Thematic structure of the translated rhetorical questions in the Quranic text into English

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Abstract

Translating rhetorical questions from one language into another requires the translator's attention, since rhetorical questions are interrogative in form yet do not expect answers but rather are used to deliver rhetorical functions such as assertion, negation, exclamation and showing abundance. Further, the sustenance of the thematic structure of rhetorical questions is important to maintain their functions. As such, the present study analysed the thematic structure (theme-rheme) of the Quranic rhetorical questions translated into English by Arberry (1996) to determine whether the functions of such questions are reflected accurately. To achieve this purpose, the study employed Halliday's (1994) textual metafunction. The analysis revealed that the translator made some differences and changes in the thematic structure of the target text, mainly playing on the theme of the rhetorical questions of the source text. The rheme also shows some changes and differences, especially the grammatical categories. Accordingly, the functions of the Quranic rhetorical questions were not accurately reflected.

Keywords: Quran; rhetorical question; thematic structure; translation.

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1. Introduction

Based on their function in communication, Athanasiadou (1991) classified questions into four main types as information seeking questions, examination questions, indirect requests and rhetorical questions (RQs henceforth). While the first three types expect answers, either directly or indirectly, rhetorical questions do not. Further, according to the type of response initiated, Ilie (1994) categorised questions into three groups, namely answer-eliciting, action-eliciting and mental-eliciting response questions. Rhetorical questions are listed in the mental-eliciting response questions group because they need a cognitive response, where the addressee shows acceptance of the implied answer of the speaker. In one way or another, rhetorical questions, different from other kinds of questions, do not aim to be answered or more specifically to receive verbal answers. In this situation, the rhetorical question is defined as "a forceful statement which has the form of a question but which does not expect an answer" (Richards & Schmidt, 2002: 459). Further, "the label, rhetorical questions, has often been used to indicate interrogative grammatical forms which are used with a non-question meaning" (Larson, 1984: 257). Larson (1984) also clarified that the speaker makes use of a grammatical form which its basic use indicates that it's a question, but the speaker's purpose is not seeking information; however, he/she might want to command, request, emphasis, etc. Hence, rhetorical questions are "heard as questions and understood as statements" (Ilie, 1994: 130).

Rhetorical questions are an important rhetorical device which has attracted the attention of scholars from different languages and perspectives. In Arabic, rhetorical questions have taken the concern of both rhetoricians and grammarians due to their wide occurrence in the Holy Quran and the Hadith (sayings and deeds) of the Prophet Muhammad. Being non-seeking information, rhetorical questions are intended to provide some purposes or functions. Under this circumstance, scholars working on Arabic and English have provided lots of purposes or functions served by rhetorical questions. In English, Ilie (1994), for example, showed several functions for RQs such as warning, promising, challenging, etc. Moreover, Koshik (2005) explained that English language speakers use rhetorical questions to perform different actions like accusations, contests and complaints. In like manner, Arabic scholars mentioned several functions like denial, negation, exclamation, etc.

With respect to translation, rhetorical questions must be taken into consideration. Khalil (2011) claims that translating the rhetorical question literally leads to have its meaning lost. In this situation, the thematic structure of the source text (ST) is important. On this ground, the translator needs to pay special attention to the thematic structure of the source text's rhetorical question to produce a translation that sustains its function, since any differences between the thematic structure of the source text and target text (TT) may lead to change or distort the function of the rhetorical question.

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2. Rhetorical questions in Arabic

Rhetorical questions have been studied by Arab scholars, i.e., grammarians and rhetoricians when they explained about interrogation in Arabic. Briefly, an interrogative mood is the grammatical classification of a sentence type that is used for the sake of eliciting an answer. Thus, grammatically, questions are referred to as interrogatives in form. Therefore, Arab grammarians defined interrogation as a question that is posed by a speaker to get an answer from a hearer. Interrogative sentences in Arabic are divided into yes/no questions and wh-questions. This division is related to the tool used to form the question. The question particles "أ" /hamza/ and "هل" /hal/ form yes/no questions, while the question elements (pronouns and adverbs) like "من" (*man*) /who/, "أين" (ayna) /where/, etc., form wh-questions.

