

A Semantic Study for the Transference of the word  
(heaven) in the Glorious Quran into English



دراسة دلالية لترجمة لفظة السماء في القرآن الكريم الى الانكليزية

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## A Semantic Study for the Transference of the word (heaven) in the Glorious Quran into English

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#### ملخص البحث

إن مفهوم السماء في القرآن الكريم له أهمية بالغة حيث إن له دلالات كثيرة وحسب السياقات اللغوية التي وردت فيه ، مثل معنى السقف ، والمطر ، والغيوم ، ومعنى العقاب ، وسماء الجنة والنار فضلا عن كونها دليلا عظيما على وحدانية الله سبحانه وتعالى وقد عمد الباحث من خلال الدراسة الحالية لتوصيف الجوانب الدلالية و المقاصدية للفظ السماء في القرآن الكريم حيث تعمد الدراسة إلى اكتشاف التحديات والاستراتيجيات بغية الوصول الى ترجمة مؤثرة لمفردة السماء من العربية - باعتبارها اللغة الأم - إلى الانكليزية - باعتبارها اللغة الهدف أو المترجم إليها - وللوصول إلى هذه الاهداف تفترض الدراسة أن ترجمة مفردة السماء بنجاح تتطلب اللجوء إلى تفسير أصيل موثوق به.

وقد تبنت الدراسة اثنتي عشرة آية قرآنية وردت فيها لفظ السماء واعتمدت الدراسة على ثلاثة تفاسير للقرآن الكريم لأدراك المعنى المقصود للسماء ثم عمد الباحث الى تقييم الترجمة الانكليزية لمفردة السماء من خلال ثلاث ترجمات تفسيرية متنوعة لكل من (اربري) و(غالي) و(كساب) لمعرفة فيما اذا نجح هؤلاء المترجمون في نقل المعنى المقصود لمفردة السماء وقد

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توصلت الدراسة إلى أن افضل طريق لتحديد دلالة معنى السماء هو الاعتماد على المعنى المعجمي للمفردة فضلاً عن السياق الذي وردت فيه.

### Abstract

The term (heaven - transliteration -asama) is a pivotal word in the Glorious Quran for it has a wide semantic Spectrum in Quranic verses like roof, rain, clouds, our Lord's oneness, the heaven of Paradise and pivotal hell as well as punishment. Thus the current study describes semantic and translational axes of the word (asama) in the Glorious Quran. As translation concentrate on terms and their importance in drawing the scope of meaning ,the study also aims at exploring the challenges and the best strategies for effective and successful translation of the word (asama) from Arabic- as a source language into English- as a target language. In order to achieve these aims the study hypothesizes that translating the word (asama) in an appropriate way requires restoring to the reliable authentic exegesis. The research adopts (12) Quranic verses depending on four Quranic exegeses to understand the intended meaning of the word (asama). After that, assessing the English translation of the word under focus through 3 various translations for (Arberry, Ghali and Kassab) to see whether they are successful in transferring the intended meaning of the term (asama). The study will analyze the Quranic word (asama) through Quranic text, compare and discuss their choices in translating the term and the implications of these choices on the reader's understanding of the Quranic text. Finally, the study comes up to conclude that the most accurate and appropriate way to translate (asama) into English is the dependence on both the lexical meaning and the contextual meaning.

### 1.1 Introduction

Translation of religious texts requires special attention this is due to the fact that such texts maintain specificity, and sanctity and sacredness. Ilyas (1989:89) argues that that translation of religious texts needs extra concern when they are rendered into TL. The sacredness of religious texts especially the Glorious Quran makes the translation process into TL difficult, but not impossible. Thus, translating Quranic texts into English needs a qualified translator who possess a sort of Quranic culture in order to gain the semantic nature of the Glorious Quran. It is a miracle and can never be imitated. (EL-Shaik, 1985: 415; Aziz and Lataiwish, 2000: 110-111).





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The solid ground which languages based on are terms constitute. Translators faces many obstacles to attain the exact meaning of terms in the target language. One of the problematic words that faces the translators of the Glorious Quran into English is the notion (asama) because it refers to various senses in different contexts. This is usually due to both cultural and linguistic differences between the two languages. Finding, appropriate or closer equivalent with the original version is not an easy task for it imposes a sort of problem. The rendered text will often omit some elements in the SL, and change Some semantic structures of the original text. The reason behind this difficulty due to the fact that the word (asama) in the Glorious Quran has different meanings in different contexts.

