

The Ideology in the English-Indonesian Translation of Imperative Utterances in Al-Quran Surah Al-Baqarah

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Abstract

This study investigates the ideological choices in the English-Indonesian translation of imperative utterances in Al-Qur'an Surah Al-Baqarah by examining their themes, translation techniques, and underlying translation ideologies. Using a qualitative approach and discourse analysis, the research analyzed 30 imperative utterances taken from the English translation by Mustafa Khattab and the Indonesian version published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The findings revealed five dominant themes embedded in the imperative structures, *viz.* obedience and worship of Allah, social responsibility and ethical conduct, dietary and behavioral guidance, economic justice, and personal accountability in faith. The analysis identified four translation techniques, *i.e.*, literal translation, communicative translation, adaptation, and transference, applied to render these commands into Indonesian. The study further highlighted the interplay between domestication and foreignization ideologies, showing how translators balance linguistic naturalness with theological fidelity. Domestication enhances accessibility for Indonesian readers, while foreignization preserves the Qur'an's doctrinal nuance and cultural identity. Overall, this research demonstrates that translating Qur'anic imperatives requires careful negotiation between linguistic precision, cultural relevance, and theological accuracy, ensuring that the divine message remains both comprehensible and faithful to its original context.

Introduction

Effective translation studies rely on a fundamental connection between language and culture (Al-Sulaimaan & Khoshaba, 2018; Mohamed, 2022). In settings where cultural and religious elements greatly affect the text, translating—the process of transmitting meaning from one language (source language or SL) to another—becomes rather important (Angelelli, 2014). As stated by (Al Farisi, 2023), one of the most difficult tasks in translating holy books, such as the Al-Quran, is that millions of people all around respect this holy book, which contains not only spiritual, linguistic, and cultural elements, but also religious instructions. Translation of its verses, particularly those with strong statements, presents



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different difficulties. These words cover commands, prohibitions, and instructions that are essential for understanding Islamic theology and behavior (Al Farisi, 2023). Maintaining the sacredness of the text and making sure it is understandable to many linguistic and cultural audiences depend on their exact and important translocation.

Surah Al-Baqarah is the second and longest chapter of the Al-Quran (Lubis, 2021). It is a deep and complex text that talks about many important topics in Islamic faith and practice. Spanning 286 verses, Surah Al-Baqarah tells us everything we need to know about how to behave, how to interact with others, and the law (Nugraha, 2022). The main ideas of this chapter are religious beliefs, worship duties, the basics of fairness, and specific rules about family, money, and running the government (Rahimi & Moghaddam, 2019). These parts make the surah's religious importance and the need for accurate and meaningful translation into other languages stand out. The themes that organize Surah Al-Baqarah demonstrate its potential as a guide for individuals and societies (Lubis, 2021). It amalgamates spiritual guidance with practical counsel. The text initiates with an examination of the characteristics of believers, nonbelievers, and hypocrites, providing insight into human behavior in relation to divine guidance. It continues with narratives concerning the Israelites and their covenant with God, imparting lessons on faith, obedience, and responsibility. The application to daily life is evident through its legal rulings concerning fasting, pilgrimage, and marriage.

The translation of imperative utterances in Surah Al-Baqarah necessitates a method that aligns linguistic precision with cultural and theological principles. These statements, often expressed as commands or prohibitions, serve as clear representations of divine authority and guidance. Examples include commands such as pray, fast, and fear Allah, which are essential to Islamic worship and ethics. In the realm of language, imperatives are characterized by their illocutionary force, or the intended impact the speaker seeks to achieve on the audience, which may lack a corresponding term or expression in the target language. This complicates the translation process as it must encompass not only the literal meaning but also the emotional and theological nuances of these directives. For instance, directives like "*gäbiru*" (endure patiently) or "*ittaqu*" (fear Allah) hold theological significance that transcends their literal interpretation, necessitating an advanced translation approach.