The grammarians noticed the deviation of Arabic interrogation, whether in the form of yes/no question or wh-question, where it gave rise to the rhetorical question known as "al-istifham al-balagi". While "al-Istifham" is a verbal noun that is derived from the verb "Istafhama" meaning interrogating, "al-balagi" /rhetorical/, on the other hand, is an adjective that is constructed from the noun "al-balagah". In this sense, "al-istifham al-balagi" is not only deemed to have functioned as a noun phrase at a syntactic level but had also acted as a stylistic device with certain functions. Under this circumstance, Sibawayh, the well-known linguist of Arabic, mentioned that the Arabic question may sometime skew its normal meaning and give another one. To explain this, he talked about the rebuke function (1998: 52). Furthermore, al-Fara'a (1983) mentioned that Arabic questions are sometimes rhetorically used to deliver certain functions such as testing, glorification, exclamation and rebuke. He remarked that sometimes the question particle "هل" (hal) leads to have a rhetorical question. This is in contrast with Sibawayh, who had claimed that "هل" (hal) is only used for real questions. But other grammarians like al-Mubarad (1997) confirmed that "هل" (hal) can be rhetorically used, where sometimes it means "verily or certainly", thus giving an assertive rhetorical question.

The same as Arab grammarians, Arab rhetoricians paid great attention to rhetorical questions. In fact, Arab rhetoricians adopted some of the progress made by the grammarians. Generally, the question, according to the rhetoricians, is the tool which the speaker uses to get information from the hearer. However, they recognised that it is not always used for this purpose. In this context, Sa'ad al-Deen al-Taftazani was the first rhetorician who noticed that questions in Arabic deviate their meanings and give others. He said that "these questions are sometimes used with non-interrogative purposes" (al-Taftazani, 2001: 419). The explanation of the Quranic text by Abdul al-Qahir al-Gurgani (2008), who is considered the chief of Arab rhetoricians, benefited others who came after him, since he considered the sentence from rhetorical and linguistic points of view and stated that it has different meanings. His theory of Nazem (theory of composition) paved the way to show different meanings for Arabic rhetorical questions in different chapters of his books that were attributed to interrogation in Arabic

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2.1. Functions of Arabic rhetorical questions

Arab scholars have provided different functions that are played by rhetorical questions. While some scholars may consider 4 functions, there may be others who believed otherwise. This, therefore, prompted many Arab grammarians and rhetoricians to attempt distinguishing the different functions of rhetorical questions by looking at both the context and structure of the question. In addition, recent Arabian scholars deliberated on the functions of rhetorical questions. Foda (1953) specified eleven primary and fourteen secondary functions for such questions, where the differences were due to the speaker, the addressee as well as the state of the addressee. Although there are numerous functions of rhetorical questions, however, Arab rhetoricians and grammarians have a common understanding of over ten prominent functions (Rajdal, 2013). As for the other functions, they are considered secondary and are classified as subcategories under the ten primary functions. In this study, rhetorical questions with the functions of assertion, negation, exclamation and showing abundance are focused on with their brief explanation as described below.

2.1.1. Assertion

To force the listener to confess on things that he/she has knowledge of. Thus, according to Abbas (1997), assertion comes to make the hearer confess on something by way of asking and this is more emphatic. It also comes to affirm and recognise what the speaker wants. This kind of rhetorical questions may sometimes come with a negative aspect in its structure, especially the negation "لم" (lam) /not/. This is clearly and widely used in the Quran. Another important negation that is used in the Quran is "ليس" (laysa).

