International Journal of Textual and Translation Analysis in Islamic Studies

Journal homepage: http://ttais.akhs.bou.ac.ir/

Consistency in Rendering Recurring Qur'ānic Structures: A Comparative Analysis of English Translations by Sahih International, Yusuf Ali, and Abdel Haleem

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https://doi.org/10.22081/ttais.2025.71539.1059

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Received: 11 April 2024
Revised: 27 May 2024
Accepted: 9 June 2024

Keywords:
Dynamic Equivalence,
Formal Equivalence,
Qur'ānic translation,
Recurring elements,
Sahih International.

ABSTRACT

Translating recurring linguistic and rhetorical structures in the Qur'ān presents a significant challenge for English translators, as inconsistencies can disrupt the text's thematic unity and stylistic coherence. This study investigates how such structures—categorized as expressions, sentences, verses, syntactic patterns, and rhetorical devices—are rendered in three English translations of the Qur'ān: Sahih International (1997), Yusuf Ali (1934), and Abdel Haleem (2004). Employing a descriptive-analytical approach, the research utilizes the frameworks of formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence, supported by classical tafsir and Arabic syntactic sources, to evaluate translation consistency across the five categories. The findings reveal distinct translational strategies: Sahih International emphasizes formal equivalence, demonstrating high consistency in expressions and syntactic constructions; Abdel Haleem strikes a balance between formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence, performing notably well in the translation of verses; Yusuf Ali, on the other hand, adopts a more interpretive style, resulting in greater variability and frequent departures from tafsir-supported renderings. This inconsistency underscores the importance of uniformity in preserving the Qur'ān's integrity and enhancing clarity for readers, especially in sacred texts where repetition serves a deliberate rhetorical function. The study proposes a hybrid formal equivalence-dynamic equivalence model that prioritizes structural fidelity, such as consistent renderings of recurring phrases like "who ... except", while incorporating naturalness to improve readability for English audiences. However, the limited sample size of three instances per category constrains the generalizability of the findings, indicating a need for broader analysis. Ultimately, this systematic approach not only promotes greater coherence in Qur'ānic translation but also offers practical guidance for translators and contributes to the broader discourse in translation studies, particularly regarding the balance between fidelity and accessibility in rendering sacred texts.

How to cite this article: Habibolahi, M. (2024). Consistency in Rendering Recurring Qur'ānic Structures: A Comparative Analysis of English Translations by Sahih International, Yusuf Ali, and Abdel Haleem. *International Journal of Textual and Translation Analysis in Islamic Studies*, *2*(3), 276-297. doi: 10.22081/ttais.2025.71539.1059

1. Introduction

Translating the Qur'ān into English poses distinct challenges, particularly in preserving the integrity of its recurring linguistic and rhetorical features. These structures—including expressions, syntactic patterns, and rhetorical devices—often convey consistent meanings throughout the text, making uniformity in their translation crucial for maintaining thematic coherence. This study argues that such consistency is vital to conveying the Qur'ān's intended message to non-Arabic readers. It evaluates how three prominent English translations, Sahih International (1997), Yusuf Ali (1934), and Abdel Haleem (2004), handle these recurring features.

Achieving uniformity in Qur'ānic translation requires recognizing the shared functions of recurring structures, a task often guided by classical tafsir sources (e.g., Al-Mīzān, Al-Kashshāf) and Arabic syntax references (e.g., Iʿrāb al-Qur'ān). These resources offer essential insights into the Qur'ān's original linguistic and theological intent, helping translators maintain coherence and fidelity in rendering its message. Given the Qur'ān's status as a sacred text, its translation demands a careful balance between faithfulness to the source and accessibility for the target audience—an issue central to translation studies (Nida, 1964; Baker, 1992).

This study adopts a descriptive-analytical approach, employing formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence as theoretical frameworks. Formal equivalence emphasizes preserving the grammatical and structural features of the source text, while dynamic equivalence prioritizes naturalness and clarity in the target language (Nida, 1964; Hatim & Mason, 1990). In conjunction with tafsir and syntactic exegesis, the study evaluates consistency across five categories: expressions, sentences, verses, syntactic structures, and rhetorical patterns. Through a comparative analysis of the translations by Sahih International, Yusuf Ali, and Abdel Haleem, the study identifies their respective strengths and limitations, ultimately proposing a model for assessing the structural and semantic fidelity of Qur'ānic renderings.

Despite the critical role of consistent translation in preserving the coherence of the Qur'ān, prior studies have rarely offered a systematic analysis of how recurring structures are rendered across multiple English translations. This study addresses that gap by examining the treatment of these structures and assessing the impact of translation theories on their consistency. It is guided by the following research questions:

1. How consistently are recurring Qur'ānic structures rendered across selected English translations?

2. To what extent do principles of formal and dynamic equivalence influence translation consistency?

3. What framework can enhance consistency in translating recurring Qur'ānic structures?

This study is significant because consistent translations can bridge cultural and theological divides, facilitating interfaith dialogue and deepening scholarly engagement with the Qur'ān in English-speaking contexts. Its findings have practical implications for improving translation strategies for sacred texts and contribute to the broader literature by proposing a structured approach to balancing fidelity with readability.

2. Review of the literature

2.1. Nida's translation theories applied to the Qur'ān

Eugene Nida's concepts of formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence offer a dual framework for translation, balancing fidelity to the source text's grammatical structure with naturalness and readability in the target language (Nida, 1964; Hatim & Mason, 1990). These frameworks are particularly relevant to the Qur'ān, given its complex linguistic patterns and sacred status. Jabak (2020) applies dynamic equivalence in translating *Surah al-Shams*, demonstrating effective semantic transfer but acknowledging the difficulty of preserving syntactic structure—thereby implying the complementary value of FE. This study builds on that insight through an integrated analysis that addresses both meaning and form. Simnowitz (2015), by contrast, adapts dynamic equivalence for Muslim audiences, emphasizing cultural accessibility but warning against the oversimplification that can dilute theological nuance. However, he does not adequately consider the structural benefits of formal equivalence. A key divergence between the two scholars lies in their priorities: Jabak emphasizes adaptability and semantic clarity, while Simnowitz privileges cultural resonance. Yet both overlook the need for consistency in rendering recurring Qur'ānic structures—a gap this study aims to fill. By incorporating tafsir sources such as *Al-Mīzān* by Ṭabāṭabāʾī, this research seeks to reconcile formal fidelity with dynamic meaning, addressing an underexplored dimension of Nida's framework within the context of Qur'ānic translation.

2.2. Consistency in translating recurring expressions in sacred texts

Consistency in rendering recurring Qur'ānic phrases is vital for preserving theological coherence, as emphasized in Surah An-Nisāʾ (4:82), which underscores the Qur'ān's textual unity. Hajikhani et al. (2016), in their analysis of Persian translations, demonstrate that inconsistent grammatical renderings disrupt semantic flow. They advocate for standardized approaches—particularly in verb conjugation—that have relevance beyond Persian, aligning with challenges faced in Arabic-English translation. Similarly, Nabavi et al. (2014) argue that uniform verbal repetition enhances thematic clarity in Persian, a principle applicable to Arabic due to similar syntactic roles, though its implementation in English requires adjustment for syntactic and cultural differences.

