



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Section: *Philosophy & Religion***Islamophobia and the use of the Qur'anic text: A critical discourse analysis of distortion mechanisms and their impact on Western perception**Mahmood Matnee Khalaf¹, Taha Ibrahim Shabeeb^{1*} & Ali Ali Gobaili Saged²¹College of Education for Humanities, University of Anbar, Iraq²University of Malaya Academy of Islamic Studies, Malaysia*Correspondence: aha.shabeeb@uoanbar.edu.iq**ABSTRACT**

This research aims to analyze the phenomenon of Islamophobia by tracing the mechanisms of employing the Qur'anic text within Islamophobic discourse, and revealing the patterns of semantic and interpretive distortion practiced on the text in contemporary Western media and cultural contexts. The research begins with the premise that this discourse not only extracts Qur'anic texts from their historical and interpretive contexts, but also goes further, reproducing them within pre-existing narrative and ideological frameworks that contribute to perpetuating negative stereotypes about Islam and Muslims, and reshaping the meaning of the text to serve preconceived notions of violence or exclusion.

This research employs a critical analytical approach, drawing on critical discourse analysis methodologies. It examines selected Quranic verses that are among the most frequently cited texts in Islamophobic debates, comparing them with their interpretations in the Islamic exegetical tradition and contextual understanding methodologies. The research also addresses prominent patterns of methodological distortion, such as contextual selectivity, biased translation, cultural generalization, and the imposition of contemporary meanings onto the texts. Furthermore, it deconstructs the mechanisms by which religious texts are exploited for media and political purposes.

The research concludes that the use of Quranic texts in Islamophobic discourse directly contributes to shaping Western perceptions of Islam by producing distorted cognitive representations based on a fragmented and unscientific reading of religious texts. It emphasizes that these practices do not represent mere differences in interpretation but rather reflect a discursive structure that produces ideological meaning. The research concludes by stressing the importance of developing contemporary interpretive and critical approaches capable of deconstructing this discourse and reinterpreting the Quranic text within its integrated epistemological, humanistic, and rhetorical context.

KEYWORDS: Islamophobia, Quranic text, critical discourse analysis, semantic distortion, Western discourse, stereotype

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1. Introduction

The Qur'anic text represents the central pillar in the doctrinal and epistemological framework of Islamic civilization. It constitutes the primary reference for Islamic legislation and a foundational source for the system of values and ethics that guides the individual and collective behavior of Muslims throughout the ages (Nasr, 2015; Abdel Haleem, 2004). It is not merely a religious text, but a comprehensive epistemological system encompassing creed, jurisprudence, ethics, and politics, and it serves as a fundamental reference in shaping Islamic philosophical and social thought (Al-Ghazali, 2000; Ibn Taymiyyah, 1998).

The Qur'anic text is characterized by profound semantic coherence and a precise argumentative structure. Its verses form a cohesive unit, relying on the foundations of rhetoric and eloquence to achieve a persuasive effect on the mind and heart. This ensures the understanding of divine purposes and the realization of justice, mercy, and a balance between rights and duties (Al-Baydawi, 2002; Al-Razi, 2005). Scholars and commentators throughout history have emphasized the necessity of understanding the text within its historical and linguistic context, employing interpretive reasoning to extract precise rulings and meanings, while considering the objectives of Islamic law and its ethical and social dimensions (Ibn Kathir, 2003; Al-Qurtubi, 2007). The transmission of this interpretive methodology relied heavily on the institution of sheikhdom, where knowledge was not merely transmitted but embodied in a chain of certified scholars (Awad & Shabeeb, 2026).

Islamic tradition also indicates that the Qur'an represents a vital source for human doctrinal and spiritual understanding, linking intellectual knowledge with moral experience and equipping Muslims with the tools for critical thinking and distinguishing between right and wrong (Nasr, 2015). Therefore, any engagement with Qur'anic texts—whether in translation or academic analysis—requires a profound awareness of the doctrinal, rhetorical, and cultural dimensions to ensure the preservation of the message's authenticity and prevent any distortion or alteration that might affect its original meaning. In this way, the Qur'an is viewed not as a mere collection of texts, but as an integrated framework for building individual and collective consciousness, a standard for judging values and actions, and a source for developing scientific and intellectual methodologies in various humanities and social sciences both within and outside Islamic civilization (Al-Shahrastani, 1998; Al-Jurjani, 2002).

The Qur'anic text is distinguished by its semantic richness and rhetorical depth, as well as its connection to complex historical and interpretive contexts. This makes understanding and invoking it in any contemporary discourse a precise epistemological process that requires rigorous scientific tools capable of grasping its linguistic, interpretive, and contextual dimensions (Izzi Dien, 2000; Saeed, 2006). The tradition of Quranic exegesis indicates that the Qur'an is read within a comprehensive system of interpretive rules, encompassing the contextual reasons for revelation, the objectives of Islamic law, the principles of Arabic rhetoric, and the connections between different verses and chapters, to ensure a complete understanding of the text's meaning (Al-Razi, 2005; Al-Baydawi, 2002).