2.1.2. Negation

To negate something. Linguistically, the word negation in Arabic revolves around ejection and making things go away. In this sense, "negating a man is expulsing him and negating a thing is denying it" (Ibn Manthor, 1999, cited in Aida, 2012: 78). Using a question with the function of negation influences the hearer and makes speech more elegant. Moreover, letting the hearer confess on the negation is more rhetorical and emphasises the things negated (Aida, 2012).

2.1.3. Exclamation

Al-Balakhi (2007) stated that exclamation is related to the emotions of man due to something new or not known. Al-Bderat and al-Bataynah (2015) mentioned that the linguistic meaning of exclamation relates to "العُجب والعَجب" /alugab and alagab/, which mean denying what one sees or told as he/she is not accustomed to.

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2.1.4. Showing abundance

It is used to show a plenty of things. Linguistically, the word "التكثير" (al-takthir) comes from the verb "كَثَّر" (kathara), which means "جعله كثيراً", made it too many. Sagir (2015) says that the event occurs more than once.

3. Methodology

3.1. Data type

The present study focuses on Quranic rhetorical questions translated into English with the aim of finding out whether the functions of such questions are reflected accurately in the English translation. 7 rhetorical questions with the functions of assertion, negation, exclamation and showing abundance are collected from the Quran against one English translation by Arberry (1996). The analysis of the source text and target text is based on Halliday's textual metafunction (1994), which is explained below.

3.2. Textual metafunction

The textual metafunction concerns the issues of information structure and thematic structure. Concerning thematic structure, theme and rheme are important concepts. The theme is the thing with which the text starts, or "the element which serves as the point of departure of the message; it is that with which the clause is concerned" (Halliday, 1994: 37). Halliday (1994) talked about three important characteristics of the theme. These are explained as follows:

1. The theme can be of three kinds. These are the ideational/topical, interpersonal and textual themes. The topical theme is the element which must be available in the clause. It is the theme that represents human experience and inner world. In the clause, the topical theme is positioned initially and is then followed by the rheme. The topical theme is represented by a nominal group, a prepositional phrase or an adverbial group. As for the interpersonal theme, it shows the speaker's or writer's point of view. It consists of any combination of vocatives, modal adjuncts and mood marketing elements, such as finite verbal operators and wh-elements and imperative. The textual theme, on the other hand, helps structure the text by forming links between clauses. It encompasses continuatives, discourse elements like "oh, no, yes" which indicate that a new move is beginning. It also includes structural elements "subordination and coordination". Further, it involves conjunctive adjuncts that function in linking the clause with the preceding text.

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2. The theme might be simple and or multiple. In case the theme is made of one unit, it is simple. Thus, it might be a noun, adverb or prepositional phrase. Further, in case the theme is made of at least two or more groups or phrases that make a single structural element, it is also simple. However, when the theme is made of multiple groups or phrases such as a prepositional phrase and a conjunction, the theme is multiple. The multiple theme, as mentioned by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), might consist of textual, interpersonal and topical themes.

3. Further, the theme might be marked and unmarked. In relation to this, if the element which takes the position of theme correlates with the subject, the theme is unmarked. However, when such an element conflates with a position other than the subject, the theme is categorised as marked.

The second important element in the thematic structure is the rheme. The rheme is the remainder of the clause, or "the part in which the theme is developed" (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004: 64).

Like other types of clauses, interrogatives do have their themes. The interrogative clause takes the form of yes/no question and wh-question. The normal function of such clauses is asking questions to receive information. On the other hand, they could function to deliver certain meanings or functions, i.e., like our study. In yes/no question, the theme includes the finite operator and the subject (Halliday, 1994: 46). With respect to the wh-question, the theme is composed of only the wh/word. But when the wh/word is part of a nominal group which functions as a complement in a prepositional phrase, such a nominal group can function as a theme on its own (Halliday, 1994: 46).

