

RELEVANCE OF ISLAMIC THEMES FOR SUBSTITUTING MAIN THEMES IN ENGLISH SYLLABUS

¹Muhammad Nawaz, ²Dr. Muhammad Rashid Hafeez, ³Dr. Muhammad Shahbaz, ⁴Dr. Khalil Ahmad

ABSTRACT

This study aims to assert the viability of Islamic principles for teaching humanities, specifically the English syllabus at higher secondary school (HSSC) level in Pakistan. The Present study establishes that education must be aligned with the basic human tenets that are enshrined in Holy Quran and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet. Islam preaches compassion, harmony and forbearance. Islam stands for humanity and teaches morality. The Holy Quran puts forth the strong evidences of these ultimate goals of Islam. The interpretation of the Holy Quran's verses and Surahs can become the part of our curriculum and syllabus in form of short stories. The theoretical framework of Vermeer's Skopos theory (1978) has been used for the translation of verses and Islamic incidents. The sample for this study is the English text book of Intermediate Part 1. The method of content analysis has been used. The book is explored to study its major themes. The themes are extracted manually by extensive reading and they are presented in tabulation form. The events and incidents from the history of Islam and the holy verses of the Quran have been explored corresponding to the extracted themes from the selected text book. Translations of such texts that shape the minds of young learners should be the essential component of our academia. The study asserts that text books of English must be designed to teach the Islamic values of life by exemplifying true incidents from Islamic civilization. Translation of the Holy Quran will assist in maintaining cross cultural relationship and creating awareness among people.

Key words: Holy Quran, Teaching Quran in English, Content Analysis, Parallel themes.

Key Questions:

- What are the major themes in HSSC I English book?
- What types of didactic and moral values are taught to the students by the themes of short stories?
- How are the Holy Verses and Islamic incidents parallel to the extracted themes of English text book?

Introduction

Translation has been center of attention since ages. It has been studied and practically used for communication and language teaching in the beginning. With the advent of human civilization, basic necessities and ever increasing needs of men forced them to interact and come out of their caves to fulfill their needs.

¹Assistant Professor, Humanities Department, COMSATS University, Islamabad

²Assistant Professor, Department of English, GC, Women University Sialkot

³Assistant Professor, Department of English, GC Women University Sialkot

⁴Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Khwaja Fareed University of Engineering & Information Technology, Rahim Yar Khan

This forced them for socialization and they started exchanging of goods and needful articles with others. The similar code was the foremost aim to achieve for which they started understanding the languages of each other. That was how trade and socialization nurtured the discipline of translation initially. Religion and education have been other key factors in influencing the growth and development of translation. Translation studies have developed itself as an independent discipline throughout the world since 1960s. It has become a tool for inter cultural communication among nations and inhabitants. The language teaching is one of the major purposes of translation studies. Especially, for teaching a foreign or second language, translations have been used practically and extensively.

Pakistan is an Islamic Republic where official language is English. English has been taught as a compulsory subject to the students from the nursery level to graduate level. The textbooks of English are replete with foreign contents including poetry, short stories, essays and plays. The main objective of such textbooks is to enhance the language proficiency of the students providing them with opportunity to improve their writing, listening, speaking and reading skills. The short stories or poems generally deal with common moral or social subjects which somehow or other endeavor to teach didactic or moral lessons to the young raw minds of the learners. The presents study emphasis on the need based content for English text books to make them align with the religious, social and cultural values of the native learners. The Holy Quran is manifestation of the eternal true teachings of Islam that aims to convey the original, factual and practical lessons of life. It is complete guidebook to lead a pious and pure life. The verses and incidents from the Holy Book in the form of short stories and essays can be translated and included in the curriculum and text books of English at all levels to enlighten the minds and hearts of the students. It is essential for the strong foundation of a nation who preaches the religion of Islam. Translation has become a widely acknowledged phenomenon in present times and translation laboratories are being established to make sure the sharing of knowledge and enriching cultural harmony. Translations of the religious scriptures provide a thorough understanding of one's religious values and norms and it makes individual good human beings. Our curriculum needs the addition of such translated work instead of horror stories or general imaginative stories.

