The comparative analysis of the modal verbs in three Surahs: "Yasin, Al-Rahman and Yusuf" and their contrastive Persian and English translations

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ABSTRACT

Modal verbs are one of the means for expressing the modality and they generally deal with the certainty and uncertainty of a sentence from the listener's perspective. The objective of the present study is to find and count the modal auxiliaries used in the context of Surah Ar-Rahman and Surah Yasin and their Persian and English equivalents and translations will also be presented in the related sections of the current study. The present study methodology is of the descriptive-analytical style therefore to find an answer to the study questions the verbs have been collected and excerpted from the book "Mo'jam Al-'A'rab" and the findings of the study indicate that in Arabic language modality is not existing in the form it is applied in Persian and English languages. To the same reason, the modal auxiliary verbs were collected from the translations and they were compared with the original context.

Keywords: Surah Ar-Rahman, Surah Yasin, modal auxiliaries, Ideology
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INTRODUCTION

Language is a medium by which a relationship is established between the speaker and the listener and it is considered as a tool for transferring thoughts between the individuals and it is a also a collection of sounds and signs, abstract and subjective systems which is being applied for the creation of a relationship between the individuals. Language per se is a complex system with various aspects and religious linguistics and the Holy Quran contexts are among some of the peripheral discussions regarding language and linguistics.

In the face of Persian language and syntax, independent researches date back to very long time ago and it is estimated that it has a 200-year history. In the meantime, there are many concepts and subject matters which have been well analyzed and evaluated but there are still unsolved discussions such as the lack of a comprehensive and clear-cu definition in respect to the modality in Persian grammar. The definition regarding the modality based on the traditional grammarians' opinions differs radically from the definition proposed by linguists. For instance, Khanlori who is regarded as one of the traditional grammar prescribers (1987, cited from Rahimian, 1999) believes that "modality points to a method of applying the verbs by which the speaker expresses his or her position respective to the action or the verb occurrence". In English language, Palmer (1994) also has expressed the modals definition as "the speaker's idea and intention, speech acts, subjectivity or individualism, uncertainty, equivocalness, possibility and obligation". Concerning the Arabic language and the Holy Quran Language, there have been a lot of talks from the early onset of Islam up to date which is out of the current study scope.

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DISCUSSION

It is clear that the Holy Quran context, its lexicology and wording and the implied and hidden semantics are per se a guide and help to the researchers and are therefore considered as very great patterns and clues. For instance, one of the researches existing in this regard is the study conducted by Abedini (2005) within which four Surahs including "Taha", "Haj", "Maryam", and "Towbeh" have been compared regarding the number of times and the frequency of using the words "ALLAH" and "Rahman" and it has come to find striking results some of which are briefly stated in the following part:

In Surah "Maryam", which speaks about the appearance and the birth of His Holiness Messiah, the word "Allah" has been used eight times, three times of which there has not been any semantic implication on the word, but in Surah Haj which has been revealed regarding the people of Mecca there has been made use of such a word for 75times and that has been with this purpose that the people from Mecca are completely familiar with this word and in their letters the people of Mecca used to begin with "to the name of thy, Lo! My God".

In relation to the Holy Quran discussions and topics, Mansoori (2006) has undertaken a study in which the Holy Quran has been surveyed from the perspective of the modern linguistics. He has based his study pivoting around three main topics: language inherence or acquisitiveness, language stratification, and language specificity to the human beings.

Regarding modality in Persian language, its definition differs greatly corresponding to the traditional grammarians' prescriptions opinions in comparison to the ideas proposed by linguists. For instance, Khanlary considers five types of present indicative (realis) mood, subjunctive mood, conditional mood, imperative mood and optative mood. In defining the realis mood, he states that the speaker makes use of realis mood to inform the occurrence of an action in one of the present, past or future tenses. In his opinion, the subjunctive mood is "a form of expressing an action or the verb" by the use of which the speaker conceptualizes ideas such as intention, option, doubt, prediction, supposition, inhibition, condition or agreement. The word "subjunctive" has been shown as appropriate for implying this mood because it needs to be always used by, along and accompanied with another verb. Khanlary goes on to explain that the subjunctive mood fits the tense in which the verb is suggested to take place suppositionally. The imperative mood is the mood applied to give an order such as "Go!", and the optative mood is the mood which is used to show craving and desire for a verb or action to take place such as "I wish he went". Rahimian (1999) believes that the definition offered by Khanlari (1987) regarding moods is in such a manner that it incorporates topics other than moods including aspect and tense of the verb.

