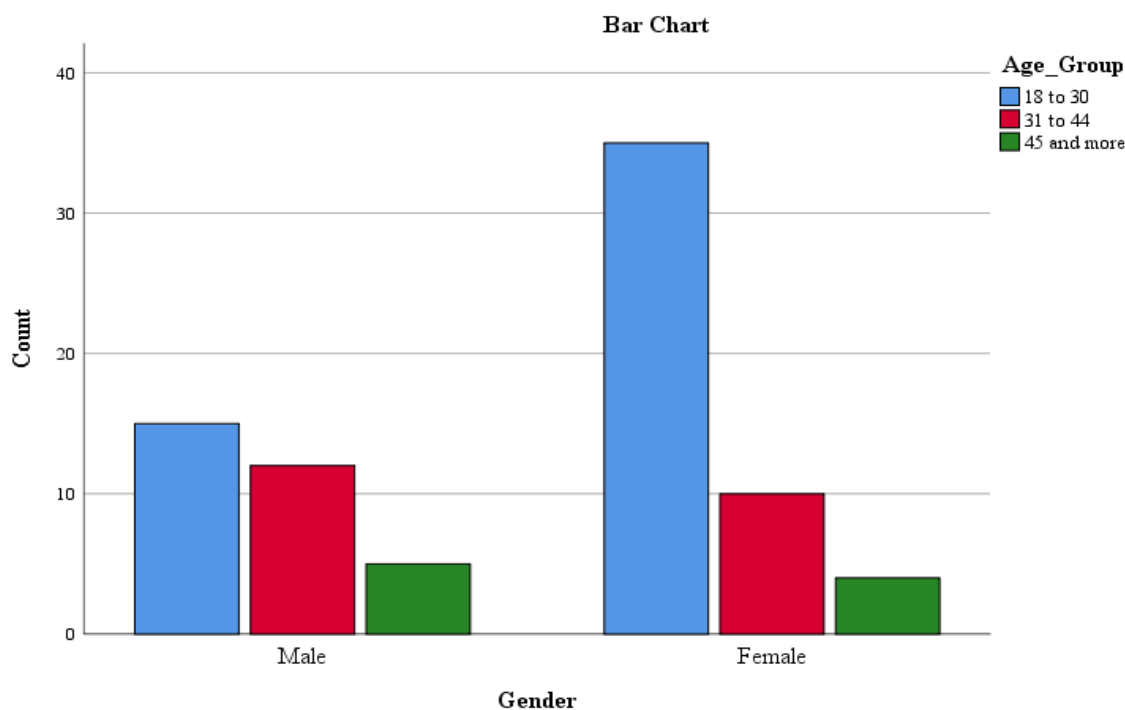
The present study adopted a mixed approach used both quantitative and qualitative research instruments. Both the questionnaire and interview included questions about the methodology adopted, the quality of the content, the program's strengths and

weaknesses of the training. The questionnaire included six significant sections, with a total of 22 questions. They were concerned with the importance of the training program and its relevance, the challenges the translator faces, the trainees' competence in Arabic and the Holy Qur'an, the efficiency of the training program, its value, and the challenges the trainees faced during its implementation. The questionnaire also included three open questions.

3.3 Population Sample

A total of 80 participants were involved in the training program. The sample is presented in Figure (1) below according to their age and gender.

Figure 1: Population sample



To gain a deep insight into the effectiveness of the training, an interview was also conducted with 29 informants (16 males, and 13 females). The interviewees were selected on the basis of their interactions and involvement during the training. Five of them were doctoral students, and 24 were Master program students. The questions concerned the main sections of the training program and the challenges faced by the translator of the Arabic text in general and the Qur'anic Text in particular. The list of the interviewees is summed in Table 3.

Table 3: List of interviewees

Informants	Gender	Age	Program	Semester	Institution	University
16	9 Females 7 males	< 40-22>	Master Shar'ia	1 st	FLHS Rabat	UM5R
4	3 males 1 female	<30-42>	Mas. Religion & Mysticism	2 nd	FLHS Rabat	UM5R
4	3 males 1 female	<23-39>	MA Translation & Linguistics	4 th	FLHS Tetouan	Abdelmalek Saadi
5	3 males 2 females	<29-71>	1 Doc. Islamic Studies 4 Doc. Translation	<1 st year-5 th year>	1 FLHS Rabat 4 FLHS Tetouan	Abdelmalek Saadi

The quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS (Software Package for Social Sciences), while the qualitative data were analyzed using critical discourse analysis. Qualitative data were coded and organized in light of the research questions. The key testimonies were identified. The data analysis and interpretation are presented interactively.