With respect to Arabic, especially in the wh-interrogative clause, the thematic structure is often similar to that of English. However, in yes/no interrogatives, the thematic structure, especially the theme, might have a little difference. Yes/no or polar interrogative in Arabic is generated by the question particle "أ" (a/hamza) and the question particle "هل" (hal). In relation to this, the question particle "أ" (a/hamza) extends to the element that comes after it, whether a verb or a noun, and thematises it (Bardi, 2008; al-Rajhi, 2009). Concerning "هل" (hal), which also generates nominal and verbal interrogative clauses, Obiedat (1994) remarked that the explicit subject in the verbal sentence introduced by the question particle "هل" /hal/ is inclined in the theme. However, when the subject is implicit and understood from the verbal group, this verbal group is thematised. One more important thing in the Arabic thematic structure is related to negation. The negative particle is part of the theme in the polar interrogatives. However, in wh-interrogatives, it is part of the rheme (Bardi, 2008: 480).

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4. Findings and discussions

4.1. Rhetorical questions serve assertion

ST (1): أَلَيْسَ ٱللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ ؟

TT (1): Shall not God Suffice His servant?

TABLE 1

Theme and rheme of data 1 - Rhetorical question serves assertion

ST	بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ		الله	ليس	أ
Trans	Bikafin Abdahu		Allah	laysa	a/hamza
Back Trans	Sufficient for servant his		Allah	not	have
Textual meaning	Rheme		Topical theme	Topical theme	Interpersonal
TT	shall not	God	Suffice His servant		
Textual meaning	Interpersonal theme	Topical Theme	Rheme		

As observed, the ST has a multiple theme being "أَلَيْسَ ٱللَّهُ" (a laysa Allah). It consists of the question particle / interpersonal theme "أ" (a/hamza) and the topical themes "ليس" (laysa) /not/ and "الله" /Allah/. The topical theme "ليس" (laysa) /not/ is a negated verb in present time. In the ST, the combination "أليس" (a laysa), interpersonal and topical themes, is important for assertion since it is in the negative form.

The TT also presents a multiple theme as "shall not God". Here, the negation used in the TT "shall not" is important for assertion too. However, in Arabic, the question particle / interpersonal theme "أ" (a/hamza) does not inflect for tense. In fact, this question particle places special emphasis on the entity that comes after it, which is the negative auxiliary verb "ليس" (laysa) /not/ in this RQ, which is in the present time. This is to say that this question particle carries a present tense. As a result, although an interpersonal theme "shall" is used in the translation, the tense change from present to future affects the Arabic question's particle / interpersonal theme. Concerning the topical theme, "الله" /Allah/, it is sustained as "God". Hence, the ST theme is slightly affected.

The ST rheme "بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ" is composed of the PP "بِكَافٍ" (bikafin) /sufficient/ and the NP "عَبْدَهُ" (abdahu) /His servant/. The PP "بِكَافٍ" (bikafin) /sufficient/ is transposed into the verb "suffice" in the TT. However, this change in translation does not pose a problem to the meaning of the ST. The NP "عَبْدَهُ" /His servant/ maintained its grammatical category and seman-

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tic meaning when translated into the NP "His servant", which refers to Allah and Prophet Muhammad. To sum up, the ST thematic structure is slightly affected due to the change occurred to the interpersonal theme "أ" (a/hamza). Hence, the translation reflects the ST function but with a slight difference.

ST(2): أَوَلَمْ نَنْهَكَ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ؟

TT(2): Have we not forbidden thee all beings?

TABLE 2

Theme and rheme of data 2 - Rhetorical question serves assertion

ST	عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ		نَنْهَكَ	لم	و	أ
Trans	an I-alamin		nanhaka	lam	wa	a/hamza
Back Trans	From human beings		Forbidden we you	not	and	have
Textual meaning	Rheme		Topical theme	Interpersonal theme	Textual theme	Interpersonal theme
TT	Have	we	not forbidden thee all beings?			
Textual meaning	Interpersonal theme	Topical theme	Rheme			