However, this very complexity has made the Qur'anic text susceptible to varying interpretations. While some commentators adhere to the precise principles and rules of interpretation, others deviate from the text's objectives when it is invoked outside its intellectual and cultural context. Examples of this can be seen in some contemporary discourses, particularly in the West, where specific verses are taken out of context and interpreted in isolation from their legal and rhetorical purposes, leading to distorted or inaccurate representations of Islamic meaning (Saeed, 2006; Lean, 2012).

Researchers emphasize that the challenge lies in translating Quranic texts into new contexts without compromising their doctrinal and rhetorical framework. This necessitates developing modern epistemological tools that combine classical hermeneutical reasoning with contemporary critical analysis to interpret the text in a way that preserves its integrity and allows for a correct understanding of its meaning in light of contemporary intellectual and cultural challenges (Nasr, 2015; Al-Jurjani, 2002; Esack, 2005).

In this context, Islamophobia has emerged as one of the most prominent contemporary issues that has contributed to reshaping the image of Islam in Western consciousness. It is not limited to social or political stances but extends to the selective and distorted use of religious texts, particularly the Quran, within media and cultural discourses (Allen, 2011; Lean, 2017). This approach often involves extracting verses from their contexts or reinterpreting them according to preconceived frameworks, thus serving to construct stereotypical perceptions of Islam as a religion associated with violence or exclusion (Said, 1978; Poole, 2002).

Global transformations, particularly the rise of political and media discourse after the events of September 11, have contributed to entrenching this fragmented reading of the Quranic text. Some verses are now presented as conclusive evidence outside their overall context, ignoring the surrounding reasons for their revelation, historical contexts, and established interpretive approaches within the Islamic tradition (Kumar, 2012; Cesari, 2013). Consequently, the problem is no longer limited to misunderstanding; it has escalated to the construction of a parallel epistemological discourse that reproduces the Quranic text within a semantic framework distinct from its original intent (Bleich, 2011).

Several fields of knowledge intersect in this context, most notably critical discourse analysis, which allows for the deconstruction of the linguistic and narrative structures through which religious texts are reshaped within Islamophobic discourse, and the revelation of the mechanisms used in producing and directing meaning (Fairclough, 2013; Wodak & Meyer, 2015). This approach also contributes to highlighting the relationship between power and knowledge, and how religious texts are employed in the service of specific ideological or cultural perceptions.

1.1 Background and Significance of the Research

The Qur'anic texts are the central reference point in the construction of the doctrinal, legal, and ethical system in Islam. Throughout Islamic history, they have formed a comprehensive epistemological framework that has contributed to guiding individual and collective thought and behavior, as well as producing a civilizational system with spiritual, ethical, and human dimensions, this integrated model of knowledge transmission mirrors the way Islamic civilization has historically integrated religious, cultural, and architectural dimensions into cohesive educational systems (Awad, 2025). The Qur'anic text is characterized by its semantic richness and multiple levels of interpretation, combining the apparent meaning with the historical context, the teleological dimension, and the rhetorical dimension. This makes its understanding linked to a comprehensive interpretive system (Al-Razi, 2005; Al-Qurtubi, 2007; Al-Shatibi, 2003).

Conversely, recent decades have witnessed a notable increase in the presence of Islam within Western media and political discourses, especially in the context of the aftermath of the September 11 attacks. This has led to the emergence of what is known as Islamophobic discourse as an interpretive and media framework that contributes to the selective and ideologically driven reproduction of Islam's image. This discourse has often relied on employing the Quranic text outside its linguistic and historical context, by extracting specific verses or reinterpreting them according to preconceived epistemological frameworks, thus producing meanings that do not align with the text's original intent (Saeed, 2006; Allen, 2010; Kumar, 2012).

Contemporary studies indicate that this type of representation cannot be understood as merely a difference in interpretation, but rather as part of a broader discursive structure that contributes to shaping stereotypes about Islam and Muslims, and reproduces them within cultural dichotomies such as violence/peace, and progress/backwardness. This discourse is also linked to analytical and media mechanisms that employ textual selection, cultural generalization, and semantic reframing of religious texts to serve specific political and cultural narratives (Cesari, 2013; Lean, 2012).

Hence the importance of studying this phenomenon as an area where religious text intersects with media discourse and cultural analysis. This necessitates critical approaches capable of deconstructing the mechanisms of manipulation and restoring the Qur'anic text to its correct interpretive and epistemological context, thereby limiting reductionist readings and promoting a balanced scholarly understanding.

Based on this, the significance of this research lies in its attempt to analyze how the Qur'anic text is employed in Islamophobic discourse by uncovering patterns of semantic and interpretive distortion and demonstrating their impact on shaping Western perceptions of Islam. It also aims to reread these texts in light of their original interpretive contexts, contributing to a balanced scholarly perspective that restores the Qur'anic text to its true meaning and limits the reductionist readings that distort its image (Lulu et al., 2024; Saeed, 2006; Esack, 2005).