4. Results and Discussion

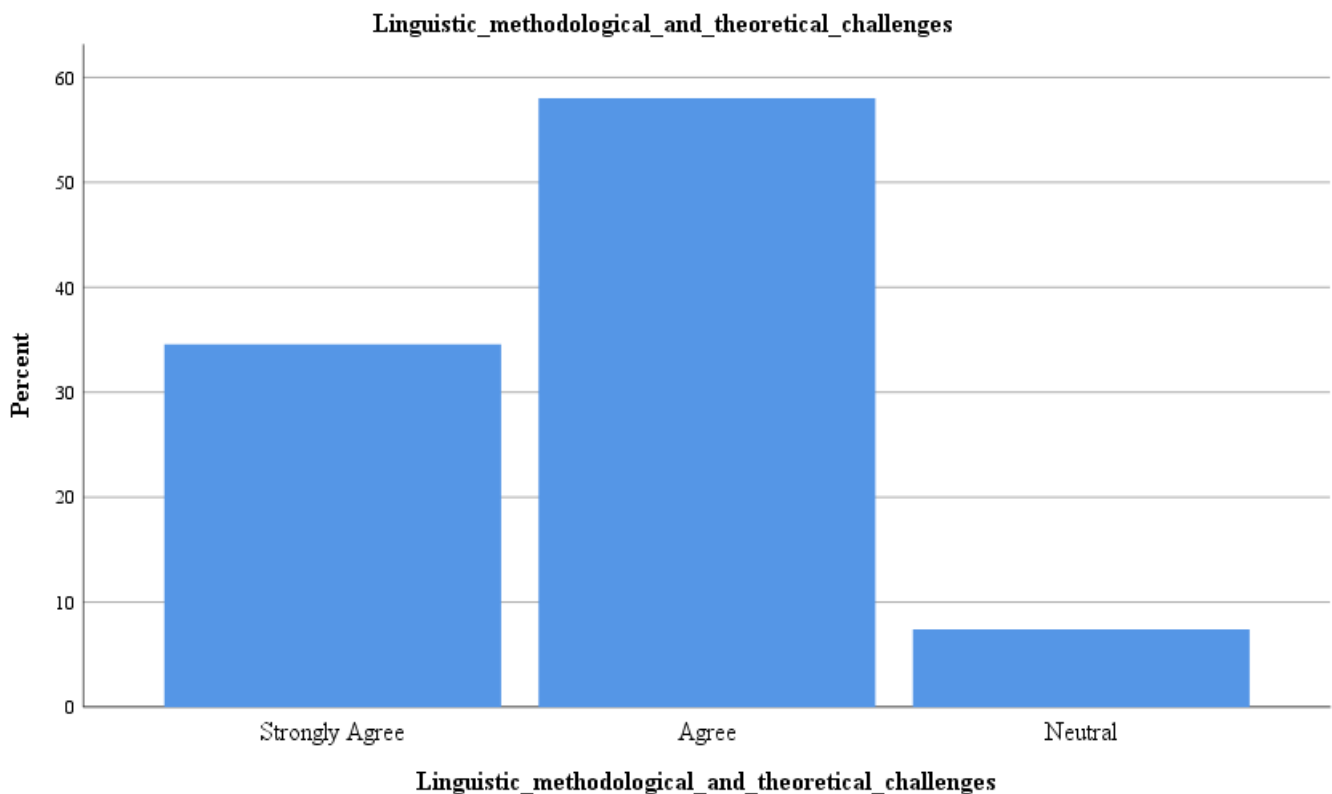
The results and findings are organized into three main sections that relate directly to the research questions. The first section identifies the specificities of the Holy Text and the challenges faced in its translation; the second one looks into the efficiency of the training program, while the third section presents the trainees’ views and opinions. The three sections are presented in turn below.

4.1 Specificities of the Qur’anic Text and Challenges with its Translation

One of the key questions the present study tries to answer relates to the specificities of the Holy Text and the challenges its translation poses to translators. To determine this, the trainees were asked a direct question about the challenges facing the translator of the Holy Qur’an. Twelve statements were provided for them to choose from. These were organized into (i) linguistic challenges, (ii) Challenges with the Qur’anic Text, and (iii) challenges related to the training of translators.

The linguistic challenges involve the differences between Arabic and English, the nature and specificities of the Qur’anic Text, the particularities of the Arabic language, and the lack of familiarity with Arabic rhetoric. All the questions were computed and helped draw figure 2.

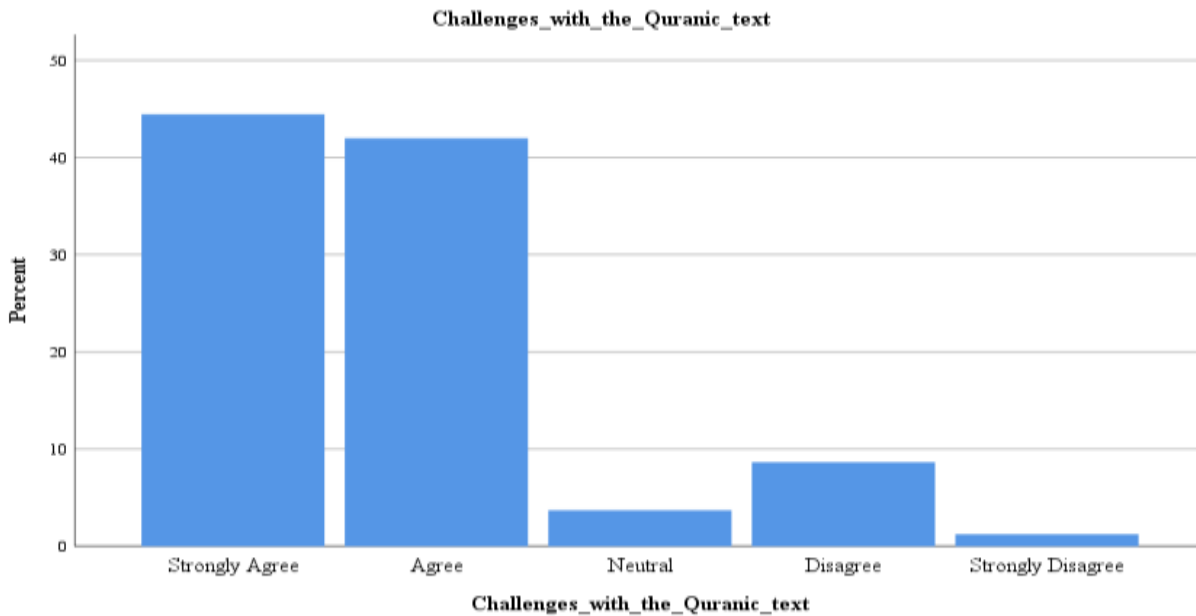
Figure 2: Linguistic challenges in the translation of the Qur’anic Text



A close look at the Figure 2 reveals that most of the trainees either strongly agree or agree, with 34.6% and 58.0% for each option, respectively, and a total of 92.6% for both options; 7.4% of the respondents adopted a neutral position. This somehow shows the trainees’ awareness of the difficulty of the Qur’anic Text. The same fact was also confirmed by qualitative data. A 71 y.o. Male trainee, preparing his doctorate in Islamic Studies at FLHS-UM5R, stated that *“as for the content, the biggest challenge is the trainees’ lack of mastery of Arabic vocabulary and of the language the Holy Qur’an was revealed.”* Another trainee, a 40 y.o. Female from Shar’ia Sciences Master’s Program at FLHS-UM5R added that *“the main linguistic challenge is with the rhetorical aspects. These rhetorical styles have important rhetorical purposes, and those purposes may be impossible to translate or may get lost due to the impossibility of translating that style correctly.”*