1.2 The various Semantic Range of (asama) in Quran Generally, the word (asama) in the TL as well as in the SL refers to the sky above us. But to generalize one meaning is unacceptable, this is due to the fact that the term (asama) has various senses in different contexts. It is pivotal term in the Glorious Quran for it carries different semantic and cultural Connotations. Recognizing the semantic aspects of the Quranic text is crucial for its interpretation and translation. It occurs three hundred and ten times in Quran in which it has several range of meaning according to Quranic exegesis to express multiple meanings such as roof, rain, cloud, the heaven which is differ from the earth, paradise and hell and punishment. On this basis, the notion (asama) has various referents in the Glorious Quran as the Arab lexicographer and commentators of the Quran explain among them. Ibn Qutaiba (1978:32) who points out that the referential function of (asama) in Quran is roof, rain, cloud, heaven of Paradise, and hell, our Lords oneness, the heaven which is differ from the earth, punishment and other lexical items (see also Ibn-Duraid :1964,53). According to Cown (1960:432) the lexical definition of the word (asama) in Arabic expresses it generally as the height and highness and the specific meaning is roof and the heaven which is differ from the earth or other than earth. This word is context dependent as Abdul-Raof (2001:45) states that the term (asama) signifying a range of meanings depending on the context. EL-Rouayheb (2016:27) this Quranic term (asama) can be broadly categorized into three main senses:

- 1.The physical sky or firmament includes celestial bodies such as stars, planets and the sun.
- 2.The metaphysical realm in which angels and other divine beings reside.
- 3.The afterlife abode of the righteous, also known as paradise or Jannah.



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### 1.3 "Heaven" in English

There is approximately a unanimous agreement about heaven's meanings in English dictionaries, some meanings that are used to describe (heaven) are: the home of God and his angels, a place of extreme happiness where good people go when they die. It is also refers to as the expanse in which sun, moon and stars are seen. It is also defined as the place sometimes imagined to be in the sky, Where God or the Gods live and where good people are believed to go after they die, so that they can enjoy perfect happiness (Burrige, 1984:116; Wehmeier, 2004: 602).

### 1.4 Quranic Context and Translation

The Glorious Quran was revealed in Arabic language. Thus the translator must be able to understand the language completely, recognizing all the denotations that come with the Quranic texts as well as the contextual meaning of the verse. Ibn Qutaiba (198:324) states that a person who has deep and wide knowledge can understand the Quranic text. He must be equipped with vast knowledge, be familiar with the customs, cultures and religion of the Arabs and their linguistic style. Translating the Glorious Quran into English is a difficult and complicated issue. This is due to the divine synthesis of the words that it is based on. Larsen (1984:30) says that translator should take upon himself three aspects in his translating:

- Differences in characteristics of language.
- Sort out the confusion between the source language and target language.
- Recognize the differences in the context of the uses of each term.

Translating Quranic texts into English or any other foreign language requires full understanding to the contextual meaning of Quranic verses. Hence, context play a vital role in translating Quranic verses in general and specificall! in translating Quranic terms because the context determines their meanings.

### 1.5 Procedure

This section examines the translation of twelve Quranic texts contain the term (asama) in various English translations. The name of the translators will be ordered according to the alphabetical order, Arberry (1980), Ghali (2007) and Kassab (1994). The researcher will analyze and discuss the translation choice made by these translators. The present work also assesses the translators renderings of the term (asama) in selected Quranic verses to see if they are successful in transferring the intended meaning of (asama) into English. The study depends on both the lexical meaning of the term (asama) and the Quranic context that it is found in. The final





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section of the study is supported by the conclusions that the writer of the present work arrived at.

The Study of the translated texts

### 1. SL Text

(وَجَعَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ سَقْفًا مَّحْفُوظًا وَهُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِهَا مُعْرَضُونَ) الانبياء/32

a- Arberry (142): And we set up the heaven as a roof well-protected.

b- Ghali (344): And we have made the heaven as roof well preserved.

c- Kassab (552): And we made the sky as a ceiling which is protected [from falling down].