Therefore, this research is not limited to monitoring the phenomenon, but goes beyond that to analyzing its discursive structure and exploring its cognitive and cultural dimensions, while striving to build a critical approach capable of distinguishing between the scientific interpretation of the Qur'anic text and its ideological employment. This comes within the framework of the increasing need for solid studies concerned

with deconstructing contemporary discourses that deal with Islam, and providing cognitive alternatives that contribute to enhancing mutual understanding and correcting stereotypes in different cultural environments (Allen, 2010; Cesari, 2013).

1.2. Research Problem and Questions

The central problem of this research lies in the dual challenge facing translators and researchers when dealing with classical Islamic texts, particularly the Holy Qur'an, the Hadith, and legal texts. This challenge is manifested in how to preserve the epistemological, doctrinal, and rhetorical structure of these texts while ensuring they remain comprehensible and accessible to non-specialist or non-Arabic-speaking readers (Cleary, T., 2004). These texts are not merely words to be translated; rather, they constitute an integrated system of knowledge encompassing doctrinal dimensions, legal rulings, ethical messages, and subtle rhetorical techniques, making their transfer into another language a sensitive and complex process (Nasr, 2015).

The fundamental question arising from this problem is not simply, "How do we translate classical Islamic texts?" but extends to something deeper: "How do we translate these texts without losing their essence or compromising the doctrinal and rhetorical concepts they embody?" The lack of a deep understanding of these dimensions leads to incomplete, erroneous, or distorted translations, which may contribute to a distorted image of Islam or an inaccurate understanding of the texts' intentions (Cleary, 2004; Saeed, 2006).

From this central problem, a set of sub-questions emerge that this research seeks to answer, most notably:

1. What are the methodological criteria for translating classical Islamic texts in a way that balances accuracy of meaning with ease of comprehension?
2. What are the limits of the translator's interpretive intervention to ensure the conveyance of intentions without deviating from the doctrinal and textual spirit of the text?
3. Is it possible to reconcile the requirements of modern translation theories with the requirements of religious texts, which are characterized by their doctrinal and rhetorical specificities?

What is the ideal model for a translation that satisfies the contemporary reader without compromising the authenticity of the source or infringing upon the intentions of the religious text? This problem stems from the observation that many contemporary translations of Islamic texts, whether Qur'anic, Hadithic, or legal, tend toward simplification or free interpretation, leading to discrepancies in accuracy and meaning between the original text and the translation (Saeed, A. 2006). Therefore, this research aims to present a comprehensive methodological framework that ensures a balance between textual fidelity and flexibility of understanding, and provides a framework that translators and researchers can use to preserve the doctrinal and rhetorical meaning of the texts within their civilizational and cultural context.

This research adopts a comparative, critical analytical approach that combines theoretical grounding with practical application, with the aim of revealing the mechanisms of employing the Qur'anic text within the discourse of Islamophobia, and analyzing the patterns of semantic and interpretive distortion to which it is exposed in Western media and cultural contexts. The research starts from employing the tools of critical discourse analysis as a main methodological framework, due to the analytical possibilities it provides for understanding the relationship between language and power, and deconstructing the discursive structures through which religious texts are reproduced within specific ideological contexts (Fairclough, 1995; Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

1.3 Research Objectives

This research aims to analyze the phenomenon of Islamophobia by examining how the Quranic text is employed within Western media and intellectual discourse. It seeks to uncover the mechanisms for reproducing religious meaning within selective ideological contexts that disregard the original structure of the text and its interpretive contexts. The research stems from a set of interconnected objectives that collectively aim to deconstruct the patterns of unscientific application of the Quranic text. It focuses on identifying instances of contextual quotations and their reinterpretation outside their historical and rhetorical frameworks, demonstrating the impact of this on producing new meanings that deviate from their original intent. Furthermore, it seeks to reveal the forms of semantic distortion that affect Quranic concepts when they are translated into Western discourse, and how

this transformation leads to a misleading oversimplification or deliberate distortion of Quranic meaning, thus contributing to the construction of stereotypical perceptions of Islam and Muslims.

This research also aims to analyze the impact of this selective use of religious texts on shaping contemporary Western consciousness. It does so by tracing how religious texts are exploited in media and political discourse to produce mental images that link Islam with violence or exclusion. Simultaneously, it seeks to conduct a critical comparison between this discourse and traditional and contemporary Islamic interpretations, highlighting the gap between the original meaning of Quranic texts and their ideologically driven uses. The research employs critical discourse analysis tools to understand the linguistic and argumentative structures underlying this selective use. It strives to offer an alternative scholarly approach that restores the Quranic text to its intended, rhetorical, and historical context. This approach contributes to fostering objective understanding, mitigating the impact of reductionist readings in diverse cultural environments, and simultaneously supporting intercultural dialogue.