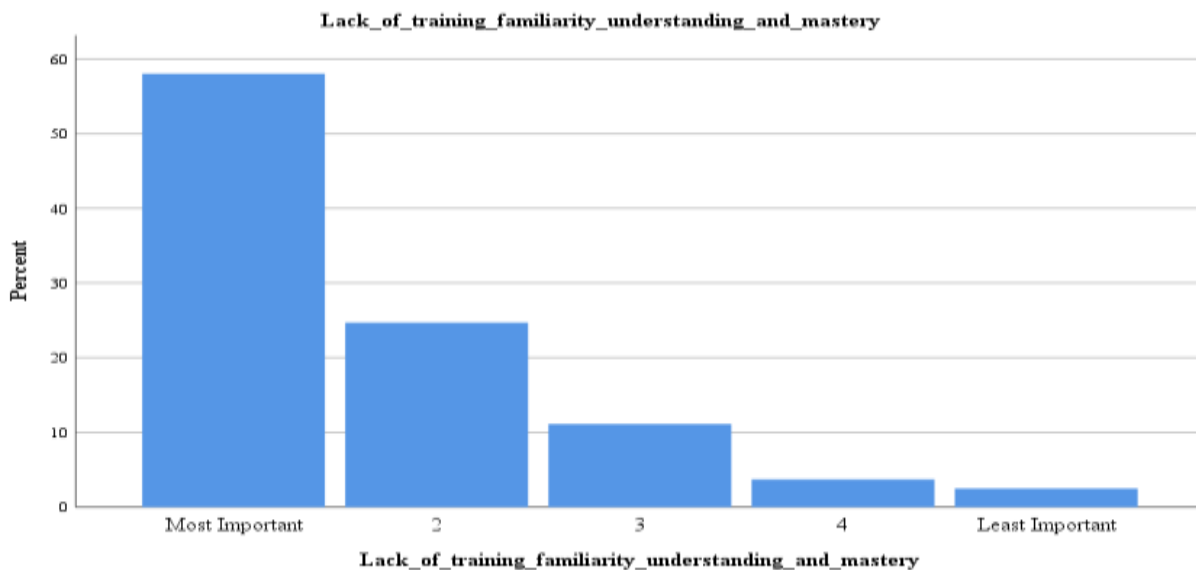
The second category of challenges the translation of the meanings of the Qur’anic Text involves relates to the challenges with the Qur’anic Text itself, namely lack of familiarity with the science of interpretation, lack of mastery of religious sciences, the difficulty of the Qur’anic Text, the ignorance of the Islamic culture, and the challenges imposed by some Qur’anic Texts at the level of rhetoric. The data analysis shows that the majority of trainees, with a total. 86.4%, either ‘*strongly agree*’ or ‘*agree*’ (i.e., 44.4% and 42.0%, respectively) that the translation of the meanings of the Qur’anic Text is not an easy task, for it requires a mastery of the religious sciences, the science of interpretation, and a knowledge of the Islamic culture. Only a minority, i.e., 9.8%, either ‘*Strongly disagree*’ or ‘*Disagree*’ with the claim. The results are presented in figure 3.

Figure 3: Challenges with the Qur’anic Text



The challenges translators face also involve the absence of preparation and training of translators for the translation of the Qur’anic Text. Most trainees agree with the statements that preparing and training are absent of translators, with a total of 77.8%, with 49.4% and 28.4% for ‘*Strongly agree*’ and ‘*Agree*’, respectively. Note that very few, i.e., 9.9% of the participants, are neutral, while 12.3% either ‘*Strongly disagree*’ or ‘*Disagree*’, with 4.9% and 7.4% for each option, respectively. The details are presented in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Absence of preparation and training of translators



These results were confirmed by the interviewees, who all admitted that they lacked training and familiarity with the topic. A 38 y.o. male trainee preparing a doctorate in Translation at FLHS-Abdelmalek Saadi University on the translation of historical manuscripts and a 24 y.o. female from Shar'ia Sciences Master's Program at FLHS-UM5R both agreed that one of the most prominent challenges concerns the nature and specificity of the Qur'anic Text because it is the word of Almighty Allah (Kalam Allah); the real challenge concerns how to get a real grasp of the Qur'anic Content to translate it correctly and according to the reliable Islamic sources.