Interpretation

All Arab commentators agree that this verse describes how our Lord Allah creates roof for the earth as if it is a roof for a house (AL-Baythawi 1964 :99; AL-Tabaree 1972:16-17). There is a very beautiful image the earth is like house and the heaven is its roof. The blue dome prevents the earth from other circumstances without this roof the earth becomes live less. It transfers light and heat from the sun, the moon and stars to the earth. It is regarded as an observatory for Jinn's who to overheard (AL-Saboni, 1981:262; Ashour, 1984:331).

Commentary

In this Quranic text the contextual meaning of (asama) is roof as the commentators of Quran agree on. All translators try to follow the original text in their translations. Arberry and Ghali use (the heaven as a roof). Both of them over translate the word (asama) as it refers here to the physical sky. Kassab uses (the sky as a ceiling) in which (sky) is an is translated(سقفًا) exact equivalent. In the same context the word into (as a roof) by Arberry and Ghali, but Kassab translates it into (as a ceiling). The former translators use an exact word and follow the Quranic text, whereas the latter translates it into (a ceiling) in this sense he is far away from the original text. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary offers the word roof as the external covering of the top of a building, whereas ceiling refers to the overhead closure of a room. The three translators use a figure of speech (simile) when they use (as) after (asama) which is found in the original text. Finally, we can say that the three translators are not precise in their translation of the Quranic text.

2-SL Text

(وَالسَّقْفِ الْمَرْفُوعِ) الطور/5

a- Arberry ( 237): And the roof uplifted.

b- Ghali (523): And (by) the roof upraised.

c- Kassab (942): And by the Raised ceiling.



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### Interpretation

Allah Almighty swore by the heaven, because it is for the earth like the roof of a house. All Arab commentators agree that the roof in this Quranic verse is the sky (Ibn-Qutayba, 1978: 424).

### Commentary

in the above verse it refers (وَالسَّقْفِ) Considering meaning of the word (to (asama) as explained by the commentators and indicated by the word (الْمَرْفُوعِ) that followed it. Arberry and Ghali use (the roof) which is the counterpart of the Arabic term (السَّقْفِ). Both translators employ approximately the same meaning and structure of the original verse in their renderings. Kassab seems not precise in his translation of the word (السقف) as he uses the word (ceiling) which is used here figuratively, but it does not give the intended meaning of the Quranic text.

### 3-SL Text

( 11 يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَارًا ) (نوح)

a- Arberry (262): He will loose heaven upon you in torrents.

b- Ghali (571): He will send down on you (rain) from the heaven.

c- Kassab (1064): If you do, He would cause the sky to send down consecutive rain on you.

### Interpretation

From the preceding verse it is clear that this is a dialogue between prophet Noah (PBUH) and his people. They disbelieved him for a long time, therefore, the Al-mighty punishes them by rain prevention for them forty- years so their animals and plants died. They went to their prophet Noah and asked him to help them. Their prophet advised them to ask Allah's forgiveness and call them to believe in Allah as a result Allah will send rain (Al-Anbari, 1969:464; AL-Tabaree 1972:59).

### Commentary

To refer to the above Quranic text, it can be seen that the three translators view the term) asama) differently. Arberry uses (heaven) in his translation for the Quranic word (asama) which means the Physical sky as it explained by commentators of Quran. So Arberry's translation is inaccurate for certain reasons. First of all he uses (He will loose heaven) to translate the Quranic text (يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ) in which (loose) means (Free to move around without control) according to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary. The second point is that he drops the definite article (the) before (heaven) which is found in the original text. Ghali uses direct translation by inserting the word (rain) in his translation and put it in brackets. He follows the commentators' interpretation who say that the





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intended meaning of (asama) in this verse is rain. By doing so, Ghali wants to be closer to the original text. Kassab tries to express the Quranic verse in his rendering as he prefers to use (the sky) instead of (the heaven). The intended meaning of this verse is explained clearly by Kassab.

### 4-SLText

6\ إِنَّا زَيَّنَّا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا بِزِينَةِ الْكَوَاكِبِ الصَّافَاتِ

a- Arberry (199): We have adorned the lower heaven with the adornment of the stars.

b – Ghali (446): Surely we have adorned the lowest heaven with an adornment the planets.

c- Kassab (771): We have to decorated the sky nearest to you with stars.