1.4. Methodology

This research adopts an integrated methodological framework combining critical analytical and comparative approaches. Its aim is to study how Qur'anic texts are employed within Islamophobic discourse in both Western media and intellectual contexts. The research begins by analyzing selected samples of these discourses that rely directly or implicitly on Qur'anic texts, tracing the patterns of their presence and the mechanisms of their invocation within the discursive structure.

The initial phase of the analysis is based on a descriptive-analytical approach. This approach identifies the Qur'anic texts most frequently used in this discourse and tracks their contextual usage in media and intellectual writings. It focuses on the linguistic and semantic mechanisms through which the original text is deconstructed and reconstructed to serve specific ideological narratives. This approach contributes to revealing the relationship between language and power and highlighting how religious meaning is reproduced within directed interpretive frameworks.

In a later stage, the research adopts a comparative interpretive approach as a central tool for revealing the gap between the original meaning of the Qur'anic text and its use in Islamophobic discourse. This is achieved by comparing these discursive representations with those found in established sources of interpretation, both classical and contemporary. This comparison is not limited to the formal level but delves deeper into analyzing aspects of interpretive deviation and identifying mechanisms of semantic transformation, such as fragmentation, omission of context, and the ideological re-application of the text (Saeed, 2006; Esack, 2005).

The research also employs semantic and rhetorical analysis tools to understand the argumentative structure of the Qur'anic text and highlight its internal coherence and multiple levels of meaning. This includes the relationship between linguistic meaning and pragmatic context, and between textual details and overarching objectives. This analysis demonstrates that the Qur'anic text is not understood through its isolated vocabulary but rather within an integrated system of semantic and rhetorical relationships that grant it its interpretive depth and epistemological balance. In the same vein, the research employs a contextual-historical approach by examining the reasons for revelation and the historical and social circumstances surrounding the verses. This contributes to reconstructing meaning within its proper framework and reveals the impact of neglecting these contexts in producing distorted interpretations that serve specific ideological agendas.

Furthermore, the research relies on a qualitative content analysis of a selected sample of Western media discourses. This analysis aims to uncover patterns of repetition and selectivity, semantic framing strategies, and mechanisms for linking the Quranic text to issues of violence or extremism. This approach is reinforced by employing critical discourse analysis methods, which serve as an effective tool for deconstructing linguistic and narrative structures and highlighting the relationship between knowledge production and ideological underpinnings (Izzi Dien, 2000; Nasr, 2015).

Through this methodological integration, the research presents a coherent scientific approach that combines linguistic, interpretive, and critical analytical tools, enabling the deconstruction of the discursive structure of Islamophobia and the unveiling of its mechanisms of meaning production, while re-presenting the Qur'anic text in its correct linguistic, historical, and intentional context, within a framework that balances the authenticity of the interpretive tradition with the requirements of contemporary critical analysis.

1.5. Previous Studies

Previous studies indicate that the use of Qur'anic texts in contemporary Western discourse, particularly in media and political contexts, oscillates between two main approaches: the first is a scholarly, interpretive approach that seeks to understand the text within its historical and semantic context, drawing upon the Islamic interpretive tradition, as seen in the works of Saeed (2006) and Esack (2005). The second is characterized by a selective, interpretive approach that aims to reproduce texts outside their original contexts, serving preconceived notions about Islam. This is clearly evident in some Western media and political discourses that employ Qur'anic verses to perpetuate negative stereotypes about Muslims (Poole, 2002; Allen, 2010). This divergence reveals a profound methodological problem concerning the limits of understanding and interpretation, and the nature of the relationship between religious texts and the cultural context in which they are invoked.

In this context, a number of studies have focused on analyzing fragmented readings of Quranic texts within the context of Islamophobia. These studies demonstrate that research often concentrates on specific verses deemed more controversial, such as those concerning fighting, jihad, and relations with others, without considering the context of revelation or the interpretive frameworks that govern their understanding (Lean, 2017; Kumar, 2012). These studies emphasize that this pattern of selective reading contributes to distorting the original intent of the text and leads to the production of a mental image that reduces Islam to its conflictual dimension, ignoring its integrated ethical and legal structure.

On the other hand, numerous studies have addressed the issue of translation and its role in reshaping Qur'anic meaning in non-Arabic contexts, indicating that biased or selective translation is one of the most prominent factors in semantic distortion. Western readers often receive the Qur'anic text through a linguistic medium laden with implicit interpretations that may reflect ideological biases (Cleary, 2004; Izzi Dien, 2000). These studies highlight that the loss of semantic equivalence, or the reduction of complex doctrinal concepts to superficial linguistic equivalents, deepens the epistemological gap between the original text and its portrayal in Islamophobic discourse.