The underlying ideology of translation serves as essential in tackling these challenges. Lawrence Venuti (1995) introduced domestication and foreignization as two fundamental translation ideologies (Siregar, 2017; Venuti, 1995). Domestication aims to align the source text with the cultural and linguistic conventions of the target language, rendering the translation more accessible and intuitive for its audience (Elnaili, 2014; Prasetyo & Nugroho, 2013; Yang, 2010). Conversely, foreignization preserves the cultural and linguistic attributes of the source text, frequently prompting the target audience to confront the "foreignness" of the original context (Elnaili, 2014; Prasetyo & Nugroho, 2013; Yang, 2010). In the translation of imperatives from Surah Al-Baqarah, these philosophical approaches have a significant impact on how people understand and obey commands. A domesticated translation (Elnaili, 2014) may prioritize accessibility and cultural relatability, possibly at

the expense of theological nuance. In contrast, a foreignized translation (Yang, 2010) may preserve the original cultural and theological context while alienating the intended audience due to unfamiliar language or concepts.

The need to adhere to doctrinal accuracy while also ensuring comprehensibility for contemporary readers complicates the process of translating religious imperatives. Translators must decide whether to prioritize literal fidelity or adapt expressions so that the intended meaning is understandable and relatable to the target audience (Jaya, 2020; Kuncoro & Sutopo, 2015). The translator's ideological position and understanding of the text's intended impact frequently influence these decisions (Permatahati *et al.*, 2021). For instance, a translator leaning towards domestication might render "ittaqu" as "*being mindful of Allah*" to convey its essence in a culturally resonant manner, while a foreignization-oriented translator might retain a more literal rendering, such as "*fear Allah*."

Furthermore, translating the Al-Quran entails an inherent responsibility because it involves interpreting God's word (Husni & Newman, 2015; Lubis, 2021). Any translation is, by definition, an interpretation shaped by the translator's linguistic, cultural, and theological backgrounds (Man, 2017; Zhou & Yin, 2017). This makes the translator's role critical in bridging the gap between the source and target cultures. Failure to account for cultural nuances or theological subtleties can result in misinterpretation and potentially alter the scripture's intended message. As a result, a translator's ideological approach—whether leaning towards domestication or foreignization—has a significant impact on how the text is received and understood by the target audience.

The pragmatic dimensions of imperative utterances further complicate their translation. From a pragmatic perspective, these utterances are characterized by their illocutionary force, which conveys the intention behind the command and seeks a corresponding perlocutionary effect—obedience or compliance from the listener (Birner, 2021; Masykur, 2021; Novitasari, 2021). Analyzing these utterances within the framework of speech acts theory involves distinguishing their locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary components. The locutionary aspect pertains to the literal content of the utterance, while the illocutionary force signifies the intent behind it (Lanigan, 1977; Searle, 2010). The perlocutionary outcome, on the other hand, relates to the audience's reaction or response to the command (Clark, 2022; Huang, 2014; Levinson, 1992; Searle, 2010). Translating such utterances from Arabic into other languages requires careful consideration of these dimensions to ensure that the theological intent and pragmatic effect are preserved in the target language.

Furthermore, the translation of imperative utterances intersects with cultural pragmatics, because the sociocultural context of the source language influences how commands are constructed and understood. Differing linguistic norms and cultural values between Arabic and the target language can make it difficult to maintain the original illocutionary force. For example, commands with an inherent sense of reverence and submission in Arabic may require additional contextualization or adaptation to achieve the same effect in English or Indonesian. Translators must navigate these complexities while understanding the source and target audiences' linguistic and cultural frameworks.

This study aims to analyze the translation ideology applied in the English-Indonesian translations of imperative utterances in Al-Quran Surah Al-Baqarah. Specifically, it seeks to identify the themes of imperative utterances found in Surah Al-Baqarah and their corresponding translations in English and Indonesian. The study also aims to describe the translation techniques used in rendering these imperative utterances and to determine the dominant translation strategy—domestication or foreignization—employed in the translations. Furthermore, this research examines how the chosen translation strategies influence the preservation of theological and cultural essence in the target texts.

Through an analysis of Dr. Mustafa Khattab's English translation and the Indonesian translation issued by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, this research explores the ideological choices behind the translators' decisions. Additionally, it aims to evaluate the extent to which these ideologies affect the comprehensibility, doctrinal accuracy, and cultural resonance of the translations for their respective target audiences. Through this analysis, the study aspires to provide insights into the complex interplay between linguistic fidelity, cultural adaptation, and theological integrity in the translation of sacred texts.