Similarly, this ST has a multiple theme as "أَوَلَمْ نَنْهَكَ" (a wa lam nanhaka). It is composed of the question particle / interpersonal theme "أ" (a/hamza), the conjunction / textual theme "و" (wa) /and/, the negative particle / interpersonal theme "لم" (lam), and the topical theme "نَنْهَكَ" (nanhaka) /we forbidden you/. The translator offers a multiple theme, "have we". In this context, the interpersonal theme "have" translates the Arabic interpersonal theme "أ" (a/hamza) and the topical theme "we" makes the covert subject, i.e., the speakers in the topical theme "نَنْهَكَ" (nanhaka) /we forbidden you/, overt. As for using the interpersonal theme "have" to render the interpersonal theme "أ" (a/hamza), the translator uses a suitable tense. The question particle / interpersonal theme "أ" (a/hamza), as stated above, does not inflect for tense. This bound question particle places special emphasis on the entity that comes after it, which is the VP "نَنْهَكَ" (nanhaka) /we forbidden you/. This VP is composed of the simple past verb with indefinite time "ننه" (nanha) and the object pronoun "ك" (ka) /you/. Then, a past tense with indefinite is reflected in the question particle which is usually presented in English by the present perfect. The topical theme "نَنْهَكَ" (nanhaka) and the interpersonal theme "لم" (lam) /not/ became the rheme of the TT. The rheme is the new information which is focused upon. The ST focuses on the VP "نَنْهَكَ" (nanhaka) /we forbidden you/ by means of "أ" (a/hamza). This is represented in the translation with the use of the

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VP "forbidden thee" and a negation. However, the textual theme of the ST, which is realised through the conjunction "وَ" (wa) /and/, is not saved. This conjunction adds information and connects the current RQ with a previous verse that enjoys speech between the speakers/disbelievers and the Prophet. Hence, dropping it in the translation is problematic.

The rheme "عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ" (an I-alamin) is a PP consisting of the preposition "عَنِ" (an) /from/ and the NP "الْعَالَمِينَ" (I-alamin) /humans/. Rendering it into the NP "all beings" is not suitable. The NP "الْعَالَمِينَ" (I-alamin) talks about human beings (men) and no other beings. However, when hearing or reading "all beings", the listener or reader will refer to all beings, i.e., both human and non-humans. To this end, the thematic structure of the ST is partially affected. Accordingly, the rhetorical function of assertion is not accurately reflected.

4.2. Rhetorical questions serve negation

ST(3): صِبْغَةَ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ صِبْغَةً؟

TT(3): the baptism of God; *and who is there that baptizes fairer than God?*

TABLE 3

Theme and rheme of data 1 - Rhetorical question serves negation

ST	أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ صِبْغَةً؟		من	و
Trans	Ahsanu min Allah Sibghah		*man*	wa
Back Trans	Better than Allah in purification		who	and
Textual meaning	Rheme		Interpersonal theme	Textual theme
TT	And	Who	is there that baptizes people fairer than God?	
Textual meaning	Textual theme	Interpersonal theme	Rheme	

The multiple theme "وَمَن" (wa *man*) /and who/ is composed of the comment conjunction / textual theme "وَ" /wa/, and the question pronoun / interpersonal theme "مَنْ" (*man*) /who/, which is used to negate. Similarly to the ST, the TT presents a multiple theme "and who", which consists of the comment conjunction / textual theme "and" and the interpersonal theme "who". Thus, the textual theme "وَ" (wa) /and/ is equated to "and" in the TT. Concerning the interpersonal theme "مَنْ" (*man*) /who/, it means "no one" and is intended to negate that there is anyone better than Allah in purifying people. In the TT, the translator keeps the same theme as "who" to present a negation and focuses it on human beings. Thus, the theme of the ST is preserved.