In the same vein, other studies have focused on analyzing the discursive dimension of Islamophobia, demonstrating that this phenomenon is not limited to misunderstanding texts, but rather involves the construction of linguistic and media narratives that reshape the Quranic text within new semantic frameworks serving ideological purposes. Here, the role of critical discourse analysis emerges as an effective methodological tool for deconstructing these structures by revealing the relationship between language and power, and how religious texts are employed in the production and direction of knowledge (Fairclough, 1995; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). These studies have shown that Islamophobic discourse relies on specific linguistic strategies, such as selective framing, repetition, and the artificial contextual linking of Quranic texts to contemporary acts of violence.

Some studies have also adopted a comparative approach between Western discourse and Islamic interpretive discourse, aiming to highlight the differences in understanding Quranic texts. These comparisons have shown that Islamic interpretive discourse offers an integrated reading of the text, taking into account its doctrinal, rhetorical, and contextual dimensions, while Islamophobic discourse relies on fragmenting the text and extracting it from its historical context (Nasr, 2015; Saeed, 2006). These studies emphasize the importance of adopting multi-level analytical approaches that combine linguistic, rhetorical, and hermeneutical analysis for a deeper understanding of religious texts and the deconstruction of ideologically driven interpretations, the recognition of doctrinal pluralism within classical Islamic jurisprudence provides a historical precedent for such multilevel hermeneutical approaches, demonstrating that interpretive diversity was institutionally accommodated (Awad, 2025).

On another level, recent studies have examined the impact of this rhetorical use of Quranic texts on shaping Western perceptions of Islam, indicating that media and political discourse based on selective interpretation and reinterpretation contributes to reinforcing stereotypes and influences public policy and attitudes toward Muslims (Cesari, 2013; Bleich, 2011). These findings highlight that Islamophobia is not merely a transient cultural phenomenon, but rather a comprehensive epistemological construct that relies on reshaping religious texts within targeted discursive frameworks. In applied studies, several researchers have focused on analyzing real-world examples from Western media and political thought writings to reveal how Quranic texts are employed to support Islamophobic narratives. These studies show that this employment is characterized by a high degree of selectivity and semantic distortion, where specific verses, particularly those related to jihad

or relations with non-Muslims, are invoked in isolation from their interpretive and intended contexts (Lean, 2012; Kumar, 2012). The results also demonstrate that this repeated use contributes to establishing a mental association between the Quranic text and concepts of violence or extremism.

These studies collectively underscore the importance of combining theoretical analysis with practical application by examining media and intellectual discourses in light of the original Quranic texts. This allows for the identification of the gap between the true meaning and the reinterpreted meaning. It also points to the necessity of developing a critical methodological framework that combines the tools of Islamic interpretation with contemporary discourse analysis, aiming to offer a balanced reading of the Qur'anic text and confront the patterns of distortion it faces in Islamophobic discourse (Allen, 2010; Poole, 2002).

Accordingly, this research is distinguished by its attempt to construct an integrated approach that combines interpretive, linguistic, and critical analysis, while expanding the scope of the study to include not only Qur'anic texts but also the contexts of their use in contemporary discourse. This contributes to bridging the gap between theoretical and applied studies and providing a deeper and more precise understanding of the mechanisms by which the Qur'anic text is employed in the context of Islamophobia.

Based on the above, it is clear that most previous studies have focused on one aspect of the phenomenon, whether linguistic or interpretive analysis or the impact on Western consciousness, without offering a comprehensive study that combines an analysis of the Qur'anic text, a comparison of its use in Islamophobic discourse, and an examination of its impact on shaping Western perceptions of Islam. Hence, this research is distinguished by its comprehensive approach which combines comparative analysis, employing critical discourse analysis tools, and referring to original Islamic interpretive sources, with the aim of presenting an integrated and documented vision of the phenomenon and explaining ways to address it.

2. Analysis and Discussion

A comparative analysis of the original Qur'anic texts versus the models of translations and citations used in the Islamophobic Western media and intellectual discourse reveals large and deep gaps at the level of semantic meaning, argumentative structure and the cultural dimension of the text. The Qur'anic text is characterized by its multi-level semantic nature, as it combines the apparent meaning, the linguistic context and the intentional and ethical dimension, reflecting an integrated argumentative system that links the purposes of legislation, social behavior and moral values. Commentators and scholars of Islamic jurisprudence have emphasized this multiplicity of levels of meaning and the necessity of considering the context and the legitimate objectives in understanding the Quranic text. They have also clarified that the Quranic meaning is not reduced to a single literal meaning, but rather is formed within a system of linguistic and intentional relationships (Al-Razi, 2005; Al-Qurtubi, 2007; Al-Shatibi, 2003; Al-Jurjani, 2002). However, Western Islamophobic discourse often ignores this semantic and interpretive integration of the Quranic text, limiting itself to extracting verses or reinterpreting them outside their historical and interpretive context. This leads to the production of new and distorted meanings that do not reflect the original intentions of the text, but rather reformulate them within preconceived epistemological frameworks that serve stereotypical perceptions of Islam (Saeed, 2006; Esack, 2005; Allen, 2010; Kumar, 2012). Studies have shown that this selective excerpting often focuses on verses that can be portrayed as relating to violence or extremism, while ignoring the ethical context and the overall value system that frames the Quranic text. Consequently, in these translations and quotations, the Quranic text becomes a tool for reinforcing preconceived notions about Islam, thus perpetuating negative stereotypes about Muslims and Islam as a whole, such as portraying it as a rigid or violent religion, while disregarding the ethical and compassionate framework that governs the Quranic texts (Saeed, 2006; Esack, 2005).