Research Method

This study employed a qualitative research approach. According to (Hall & Liebenberg, 2024), qualitative research has several defining characteristics: it relies on the natural setting as the primary source of data with the researcher serving as the key instrument; it is descriptive, with data collected in the form of words or images rather than numbers; it focuses on processes rather than merely outcomes or products; it uses an inductive approach for data analysis; and the concept of "meaning" is central to its design. This study was conducted through discourse analysis, which is suitable for exploring the underlying ideologies in translation (Canning & Walker, 2024; Mohamed, 2022; Venuti, 1995). The objects of this research are the English-Indonesian translations of imperative utterances in Al-Quran Surah Al-Baqarah. The Al-Quran Surah Al-Baqarah used as an object of this research is insisted in the site <https://quran.com/al-baqarah>. The English translation used in this study was by Dr. Mustafa Khattab, while the Indonesian translation was produced by the Indonesian Islamic Affairs Ministry. Surah Al-Baqarah was selected as the focus of this research due to its extensive use of imperative utterances that convey divine commands, prohibitions, and guidance, making it a rich source for analyzing translation ideology.

The data for this study were collected using the observation method, complemented by the note-taking technique. This method involved a systematic examination (Alasuutari et al., 2008; Berg, 2001; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002) of the imperative utterances in the English and Indonesian translations of Surah Al-Baqarah. The observation process began with a thorough reading of the source text and its translations. Each occurrence of imperative utterances in the English and Indonesian versions was underlined, noted, and extracted as data for further analysis. The collected data were classified according to the themes of imperative utterances and translation strategies. The classification was guided by the theoretical framework regarding translation procedures and strategies (Munday, 2007;

(Venuti, 1995). The analysis focused on identifying domestication and foreignization elements in the translations and assessing how these strategies influenced the theological and cultural representation of the imperative utterances. Meanwhile, the concept of imperative utterances within speech acts was discussed based on the framework of speech act theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1980; Searle et al., 1980).

Results and Discussion

This study identified 30 imperative utterances which are used to instruct or guide followers in terms of their religious obligations and moral conduct. These utterances are categorized based on their linguistic form (imperative verb structure) and the role they play in directing action. The classification aligns with the understanding that imperative utterances in speech act theory aim to influence the listener's behavior through commands or requests. The features that would classify an utterance as imperative in speech act theory include: (1) the form of the verb—imperative utterances typically employ verbs in the imperative form (e.g., *do, recite, fast*); (2) the intention behind the utterance—in Surah Al-Baqarah, these imperatives typically express divine will or guidance (including commandments for worship or moral conduct); and (3) the listener's role—these utterances are usually directed to the listener or a group, calling them to action, whether it's performing a religious duty, behaving in a specific way, or following a rule.

Surah Al-Baqarah is rich with both positive and negative directives. Positive imperatives may instruct actions, such as performing prayers, fasting, giving charity, or adhering to principles of faith. Negative imperatives (commands to avoid certain actions) may prohibit behaviors, such as usury, hypocrisy, or disobedience to Allah's commands.

The Themes of Imperative Utterances in Al-Quran Surah Al-Baqarah

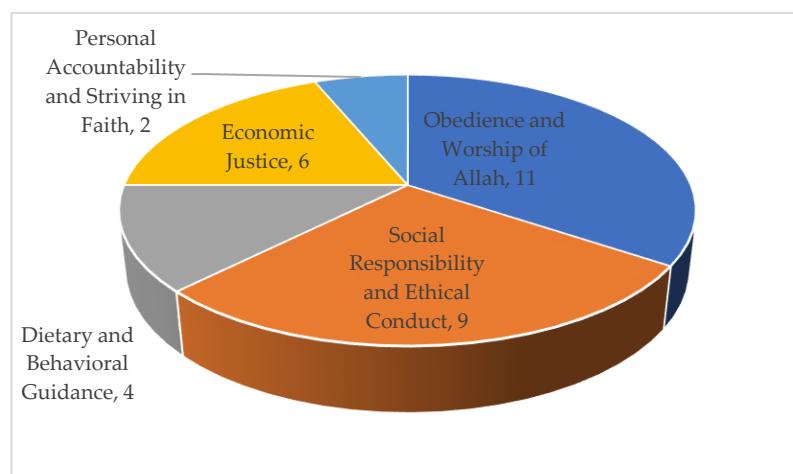


Figure 1. Themes of Imperative Utterances in Al-Qur'an

The common theme in the imperative utterance above is obedience to Allah, manifested through *Obedience and Worship of Allah*; *Social Responsibility and Ethical Conduct*; *Dietary and Behavioral Guidance*; *Economic Justice*; and *Personal Accountability and Striving in Faith*. Commands under the theme of *Obedience and Worship of Allah* reinforce a believer's