Literature Review

Initially translation was not considered as a subject and primarily it was practices in language teaching. The emergence and acknowledgement of translation studies as a discipline is the story of the 1960s. Translation studies is an independent discipline neither a branch of linguistics nor the part of literary studies (Bassnett, 2013). However, there have been many researches to highlight the strong relationship between translation and linguistics to show how textual and pragmatic level is influenced in the process of translation (Malmkjær, 2017). It was a conference of Applied Linguistics back in 1972 when James S Holmes shared comprehensively about translation in his presented paper (Toury, 2012). The process of translation has been very demanding and the ethics in translation has been a serious concerns of the translators since 1990' as ethics have become a social trend that is widely acknowledged and observed (Pym, 2001).

There has been an ever increasing debate how to translate. The great Roman poet Horace in his famous book *Arc Poetica* threw light on the issue and said that word to word translation is applicable in the translation of poetry to maintain the stylistic effect and impact. In fact theory of

translation studies has been witnessed changing perceptions. The equivalence theories in translation insisted on the role of translator as mediator who must be loyal, faithful, and correct in the presentation of the content of source text (Rion, 2009). Functional theories in translation studies, however; focus on the potential of the translated content to work in target culture valuing the social, political and economic agendas of the target culture (Venuti, 2012). Skopos theory of translation laid the way for practical approach in translation. This theory is quite opposite to the traditional theories of translations that aims to dethrone the source text by considering the purpose for which translation is being done ifor target culture (Pym, 2017).

The existing swift progress and evolution of science and technology along with the consistent expansion in cultural, economic, and political relationship between nations have raised incomparable complexities for humanity in the integration of valuable and essential information. The researchers are trying hard to control the barriers in language and in such times the importance and status of the discipline Translation studies is quite distinctive and significant. The learning of translation and the working out for trained translators is no doubt a fundamental part for the exposure of both intercultural affairs and the dissemination of scientific and technological knowledge; the requirement for an innovative methodology to the process of teaching and learning is unquestionably realized in translator and interpreter training programs around the world also (Robinson, 2012).

Methodology

This study is qualitative in nature. The objective of this study is to make the teachings of Islam and the Holy Quran part of our curriculum and syllabus in form of short stories in English Text Books. The theoretical framework of Skopos theory has been used for the translation of Holy Verses and incidents. The Skopos theory in Translation Studies belongs to Functional paradigm of translation theories. It is a functional approach that was a reaction against the equivalence or traditional paradigms in translation studies. Skopos Theory was presented and developed by German Linguist and Translator Hans. J. Vermeer in 1978 (Schäffner, 1998)). The purpose of Skopos theory is to focus the end product by keeping in mind the target audience and target culture for which translation of a text from source text to Target text is done. The overall aim of the end product in the form of the translation is valued. English text book of Short Stories HSSC1 has been taken as a sample. We have analyzed various themes of the book that have been extracted using the methodology of content analysis by skimming the book of short stories. The major themes are extracted manually by extensive reading and presented in tabulation form. The verses from the Holy Quran and Hadiath narrated by authentic sources equivalent to extracted themes of textbook stories have been provided. The themes of the short stories are extracted manually and against each theme the verse from the Holy Quran is provided with its translation in English. The incidents and happenings from the history of Islam or from the life of Prophets, saints and religious scholars are provided to match the extracted themes.

Data Presentation

Table 1. Extracted Themes from Text Book

Sr.	Story	Theme
1	Button, Button	Value your dear ones in your life and listen to them. Lust for Money or materialistic gains destroy everything. (The story reflects how wife is ready to push the button to get \$50,000 at the cost of anyone's death in the world despite her husband stops her to avoid the idea of pushing the button)
2	Clearing in the Sky	Strong will power and determination lead to impossible achievements. Hope is life while hopelessness makes a man sad and indifferent towards life. (The story is about the old man who lived more than seventy years despite being warned by doctors time and again that he had a weak heart and he could not live long. He climbed the mountains, raised corn for his family and proved doctors wrong because of his strong will power and good intention).
4	Thank you Ma'am	Kindness and compassion wins heart. Don't try to steal as stealing is a sin. Forgiveness is divine. (The story revolves around a fifteen years old boy that tries to steal the bag of a large woman but was caught by her. She brought the boy home, asked her to wash his mouth, served him with food and advise him not to steal in future as it is a sin and anything that would be buy by stolen money would burn everything. The kindness and forgiveness of the woman changed the boy into a good person)
5.	A Piece of String	Truth does not need repeated justifications as it makes people believe that you are at fault. Incredulity and selfishness in human nature can take away one's reputation and even life in no time. (The story is about a naïve and simple countryman who was blamed the people that he took the lost purse of Mr. George from the ground. Though he repeatedly defended himself saying that he took a piece of string but no one believed in him. He took this insult to his heart and died in short time)
6.	The Reward	Sticking to one's ambition and hard work for that ambition make one reach one's destiny. Sincerity and steadfastness pave ways in seeking goals. (The story is about the young boy who wished to be the acrobat the times when the post of acrobat was nowhere. However, he kept on making effort and at the age of sixty,