Moreover, this gap between the original text and its excerpted translations not only affects the apparent meaning but also distorts the argumentative structure of the text. The logical connections between verses and their legal contexts are omitted, and the cultural dimension that links the text to the historical and social environment in which it was revealed is marginalized. This neglect leads the Western reader to receive the text in isolation, incompletely, which facilitates the formation of stereotypes and reinforces fears about Islam and Muslims (Lean, 2012; Cesari, 2017). The analysis indicates that the use of Quranic verses in Western media is often selective and strategic, relying on extracting texts and reinterpreting them in a biased manner to highlight what is portrayed as violence or extremism, while ignoring the comprehensive ethical and value-based

framework that frames these verses within their Quranic context. When read within their complete context, Quranic texts reflect a delicate balance between moral guidance, social norms, and spiritual values, making any partial extraction of the text a misleading or distorted understanding (Lean, 2012; Allen, 2010).

Therefore, the aim of this strategy is not merely to offer objective criticism or a scientific analysis of the Islamic text, but rather to reshape Western perceptions of the text to serve a specific ideological agenda, such as portraying Islam as a religion of violence or using the texts as evidence of civilizational backwardness or moral deficiency in Muslim societies (Cesari, 2017). The media thus becomes a tool for producing preconceived stereotypes, ignoring the historical, social, and legal context of the text, and exploiting the gap between the literal meaning of the text and its deeper contextual meaning to fuel fears and reinforce negative perceptions of Muslims.

Furthermore, the analysis shows that understanding the historical context of revelation, the environment in which the text was revealed, and the objectives of Islamic law (Maqasid al-Shariah) is often overlooked, turning the verses into an ideological tool against Muslims rather than an integral part of a comprehensive ethical and legal discourse (Izzi Dien, 2000; Nasr, 2015). Islamophobic discourse exploits this gap between the literal and deeper contextual meaning of the text to amplify fears, shape stereotypes, and reinforce psychological and cultural barriers toward Islam and Muslims (Saeed, 2006).

2.1. Semantic and Terminological Gaps

The first gaps are manifested in the translation of basic doctrinal terms, such as “piety”, “clear proof”, “faith”, and “justice”, as these concepts are often translated or interpreted superficially in a way that does not reflect their semantic richness in the Qur’anic context, as these terms go beyond the limits of the lexical meaning to complex doctrinal, ethical and behavioral dimensions, which can only be understood through the tools of interpretation, context and intentions (Abdel Haleem, 2004; Saeed, 2006; Al-Raghib al-Isfahani, 2009; Ibn Ashur, 2006). These terms transcend the boundaries of their direct linguistic meaning to encompass complex doctrinal, ethical, and behavioral dimensions. This makes their translation into other languages a cognitive and methodological challenge. Studies in translation and interpretation have indicated that the semantic reduction of these concepts leads to a reshaping of meaning in the mind of the recipient in a way that may deviate from the original intentions of the text (Saeed, 2006; Dickins et al., 2016). This partial translation and distortion of the text’s frame of reference leads the Western reader to receive the text with a meaning completely contrary to its original intentions. It reinforces stereotypes about Islam as a religion that focuses on doctrinal rituals or deals with social phenomena violently, ignoring the frameworks of ethical and compassionate teachings (Lean, 2012; Kumar, 2012).

2.2. Neglecting the Rhetorical Dimension and Expressive Style

The results also indicate the neglect of the rhetorical dimension of the texts. Verses are often translated in a dry and definitive style that deprives them of their expressive beauty and rhetorical richness (Abdul-Raof). (2013). The Qur’anic text is characterized by a parallelism between meaning and sound, internal rhythm, and a stylistic approach that reflects the depth of its religious and ethical message (Nasr, 2015). When these elements are neglected, the text becomes merely a collection of disjointed sentences exploited to reinforce preconceived notions, rather than a source of reflection and profound understanding.

The reproduction of texts in Islamophobic discourse is often characterized by an excessive simplification of language, a reduction of complex meanings, and the use of convoluted linguistic structures to create a sense of threat or violence (Poole, 2002; Allen, 2010). This obscures the integrated cognitive structure of the text and reinforces the distorted image of Islam as a tolerant and multifaceted religion.

2.3 Qur’anic texts are employed in Islamophobic discourse within systematic patterns of distortion and semantic reinterpretation.