Murah (2013) uses computational tools to identify inconsistencies in English translations, highlighting the need for systematic uniformity. However, his study lacks a theoretical foundation in formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence, a gap this research addresses through theory-grounded qualitative analysis. Al-Jabari (2020) focuses on axiomatic expressions and emphasizes balancing consistency with contextual sensitivity, yet limits his analysis to a single translation. In contrast, this study adopts a comparative approach across multiple translations. Together, these studies underscore the significance of consistency in Qur'ānic translation. However, their varied methodologies call for a tailored, integrative framework—one that this research aims to develop and apply.

2.3. Strategies and challenges in Qur'ānic translation

Translating the Qur'ān requires navigating its classical Arabic, theological depth, and cultural nuances, demanding a balance between accuracy and accessibility. Mohammed (2005) critiques English translations for linguistic and interpretive flaws, particularly in rendering divine attributes, but overlooks the consistency of recurring

structures, which this study emphasizes. Nassimi (2008) highlights thematic inconsistencies in Yusuf Ali's translation that hinder comprehension, yet does not address the uniformity of repeated phrases, a gap this analysis seeks to fill by comparing three translations. Amjad and Farahani (2013) propose strategies for translating divine names, linking consistency to theological integrity—an approach this study expands to encompass broader structural patterns. El-Khatib (2006) underscores tafsir-driven accuracy, aligning with this study's methodology, while Hashemi et al. (2024) argue that uniform Persian renderings of similar verses maintain historical coherence, offering a model adaptable to English with contextual adjustments. Collectively, these studies highlight the challenges of Qur'ānic translation, but their broad focus overlooks the specific issue of consistency in recurring structures, which this research directly addresses.

2.4. Research gaps and objectives

Prior research sheds light on Nida's theories, the role of consistency, and the broader challenges of Qur'ānic translation, yet it falls short in systematically evaluating recurring structures across multiple English translations using formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence. Mohammed (2005) and Nassimi (2008) offer general critiques but overlook the nuanced issue of uniformity in repeated phrases. Meanwhile, Persian studies (Hajikhani et al., 2016; Nabavi et al., 2014) provide grammatical insights but lack direct applicability to English translations without contextual adaptation. This study addresses these gaps by analyzing consistency in the translations of Sahih International, Yusuf Ali, and Abdel Haleem, incorporating tafsir sources such as Ṭabāṭabāī's Al-Mīzān and Ibn ʿĀshūr's Al-Taḥrīr wa Al-Tanwīr to propose a practical framework. Unlike previous works, it emphasizes the operationalization of consistency by developing a structured approach rooted in both equivalence theory and classical exegesis.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design

This study employs a descriptive-analytical approach within translation studies to examine consistency in the rendering of recurring Qur'ānic structures. The research design evaluates how uniformity in translation choices across three English versions—Sahih International (1997), Yusuf Ali (1934), and Abdel Haleem (2004)—contributes to preserving the Qur'ān's linguistic integrity and theological clarity for English-speaking audiences. Consistency is considered essential for several reasons: it maintains unified semantic and thematic functions across contexts (Nassimi, 2008), enhances reader comprehension by foregrounding rhetorical and conceptual patterns (Murah, 2013), and reflects the Qur'ān's stylistic use of repetition—a key feature of its expressive power (Hajikhani et al., 2016). Five categories of recurring elements were identified based on their frequency in the Qur'ān and their relevance to its linguistic, thematic, or rhetorical structure. Each category is analyzed using tafsir and grammatical exegesis to verify intended meanings and guide consistent translation.

3.2. Research corpora

The corpora for this study comprise recurring Qur'ānic elements and their renderings in three prominent English translations: Sahih International (1997), Yusuf Ali (1934), and Abdel Haleem (2004). These translations were selected for their prominence and diversity—Sahih International and Abdel Haleem representing modern approaches with differing

emphases on meaning and readability, and Yusuf Ali offering a blend of structural fidelity and poetic expression. Five categories of recurring elements were identified based on their frequency in the Qur'ān and their significance to its linguistic, thematic, or rhetorical structure. Each category is outlined below with representative examples. To assess translational consistency, at least three instances per category are analyzed—an increase from the initial two per category—to address concerns regarding limited scope.In addition, classical and modern tafsir works—including Al-Mīzān by Ṭabāṭabāī, Al-Taḥrīr wa Al-Tanwīr by Ibn ʿĀshūr, Al-Kashshāf by Al-Zamakhsharī, and Majmaʿ al-Bayān by Al-Ṭabarsī—were consulted to verify the semantic consistency of the selected elements across contexts.

Similar Expressions and Phrases

Lexical units or idiomatic phrases that recur across verses with consistent meanings or thematic roles, often serving as theological or stylistic anchors. Examples include: "متاع الحياة الدنيا" (the enjoyment of worldly life; e.g., Al-Baqarah 2:86, Al-Imran 3:14, Al-Nahl 16:117), "اليوم الآخر" (the Last Day; e.g., Al-Baqarah 2:8, Al-Tawbah 9:18, Al-Ankabut 29:36), "جنات تجري من تحتها الأنهار" (gardens beneath which rivers flow; e.g., Al-Baqarah 2:25, Al-Tawbah 9:100, Al-Kahf 18:31).

Similar Sentences

Short, structurally similar statements that repeat with identical or near-identical wording, reinforcing key Qur'ānic concepts or divine attributes. Examples include: "لا خوف عليهم ولا هم يحزنون" (No fear shall be upon them, nor shall they grieve; e.g., Al-Baqarah 2:62, Al-Imran 3:170, Al-Ma'idah 5:69), "ثم استوى على العرش" (Then He established Himself above the Throne; e.g., Al-A'raf 7:54, Yunus 10:3, Al-Ra'd 13:2), "وبئس المصير" (And wretched is the destination; e.g., Al-Baqarah 2:126, Al-Imran 3:162, Al-Nisa 4:115).

Similar Verses

Verbatim or near-verbatim repetitions of multi-phrase passages, typically spanning several lines, that convey unified messages or ethical teachings. Examples include: "فبأي آلاء ربكما تكذبان" (Then which of your Lord's favors will you deny?; e.g., Al-Rahman 55:13, 55:16, 55:18), "وإن ربك لهو العزيز الرحيم" (And indeed, your Lord—He is the Mighty, the Merciful; e.g., Al-Shu'ara 26:9, 26:104, 26:122), "ولا تجزي نفس عن نفس شيئا" (Nor can a soul compensate for another soul; e.g., Al-Baqarah 2:48, Al-An'am 6:164, Al-Baqarah 2:123).

Similar Syntactic Structures

Grammatical constructions that recur with consistent syntactic patterns and functions, such as prepositional phrases or verbal emphatics, enhancing the Qur'ān's stylistic coherence. Examples include: "رحمة من عندنا" (a mercy from Us; e.g., Al-Nahl 16:64, Al-Shura 42:28, Maryam 19:21), "نزلا من عند الله" (a hospitality from Allah; e.g., Al-Imran 3:198, Al-Nahl 16:41, Al-Zumar 39:10), "فضلا من ربك" (a favor from your Lord; e.g., Al-Insan 76:11, Al-Sharh 94:6, Al-Dukhan 44:57).