connection to Allah through rituals and faith-driven actions. They underline the importance of submission, remembrance, and gratitude to Allah. These directives provide a foundation for spiritual growth and a sense of accountability in life. *The Social Responsibility and Ethical Conduct* illustrate the Quran's emphasis on creating a just and compassionate society. Believers are reminded of their obligations to treat others with kindness, maintain honesty, and uphold justice. These instructions bridge the gap between personal faith and communal harmony. *Dietary and behavioral regulations* ensure that believers maintain both physical and spiritual purity. By adhering to these instructions, Muslims align their lifestyles with the principles of Islam, fostering discipline and mindfulness in everyday actions. *Economic Justice* commands aim to establish fairness in wealth distribution and discourage practices that lead to exploitation or injustice. The emphasis on writing down debts and avoiding interest creates a system of accountability and prevents financial oppression. The theme of *Personal Accountability and Striving in Faith* calls on believers to maintain resilience in the face of challenges and to consistently seek Allah's guidance and mercy. It inspires them to lead a life of purpose, faith, and determination, regardless of the difficulties encountered.

The Translator's Ideological Choices

The Ideology of Domestication

This section presents the findings and discussion related to the ideology of domestication identified in the Indonesian translation of imperative utterances in Surah Al-Baqarah. Domestication is evident when translators adapt the source text into culturally and linguistically familiar forms in the target language, making divine commands accessible and natural for Indonesian readers. Domestication in translation refers to the process of making the text more familiar and accessible to the target culture, often adjusting the original content to suit the linguistic and cultural expectations of the target audience. Venuti (1995) states that *domestication* is a translation ideology that brings the text closer to the target linguistic and cultural norms. In the context of Al-Quran translations, domestication seeks to make the message of the Quran easily understandable to the reader, ensuring the translation aligns with the cultural and linguistic conventions of the target language.

The analysis of the imperative utterances in Surah Al-Baqarah showed that the Indonesian translation consistently applied domestication to make the Qur'anic commands sound natural and familiar to Indonesian readers. Firstly, the translators used commonly known Indonesian Islamic vocabulary, such as '*sembahlah*', '*berbuat baiklah*', '*infakkanlah*', and '*rezeki*', allowing the message to fit smoothly within the linguistic habits of Indonesian Muslims. Secondly, Arabic imperative structures were adjusted into fluent Indonesian syntax, ensuring that the commands read naturally rather than sounding foreign or overly literal. Thirdly, the translators occasionally added clarifying words, such as '*harta kalian*', to make the intended meaning clearer for readers who may not be familiar with the implicit cultural or contextual elements of the original Arabic. Fourthly, many commands were softened with the suffix *-lah*, reflecting Indonesian politeness norms and helping the imperatives sound respectful while still conveying divine authority. Finally, the translations incorporated contextual interpretation by choosing vocabulary that resonates with

Indonesian cultural and religious understanding, enabling the Qur'anic instructions to be more easily understood and applied in daily life. Overall, these strategies demonstrated how domestication helps bridge linguistic, cultural, and theological gaps, making the Qur'anic message accessible without sacrificing its essential meaning.

The following data illustrate this ideology as reflected in the English–Indonesian translations.

ST : "O humanity! Worship your Lord..."
 TT : "Wahai manusia! Sembahlah Tuhanmu..."

In this verse, the imperative "*Worship your Lord*" is translated into Indonesian as "*Sembahlah Tuhanmu*," which reflects a domestication strategy. The translator selected the term '*sembahlah*', a familiar and commonly used expression in Indonesian Islamic discourse, to ensure that the command sounds natural and easily understood by the target audience. Instead of keeping a literal or foreign-sounding equivalence, the translation adopted vocabulary that aligns with the linguistic habits and religious culture of Indonesian readers. This approach helps bridge the gap between the original Arabic message and the everyday language of the Indonesian Muslim community, making the divine instruction more accessible while maintaining its theological intent.

ST : "Do not deny Allah..."
 TT : "Janganlah kalian mengingkari Allah..."

In this verse, the prohibitive command "*Do not deny Allah*" was rendered into Indonesian as "*Janganlah kalian mengingkari Allah*," which also illustrates a domestication strategy. The use of the familiar Indonesian prohibitive structure '*janganlah... mengingkari*' aligns the verse with natural Indonesian grammar and speech patterns. Instead of preserving the directness of the Arabic form, the translator adapted the expression to match the way prohibitions are normally conveyed in Indonesian. This makes the message clearer and more accessible to Indonesian readers while still maintaining the essential meaning of the divine command.