		he was able to create the post of acrobat.)
7.	Use of Force	A person in power and authority must not use his power especially on the helpless ones. (The story is about a little girl who was suffering from Diphtheria. She resisted when doctor asked her to open the mouth and doctor became irrational and furious at her resistance. He used force to get her mouth open and her mouth began to bleed.)
8.	The Gulistan of Sa'di	One should never use even a little thing of other without permission. It becomes a custom and can ruin the relationships and nations. The ruler must provide justice to his subject. (The first tale by Sheikh Sa'di is about a Persian slave who did not value the worth of security and tranquility. The second tale is about Nushirvan, the king of Persia, who believed in fairness, impartiality and compassion. The third tale is about a king who wanted to use callously the bile of a boy for his own treatment.)
9.	Foolish Quake	Incomplete or insufficient knowledge of anything leads to dangerous result. (The story is about a foolish quake who saw a camel. The melon stuck in the throat of camel and camel man use a hard stick to hit the throat of camel. Later on, he went to a village and saw an old hag with swollen throat. He applied the same method on that woman and she died.)
10.	A Mild Attack of Locusts	Natural calamities are inevitable but man must be resilient to cope up with unavoidable circumstances considering that worst instead of worse could happen. (The story is about the attack of locusts due to which crops were destroyed and it took more than a day to stop locusts to not stay in the fields and run away. The fields were destroyed completely, but villagers consoled themselves saying that it might be worse so we should be ready to face even worst in future as locusts are like bad weathers.)
11.	I Have a Dream	There must be no discrimination on the base of colour, cast and creed. Repression and cruelty is mere a momentous episode in the general dram of life. Equality and brotherhood must be practiced and preached. (The lesson consists of the speech of Martin Luther King to his nation. He assured his people that a day would come when there would be no discrimination between white and black and all people would live together getting equal rights in America.)

12.	The Gift of the Magi	The exchange of gifts strengthens the bond of love. Gifts should be given out of heart avoiding the game business of profit or loss. (The story is about Gym and Della who deeply love each other. Della sacrifices her long golden hair to buy a chain of gold for Gym's watch and Gym sold out his watch to get the hair pins for Dell's long hair. Both of them sacrificed their dearest things for them.)
13.	God be Praised	Faith in and Gratefulness to Allah are the strongest weapons to end the worries of man's life. (The story is about Molvi Abul who had five daughters. He was poor but never lost his faith in God. At the end, he was able to perform his all duties as he remained hopeful, thankful and contented what was bestowed upon him by the creator.)
14.	Over Coat	Appearances are often deceptive. Class discrimination in actual exposes the hypocrisy of the society. (The story is about a young man who was walking the crossing road in an evening wearing an overcoat. He was pretentious but at the end of story it revealed how poor and wretched man was he.)
15.	The Angel and Authors and Others.	Man should do good deeds to get the closeness of Almighty Allah in his mortal life. (The story is about the author who dreamt that he had been died. He realized that he had not done any good deeds during his life. He repented on his carefree life.)

Table 2. Parallel Islamic Themes

Sr.	Themes	Islamic incidents, Quranic references, Hadith parallel to themes.
1.	Value your dear ones in your life and listen to them.	وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ- And you must abide by Allah being His devotee. And you must have sympathy for your parents, relatives and others.
2	Lust for Money or materialistic gains destroy everything.	Qaroon and Moses' incident related to Zakaat