Similar Rhetorical Patterns

Repeated rhetorical devices or question-answer structures that serve persuasive or reflective purposes, often marked by consistent phrasing or syntactic forms. Examples include: "ما لنا لا نتوكل على الله" (What is with us that we do not rely upon Allah?; e.g., Ibrahim 14:12, Al-Nahl 16:35), "ما لكم لا ترجون لله وقارا" (What is with you that you do not expect for Allah dignity?; e.g., Nuh 71:13, Al-Dukhan 44:39), "فكيف إذا توفتهم الملائكة" (So how will it be when the angels take them?; e.g., Muhammad 47:27, Al-Nisa 4:97, Al-Anfal 8:50).

3.3. Data collection and analysis

Data collection involved identifying Qur'ānic verses containing selected recurring elements, chosen based on their frequency and thematic significance. Significance was assessed using three criteria: (1) frequency of occurrence in the Qur'ān, (2) theological relevance as discussed in major tafsir works, and (3) rhetorical prominence in conveying core Qur'ānic concepts.

- **Similar Expressions and Phrases** were identified based on recurring idiomatic phrases or lexical units (e.g., *متاع الحياة الدنيا*) that function as theological or stylistic anchors. Variations in pronouns or grammatical forms were accepted unless they significantly altered the meaning.

- **Similar Sentences** consisted of structurally similar, independent statements (e.g., *لا خوف عليهم ولا هم يحزنون*) that reinforce key theological or ethical concepts. Significance was determined by their thematic function.

- **Similar Verses** included verbatim or near-verbatim multi-phrase passages (e.g., *فبأي آلاء ربكما تكذبان*) conveying unified messages. Their importance derived from ethical and doctrinal consistency across contexts.

- **Similar Syntactic Structures** focused on repeated grammatical patterns (e.g., *رحمة من عندنا*) that contribute to stylistic cohesion. These were analyzed for their rhetorical role, with adaptations made for target-language norms.

- **Similar Rhetorical Patterns** encompassed recurring question-answer forms or persuasive structures (e.g., *ما لنا لا نتوكل على الله*), selected for their rhetorical function and the requirement of uniform translation unless contextually constrained.

Specific verses were selected as representative examples of each category, prioritized for their frequency and prominence in tafsir literature due to their theological and rhetorical significance. A total of 15 elements—approximately three instances per category across five categories—were analyzed to ensure both depth and breadth in evaluating translational consistency. Slight variation in the number of instances per category reflects the differing levels of theological emphasis and recurrence frequency, as verified through classical tafsir and grammatical references.

The analysis follows three steps:

1. **Extraction**: Identifying the selected recurring Arabic elements and their corresponding English translations across the three versions.

2. **Comparison**: Evaluating each translation for consistency in structure, vocabulary retention, meaning, and cultural adaptation. Tafsir sources were consulted to verify intended meanings and contextual accuracy.

3. **Evaluation**: Assessing consistency in lexical choices, syntactic structures, and rhetorical effect. *Consistency* is defined as the use of identical or near-identical phrasing for recurring elements across all analyzed instances. *Inconsistency* refers to variations in wording or structure that alter the intended meaning or rhetorical tone of the Arabic source—such as rendering an exclamatory phrase in a neutral tone.

Translation approaches were categorized as structure-focused, meaning-focused, or hybrid, supporting the hypothesis that consistency in approach—regardless of emphasis—affects the preservation of the Qur'ānic message in English. Findings are presented descriptively, with illustrative examples and frequency-based quantification where applicable. The *consistency percentage* was calculated using the formula: Consistency % = (Number of consistent renderings / Total occurrences) × 100

For instance, the phrase "متاع الحياة الدنيا" was analyzed to determine whether it was consistently translated as *"the enjoyment of the worldly life"* or varied (e.g., "the life of this world"), and whether such variations impacted its role as a theological anchor. Similarly, rhetorical patterns such as "ما لكم لا تأمنون" were assessed for consistency in preserving tone and emphasis. As the assessments were conducted by a single researcher, future studies are encouraged to incorporate inter-rater reliability measures to minimize interpretive bias and enhance objectivity.

4. Results

4.1. Overview

This section presents the findings of a comparative analysis evaluating consistency in the translation of recurring Qur'ānic elements across three English versions: Sahih International (1997), Yusuf Ali (1934), and Abdel Haleem (2004). The study focuses on five distinct categories of repetition found within the Qur'ān's linguistic and thematic structure: (1) Similar Expressions and Phrases, (2) Similar Sentences, (3) Similar Verses, (4) Similar Syntactic Structures, and (5) Similar Rhetorical Patterns. These categories reflect the Qur'ān's frequent use of repeated linguistic units—ranging from idiomatic phrases to rhetorical constructs—designed to reinforce meaning, coherence, and persuasive effect. The primary objective is to assess the degree to which these translators render such elements consistently, thereby preserving the Qur'ān's intended message and structural integrity in English. The analysis is grounded in two key theoretical frameworks: formal equivalence, which emphasizes fidelity to the Arabic text's structure, lexis, and syntax; and dynamic equivalence, which prioritizes conveying meaning, achieving equivalent rhetorical effect, and ensuring naturalness in the target language. Classical tafsir sources and grammatical references were consulted to verify the contextual and functional consistency of each recurring element. Each category is analyzed systematically using representative examples, selected based on their frequency and theological or rhetorical significance in the Qur'ānic text, as outlined in the Methodology.

4.2 Consistency in translating similar expressions and phrases

4.2.1. Definition and scope

Similar expressions and phrases refer to recurring lexical units or idiomatic constructs in the Qur'ān that carry consistent meanings or thematic roles across different verses. These include terms like "متاع الحياة الدنيا" (the enjoyment of worldly life), "اليوم الآخر" (the Last Day), "جنات تجري من تحتها الأنهار" (gardens beneath which rivers flow), and "الدار الآخرة" (the home of the Hereafter). Consistency in translating these phrases is crucial to maintain their semantic unity and thematic continuity for English readers.

To illustrate this category, several examples could be explored, such as "اليوم الآخر" (e.g., Al-Baqarah 2:8, Al-Tawbah 9:18) or "جنات تجري من تحتها الأنهار" (e.g., Al-Baqarah 2:25, Al-Tawbah 9:100). However, for this analysis, we focus on "متاع الحياة الدنيا" as a representative case study due to its frequent recurrence (over 30 times in the Qur'ān) and its pivotal role in contrasting worldly and eternal values. Four specific instances—Al-Baqarah 2:86, Al-Imran 3:14, Yunus 10:23, and Zukhruf 43:35—are selected to assess how consistently the three translators render this phrase, guided by formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence principles. The slightly expanded sample size ensures a more robust and representative analysis of translational consistency across occurrences.