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The rheme of the ST starts with "أَحْسَنُ" (Ahsanu) /better/, which is a superlative noun. It is transposed into the adjective "fairer" to preserve its meaning since "fairer" can mean "better". The P "مِن" (min) /than/ in the PP "مِن الله" (min Allah) /than Allah/ can mean "than" as it is located in a negation question. Thus, the use of "than" is accurate. However, the translation of the noun "صِبْغَةً" (Sibghah) /purification/ into the verb "baptizes" is a problem. Besides changing its grammatical category, its meaning is distorted. The noun "صِبْغَةً" (Sibghah) /purification/ and the verb "baptizes" are related to purification; however, in the ST the purification is done by Allah, while in the TT the purification is a man-made thing. Further, the real meaning of "صِبْغَةً" /Sibghah/ is the religion of Islam. Due to this change, the ST rheme is partially affected. Hence, the thematic structure of the ST is affected. Consequently, the rhetorical meaning of the ST rhetorical question is not accurately reflected.

ST(4): فَلْيَنظُرْ هَلْ يُذْهِبَنَّ كَيْدُهُ مَا يَغِيظُ ؟

TT(4): behold *whether his guile does away with what enrages him.*

TABLE 4

Theme and rheme of data 2 - Rhetorical question serves negation

ST			مَا يَغِيظ	كَيْدُهُ	يُذْهِبَنَّ	هل
Trans	Ma Yaghizu			kayduhu	Yudhibna	hal
Back Trans	What enrages him			His plan	remove	Shall
Textual meaning	Rheme			Topical theme	rheme	Interpersonal theme
TT	Whether	his guile		Does away with that enrages him.		
Textual meaning	theme	Theme		Rheme		

This RQ has a multiple theme consisting of the interpersonal theme "هل" (hal) and the topical theme "كَيْدُهُ" (kayduhu) /his plan/, where the interpersonal theme functions to negate. Similarly, the TT has a multiple theme as "whether his guile". In this respect, the interpersonal theme "هل" (hal) is translated into the structural theme "whether", which has a different grammatical category being an adverb. In this context, the structural theme "whether" does not reflect the negation seen in the ST interpersonal theme "هل" (hal). About the topical theme "كَيْدُهُ" (kayduhu) /his plan/, it functions as a NP at the grammatical level. In the translation, it is saved as a NP "his guile" being a topical theme, which has a similar meaning.

The verb "يُذْهِبَنَّ" (Yudhibna) /will remove/ in the ST rheme is simple present with future relevance. This verb talks about the removal of the rage of the disbelievers, addressees. In

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the TT, it is rendered into the phrasal verb "does away", which retains the meaning of re-moving but not the time preference. The relative pronoun "ما" (ma) /what/ is important here since it points out to the thing that enrages the disbelievers. In the translation, it retains its meaning and function when rendered as "what". The simple present verb "يَغِيظُ" (Yaghizu) /enrages/ finishes the ST rheme and is changed into the verb phrase "enrages him" since the ST verb has an implied pronoun "هو" (hu) /him/, which shows that the disbelievers are enraged. As a matter of fact, this translation retains the meaning of the ST verb, especially by using the object pronoun "him". To conclude, it can be said that the thematic structure of the ST is partially affected because of the interpersonal theme distortion. However, the rhetorical meaning is not reflected in translation.

4.3. Rhetorical questions serve exclamation

ST(5): مَالِ هُذَا الرَّسُولِ يَأْكُلُ الطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشِي فِي الْأَسْوَاقِ؟

TT(5): What ails this Messenger that he eats food, and goes in the markets?

TABLE 5

Theme and rheme of data 1 - Rhetorical question serves exclamation

ST	يأكل الطعام ويمشي في الاسواق؟		ما لهذا الرسول
Trans	Ya'kulu i-tama wa yamshi fi i-aswaq		Ma lihatha rasuli
Back Trans	for this messenger he eats food and walks in the markets?		What
Textual meaning	Rheme		theme
TT	What	Ails this messenger that he eats food, and goes in the market?	
Textual meaning	theme	Rheme	

The question pronoun "ما" (ma) /what/, which begins the ST theme, normally asks about rationales or the truth of things. In this RQ, it performs an exclamatory function and is used to reflect the fact that the disbelievers of Mecca were astonished that the one who called himself a Prophet used to eat food and walk in the markets like them. The theme of the TT here is "what". Thus, the PP "لهذا الرسول" (hatha rasuli) of the ST theme became in the TT rheme. With respect to "what", the translator tries to reflect the purpose intended by the question pronoun "ما" (ma) /what/. In other words, by using the question pronoun "what" as the theme, the translator aims to preserve the exclamation of the ST speakers.