### Interpretation

The word (asama) in this Quranic text refers to our Lord's kindness and mercy towards his People. He created it and decorated it with stars in order to clear our way when we walk at night. (AL-Tabaree, 1972: 3; AL-Qurtubi, 1988,43; AL-Zamakshari, 2007:335).

### Commentary

Obviously in this Quranic text the term (asama) refers to the firmament or the physical sky which is opposite to our earth. This meaning is so clear according to the text contextually of the above verse. What is meant by the word (asama) in this Quranic text is the first sky that is above us, and this is clearly evident as the word (asama) is followed by the noun (الدُّنْيَا). The three translators view (السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا) differently. Arberry uses a comparative degree (the lower heaven) as if there were a comparison between two things which is unsuitable translation. Ghali uses the superlative degree (the lowest heaven) which is better than Arberry's translation as Ghali compares (السماء الدنيا) with the six heavens above it. Kassab's translation is more precise and accurate as he uses (the sky) which is an exact equivalent and reflects the intended meaning of the verse.

### 5- SL Text:

59\ فَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا رِجْزًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ البقرة

a- Arberry (6): So we have sent down upon the evildoers wrath out of heaven for their ungodliness.

b- Ghali (9): So we sent down upon the ones who did injustice chastisement from the heaven.

c- Kassab (15): We sent down a punishment from the sky upon those who transgressed.





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### Interpretation

This Quranic text refers to the punishment of Israelis for their proud and disobeying Allah's orders. As a result to their disobedience this beautiful sky is changed into the source of punishment to carry out Allah's command and the word (رَجَزَ) is torments, and it was said that it was a plague (AL- Qurtubi, 1988:287).

### Commentary

Obviously the term (asama) in this Quranic verse is an equivalent to the English term (the sky) as described by Arab commentators. Arberry and Ghali are not precise in their translations as they use the word (heaven) to substitute the Quranic term (asama). Arberry drops the definite article (the) which is found in the original text whereas Ghali retains it and follows the original text. Both of them have used archaic style in their translation when they translate (رَجَزًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ) Arberry uses (wrath out of heaven) while Ghali uses (chastisement from the heaven). In Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary both (wrath and Chastisement) are old-fashioned style. The reason behind this is thought to be the translator's desire to use an old style to give more weight to the English translation of the Quranic text. Kassab uses an appropriate equivalent.

### 6- SL Text:

63\العنكبوت\ (وَأَلَيْنَ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَّنْ نَّزَّلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوْتِهَا لِيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ الْعنكبوت\63)

a- Arberry (77): If thou askest them, who sends down out of heaven water.

b- Ghali (403): And indeed in case you were to ask them, who has been sending down from the heaven water.

c- Kassab (698): And if you ask them who sends down water from the sky.

### Interpretation

This Quranic verse in its context establish an argument against the polytheists determining the state of water descending from the sky. This verse is an evidence that the unbelievers are ignorant and stupid for they are sure that our Lord Allah, but not anyone else is descending water (AL-Baythawi, 1964:141).

### Commentary:

In this Quranic text the contextual meaning of (asama) is cloud. The past tense of the Arabic verb (نَزَّلَ) refers to the action of descending water up to down, from the clouds to the earth (AL-Najmany,2003:13).





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The above Quranic text (مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً) is translated differently by the three translators. Arberry uses ( of heaven water), whereas Ghali uses (from heaven water) both translators try to be as close as possible to the original text though they are not far away, but not very precise. Kassab uses direct translation as he translates (مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً) into (water from the sky) which is an exact equivalent to the Quranic verse. By doing so, his translation is more powerful than Arberry's and Ghali's translation. This is quite clear as the rain sends down from the physical sky that can be seen.

### 7- SL Text:

(79) أَلَمْ يَرَوْا إِلَى الطَّيْرِ مُسَخَّرَاتٍ فِي جَوِّ السَّمَاءِ مَا يُمَسِّكُهُنَّ إِلَّا اللَّهُ النحل

- a- Arberry (119): Have they not regarded. the birds, that are subjected in the air of heaven?
- b- Ghali (275): Have they not regarded the birds subjected in the firmament of the heaven?
- c- Kassab (456): Have they not seen the birds that are harnessed in the celestial space?