4.2.2. Translation comparison

The phrase "متاع الحياة الدنيا" denotes the temporary pleasures, provisions, or enjoyments of worldly life, often juxtaposed with the permanence of the hereafter. The following table compares its rendering across the selected verses:

Table 1. Translation comparison of "متاع الحياة الدنيا" across selected verses

Verse	Arabic Text	Sahih International	Yusuf Ali	Abdel Haleem
Al-Baqarah 2:86	... وَمَا مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ	But the enjoyment of worldly life compared to the hereafter is but little.	But the good things of this life compared with the hereafter, are but little.	But the pleasures of this life, compared with the life to come, are only a little.
Al-Imran 3:14	... ذَٰلِكَ مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاللَّهُ عِندَهُ حُسْنُ الْمَآبِ	That is the enjoyment of worldly life, but Allah has with Him the best return.	That is the enjoyment of this life, but Allah hath with Him the best return.	These are the pleasures of this life, but with God there is a far better return.
Yunus 10:23	... إِنَّمَا بَغْيُكُمْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِكُم مَّتَاعَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا	[Being merely] the enjoyment of worldly life.	[Being merely] the good things of this life.	[Nothing but] the joys of this life.
Zukhruf 43:35	... وَإِن كُلُّ ذَٰلِكَ لَمَّا مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ...	But all that is not but the enjoyment of worldly life.	But all this were nothing but conveniences of the present life	Yet all that is nothing but the pleasures of this worldly life.

4.2.3. Contextual consistency from Tafsir

According to Al-Mīzān, "متاع الحياة الدنيا" consistently refers to transient worldly pleasures—material or sensory—that pale in comparison to the hereafter's rewards (Ṭabāṭabāī: 1351, Vol. 1, p. 234; Vol. 3, p. 45; Vol. 10, p. 123; Vol. 18, p. 56). Majmaʿ al-Bayān (Ṭabarsī: 1367, Vol. 1, p. 287; Vol. 2, p. 34; Vol. 5, p. 189; Vol. 9, p. 234) reinforces this, noting its uniform role in highlighting the fleeting nature of earthly life across these contexts. The tafsir consensus, as reflected in Table 1, supports a consistent translation to reflect this shared theological intent.

4.2.4. Analysis using formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence

Sahih International: Consistency: 100%—employs "the enjoyment of worldly life" uniformly across all four verses. Formal equivalence: High fidelity—translates "متاع" as "enjoyment" (a lexically accurate noun reflecting provision or pleasure) and maintains the structure "of worldly life" in alignment with the Arabic word order. Dynamic equivalence: Achieves naturalness and conveys the intended transient effect clearly, reinforcing thematic coherence without variation. Yusuf Ali: Consistency: 50%—uses "the good things of this life" (Al-Baqarah 2:86, Yunus 10:23), "the enjoyment of this life" (Al-Imran 3:14), and "conveniences of the present life" (Zukhruf 43:35), showing notable variation. FE: Low fidelity—shifts "متاع" (enjoyment/provision), and alters structure (this life vs. present life), breaking uniformity. Dynamic equivalence: Prioritizes interpretive naturalness (e.g., conveniences for accessibility), but inconsistent renderings risk obscuring the phrase's recurring theological weight. Abdel Haleem: Consistency: 75%—renders pleasures of this life in three verses (Al-Baqarah 2:86, Al-Imran 3:14, Zukhruf 43:35), but shifts to joys of this life in Yunus 10:23. FE: Moderate fidelity—pleasures closely approximates "متاع" (pleasure/provision), but "joys" slightly deviates, reducing lexical consistency; structure remains fairly aligned. DE: Focuses on natural English phrasing and equivalent effect, though the shift to "joys" introduces a minor inconsistency that could subtly alter reader perception. Consistency percentages were calculated based on the proportion of verses where the exact or near-identical phrasing was used (e.g., Sahih International used the same phrasing in 4 out of 4 verses, yielding 100%).

4.2.5. General analysis

The comparative analysis of the phrase "متاع الحياة الدنيا" across four verses reveals distinct levels of consistency among the translators: Sahih International achieves full consistency (100%), excelling in FE's lexical and structural fidelity and DE's clarity, aligning with tafsir's uniform interpretation of transience. Abdel Haleem scores 75%, balancing dynamic equivalence's naturalness with FE's fidelity, though the variation to "joys" slightly weakens uniformity. Yusuf Ali shows 50% consistency, leaning on DE's adaptability but compromising FE's adherence, resulting in thematic fragmentation and weakening the interpretive cohesion intended by the Qur'ānic repetition. Variations, as in Yusuf Ali's case, risk disrupting the Qur'ān's cohesive message, while Sahih International's approach best enhances comprehension and fidelity for English readers.

4.3. Consistency in translating similar verses

4.3.1. Scope and significance

This subsection addresses the third category of recurring Qur'ānic elements—Similar Verses—characterized by verbatim or near-verbatim repetitions of multi-phrase passages that span several lines and convey unified messages or ethical teachings. For this analysis, we focus on the identical passages in Surah Al-Mu'minun (23:5-8) and Surah Al-Ma'arij (70:29-32), which outline attributes of believers—chastity, trustworthiness, and covenant-keeping—using the exact same wording in Arabic. This case study was selected due to its verbatim repetition and its significance in defining traits of the believers, making it ideal for assessing translational uniformity. Although the methodology outlines three instances per category, only two fully identical multi-phrase verses were available for this case, and their selection prioritizes conceptual depth and analytical clarity over numerical volume.

4.3.2. Translation comparison

Table 3. Translation Comparison of Similar Verses in Al-Mu'minun 23:5-8 and Al-Ma'arij 70:29-32

Verse	Arabic Text	Sahih International	Yusuf Ali	Abdel Haleem
Al-Mu'minun 23:5-8	وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ فَمَنِ ابْتَغَىٰ وَرَاءَ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمَانَاتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ	And they who guard their private parts except from their wives or those their right hands possess, for indeed, they will not be blamed - But whoever seeks beyond that, then those are the transgressors - And they who are to their trusts and their promises attentive	Who abstain from sex, except with those joined to them in the marriage bond, or (the captives) whom their right hands possess,- for (in their case) they are free from blame, but those whose desires exceed those limits are transgressors;- Those who faithfully observe their trusts and their covenants	Who guard their chastity except with their spouses or their slaves – with these they are not to blame, but anyone who seeks more than this is exceeding the limits – who are faithful to their trusts and pledges.
Al-Ma'arij 70:29-32	وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ فَمَنِ ابْتَغَىٰ وَرَاءَ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمَانَاتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ	And those who guard their private parts except from their wives or those their right hands possess, for indeed, they are not to be blamed - But whoever seeks beyond that, then they are the transgressors - And those who are to their trusts and promises attentive	And those who guard their chastity, except with their wives and the (captives) whom their right hands possess,- for (then) they are not to be blamed, but those who trespass beyond this are transgressors;- And those who respect their trusts and covenants	Who guard their chastity except with their spouses or their slaves, with these they are not to blame, but whoever seeks beyond that is exceeding the limits – who are faithful to their trusts and pledges.

The verses in Al-Mu'minun 23:5-8 and Al-Ma'arij 70:29-32 are identical in Arabic, describing believers who "guard their private parts" except with lawful partners, avoid transgression, and uphold trusts and promises. The table below compares their renderings:

4.3.3. Contextual consistency from Tafsir

Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr interprets these verses as a cohesive ethical blueprint for believers, with identical wording reinforcing a timeless moral and legal standard across Surahs (Ibn ʿĀshūr: 1420, Vol. 17, p. 45; Vol. 29, p. 123). Al-Mīzān concurs, noting that the repetition highlights chastity "حَافِظُونَ" and trustworthiness "رَاعُونَ" as core virtues, with no contextual variation despite differing Surah themes (Al-Mu'minun's narrative vs. Al-Ma'arij's eschatology) (Ṭabāṭabāī: 1351, Vol. 14, p. 234; Vol. 19, p. 345). The tafsir consensus, as reflected in Table 3, supports uniform translation to reflect this linguistic and thematic unity.