ST : "Establish prayer, pay alms-tax, and bow with those who bow."
 TT : "Dirikanlah salat, tunaikanlah zakat, dan rukulah bersama orang-orang yang rukuk."

In this verse, the command "*Establish prayer, pay alms-tax, and bow with those who bow*" was translated as "*Dirikanlah salat, tunaikanlah zakat, dan rukulah bersama orang-orang yang rukuk*," which reflects a domestication strategy. The Indonesian version uses familiar Islamic terms that already function as part of the religious vocabulary in Indonesia, allowing the imperative to read naturally within the cultural and linguistic context of the target audience. This choice helps the instruction become immediately recognizable and accessible to Indonesian readers while maintaining its core meaning.

ST : "Be kind to parents... speak kindly to people..."
 TT : "Berbuat baiklah kepada orang tua... ucapkanlah kata-kata yang baik kepada manusia..."

In this verse, the commands “*Be kind to parents... speak kindly to people...*” were translated as “*Berbuat baiklah kepada orang tua... ucapkanlah kata-kata yang baik kepada manusia,*” which also demonstrates a domestication strategy. The translator used expressions that are deeply familiar within Indonesian moral and cultural discourse, making the commands sound natural and easily relatable. By choosing phrasing that aligns with common Indonesian ethical teachings, the translation communicates the intended moral tone clearly and effectively.

ST : “Do not say ‘Rā‘inā’, but say ‘Unzurnā’, and listen.”
 TT : “Janganlah kalian mengatakan ‘Rā‘inā’, tetapi katakanlah ‘Unzurnā’ dan dengarkanlah.”

In this verse, the instruction “*Do not say ‘Rā‘inā’, but say ‘Unzurnā’, and listen*” was translated into Indonesian as “*Janganlah kalian mengatakan ‘Rā‘inā’, tetapi katakanlah ‘Unzurnā’ dan dengarkanlah,*” which also reflects domestication. The translator adapted the imperative by adding the suffix *-lah*, aligning the command with Indonesian norms of politeness and making the directive sound more natural in the target language. This adjustment helps Indonesian readers receive the instruction in a culturally familiar form while preserving the intended meaning.

ST : “Eat from what is lawful and good on earth...”
 TT : “Makanlah dari apa yang ada di bumi yang halal dan baik...”

In this verse, the command “*Eat from what is lawful and good on earth*” was translated into Indonesian as “*Makanlah dari apa yang ada di bumi yang halal dan baik,*” which illustrates a domestication strategy. The translator reorganized the structure to follow natural Indonesian word order, producing a smooth and familiar phrasing that Indonesian readers can easily understand. By adjusting the syntax and using everyday Indonesian expressions, the translation presents the dietary instruction in a culturally accessible way while maintaining the essential meaning of the original command.

Eng : “Eat from the good things We have provided...”
 Ind : “Makanlah dari rezeki yang baik yang telah Kami berikan kepada kalian...”

In this verse, the phrase “*Eat from the good things We have provided*” was rendered in Indonesian as “*Makanlah dari rezeki yang baik yang telah Kami berikan kepada kalian.*” This translation reflects domestication because the translator chose the word ‘*rezeki*’, a term that holds strong cultural and religious significance in Indonesian Muslim communities. Rather than keeping a neutral or literal equivalence of ‘*good things*,’ the translator used a concept that Indonesians naturally associate with sustenance granted by God. This choice not only makes the verse easier to understand but also deepens its spiritual resonance for Indonesian readers, showing how the translator adapts Qur’anic ideas into familiar cultural frameworks.

ST : “Spend in the Way of Allah...”
 TT : “Infakkanlah (harta kalian) di jalan Allah...”

The translation of “*Spend in the Way of Allah*” into “*Infakkanlah (harta kalian) di jalan Allah*” illustrates domestication through the addition of ‘(harta kalian)’, which clarifies meaning for Indonesian readers who may not grasp the implicit nuance of *anfiqū* in Arabic. This addition aligns the verse with Indonesian linguistic expectations and Islamic educational discourse, making the command immediately accessible. Viewed through Venuti’s theory, the translation domesticates the text by reducing its foreignness, while Nida’s dynamic equivalence explains the need to produce the same directive effect for the target audience. Newmark’s framework identifies the strategy as explicative translation, shifting implicit meaning into explicit form to avoid ambiguity. Overall, the domesticated rendering enhances comprehension and ensures that the verse’s moral instruction—spending one’s wealth for religious purposes—is clearly conveyed and culturally resonant for Indonesian readers.