### Interpretation

This Quranic text shows our Lord's ability to give birds strength and support to fly with their wings in give the air between the sky and the earth. Allah Almighty addresses the polytheists to look at those flying birds in the sky and do not fly. These birds are one of the evidence of the oneness of God (AL-Zamakshari, 2007:422).

### Commentary

Considering the contextual meaning of this Quranic verse the term (asama) refers to the sky above us the space where the birds fly in between. According to AL-Qurtubi (1988: 100) the word (جَوِّ) was added to (asama) in this verse and this is due to its height above the ground. There are three different forms to refer to the Arabic word (asama) in the above translation. Arberry's translation is not far away as he uses (in the air of heaven) though it is a general word and drops the definite article that precedes (asama) in the original verse. Ghali and Kassab have used the correct words to indicate the term (asama) Ghali on one hand uses (in the firmament of the heaven) in which the word (firmament) refers to the physical sky. Kassab on the other hand uses (the celestial space) in his translation. Therefore, their translations are more successful than Arberry's. Both of them choose an exact equivalent to the Quranic verse as (firmament and celestial space) to the sky above us.



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### 8- SL Text:

48 |يَوْمَ تُبَدَّلُ الْأَرْضُ غَيْرَ الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَاوَاتُ وَبَرَزُوا لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ (ابراهيم)

- a- Arberry (110): Upon the day the earth shall be changed to other than the earth and the heavens.
- b- Ghali (261): Upon the Day the earth will be exchanged to other than the earth and the heavens (will be exchanged).
- c- Kassab (427): When the earth shall be replaced by another earth, and the skies (by other skies).

### Interpretation

The purity of (السَّمَاوَاتُ) indicates the greatness of heavens on the one hand, and the capacity and magnitude of hell on the other hand. In the day of judgment the earth and the heaven will be changed into another earth and heaven which are different from those that we see now. The sun, the moon and stars will be changed. Strange changes will happen like pellet the sun and lunar eclipse. The stars will be spread that is what our Lord tells us about in the Holy Quran (AL- Qurtubi, 1988:66)

### Commentary

The word (السَّمَاوَاتُ) is plural in this Quranic text. Considering meaning of the term (السَّمَاوَاتُ), it can be seen that it is an equivalent of the English term (heaven), besides it is used generically as it refers to heavens in general (the physical sky, the metaphysical realm and paradise). Arberry and Ghali translate the term correctly as they use (heavens), whereas Kassab is not precise in his translation in which he uses (skies) in translating the term (السَّمَاوَاتُ). Unfortunately, the three translators mistranslating the noun by utilizing the definite article before a plural noun instead of the zero article.

### 9- SL Text

32 |وَإِذْ قَالُوا اللَّهُمَّ إِن كَانَ هَذَا هُوَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا حِجَارَةً مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ (الانفال)

- a- Arberry (77): Then rain down upon us stones out of heaven.
- b- Ghali (180): Then rain down upon us stones from the heaven.
- c- Kassab (292): Then shower us with stones from the sky.

### Interpretation

In this Quranic context the blasphemers challenge and ask Allah to rain down stones upon them from the sky. The word (مَطْرٌ) refers to Allah's mercy, but the pagan said (فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا حِجَارَةً مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ) which mean torment and that is so clear from the context of the verse. The unbelievers are unreasonable people instead of asking Allah to guide them to the right way they asked Him to torment them.(AL-Zamakshari, 2007: 155).





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### Commentary

In this Quranic text the term (asama) denotes the physical sky above us as all Arab commentators agree among them AL-Qurtubi (1988:152). Arberry and Ghali over translate it as they use the word (heaven) once again Arberry drops the definite article (the) which precedes (asama), but Ghali follows the original text and retains it. Both of them, use inaccurate translation. Kassab's translation is precise as he uses (the sky) as an exact equivalent. He follows the commentators interpretation as well as the contextual meaning of the Quranic verse.

### 10- SL Text:

وَبَنَيْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعًا شِدَادًا\النَّبَأ\12

- a- Arberry (269): And we have built above you seven strong ones.
- b- Gali (582): And we have built above You seven strong (heavens).
- c- Kassab (1101): Have we not built above you seven sturdy (skies).

### Interpretation

In this Quranic text the intended meaning of (سَبْعًا شِدَادًا) indicates the physical sky, metaphysical realm and the afterlife bode. Our Lord build these heavens with His power and make them a roof for the earth, so He makes it as the roof of a building as the Arab people call the roof of the house. The AL-mighty speaks to them in their tongues (AL-Tabaree,1972:152).