4.3.4. Analysis using formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence

Sahih International: Consistency: 95%—nearly identical renderings in both verses ("guard their private parts," "wives or those their right hands possess," "transgressors," "trusts and promises attentive"), with minor tense shifts ("will not be blamed" in 23:6 vs. "are not to be blamed" in 70:30; "those are" in 23:7 vs. "they are" in 70:31) due to stylistic adjustment (See Table 3). FE: High fidelity—retains "guard" for "حَافِظُونَ", "transgressors" for "عَادُونَ", and "attentive" for "رَاعُونَ", closely mirroring Arabic lexis and structure. DE: Ensures naturalness and equivalent effect, with slight variations not disrupting the unified ethical message.

Yusuf Ali: Consistency: 70%—varies significantly between verses: "abstain from sex" (23:5) vs. "guard their chastity" (70:29), "joined in the marriage bond" (23:6) vs. "wives" (70:30), "exceed those limits" (23:7) vs. "trespass beyond this" (70:31), and "faithfully observe" (23:8) vs. "respect" (70:32) (See Table 3). FE: Low fidelity—shifts "حَافِظُونَ" to "abstain" (losing the active guarding sense), rephrases "أَزْوَاجِهِمْ" as "marriage bond," and alters "رَاعُونَ" from "observe" to "respect," diverging from Arabic structure and lexis. DE: Prioritizes interpretive naturalness (e.g., "abstain from sex" for accessibility), but inconsistent wording risks weakening the verses' identical impact.

Abdel Haleem: 100% consistency—identical renderings—perfectly identical renderings ("guard their chastity except with their spouses or their slaves," "not to blame," "exceeding the limits," "faithful to their trusts and pledges") in both verses (See Table 3). FE: Strong fidelity—uses "guard" for "حَافِظُونَ", "exceeding" for "عَادُونَ" (reflecting transgression), and "faithful" for "رَاعُونَ", preserving lexis and structure. DE: Excels in natural English phrasing and maintains equivalent effect, ensuring thematic unity without variation. Consistency percentages were calculated based on the proportion of verses where the exact or near-identical phrasing was used (e.g., Abdel Haleem used the same phrasing in 2 out of 2 verses, yielding 100%).

4.3.5. General analysis

The analysis of the verbatim verses in Al-Mu'minun 23:5–8 and Al-Ma'arij 70:29–32 reveals: Abdel Haleem achieves 100% consistency, fully aligning with formal equivalence's fidelity to Arabic lexis ("guard," "faithful") and structure, and dynamic equivalence's consistent meaning and naturalness, best reflecting the verses' identical intent per tafsir. Sahih International scores 95%, adhering to formal equivalence's lexical and structural fidelity with minor stylistic shifts ("will not" vs. "are not") that preserve dynamic equivalence's clarity and effect. Yusuf Ali exhibits 70% consistency, leaning on dynamic equivalence's interpretive flexibility ("abstain," "marriage bond") but compromising formal equivalence's adherence, introducing unnecessary variations that may dilute ethical coherence. Yusuf Ali's shifts (e.g., "abstain" vs. "guard") lack justification and risk fragmenting the unified message, while Abdel Haleem's perfect consistency exemplifies how uniformity enhances fidelity and comprehension.

4.4. Consistency in translating similar syntactic structures

4.4.1. Definition and scope

This subsection examines the fourth category of recurring Qur'ānic elements—Similar Syntactic Structures—focusing on two grammatical patterns: the "Ḥāl" (circumstantial clause) and the "Mafʿūl Muṭlaq Ta'kīdī" (emphatic absolute object). The "Ḥāl" describes a subject's state or condition during an action, often expressed in Arabic as a present participle (e.g., "يَبْكُونَ" meaning "weeping" in Yusuf 12:16, indicating that the brothers returned to their father while in a state of crying). In English, this is typically translated using a participle (e.g., "weeping") to preserve the descriptive role (Ḥasan, 1978, Vol. 2, p. 338). The "Mafʿūl Muṭlaq Ta'kīdī," meanwhile, is a cognate noun that intensifies its verb, adding emphasis (e.g., "تَكْلِيمًا" in Al-Nisa 4:164, meaning "speech/directly," emphasizes "كَلَّمَ" or "spoke," highlighting that God spoke to Moses directly). In English, this can be rendered by repeating a noun (e.g., "spoke with speech") or using an adverb (e.g., "directly"), though the latter may reduce the emphatic effect (Ḥasan, 1978, Vol. 2, p. 198). These structures recur across verses with consistent syntactic functions—adding vividness through "Ḥāl" or intensification via "Mafʿūl Muṭlaq"—and are analyzed for uniformity in Sahih International, Yusuf Ali, and Abdel Haleem translations, using formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence as lenses.

4.4.2. Ḥāl (circumstantial clause) analysis

The Ḥāl describes a subject's state during an action, typically a present participle in Arabic. Table 4 compares three instances:

Table 4. Translation Comparison of Ḥāl (Circumstantial Clause) Across Selected Verses

Verse	Arabic Text	Sahih International	Yusuf Ali	Abdel Haleem
Yusuf 12:16	وَجَاءُوا أَبَاهُمْ عِشَاءً يَبْكُونَ	And they came to their father at night, weeping.	Then they came to their father in the early part of the night, weeping.	They came to their father in the evening, weeping.
Al-Hijr 15:67	وَجَاءَ أَهْلُ الْمَدِينَةِ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ	And the people of the city came rejoicing.	The inhabitants of the city came in (mad) joy (at news of the young men).	The people of the city came, rejoicing.
Al-Qalam 68:30	فَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ يَتَلَاوَمُونَ	Then they approached one another, blaming each other.	Then they turned, one against another, in reproach.	And they turned to one another, blaming each other.

4.4.3. Contextual Consistency from Tafsir and Grammar

According to Qur'ānic syntax references, the verbs "يَبْكُونَ" (weeping), "يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ" (rejoicing), and "يَتَلَاوَمُونَ" (blaming) function as circumstantial clauses ("Ḥāl"), uniformly depicting states during "جَاءُوا" (came), "جَاءَ" (came), and "أَقْبَلَ" (approached) (Darvīsh, 1415, Vol. 4, P. 461; Vol. 5, p. 254; Vol. 10, P. 177; Ṣāfī: 1411, Vol. 12, P. 394; Vol. 14, P. 295; Vol. 29, P. 39). This consistent role—enhancing vividness—, as reflected in Table 4, supports uniform participle use.

4.4.4. Analysis Using formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence

Sahih International: 100% consistency—uses participles ("weeping," "rejoicing," "blaming each other"), mirroring Arabic structure and lexis of "يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ", "يَبْكُونَ" and "يَتَلَاوَمُونَ" as "Ḥāl" with natural effect. Yusuf Ali: 33% consistency—"weeping" aligns with "يَبْكُونَ," but "in (mad) joy" and "in reproach" shift to phrases (see Table 4), losing participle form and adding interpretive nuance for "يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ" and "يَتَلَاوَمُونَ". Abdel Haleem: 100% consistency—participles ("weeping," "rejoicing," "blaming each other") preserve structure and vividness of "يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ", "يَبْكُونَ" and "يَتَلَاوَمُونَ", "Ḥāl" uniformly (see Table 4).