These methods aim to construct preconceived stereotypes about Islam rather than seeking an objective understanding of the text. This manifests in several mechanisms, most notably: extracting specific Qur’anic passages and isolating them from their historical and interpretive contexts, thus depriving them of the conditions for holistic understanding and transforming their meaning from contextual to absolute; reinterpreting doctrinal

and ethical concepts according to preconceived epistemological frameworks that serve the Western media narrative, instead of interpreting them within their original semantic system; and ignoring the rhetorical and stylistic dimensions of the Qur'anic text, leading to its presentation as a dry or threatening discourse that is exploited to incite an impression of violence or extremism.

Thus, the analysis reveals that Islamophobic discourse is not limited to the transmission of texts, but extends to their reshaping and reproduction within a new discursive structure. This structure empties the text of its intended and spiritual context and redirects it to serve pre-existing stereotypes. This necessitates a counter-critical approach based on accurate translation, consideration of the historical and interpretive context, and highlighting the argumentative structure of the Quranic text and its moral and cultural depth. This restores its semantic unity and intended integrity. Selective quotation involves extracting specific verses without regard to the general context or the reasons for revelation, such as verses related to jihad or fighting (Cesari, 2013).

Ideological interpretation involves reformulating meaning to serve preconceived narratives of violence or extremism (Bleich, 2011).

Cultural generalization involves projecting contemporary concepts onto different historical contexts, misleading the reader into believing that these behaviors apply to all Muslims (Lean, 2012). Practical examples of this pattern appear in Western media coverage of political events involving Muslims, where Quranic verses are cited to justify perceptions of Islam as a violent religion, while verses that advocate tolerance, justice, and mercy are ignored (Kumar, 2012; Allen, 2010).

2.4 The Interpretive Dimension and its Impact on Western Consciousness

The analysis highlights that employing Quranic texts out of context leads to tangible effects on shaping Western consciousness. Studies have shown that Western consumers of translated texts receive distorted messages that reinforce stereotypes and increase the tendency toward discrimination and social and political rejection of Muslims (Said, 1978; Poole, 2002). Furthermore, media and political discourse repeatedly reproduces these semantic gaps, leading to the entrenchment of a reductive understanding of Islam that fails to reflect its internal diversity or the depth of its doctrinal and ethical heritage (Cesari, 2013; Bleich, 2011).

2.5 Fidelity in Translation and Recreation of the Text

The findings indicate that faithful translation of Qur'anic texts is not simply a matter of direct, literal rendering. Rather, it requires a process of "recreation" of the text in the target language, preserving its authenticity while simultaneously accommodating the horizons of the new audience. This necessitates considering the rhetorical dimensions, the historical context of revelation, and the doctrinal and ethical objectives of the text. This ensures the presentation of an accurate and balanced image of the Qur'anic meaning without compromising its semantic unity or sacrificing its expressive specificity (Abdel Haleem, 2004; Dickins et al., 2016). In this context, the importance of combining classical interpretive tools, such as context, intentions, and rhetoric, with modern discourse analysis tools is also highlighted. This allows for a critical reading capable of uncovering the mechanisms of distortion and semantic reproduction in contemporary media and intellectual discourse, particularly Islamophobic discourse, and enabling the reader to grasp the gap between the original text and its ideologically driven uses (Izzi Dien, 2000; Fairclough, 2013).

In light of this analysis, a set of theoretical and methodological recommendations can be drawn to address patterns of intentional or unintentional distortion in the use of Qur'anic texts:

First: Strengthening comparative studies that examine the differences between the original Qur'anic texts and the ways in which they are invoked in Western media and political discourse.

Second: Developing training programs for translators and researchers that focus on deepening their understanding of the doctrinal and rhetorical context of the Qur'anic text and linking it to the principles of interpretation.

Third: Adopting critical discourse analysis methodologies in studying religious quotations within media and politics, with a focus on linguistic and semantic structures and mechanisms of ideological manipulation.

Fourth: Supporting the production of accurate and comprehensive academic translations that preserve

the overall meaning of the Qur'anic text, while taking into account the diverse cultural backgrounds of the recipients without compromising its spirit and objectives. In this context, the research presents an integrated vision for understanding how the Qur'anic text functions within contemporary reception contexts, and reveals the cognitive and semantic gaps in its use within Islamophobic discourse, thus laying a methodological basis for analyzing this phenomenon and studying its impact on shaping Western awareness of Islam (Saeed, 2006; Lean, 2012; Allen, 2010).

3. Results and Recommendations

3.1 First: Results

The research showed that translating classical Islamic texts, particularly Qur'anic, Hadith, and jurisprudential texts, requires a dual knowledge base combining linguistic and legal sciences. The absence of either of these dimensions leads to a distortion in the transmission of meaning and significance, resulting in the misrepresentation of the original message or the loss of its doctrinal and rhetorical dimensions (Abdul-Raof, 2001; Saeed, 2006). The analysis revealed that the optimal model for translating Qur'anic texts is the integrated model, which combines the foundational principles derived from the sciences of exegesis and Arabic language with modern translation theories. This achieves a balance between accuracy of meaning and fidelity of transmission on the one hand, and ease of comprehension for non-Arabic-speaking recipients on the other (Abdul-Raof, 2001; Saeed, 2006; Dickins et al., 2016).