### Commentary

In this Quranic text the word (asama) does not appear , but the hidden meaning can be deduced through the linguistic and the logical context which makes this point clear enough to be interpreted in this way .All translators view this verse differently . Arberry uses ( seven strong ones) to substitute the original text which is inaccurate . Ghali prefers (seven strong heavens) which looks very formal. Kassab uses( seven sturdy skies)in his translation. Both Ghali and Kassab follow the commentators in their translation . They have made clear that the Quranic verse employed the word (asama) by putting in brackets the English equivalent ( heavens) in Ghali's translation and ( skies ) in Kassab's translation. Both of them try to be as close as possible to the Quranic text , but Ghali's translation is more precise , unlike Kassab's translation which is not far away from the original , but not precise. The reason behind this due to the fact the word (sky) is a specific term which is used to refer to the physical sky, while (heaven) is used generically.



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### 11.SL Text

مَنْ كَانَ يَظُنُّ أَنْ لَنْ يَنْصُرَهُ اللَّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ فَلْيَمْدُدْ بِسَبَبٍ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ ثُمَّ لِيَقْطَعْ فَلْيَنْظُرْ هَلْ  
/15 يُذْهِبَنَّ كَيْدَهُ مَا يَغِيظُ الْحَجَّ

- a- Arberry (146): Let him stretch rope to heaven.
- b- Ghali (333): Then let him extend forth a means to the heaven.
- c- Kassab (564): Let him extend a rope to the ceiling.

### Interpretation

This Quranic text indicates a direct speech to everyone who believes that Al-Mighty wouldn't support prophet Mohammad (PBUH) and his religion in this world and in the hereafter. In this context there is a challenge and mockery towards the unbelievers. Allah says let them extend a rope to the heaven then cut it after suffocation. This context comes out to incapacitation if the word (heaven) is carried on the truth to the impossibility of stretching the rope to it (AL-Samurai 1986:42).

### Commentary

Obviously the term (asama) in this Quranic text means roof as all commentators and lexicographers agree (AL-Tabaree, 1972:95). Both Arberry and Ghali translate the term (asama) into (heaven), the former drops the definite article (the), whereas the latter retain it and follow the original verse. They attempt to keep the tone intended by the Quranic text. They are not far away, though not precise. Kassab's translation is inaccurate as he uses (the ceiling) to substitute the Quranic word (asama). He tries to follow the interpretation of Ibn-Qutaiba (1978:312) who says that (asama) in this verse refers to the roof of a house. According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary ceiling is the overhead closure of a room whereas roof is the external covering of the top of a building. On this basis, Kassab have used inaccurate equivalent for (asama).

### 12-SL Text

19\البقرة (أَوْ كَصَيِّبٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فِيهِ ظُلُمَاتٌ وَرَعْدٌ وَبَرْقٌ)

- a- Arberry (41): Or as a cloudburst out of heaven.
- b- Ghali (4): Or as a cloudburst from the heaven.
- c- Kassab(6): Or (they are) like (people on whom) torrential rain (is poured) from the sky.

### Interpretation

According to the commentators of the Glorious (Quran) among them AL Tabaree (1972: 334) the term (asama) in this verse means the clouds. Our





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Lord Allah gives us an example of the hypocrites who walk in the dark night with the presence of heavy rain, thunder and lightning While they were afraid.

### Commentary

Arberry and Ghali use very brief translation. They use (heaven) to translate the Quranic word (asama) which is inaccurate this is due to the fact that (asama) refers to the firmament or the physical sky. Kassab uses (the sky) which is an exact equivalent as he follows the contextual meaning of (asama) as well as the way the commentators interpret it into.

### Conclusions

The term (asama) in the Glorious Quran is difficult to translate because it has multiple meanings in different contexts. Thus, the study concludes that translating the word (asama) successfully needs two axes. A semantic axes on one hand ,in which the meaning of (asama) can only be known in the context in which it occurs in . Translational axes on the other hand in this aspect it has been found that an accurate translation for (asama) requires finding out the lexical meaning, a deep understanding of a context that it is found in and depending on a reliable authentic exegesis to understand the exact meaning of this term.

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