Rahimian (1999), in his turn and based on the modern linguists' ideas, has dealt with the verb moods in the today's Persian language. He believes that Khanlary underlies on the verb moods as being of a subjective nature rather than to be objective and he states that "one of the consequences stemming from adopting such an attitude is that he uses two labels of subjunctive and conditional for a specific mood". He continues his discussions with a survey of Bateny (1985)'s idea and expresses that Bateny has made use of imperative, subjunctive, realis and impersonal moods without providing for a clear definition of the mood in general. On the other hand, he objects the mood classification posited by Bateny, "the reader gets confused in recognizing the real nature of Persian language moods, how a single mood can be simultaneously subjunctive or realis and yet impersonal?" in the end, he presents the reader with his own definition of mood. He creates a vivid distinction between language moods as semantic topics and moods as objective subject matters. He believes that "mood semantically refers to the speaker's attitude regarding the happening of an action or the verb. Grammatically, mood can be divided into two sets of realis mood and irrealis mood. The verb moods sometimes signify the unconditional occurrence of the verb and sometimes imply their conditional happening and the existing sentences can be classified into dependent and independent based on this fact."

The translator's ideology role is also to be surveyed in the current study. In here, ideology has not been used in a way to mean only religion, rather such a concept is intended to include an extensive scope including thoughts, culture, place of residence, religion and whatever can be effective on the choice of words and the interpretation rendered by the translator as a whole. In line with this, Ghoreyshi and Jahanjooyan (2012) have dealt with specimens of translators' ideology reflections in the Holy Quran interpretation and translation. They believe that translation cannot be regarded as a direct stream in which the translator can render the source language context to the target language's text without any sort of manipulation or adaptation, rather in such a procedure there is a need

for sort of interventions by the translator in the source text the final result of which would be the target text. What is of great importance here is that such interventions should take place, consciously or unconsciously, subject to the translators' ideology and they are manifested in various levels of the target text. Writers believe that these two topics cannot be separated and the main reason behind this has been found to be that the ideology is mostly codified in linguistic signs and by the same token translation can be a useful tool for ideological manipulations. They continue their discussion with the survey of the effect of the translators' ideology on translation and they have dealt with such an effect in seven levels including lexicon, syntax, phonetic system, figurative speech, implicit connotations, polysemy and explication. At the finish, they have come to this conclusion that different translators make choices in their renderings based on their intellectual database and their accepted ideologies and do selections among their various available options and change the meanings, corresponding to their ideologies, consciously or unconsciously, and based on the ideologies adopted by or against the other translators. It is worth mentioning that the present study does not necessarily deal with the translators' works modification or we do not intend to evaluate the translators' quality of their renderings, to put it the other way, by considering and counting the modal verbs we intend to discover the translator's attitude in this regard and whether can their attitude be effective on their choices and selections.

In the present study the moods are going to be evaluated from the Akhlaghi(2014)'s point of view. He considers moods as a semantic-syntactic topic which is indicative of the speaker's idea and attitude regarding what is expressed and stated and also it is enumerated as an implicative subject matter; since he believes that language can imply the content of a sentence based on the speaker's commitment to its accuracy and one such methods is the use of modal auxiliaries and moods of verbs. He goes on to explain that the modal verbs can be used as an instrument for expressing moods and three verbs such as "should, may and could" are considered among the modal verbs by him which are used for expressing the three moods of "making request", "understanding" and ability which per se are regarded as the three main types of modalities and they are, as well, applied to show a range from likelihood to necessity which have been used to indicate the degree of the modals' intensity. Three moods have been distinguished in Persian language. Epistemic modes can be divided into two subsystems of likelihood and necessity and the verb "must" is used in the necessity subsystem and two verbs of "can" and "may" are applied under the subcategory of likelihood. The moods indicating ability can also be divided into subsystems with the exception that for the "necessity branch" two sub-branches "subject-oriented and neutral" have been considered and the verb "must" is deemed as appropriate in both of the categories. The "likelihood" branch can also be classified into two subcategories of "subject-oriented and neutral", but the verb "must" is deemed as only appropriate for the "subject-oriented branch" and for the "neutral branch" two verbs such as "can" and "may" are taken into consideration.