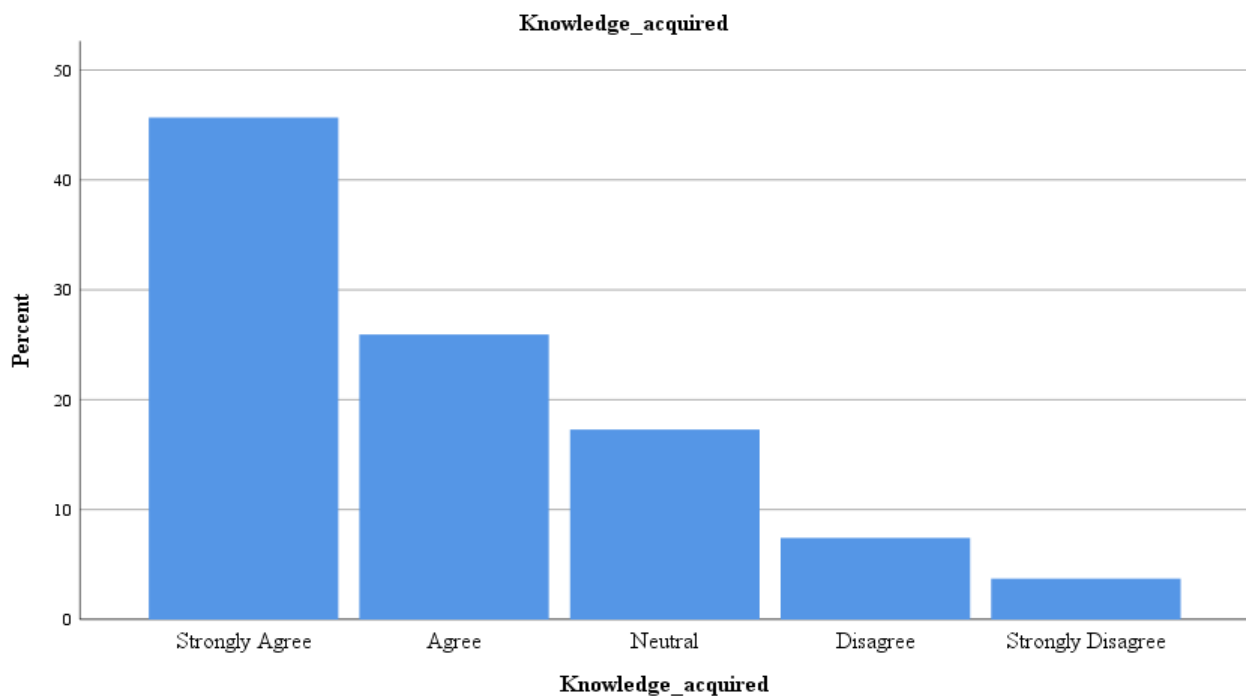
A 26 y.o. male Shar'ia Sciences Master's Program at the FLHS-UM5R confessed that "[...] we have not been previously introduced to it (translation of the meanings of the Holy Qur'an. We are not familiar with analyzing, studying, or even reaching the stage of translating the meanings of the Qur'anic Text."

A 31y.o. female graduate of the MA in Translation & Linguistics from FLHS at Abdelmalek Saadi University declared "we have not been introduced to translating the meanings of the Holy Qur'an in our training even though we are in a Master of Translation and Linguistics. There was no material dealing with the topic." Another objective of the study was to assess the training program and find out about the trainees' feedback about the training, its value, and its effectiveness. The results of the data analysis are presented in the next section.

4.2 The Efficiency of the Training Program

One of the key questions the present study The evaluation of the quality and efficiency of the training was undertaken via a section (i.e., section four) in the questionnaire used in the study as well as some questions included in the interview guide. The present study involved a practical training program designed for training students specializing in translation and Islamic studies of developing their awareness of the issues of the translation of the Holy Text. The objective is to unveil its strengths and weaknesses to improve its quality and formulate recommendations for the training of translators and students specializing in Islamic studies. The questionnaire included seven questions prepared on a 5-point Likert scale and classified into (i) those related to the knowledge acquired and those concerned with the development of some skills. The knowledge gained included four statements related to the understanding of the Quranic text, knowledge of the theories of translation, awareness of the importance of the science of interpretation, and awareness of the scientific methods for translating religious texts. Figure 5 shows the results.

Figure 5: Knowledge acquired during the training program



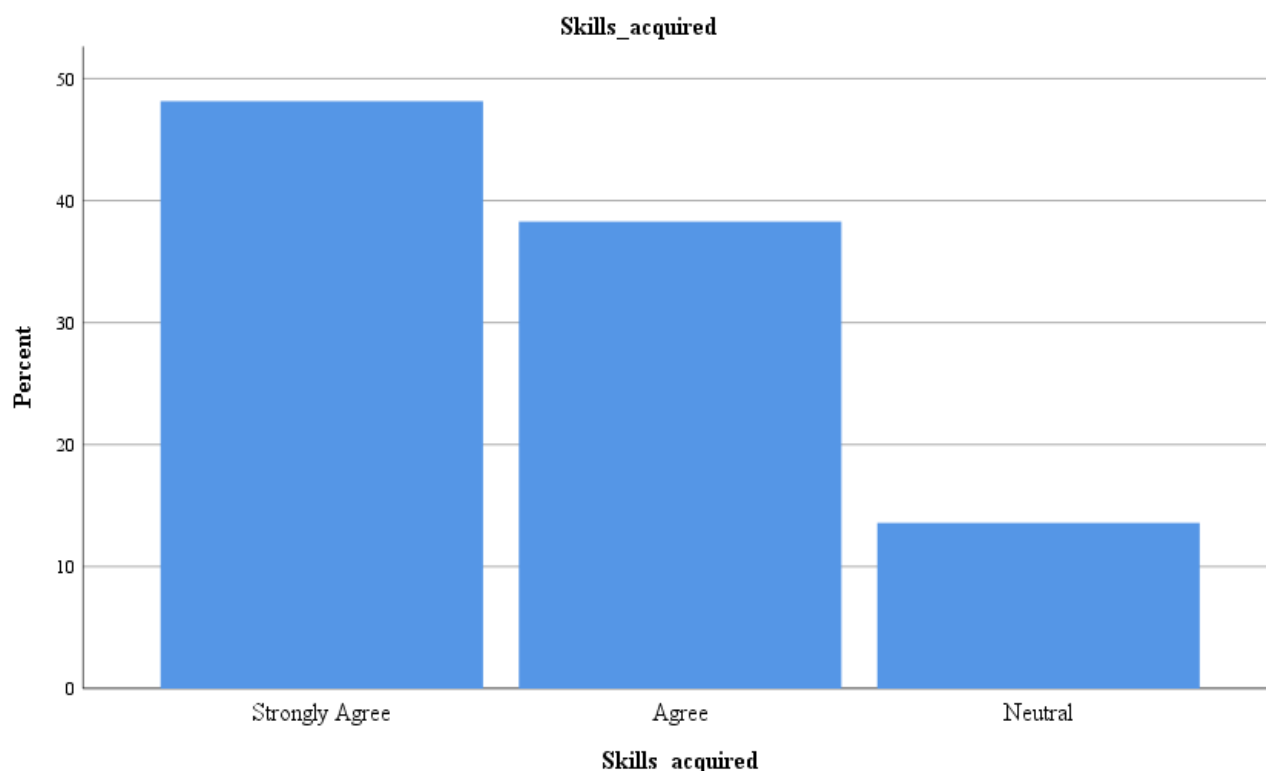
A careful examination of Figure 5 shows that very few respondents opt for the options disagreed. Indeed, only 7.4% 'Disagree' and 3.7% 'Strongly disagree'. Most respondents of 71.6% admitted that they had gained knowledge from the training program. Note,

however, that 17.3% opted for 'Neutral' and did not take any clear. The results were confirmed by the interviewees. A 24 y.o. Female from the Translation & Linguistics Master's Program at the FLHS -Abdelmalek Saadi in Tetouan, stated that:

"The applied workshops in groups played a fundamental role in this training which gave us an opportunity to interact and motivate each other and discuss important issues in our field. In addition to acquiring skills for understanding the intended meaning of the Qur'anic Verses, we were offered the opportunity to analyze the texts and extract the appropriate solutions, and use the back-translation strategy. We have benefited a lot from this training as it is an awareness-raising of the challenges with the translating the meanings of the Qur'anic Text. Additionally, we benefited greatly at the methodological and theoretical levels. We learned about the need to rely on interpretations (exegesis) and follow a specific Islamic methodology to deal with the Qur'anic Text. The workshops helped us acquire new skills, techniques, and strategies to deal with the translation of the meanings of the Holy Qur'an and to overcome the challenges it presents."

Given the practicality of the training and its objectives to develop the trainees' skills in the translation of the Qur'anic Text, it also included practical sessions related to the acquisition of skills for the translation of the religious text, such as familiarization with the rhetorical methods of the Qur'anic Text, and how to produce a correct translation. Once again, 86.4% of the respondents agreed that they did acquire some skills that will help them make an accurate translation of the Qur'anic Text (See Figure 6 below).

Figure 6: Skills acquired during training



As the Figure 6 shows, none of the trainees opted for the options 'Disagree' or 'Strongly disagree', which is very significant and reveals the added value of the training program. Only 13.6% of the respondents chose the option 'Neutral'. The interviewees also highlighted the value of the training and its contributions and outcomes. A 22 y.o. female from the Master's Program Shar'ia Sciences at the FLHS - UM5R in Rabat declared:

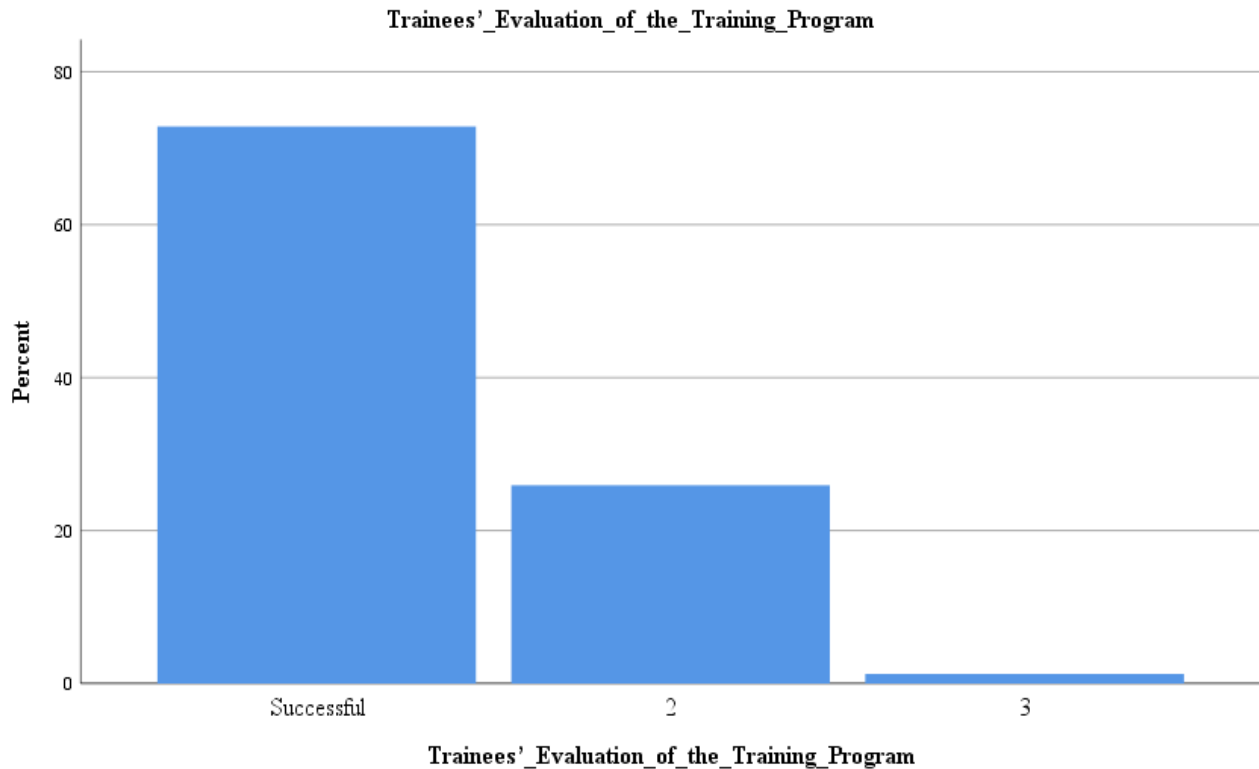
"We have benefited greatly and acquired crucial knowledge for dealing with the Quranic Text and its characteristics. We have learned about some rhetorical styles and their purposes, pseudo-iltifat in number, and linguistic lexis; we have become aware of the difficulties facing the translator or interpreter of the Holy Qur'an. We have gained some strategies and techniques that we can use to translate the meanings of the Holy Text. We practiced how to analyze and discuss the topic objectively using a scientific method."