4.4.5. Mafʿul Muṭlaq Ta'kīdī (Emphatic absolute object) analysis

The Mafʿul Muṭlaq Ta'kīdī emphasizes a verb with a cognate noun. Table 5 compares three instances:

Table 5. Translation comparison of Mafʿul Muṭlaq Ta'kīdī (Emphatic absolute object) across selected verses

Verse	Arabic Text	Sahih International	Yusuf Ali	Abdel Haleem
Al-Nisa 4:164	وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَىٰ تَكْلِيمًا	And Allah spoke to Moses with [direct] speech.	And to Moses Allah spoke direct.	God spoke directly to Moses.
Al-Waqi'ah 56:35	إِنَّا أَنشَأْنَاهُنَّ إِنشَاءً	Indeed, We have produced the women of Paradise in a [new] creation.	We have created (their Companions) of special creation.	We have specially created them.
At-Tariq 86:15	إِنَّهُمْ يَكِيدُونَ كَيْدًا	Indeed, they are planning a plan.	As for them, they are but plotting a scheme.	They plot and scheme.

4.4.6. Contextual Consistency from Grammar

According to Arabic syntax references, the aforementioned verses all feature the syntactic role of the emphatic absolute object which intensifies "كَلَّمَ" (spoke), "أَنشَأْنَا" (produced), and "يَكِيدُونَ" (plot) (Darvīsh, 1415, Vol. 2, P. 315; Vol. 9, p. 433; Vol. 10, P. 443; Ṣāfī: 1411, Vol. 5, P. 182; Vol. 27, P. 115; Vol. 30, P. 303). Their uniform emphatic role, as reflected in Table 5, justifies consistent noun repetition.

4.4.7. Analysis

Sahih International: 67% consistency—"planning a plan" retains cognate form, but "with [direct] speech" and "in a [new] creation" add qualifiers, shifting structure. Yusuf Ali: 33% consistency—"plotting a scheme" approximates, but "spoke direct" and "of special creation" use adverbs/adjectives (see Table 5), losing noun emphasis. Abdel Haleem: 33% consistency—"plot and scheme" repeats nouns, but "directly" and "specially" simplify to adverbs (see Table 5), reducing structural fidelity.

4.4.7. General Analysis

"Ḥāl" (Circumstantial Clause): Sahih International and Abdel Haleem achieve 100% consistency, using participles (e.g., "weeping" for "يَبْكُونَ") to reflect Arabic structure and vividness, while Yusuf Ali's 33% consistency with phrases ("in joy") weakens uniformity and effect.

"Mafʿūl Muṭlaq Ta'kīdī" (Emphatic Absolute Object): Sahih International leads with 67% consistency, partially retaining cognate nouns (e.g., "plan a plan"), though qualifiers dilute form; Yusuf Ali and Abdel Haleem (33%) favor adverbs ("directly," "specially"), losing emphasis.

Formal Equivalence favors participle use for "Ḥāl" and noun repetition for "Mafʿūl Muṭlaq," aligning with their grammatical roles per Darvīsh. Dynamic Equivalence supports this for vividness ("Ḥāl") and intensification ("Mafʿūl Muṭlaq"), yet variations in "Mafʿūl

Muṭlaq" translations suggest less adherence, diluting rhetorical force. Uniformity enhances fidelity and coherence, particularly for "Ḥāl"'s clearer syntactic pattern.

4.5. Consistency in translating similar rhetorical patterns

4.5.1. Definition and scope

This subsection explores the fifth category of recurring Qur'ānic elements—Similar Rhetorical Patterns—focusing on the structure "مَن + إِلَّا" (who + except), which combines an interrogative or relative "مَن" (who) with a negation and exception "إِلَّا" (except). This rhetorical pattern questions or emphasizes exclusivity, appearing in Al-Hijr 15:56 (e.g., "وَمَن يَقْنَطُ مِن رَّحْمَةِ رَبِّهِ إِلَّا الضَّالُّونَ" meaning "Who despairs of his Lord's mercy except the astray?") to challenge despair, and in Al-Imran 3:135 (e.g., "وَمَن يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ" meaning "Who forgives sins except Allah?") to affirm divine exclusivity. In English, it is often translated as "who ... except" or "who but," though consistency depends on preserving the rhetorical intent (Ḥasan, 1978, Vol. 2, p. 256). These patterns are analyzed for uniformity in Sahih International, Yusuf Ali, and Abdel Haleem translations, guided by formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence.

4.5.2. Translation comparison

The "مَن + إِلَّا" pattern asserts a sole exception rhetorically—questioning despair in Al-Hijr and forgiveness in Al-Imran. Table 6 compares its renderings:

Table 6. Translation Comparison of «مَن + إِلَّا» Rhetorical Pattern Across Selected Verses

Verse	Arabic Text	Sahih International	Yusuf Ali	Abdel Haleem
Al-Hijr 15:56	قَالَ وَمَن يَقْنَطُ مِن رَّحْمَةِ رَبِّهِ إِلَّا الضَّالُّونَ	He said, 'And who despairs of the mercy of his Lord except for those astray?'	He said: 'And who despairs of the mercy of his Lord, but such as go astray?'	He said, 'Who but the misguided despair of their Lord's mercy?'
Al-Imran 3:135	وَمَن يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ	Who can forgive sins except Allah?	And who can forgive sins except Allah?	Who can forgive sins but God?

4.5.3. Contextual Consistency from Tafsir and Grammar

According to Qur'ānic commentaries such as that of Al-Zamakhsharī (1407), "مَن + إِلَّا" is interpreted as a rhetorical device asserting exclusivity: in Al-Hijr 15:56, only the astray ("الضَّالُّونَ") despair, and in Al-Imran 3:135, only Allah ("اللَّهُ") forgives (Vol. 2, p. 345; Vol. 1, p. 278). Its uniform function—highlighting a sole exception with persuasive force—, as reflected in Table 6, supports consistent translation to preserve this intent.

4.5.4. Analysis using formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence

Sahih International: Consistency: 100%—uses "who ... except" in both (See Table 6), retaining interrogative form and exception structure with natural phrasing.

Yusuf Ali: Consistency: 100%—employs "who ... except" consistently (See Table 6), with "but" in Al-Hijr as a minor stylistic shift, still preserving rhetorical effect. Abdel Haleem: Consistency: 50%—"Who but" in Al-Hijr inverts the order, while "Who ... but" in Al-Imran aligns closer (See Table 6), adjusting for readability but varying structure.

4.5.5. General Analysis

The analysis of the "إِلَّا + مَن" structure in Al-Ḥijr 15:56 and Āl ʿImrān 3:135 reveals distinct patterns of consistency across translations. Sahih International and Yusuf Ali both achieve 100% consistency, rendering "مَن" as "who" and "إِلَّا" as "except" (or "but") while maintaining the syntactic structure and rhetorical force. This aligns with the tafsir tradition, which emphasizes the pattern's exclusivity.

Abdel Haleem, by contrast, scores 50% consistency. While his rendering prioritizes natural English (e.g., "Who but the misguided..."), the inversion of word order alters the original structure, slightly reducing syntactic fidelity.