In English language, the word "mood" was first borrowed in mid-eighteenth century from Russian languages, although it had been studied by Aristotle, the Greek philosopher, years before and it is said to have various types. In English, modality and mood deal with the "likelihood" and "necessity". In other words, modality deals, like in Persian language, with certainty, uncertainty and imperativeness. Frank Palmer (2001), in describing moods, writes "mood is a preposition regarding expressing the status and it describes an event" (Mood and Modality, 11). Numerous expressions and phrases are applied In English language to describe mood, for example modal auxiliaries, adverbs such as "perhaps" and other cases. In another definition posed regarding "moods", Comrie (1976, 5) writes, "Moods are different methods of indicating the internal choices and options extant within a situation. It means that moods are related to the happening of an event or the continuation of a status and situation which is being expressed by the speaker. In confrontation with moods, we cope with a collection comprising of likelihood, possibility, wish, doubt and so forth".

In Arabic language, and particularly at the time for the revelation of the Holy Quran there has not been defined any concept similar to the mood and the Arab grammarians do not consider the topic of modal verbs apart from the verb tenses, to put it differently, the Arabic equivalents of verbs such as "should", "can" and "may" are regarded as modal auxiliaries, but they are not identified similarly in Arabic and they are not enumerated as topics aside from the verbs.

2.4. The survey of the modal verbs in Persian translations
a) Modal "must":
This modal verb has been applied to indicate three moods of "understanding", request" and "ability". According to Akhlaghi (2014)'s idea, this modal auxiliary verb has been most frequently used in the form of "Must".

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Table 2.1: modal "should" and its application for indicating "request", "understanding" and "ability"

Translator	Fooladvand	Ansaryan	Makarem Shirazi	Elahi Ghomshe'ee
Surah "Yasin"	-	-	-	-
Surah "Ar-Rahman"	-	-	-	-
Surah "Yusuf"	1	1	1	5

In fact, all of these four translators have made use of the modal "should" in rendering Surah "Yusuf", verse 67, " عليه فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُتَوَكِلونَ", which means that "So, on Him should rely, those who trust".

It does not seem that such cases can be counted among the modals and moods application, since, on the one hand, there is no equivalent for "should" in Arabic verse and, on the other hand, the modal "should" used in its "epistemic" mood can be applied for deduction and it is indicative of a sort of necessity and it can be called "epistemic necessity", but in these verses there is no sign of explicit necessity evident. Moreover, "the verb "should" in its "epistemic" usage can be accompanied with present modals, past modals, and past continuous tenses what is not observable in these holy verses. The same explanation holds for the deontic mode that means that in the deontic mode such a verb is used to indicate obligation and it makes up a type of "deontic necessity" and it is most often accompanied with present and past modals, in the meantime in the above verses the verb is not accompanied with any of the aforementioned modes, and only the "epistemic necessity" and "deontic necessity" can be inferred accordingly.

Table 2.2: the cases of the use of "should" in Elahi Ghomshe'ee translation

Verse No.	Verse	Translation
9	اقتلوا يُوسُف	Yusuf should be killed.
10	لا تَقتُلوا يوسُفَ	It should be refrained from murdering Yusuf.
38	ما كان لنا أن نُشركَ با الله	In our tradition, nothing should ever be considered as a partner for ALLAH.
47	تَزرعُونَ سَبعَ سنين	You should practice farming for seven years.
67	عليه فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُتَوَكِلونَ	All that trust, should confide in Allah.

Therefore, the evidences do not seem to indicate that the translator have translated any verb with modality usage in Arabic language and/or any verb with necessity and obligation modes concept to Persian in none of the above mentioned verses of the Holy Quran. In this section, we again face with the translator's ideology (style, attitude, perspective and so on).

b) The modal "may", reflecting the epistemic mode:
This verb belongs to the branch epistemic modes in the field of "possibility", from the subcategory of "making judgment" and it is usually applied to reflect judgment and understanding. In this mood the only possible form of the verb that can occur is "it may", and this is not visible in the selected translations.