Another 32 y.o. female from the same program acknowledged that this training had a significant impact on all the trainees. It was a catalyst for them. It also contributed to the development of their awareness of scientific research.

4.3 Trainees' Evaluation of the Training Program

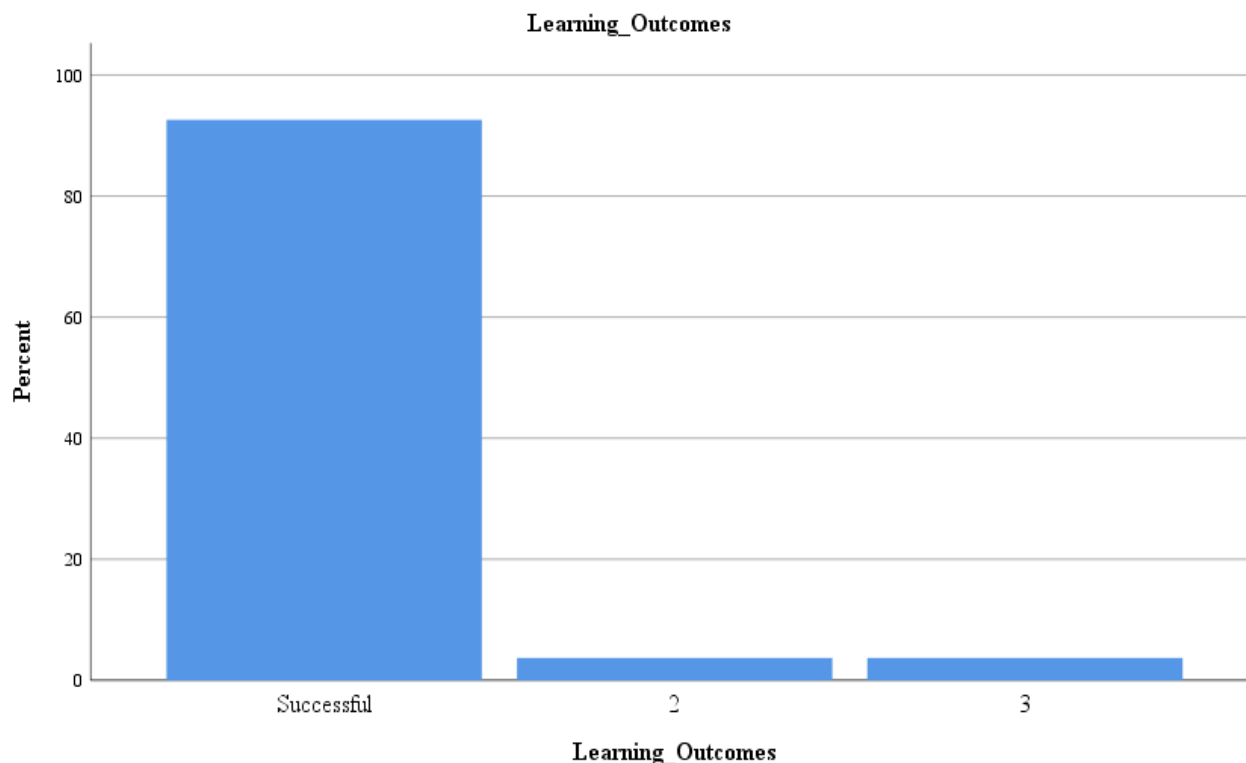
Type the To get a clear idea about the value of the training program and its outcomes, the trainees were asked about their views and opinions in the questionnaire and the interview. The general evaluation of the training revealed very positive thoughts, with 72.8% of the respondents opting for option one on a 5-point Likert scale, with one being very successful and five for not successful); 25.9% opted for scale 2. Only 1.2% checked option three on the scale. Figure 7 presents these facts.

Figure 7: Trainees' evaluations of the training program



Qualitative data supports these results. Indeed, all interviewees stated that the training was an excellent experience that improved their knowledge and developed their vocabulary and language skills. Most of them claimed that such programs should be an important part of the training of translators. A trainee stated that *"the raining addressed the core of our studies interests."* Another added that *"the training dealt with the basis of Islamic studies and translation sciences, and how to qualify a skilled translator in the meanings of the Qur'anic Text"*. Most interviewees also mentioned that the training focused on the exegesis and translation sciences of the meanings of the Holy Qur'an and admitted that it familiarized them with some translation techniques, strategies, and methods accurately and smoothly. They also revealed that the training introduced them to some critical skills and knowledge a translator needs to have.

The study also inquired about the specific aspects of the training and asked the trainees about its learning outcomes. Also, 64.2% claimed they were very successful, and 28.4% think they were successful. Very few opted for the other options. Indeed, a total of 92.6% hold very positive views about the outcomes of the training. The results are displayed in Figure 8.

Figure 8: Training program learning outcomes

Qualitative data supports the above finding. Indeed, most interviewees acknowledged that they benefited greatly from the training at different levels. They claimed that the training offered an awareness-raising opportunity. One of the interviewees summed it up, stating:

"First, we became aware of the importance of the Qur'anic Text, the challenges the translation of its meanings poses, and the need to be cautious when translating its meanings. Second, we improved our knowledge in both theoretical and practical workshops. Third, we learned new skills, procedures, techniques, and strategies to overcome the challenges. For example, we interacted in small groups and discussed the issues. We learned many techniques, including the semantic approach, the discussion, and the analysis. Then, comparison and evaluation to suggest a solution for the challenges. It was very insightful."

The study also looked into the trainees' evaluation of the effectiveness of the strategies used. The results unveiled very positive views, with 72.8% for very successful and 22.2% for successful. Scales 4 and 5 received no answers. Qualitative data also supported these views as most interviewees highlighted the atmosphere of discussion, analysis, and interactions in group work among the trainees and with the instructor. Most of them stressed that the workshops were beneficial, clear, and comprehensible, especially when dealing with the style of pseudo-iltifat in numbers and lexis differences.