3	Strong will power and determination lead to impossible achievements.	يا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ - Believers, you must be patient and fearful to your Allah Almighty. [3:200])
4	Hope is life while hopelessness makes a man sad and indifferent towards life.	وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ - If you are strong in faith, Leave rest to Allah and don't lose hope.
5	Kindness and compassion wins heart.	إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ - All Muslims are brethren so do not fight with each other and seek for Allah's kindness. (Al-Hujurat [49:10])
6	Forgiveness is divine.	قَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ صَدَقَةٍ يَتَّبِعُهَا أَذَىٰ وَاللَّهُ عَنِّي حَلِيمٌ - Indeed, Allah forgives, and He likes who forgives. (Surah Al-Baqarah [2:263])
7	Don't illegally consume other's money.	وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتُدْلُوا بِهَا إِلَىٰ الْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُوا فَرِيفًا مِّنْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بِالْإِثْمِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ And do not consume one another's wealth unjustly or send it [in bribery] to the rulers in order that [they might aid] you [to] consume a portion of the wealth of the people in sin, while you know [it is unlawful]. -(Surah Al-Baqarah [2:188])
8	Separating truth from falsehood	وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوا الْحَقَّ And mix not truth with falsehood, nor conceal the truth -(Surah Al-Baqarah [2:42])
9	Sticking to one's ambition and hard work for that ambition make one reach one's destiny. Sincerity and steadfastness pave ways in seeking goals.	لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي كَبَدٍ - We have certainly created man into hardship. (Surah Al-Balad [90:4])
10	A person in power and authority must not use his power especially on the helpless ones.	فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ - Your justice must seek for the absolute truth as is the decree of Allah. (Surah Al-Ma'idah [5:48])
12	One should never use even a little thing of other without permission. It becomes	The incident of Hazrath Omar Khathab (R) to punish his son when he proved guilty of committing the offence on the Jewish Lady to outrage her modesty

	a custom and can ruin the relationships and nations.	
13	The ruler must provide justice to his subject.	The incident of Hazrath Omar Khathab (R) to punish his son when he proved guilty of committing the offence on the Jewish Lady to outrage her modesty.
14	Incomplete or insufficient knowledge of anything leads to dangerous result.	Mansur Al Hallaj's incident
15	Natural calamities are inevitable but man must be resilient to cope up with unavoidable circumstances considering that worst instead of worse could happen.	لَنبَلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِيرٍ الصَّابِرِينَ. Indeed, the patience of patients could be tested by their wealth, health, hunger or life, but the reward for patients is huge. (Surah Al-Baqarah [2:155])
16	There must be no discrimination on the base of colour, cast and creed.	يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ. O people, certainly Allah has created you from men and women and divided peoples in tribes to build familiarity. certainly, the most gentle of you to Allah is the most virtuous of you. certainly, Allah is all Knowing and familiar. (Al-Hujurat [49:13])
17	Repression and cruelty is mere a momentous episode in the general dram of life.	قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي فَاغْفِرْ لِي فَغَفَرَ لَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ. Indeed, Allah forgives, and He likes who forgives. (Surah Al-Baqarah [2:263])
18	Equality and brotherhood must be practiced and preached.	إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ. The believers are naught else than brothers. (Surah Al-Hujurat [49:10])
19	The exchange of gifts strengthens the bond of love. Gifts should be given out of heart avoiding	<i>The Prophet (saw) said:</i> " Exchange gifts, as that will lead to increasing your love to one another." (Al-Bukhari)

	the game business of profit or loss.	
20	Faith in and Gratefulness to Allah are the strongest weapons to end the worries of man's life.	Indeed, Lord is enough for me.
21	Appearances are often deceptive.	إِعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهُمْ وَزِينَةٌ. The life here in this world is merely an eye wash. (Surah Al-Hadid [57:20])
22	Class discrimination in actual exposes the hypocrisy of the society.	The Last Address of Hajat ul Wada
23	Man should do good deeds to get the closeness of Almighty Allah in his mortal life.	مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ خَيْرٌ مِنْهَا ۖ The one who does good, the reward to him better than his deeds. (Surah Al-Qasas [28:84])

Conclusion

This research has established the viability of the principles of Islam with the declaration that since Islam is a complete code of life, it guides us in every facet of life (Kitola, Siwar and Hussain, 2009). The present study determines that education must be aligned with the fundamental human ethics introduced by Islam for portraying the true reflection of religion which advocates compassion, harmony and forbearance. Islam preaches humanity and teaches morality. These teachings will help to uplift the morality of society. The knowledge of Islam and life of Prophets is a lighthouse for all of us. There is dire need to make Islam the code of daily life so that our youth practice on its teachings ardently. The aims of English text books are to enable students to learn English language that can be fulfilled by providing the true stories from Islam and the Prophets. Islam preaches love and humanity more than any religion and the lessons one derives from fictional stories will definitely lose their impact before the real life incidents from the history of Islam, Life of Prophets and the Holy Quran.

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