The findings also reveal that the main problem lies not only in the linguistic aspect, but is rooted in the difference in cognitive and cultural structures between the source text and the target audience. Fundamental Islamic concepts, such as faith, monotheism, innovation (*bid'ah*), and piety (*taqwa*), do not have direct functional equivalents in other languages. Instead, their meaning is conveyed within a conceptual network accumulated over centuries of theological and legal scholarship. Therefore, successful translation transcends mere "linguistic transfer," becoming a process of deconstructing concepts within their original cognitive context and reconstructing them within parallel conceptual frameworks in the target language. This requires the translator to be a conscious interpreter before being a linguistic conduit, capable of blending fidelity to transmission with the dynamism of interpretive understanding. This makes translation in this field closer to interpretive reasoning than to traditional textual performance (Sulaiman, 2021; Al-Hassan, 2024).

This understanding has contributed to explaining the reasons for the failure of some common translations, despite their apparent linguistic correctness, as they lack interpretive depth and an understanding of the doctrinal context of the text. The analytical approach also highlighted a number of sub-results, the most important of which are:

1. The weakness of relying solely on literal translation: It was observed that literal translation often fails to accurately convey doctrinal and rhetorical concepts, leading to a distortion of the original message of Qur'anic and Hadith texts in many common translations (Al-Ibrahimi, 2022).
2. The varying interpretive awareness among translators: This is evident in the difference in the accuracy and depth of the translation. A translator familiar with the interpretive and doctrinal context can convey the text in its full meaning, while a less knowledgeable translator produces a superficial and incomplete translation (Al-Amrousi, 2019).
3. The Success of Integrative Models: It was found that the best translations are those that rely on a dual critical perspective, combining an understanding of the original text with its reproduction in a vibrant intellectual language that considers the semantic and rhetorical dimensions and responds to the recipient's understanding within the new linguistic and cultural context (Al-Ghamari, 2021; Al-Hassan, 2024).

The results also showed that the gap between the original text and its use in Western Islamophobic discourse is primarily related to differences in interpretive approaches. Western translations often rely on selectively extracting verses and reinterpreting them to serve preconceived narratives of violence and extremism, while comprehensive Islamic interpretive discourse considers the historical, rhetorical, and legal context of the text (Lean, 2012; Saeed, 2006).

3.2 Recommendations

Based on the preceding findings, the research proposes a set of theoretical and practical recommendations to enhance the quality of Islamic text translations and counter distortion in Islamophobic discourse:

1. **Adopt clear training standards for translators:** These standards should include an understanding of the doctrinal and interpretive context of Qur'anic and Hadith texts, familiarity with rhetorical and legal objectives, and modern linguistic and critical analysis skills (Sulaiman, 2021).
2. **Create a comprehensive guide for translating Islamic texts:** This guide aims to serve as a professional and academic reference for translators and publishers, providing a methodological framework that balances fidelity to the original text with the requirements of the recipient's understanding (Al-Faisal, 2022).
3. **Strengthen institutional cooperation:** Partnerships should be established between faculties of Sharia, translation departments, and Islamic studies centers to establish a unified scientific methodology in this field and ensure that academic training aligns with the needs of accurate translation (Al-Amrousi, 2019).
4. **Integrating Rhetorical and Interpretive Analysis into Practice:** Translators should adopt rhetorical and interpretive analysis tools to uncover the complex dimensions of the text, thus conveying meaning accurately while preserving the spirit of the text without compromising its context or intentions (Al-Ghamari, 2021; Al-Hassan, 2024).
5. **Reviewing Existing Translations and Correcting Distortions:** It is recommended to evaluate current translations used in Western media and thought, and to correct any distortions or selective interpretations of the texts, with the aim of reducing negative impacts on Western perceptions of Islam (Saeed, 2006; Lean, 2012).
6. **Academic and Media Awareness:** The findings of this research should be disseminated among educational and media institutions to clarify semantic gaps and common distortions, and to enhance readers' and listeners' awareness of the importance of the interpretive context of Qur'anic texts. With these recommendations, the research provides a comprehensive framework that addresses contemporary challenges in translating classical Islamic texts, and establishes balanced translation practices that respect the doctrinal and rhetorical dimensions of the text and limit the impact of Islamophobic discourse on Western consciousness. This framework also contributes to developing academic and professional standards for training translators and creating methodological tools for evaluating translations, thereby supporting the accurate and objective dissemination of Islamic knowledge in global contexts (Al-Ibrahimi, 2022; Al-Hassan, 2024).

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