Most interviewees also agreed that the selected samples were very appropriate and relevant to the training. They liked the combination of both the theoretical and practical session, and the smooth and accurate progression of the training program. They declared that the program was established in a very professional way, based on a solid scientific methodology. The workshops went on gradually through explaining and illustrating deal with the Qur'anic Text and how to overcome some of the challenges it poses. Interviewees also declared that the practical organization of the workshops in small groups offered them an opportunity to collaborate, interact, discuss, and motivate each other. All interviewees admitted that the workshops helped them acquire skills to understand the intended meaning of the Qur'anic Verses, analyze the texts, and present and extract the appropriate solutions. They all considered the back-translation strategy a beneficial to overcome the challenges.

A 39 y.o. female trainee from the Master's Program Translation & Linguistics at the FLHS Abdelmalek Saadi University in Tetouan admitted that the workshops played a crucial role in explaining and illustrating how to deal with Qur'anic Texts and overcome some of the challenges its translation poses. A 29 y.o. male doctoral student in Translation at FLHS-Abdelmalek Saadi in Tetouan, currently investigating the topic of translation, confessed that

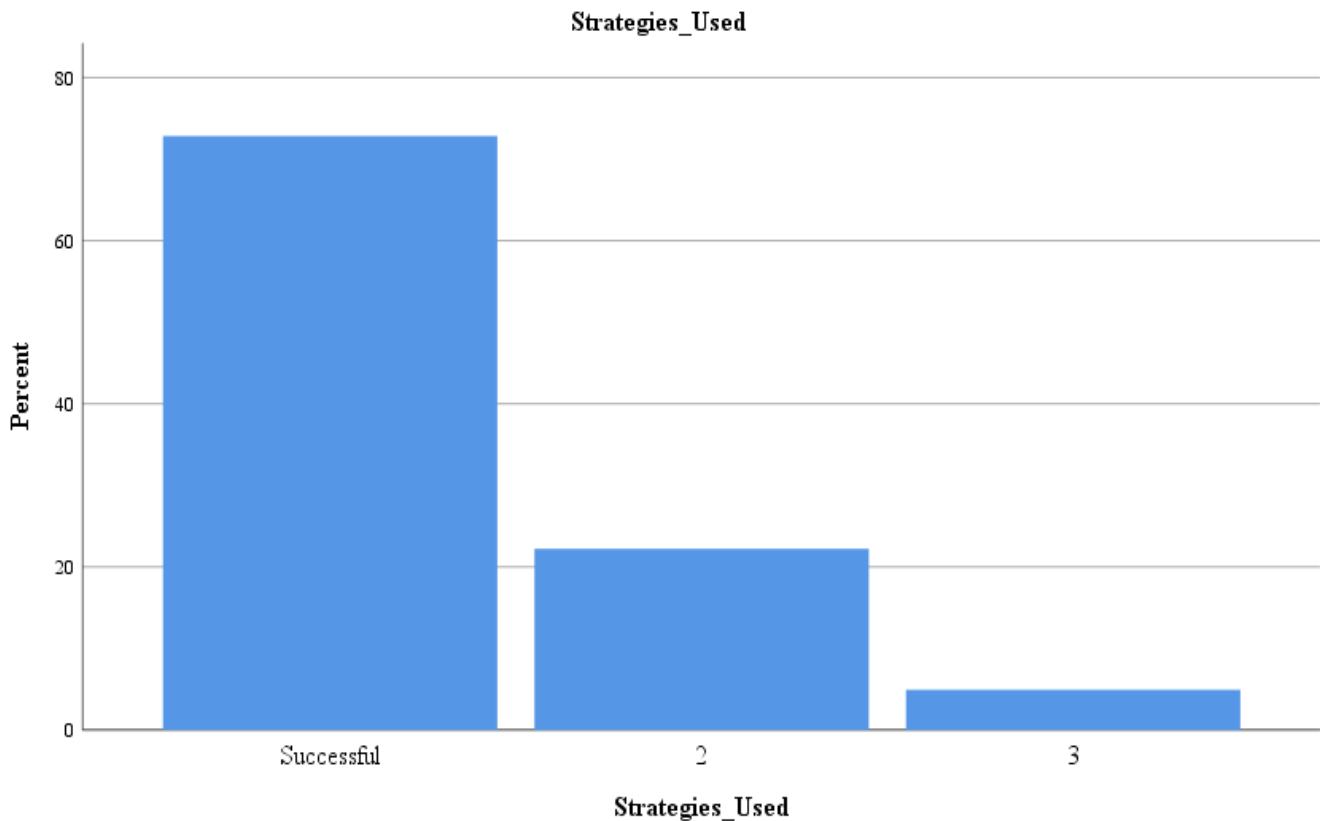
"The training focused on the effectiveness of the workshops in preparing the translator of the Qur'anic Text. It introduced the trainees to the sciences of the Holy Qur'an and Arabic language and adopted a scientific approach, and efficient strategies, and techniques."

This is also supported by a 50 y.o. female 5th year doctoral student in translation at FLHS-Abdelmalek Saadi in Tetouan, who affirmed that