Table 2.3: the modal "may" for indicating

Translator	Fooladvand	Ansaryan	Makarem Shirazi	Elahi Ghomshe'ee
Surah "Yasin"	-	-	-	-
Surah Ar-Rahman	-	-	-	-
Surah Yusuf	-	-	-	-

It seems that such a modal verb has not been n applied in its epistemic mode in the Surahs under study.

c) The modal "may", in its deontic mode:
This modal auxiliary verb is applied to express "permission" in its deontic mode and from the semantics point of view it usually can be replaced by "authorize". In this mode, as well, similar to the epistemic mode, the only possible form of the verb that can be utilized here is in the form of "it may". Akhlaghi (2014) believes that the use of "may" in its deontic mode is not so much common as in the epistemic mode.

Table 2.4: modal "may" used in its deontic mode

Translator	Fooladvand	Ansaryan	Makarem Shirazi	Elahi Ghomshe'ee
Surah "Yasin"	-	-	-	-
Surah Ar-Rahman	-	-	-	-
Surah Yusuf	-	-	-	-

In English language, unlike Persian and Arabic languages there are numerous verbs implying mode and modality and they can be regarded as modal auxiliaries as well. Fintel (2006) has classified modality in six categories as below. In this sextuple categorization, some of the verbs have been considered as modal auxiliaries, some as pseudo-modal verbs, and some other are regarded as adjectives and the last group is made up of the modal conditional forms of verbs.

In this section, similar to the previous section, the English modal verbs have been surveyed in the English translations.

Table 2.5: the number of the time (frequency) modal auxiliaries used by the translator

Surahs / Modal auxiliaries	Pickthall	Arberry	YusufAli	Shakir
Must	0	0	0	0
Should	3	5	4	1
Might	1	3	3	2
May	10	3	11	13
Could	4	3	9	3
has to	0	0	0	0
have to	0	0	0	1
ought to	0	0	0	0
needs to	0	0	0	0
Perhaps	0	0	0	0
total	18	17	27	20

This table is perfectly suggestive of the translators' ideological differences (style, perspective, attitude and so forth). Table 2.7 indicates the number of the times modal auxiliaries have been used in each of the Surahs.

Table 2.7: the total number of the modals used by the Surahs names

Surahs / Modal verbs	Surah "Yasin"	Surah "Ar-Rahman"	Surah "Yusuf"
Must	0	0	0
Should	13	0	5
Might	3	0	8
May	8	3	26
Could	11	0	9
has to	0	0	0
have to	1	0	0
ought to	0	0	0
needs to	0	0	0
Perhaps	0	0	0
total	36	3	48

According to table 2.7, the frequency of the use of modal verbs is very low. Of course, regarding the modal verb "shall" the statistics do not indicate the same low frequency of the use of this modal and 108 times the modal "shall" has been used and due to the spatial-related issues we prefer not to provide the reader with all of the cases "shall" has been used.

CONCLUSION

According to the results obtained it can be stated that the use of modal verbs is not identical in the context of the three Surahs studied in the current study. In this part, it has to be mentioned that Surah "Ar-Rahman" die to its characteristic style differs from the other two Surahs. In addition, the style this Surah has been expressed differs from the other two Surahs and this difference influences the choice of word selections in the studied Surahs. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that there has been made use of lesser modal auxiliary verbs in Surah "Ar-Rahman" comparing to the other two Surahs.

In relation to the use of modal verbs in a single context one point should be brought under attention and that is all of the modal verbs existing in English and Persian have not been used in the context of the Holy Quran, of course as it

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was illustrated by the tables the translators also have differing opinions in this regard. In Persian language, various translators have come to a consensus regarding the use of modal verbs.

It is the same in English language, that means that in some situations and occasionally the translators have made use of the same modal verb through getting to a consensus and in some other conditions a different modal verb has been used. Therefore, it cannot be asserted with one hundred percent certainty that whether the use of modal verbs in a single context can be different within various translations.

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