As mentioned, the PP "لهذا الرسول" (hatha l-rasuli) is changed from the theme to the rheme of the TT. The preposition "لـ" (la) /for/, which introduces this PP, is changed into the verb "ails"

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in the TT rheme. This change in translation causes a clear distortion to the meaning of the ST. It is true that "ails" gives a strong sense of exclamation; however, the situation presented in the TT is different from that presented in the ST. This verb implies that the reason for the speakers' exclamation is wonder about the reason that led the messenger to eat food and walk like them in the markets. This is a wrong interpretation made by the translator. It is observed that the verbs "يَأْكُلُ" (Ya'kulu) /he eats/ and "يَمْشِي" (yamshi) /he walks/ describe the status of the Prophet as a human being. This important point is maintained in the rheme of the TT by the verbal groups "goes" and "eats". Further, these two verbs are connected with the coordinator "و" (wa) /and/, which is rendered as "and" in the TT to preserve its function. Thus, due to the distortion seen in the rheme, the ST thematic structure is partially affected. Hence, the rhetorical function of exclamation is not accurately reflected.

ST(6): أَنَّى لَكِ هَٰذَا؟

TT(6): How comes this to thee?

TABLE 6
Theme and rheme of data 2 - Rhetorical question serves exclamation

ST	لك هذ؟		أنى
Trans	laki hatha		anna
Back Trans	To you this		Where from
Textual meaning	Rheme		theme
TT	how	Comes this to thee?	
Textual meaning	theme	Rheme	

The simple theme of the ST, i.e., the question adverb "أَنَّى" (anna), has three meanings in Arabic: "where from", "how" and "what". In this text, the user of the ST question, the Prophet Zachariah, was astonished by the food he used to see in the addressee's/Mary's place and wondered about its source. Thus, the theme "أَنَّى" (anna) means "where from" in this case (al-Zamakhshri, 2009: 170). In the TT, the translator sustains the same grammatical category of the ST theme by using the question adverb "how" and retains the somewhat exclamatory character of the utterance. However, the TT does not reflect the same reason of exclamation since the theme of the TT refers to manner and condition and not to place/source.

The ST rheme "لك هَٰذَا" (laki hatha) /to you this/ consists of the PP "لك" /to you/ and the demonstrative "هَٰذَا" /this/. The PP "لك" (laki) /to you/ maintains a sense of possession to say "you got this". The PP "لك" /to you/ is represented by the prepositional phrase "to thee" in the TT. Further, the demonstrative "هَٰذَا" /this/ is saved as "this". To sum up, although the thematic

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structure of the ST is sustained to a high degree, the theme "أَنَّ" (anna) /where from/ is not sustained. As such, the rhetorical meaning of the ST is not accurately reflected in the TT.

4.4. Rhetorical questions serve showing abundance

ST(7): وَكَأَيِّن مِّن قَرْيَةٍ عَتَتْ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهَا وَرُسُلِهِ؟

TT(7): How many a city turned in disdain from the commandment of its Lord and His Messengers.