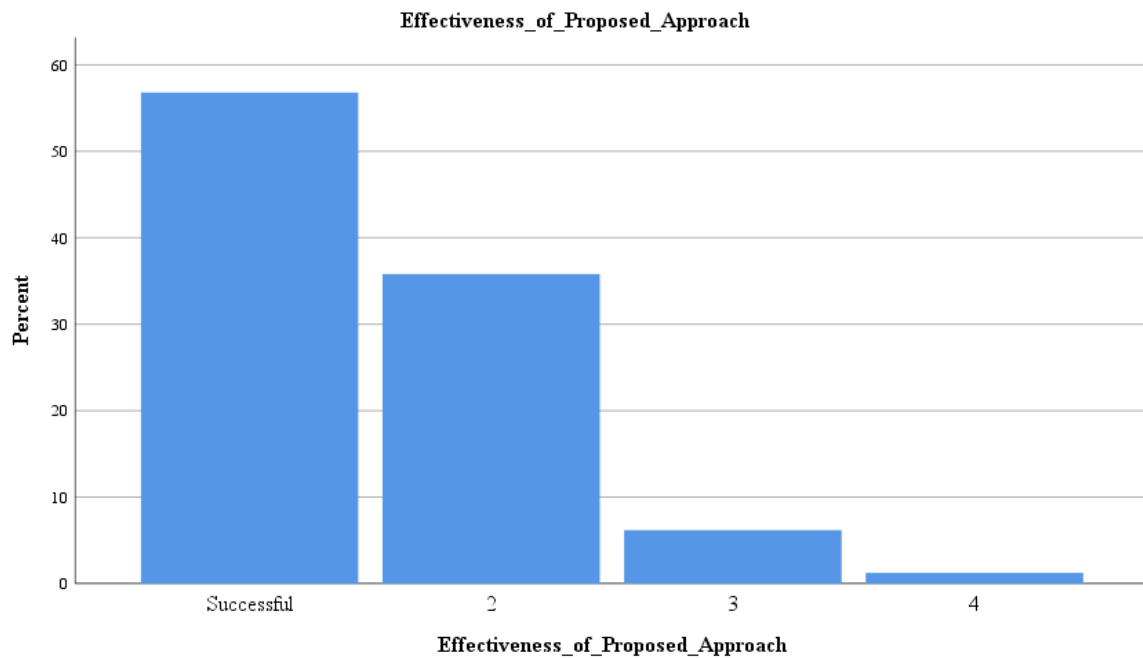
"The training curriculum is effective and to the point, whether approach, content or accuracy, and presentation. The training was designed scientifically; the sessions were rich and enjoyable, which helped us overcome the difficulties. The trainees were in dire need of this as it is the first time we have been exposed to the topic in our training."

Many other interviewees admitted that the methodology of dealing with the Qur'anic Text during the training was beneficial. They all liked the analysis of the meanings at the semantic level, the discussion of the purposes at the pragmatic and rhetorical level, and their translation according to the acquired understanding of the Qur'anic Context and using the back-translation strategy. They all declared to have enjoyed the group work and practical workshops as it allowed them to practice these procedures themselves. Figure 9 below shows that the majority of the respondents opted for the first and second options of the Likert Scale used to evaluate the success of the strategies used during the training, with 72.8% and 22.2% for the two scales, respectively. Only 4.9% of the respondents opted for scale 3, while none of them opted for scales 4 and 5, which is very revealing.

Figure 9: Degree of success of the strategies used in the training



The study also looked into the trainees' evaluation of the approach used in the training. This was also done through a 5 Likert Scale question. The assessment was positive as most respondents opted for the first and second scales, with 56.8%, and 35.8%, respectively. Only very few respondents opted for the 3rd and 4th scales, with 6.2%, and 1.2% respectively. Figure 10 displays these results.

Figure 10: Effectiveness of the approach adopted

The training evaluation also included aspects related to time management, trainees' participation, and motivation. The results for both aspects are positive as only scales 1, 2, and 3 were chosen by the respondents, with 48.1%, 50.6%, and 1.2% for scales 1, 2, and 3, respectively, for time management, and 70.4%, 22.2%, and 7.4% for the trainees' participation. For the sake of space, only the figures are provided. The study also included a question requiring the respondents to qualify for the training program using three adjectives. The processing of the terms used in multimeter has produced the following image.

Graph 1: Terms used to evaluate training program

A close look at Graph 1 shows that the majority of the trainees think the workshops were "Useful," as it appears from the size of the term; it is also believed to be "Scientific," "Systematic," "Excellent," "Rich," etc. All the words used to qualify the training are positive, and not a single negative term was used. This is evidence of the quality of the training program and its value. Based on all the findings reported in the above sections and on the trainees' evaluations and testimonies, the present study drew some implications it formulated some of recommendations for the training of experts in the field of translation. The author should deal only with new or important aspects of the results obtained. The relevance of the findings in the context of existing literature or contemporary practice should be addressed.

5. Implications, and Recommendations of the Study

Based on the findings presented above and on the trainees' testimonies, it can be concluded that the program is of great value as it can have a very positive impact and be an added value for their training of translators and experts in the field because it can help them acquire new knowledge about the translation of the meanings of the Holy Qur'an and develop new skills for dealing

with its translation. It can also make them aware of the critical challenges the translation of the meanings of the Holy Text involves and overcome them by adopting the practical strategies proposed in the training program.

In light of these implications, some recommendations been formulated for the training of translators and experts in the field and in Master's Programs specialized in translation. The most important ones are listed below:

- The translation of religious texts, in general, and the Qur'anic Text, in particular, should be part of the curriculum of all Master's Programs in translation because the specificities of the Holy Text, its rhetorical styles,
- Universities and specialized institutions should adopt practical approaches to train and qualify experts in the field. They should focus on the sciences of the Arabic language, including its grammar, rhetoric etc., as they are some of the critical challenges faced in translating the meanings of the Holy Qur'an.
- Translators are also in need of mastering the sciences of rhetoric, language, interpretation, linguistic sciences, Shar'ia, culture, differences between cultures, and the historical context.

6. Conclusion

The present study investigated the value and effectiveness of training translators and experts in Islamic studies. It also tried to highlight the need to make them aware of the specificities of the Qur'anic text and the challenges its translation involves. Its main objective was to develop the trainees' awareness of the critical issues related to the subject through a 20 hours training program. The study focused on the trainees' views and evaluations of the effectiveness of the training program to draw some implications and formulate some recommendations for the training of translators and experts in the field. The study confirms Nida's (1945) claim concerning the need to train translators. Most trainees highlighted the value of the training and the need for such training. Despite the efforts made, the study has some limitations, which concern mainly the number of trainees involved, the length of the training, the aspects, and Ayats selected and discussed during the training. The small number of trainees was imposed by the lack of availability of relevant programs and the reduced number of students involved in them. More training involving larger samples and even translators practicing in the field and addressing other rhetorical aspects of the Holy Text is needed.

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