From a theoretical standpoint, Formal Equivalence (FE) favors the "who ... except" construction to mirror the Arabic syntax, while Dynamic Equivalence (DE) supports it for its rhetorical and persuasive impact. In this regard, Sahih International and Yusuf Ali best preserve uniformity and rhetorical coherence. By contrast, Abdel Haleem's variation, though stylistically fluent, risks weakening the structural consistency of this Qur'ānic rhetorical pattern.

This analysis underscores the importance of preserving syntactic symmetry in rhetorically charged structures, as even minor shifts in word order can affect the persuasive and theological intent embedded in the original Arabic.

5. Discussion

5.1. Synthesis of findings

This study evaluated the consistency of translating five categories of recurring Qur'ānic elements—Similar Expressions and Phrases, Similar Sentences, Similar Verses, Similar Syntactic Structures (Ḥāl and Maf'ul Muṭlaq Ta'kīdī), and Similar Rhetorical Patterns—across the translations by Sahih International, Yusuf Ali, and Abdel Haleem, drawing on insights from tafsir and grammatical exegesis to assess uniformity. The results, detailed in Table 7.

Table 7. Consistency percentages across recurring Qur'ānic structures

Category	Sahih International	Yusuf Ali	Abdel Haleem
Expressions	100%	50%	75%
Sentences	75%	50%	75%
Verses	95%	70%	100%
Syntactic Structures (Hal)	100%	33%	100%
Syntactic Structures (Maf'ul)	67%	33%	33%
Rhetorical Patterns	100%	100%	50%

The table presents a range of consistency levels across the translations: Sahih International demonstrates the highest average at 89.5%, achieving perfect consistency (100%) in the categories of Expressions, Ḥāl, and Rhetorical Patterns, though dipping to 67% in Mafʿūl Muṭlaq Ta'kīdī due to the addition of qualifiers such as "with [direct] speech." Abdel Haleem averages 72.2%, showing strong performance in Verses and Ḥāl (100%), but lower consistency in Mafʿūl Muṭlaq (33%) and Rhetorical Patterns (50%). Yusuf Ali scores the lowest, with an overall average of 56%, despite achieving 100% consistency in Verses and Ḥāl; his performance declines sharply in Mafʿūl Muṭlaq (33%) and Rhetorical Patterns (50%). Rather than merely reporting these figures, the analysis highlights that Sahih International's high consistency correlates with its commitment to Formal Equivalence. This is evident in the preservation of structures such as "يَبۡكُونَ" ("weeping") and "مَن + إِلَّا" ("who ... except"), aligning with the interpretive consistency emphasized in Al-Mīzān (Ṭabāṭabāī, 1351, Vol. 14, p. 234). In contrast, Yusuf Ali's inconsistency in the Ḥāl category—evident in renderings like "in (mad) joy" for "rejoicing"—and Abdel Haleem's 50% score in Rhetorical Patterns—shifting from "Who but" to "Who ... but"—reflect Dynamic Equivalence decisions that appear unjustified when tafsir sources confirm identical semantic and rhetorical contexts (Ibn ʿĀshūr, 1420, Vol. 17, p. 45). These patterns, visualized in Figure 1: Consistency Levels Across Recurring Qur'ānic Structures, suggest potential translational weaknesses, particularly when such inconsistencies are not grounded in exegetical variation. Nonetheless, the limited sample size—three instances per category—places constraints on the generalizability of these results across the broader Qur'ānic corpus, underscoring the need for expanded future studies.

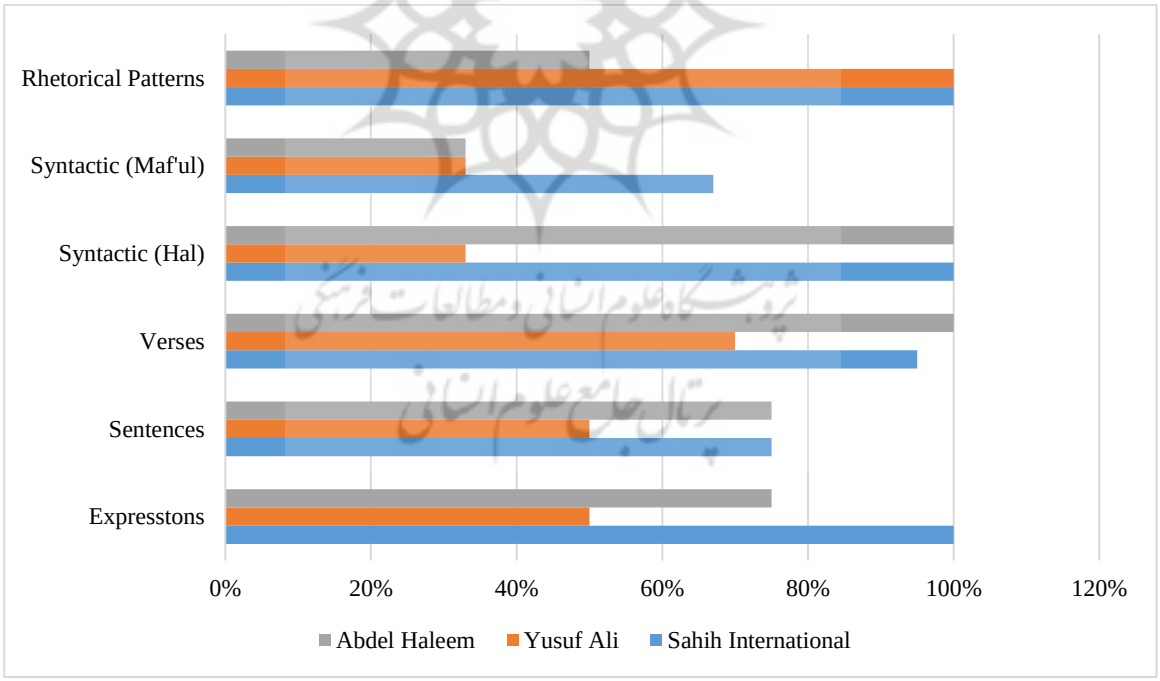

Figure 1. Consistency Levels Across Recurring Qur'ānic Structures

5.2. Theoretical implications

The interplay between Formal Equivalence (FE) and Dynamic Equivalence (DE) in the examined translations provides critical theoretical insight into the challenges of consistently rendering the Qur'ān's recurring elements. Sahih International, with its FE-oriented

methodology and an 89.5% consistency rate, effectively upholds the linguistic unity of the text. For instance, its consistent rendering of "حَافِظُونَ" as "guard" in Al-Mu'minun 23:5 and Al-Ma'arij 70:29 aligns with the ethical continuity emphasized in Al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr (Ibn ʿĀshūr, 1420, Vol. 17, p. 45). In contrast, Yusuf Ali's DE-driven approach introduces unjustified variation—translating the same phrase as "abstain from sex"—which lacks support from tafsir literature and appears more as an oversight than a deliberate interpretive choice. Abdel Haleem adopts a balanced formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence strategy, achieving full consistency in the Verses and Ḥāl categories (100%). However, this approach proves less effective in the Rhetorical Patterns category (50%), where shifts such as "Who but" in Al-Ḥijr 15:56 versus "Who ... but" in Āl ʿImrān 3:135 may improve fluency but diminish the rhetorical intensity noted by Al-Zamakhsharī (1407, Vol. 2, p. 345). This raises important questions about the trade-offs between naturalness and fidelity in sacred text translation. Overall, the findings suggest that FE is generally more effective in preserving the Qur'ān's thematic coherence and structural integrity. Conversely, excessive reliance on DE—as seen in Yusuf Ali's case—can undermine these qualities unless carefully justified by strong contextual or exegetical evidence. This tension between form and function underscores the need for further inquiry into optimal translation strategies that honor both the text's precision and its communicative goals.