TABLE 7

Theme and rheme - Rhetorical question serves showing abundance

ST	عَتَتْ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهَا وَرُسُلِهِ	كَأَيِّن مِّن قَرْيَةٍ	و
Trans	atat an amri rabiha wa rusulihi	kaayyin min karyatin	Wa
Back Trans	Violated the order of its Lord and His messengers	How many nations	and
Textual meaning	Rheme		Interpersonal theme	Textual Theme
TT	How many a city	turned in disdain from the commandment of its Lord and His Messengers.	
Textual meaning	theme	Rheme	

The ST theme "وَكَأَيِّن مِّن قَرْيَةٍ" (wa kaayyin min karyatin) is a multiple theme which consists of the textual theme "و" (wa) /and/ and the interpersonal theme "كَأَيِّن مِّن قَرْيَةٍ" (kaayyin min karyatin). The interpersonal theme "كَأَيِّن مِّن قَرْيَةٍ" (wa kaayyin min karyatin) is composed of the lexical item "كَأَيِّن" (kaayyin) /how many/ and the prepositional phrase "مِّن قرية" (min karyatin) /nations/. The lexical item "كَأَيِّن" (kaayyin) /how many/ is a compound consisting of the question adverb "اي" (ayy) to which the "ك" (ka) is prefixed and to which the "ن" (n) is affixed. This question adverb, according to Ibn Ashur (1984), means "كم" (kam), which means "how many". Thus, it shows abundance. This abundance is related to the nations which are seen in the PP "مِّن قرية" (min karyatin) /nations/.

In the translation, the interpersonal theme / adverb phrase is rendered by the interpersonal theme / adverb phrase "how many a city", while the textual theme "و" (wa) /and/ is dropped. The interpersonal theme of the ST is meant to show abundance with respect to the many nations which violated the orders of Allah and His messengers. This function is sustained in the theme of the TT as "how many a city". Also, dropping the textual theme "و" (wa) /and/ in the translation is better than using "and", since the textual theme of the ST is a resumptive conjunction that is better replaced with a textual theme other than "and". Thus, the theme of the ST is sustained.

The verb "عَتَثْ" (atat) /violated/ that starts the rheme of the ST is translated into the verb phrase "turned in disdain". If the translator had employed only the verb "turned", without "in disdain", the meaning of the ST "عَتَثْ" (atat) /violated/ would have been sustained. However, the use of the PP "in disdain" is important, since those who violated the orders of Allah and His messengers showed insolence.

This violation of the orders of Allah and His messengers is presented as a PP "عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهَا وَرُسُلِهِ" (an amri rabiha wa rusulihi). The grammatical and semantic meaning of this PP is sustained in the translation as "from the commandment of its Lord and His Messengers". With respect to this PP, the conjunction "وَ" (wa) /and/, which connects "رُسُلِهِ" /His messengers/ with "رَبِّهَا" /its Lords/, is rendered as "and". Besides, the NP "رُسُلِهِ" /His messengers/ has a possessive pronoun "ه" (hu) /his/, which refers to the connection between the messengers and Allah. This is also sustained as "His". Thus, the thematic structure of the ST is maintained. Therefore, the rhetorical meaning is reflected accurately.

5. Conclusion

The present study analysed the thematic structure of the Quranic rhetorical questions translated into English by Arberry (1996) to determine whether the functions of such questions are accurately reflected. To achieve this aim, the study employed Halliday's (1994) textual metafunction focusing on the thematic structure (theme-rheme). The study concluded that translating rhetorical questions in the Quran into English was not faithful to the thematic structure and accordingly to the meaning. As observed, some differences and changes appeared between the ST and TT rhetorical questions' thematic structures. In this sense, in terms of theme, the translator managed sometimes to change the tense of the theme of the ST, change the theme from one kind into another and change the function of the ST theme. Further, the translator, in one case, changed the multiple theme of the ST into a simple one in the TT. In terms of rheme, the translator, sometimes, changed the grammatical category and semantic meaning of some terms. For example, translating the RQ "أَوَلَمْ نَنْهَكَ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ" into "Have we not forbidden thee all beings?" shows that a change or in fact distortion happened to the rheme / the PP "عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ", which is related to human beings, when translated into "all beings", thus talking about humans and non-humans. Hence, the thematic differences between the ST and the TT made by the translator affected the transference of the ST rhetorical functions, and, thus, they were not all accurately reflected into English.

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