5.3. Practical implications

The practical implications of consistency in Qur'ānic translation extend to thematic coherence, rhetorical effectiveness, and pedagogical utility—each shaped by the translators' methodological choices. Sahih International, for example, reinforces thematic continuity through consistent renderings such as "enjoyment of worldly life" across similar expressions. This uniformity enhances reader comprehension and facilitates cross-referencing in educational contexts. In contrast, Yusuf Ali introduces deviations—such as translating the same phrase as "conveniences"—which disrupt semantic coherence and risk confusing readers, especially in instructional settings. Such inconsistencies lack support from tafsir sources like Al-Mīzān (Ṭabāṭabāī, 1351, Vol. 14, p. 234), which indicate no contextual justification for these shifts, pointing to a translational weakness.Abdel Haleem demonstrates strong performance in certain areas—achieving 100% consistency in the Verses category—but exhibits diminished rhetorical impact in the Rhetorical Patterns category (50%). Variations such as "Who but" versus "Who ... but" may enhance naturalness in English but dilute the persuasive emphasis identified in classical exegesis, such as Al-Kashshāf (Al-Zamakhsharī, 1407, Vol. 2, p. 345). The data reveal a notable correlation between adherence to Formal Equivalence (FE) and higher consistency: Sahih International scores 89.5%, compared to Yusuf Ali's 56%. This suggests that prioritizing form over excessive adaptation improves thematic and rhetorical integrity. However, given the study's limited sample size, these findings should be interpreted with caution. Broader research involving a larger dataset is necessary to validate and expand upon these conclusions.

6. Conclusion

This study examined the consistency of translating recurring Qur'ānic elements across five categories—Similar Expressions and Phrases, Similar Sentences, Similar Verses, Similar Syntactic Structures (specifically Ḥāl and Mafʿūl Muṭlaq Ta'kīdī), and Similar

Rhetorical Patterns—in three English translations: Sahih International (1997), Yusuf Ali (1934), and Abdel Haleem (2004). The analysis employed Formal Equivalence (FE) and Dynamic Equivalence (DE) as theoretical frameworks and drew on classical tafsir sources, including Al-Mīzān (Ṭabāṭabāī, 1973) and Al-Kashshāf (Al-Zamakhsharī, 1986), to assess translational fidelity. Sahih International generally favored a formal equivalence approach, prioritizing linguistic and rhetorical precision. In contrast, Yusuf Ali adopted a more interpretive dynamic equivalence strategy, often introducing variations unsupported by tafsir sources—for instance, translating "guard their chastity" as "abstain from sex" in Al-Mu'minun 23:5 and Al-Ma'arij 70:29, a rendering that may reflect cultural adaptation but lacks textual justification (Ibn ʿĀshūr, 2000). Abdel Haleem offered a more balanced method, blending formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence to preserve meaning and readability, though occasionally at the expense of structural fidelity—such as the shift from "Who but" to "Who ... but" in the Rhetorical Patterns category.

These findings underscore the need for methodological rigor when translating repetitive Qur'ānic forms, as inconsistent renderings can disrupt the intended textual coherence. The study suggests that a hybrid formal equivalence-dynamic equivalence model—anchored in formal equivalence to preserve fidelity, complemented by dynamic equivalence to enhance readability—offers the most effective strategy for maintaining the Qur'ān's linguistic, syntactic, and rhetorical unity in translation. However, certain limitations must be acknowledged. The study's scope was restricted to three examples per category and three translations, limiting the generalizability of its conclusions. Additionally, it may not capture the full spectrum of translational approaches present in lesser-known English versions of the Qur'ān. Future research could expand the dataset, include a broader range of translations, or apply computational tools to assess consistency on a larger scale.

Beyond the field of Qur'ānic translation, this study contributes to broader translation theory by illustrating how formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence frameworks can be used to balance fidelity and accessibility in sacred texts. It also holds implications for interfaith engagement, demonstrating how translation strategies can influence the accessibility and reception of Islamic texts among diverse audiences. To inform future translation efforts, a structured hybrid framework is proposed: first, establish a Formal Equivalence baseline for uniform renderings where tafsir confirms identical functions (e.g., translating "يَبْكُونَ" consistently as "weeping"); second, refine for naturalness using Dynamic Equivalence without altering structural elements (e.g., consistently rendering "إِلَّا + مَن" as "who ... except"); and finally, apply tailored guidelines by category—lexical fidelity for Expressions and Sentences, verbatim matching for Verses, grammatical mirroring for Structures, and rhetorical preservation for Patterns. This process is illustrated in Figure 2.

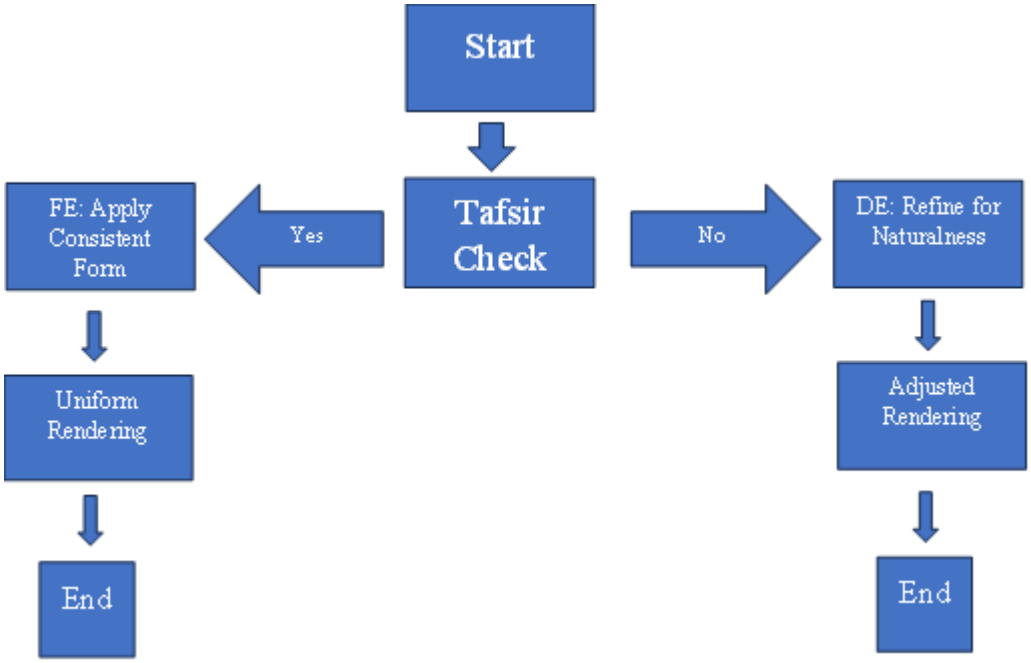

Figure 2. Proposed hybrid formal equivalence-dynamic equivalence Framework

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