The Ideology of Foreignization

The analysis also revealed several instances where the Indonesian translation preserved elements of the Arabic source text, reflecting a foreignization ideology. Foreignization, in Venuti’s framework, keeps the linguistic features, cultural references, and rhetorical force of the source language visible in the translation. Instead of naturalizing or adapting the text to Indonesian norms, the translator retains Arabic structures, terminology, and stylistic features to maintain the authenticity and sacredness of the Qur’anic message. In the Indonesian translation of Surah Al-Baqarah, this strategy appeared in imperative utterances that preserve Arabic loanwords, maintain literal syntactic patterns, or avoid interpretive additions, thereby allowing readers to encounter the text in a form closer to the original.

The following data demonstrate how foreignization appears in the English-Indonesian translations of imperative utterances in Surah Al-Baqarah.

ST	:	“Remember My favor which I have bestowed upon you.”
TT	:	“Ingatlah nikmat-Ku yang telah Aku anugerahkan kepadamu.”

In this verse, the translation of “*Remember My favor*” into “*Ingatlah nikmat-Ku yang telah Aku anugerahkan kepadamu*” represents a strong example of foreignization through the retention of the Arabic-origin word ‘*nikmat*’. Rather than replacing it with a more common Indonesian option, such as ‘*karunia*’ or ‘*anugerah*’, the translator preserved the Qur’anic term to maintain its theological depth and doctrinal specificity. The word ‘*nikmat*’ carries meanings rooted in Islamic discourse that ordinary Indonesian equivalents do not fully convey, and its presence in the translation allows readers to experience the verse with the same conceptual richness embedded in the original Arabic. This reflects Venuti’s idea of foreignization, where the translation intentionally highlights the source language’s cultural identity. From Newmark’s perspective, this strategy aligns with transference, as culturally bound terminology is brought into the target text without modification. The decision strengthens the Qur’an’s scriptural tone and ensures that key concepts remain connected to

their original Islamic context, even if the result feels less domesticated or less natural in everyday Indonesian usage.

Eng : "Fulfill promises when you make them."
 Ind : "Tunaikanlah janji apabila kamu berjanji."

The translation of "*Fulfill promises when you make them*" into "*Tunaikanlah janji apabila kamu berjanji*" demonstrates a deliberate use of foreignization through the preservation of the Qur'anic structural and conceptual form. The Indonesian rendering maintains the compactness and directness of the original Arabic imperative *awfū bi'ahdī*, reproducing the possessive construction '*janji-Ku*' in a way that closely mirrors the Arabic phrase. Instead of expanding the instruction into a more idiomatic Indonesian alternative—e.g., '*penuhilah kewajiban kalian kepada-Ku*' or '*tepati perjanjian kalian dengan-Ku*'—the translator chose a formulation that reflects the original linguistic pattern. This choice keeps the Qur'anic stylistic force visible in the Indonesian text.

In terms of ideology, this reflects foreignization as described by [Venuti \(1995\)](#) that the translator prefers to retain the linguistic features of the source language rather than fully adapting them to target-language norms. By doing so, the translation invites Indonesian readers to encounter the verse in a form that preserves the solemn and authoritative style of the Arabic command. From Newmark's perspective, this strategy aligns with literal translation and partial transference, where the translator prioritizes the source form to maintain doctrinal and stylistic integrity. Nida's dynamic equivalence plays a secondary role here; rather than reshaping the verse to match Indonesian communicative habits, the translation foregrounds accuracy and fidelity to the Qur'anic original. The result is a rendering that carries the tone, rhythm, and theological resonance of the Arabic text, preserving its distinctive scriptural identity within the Indonesian translation.

ST : "Establish prayer, pay alms-tax, and bow with those who bow."
 TT : "Dirikanlah salat, tunaikanlah zakat, dan rukuklah bersama orang-orang yang rukuk."

Although the Indonesian translation of this verse contains domesticated elements—such as smooth Indonesian syntax and the softened imperative markers like *-lah*—it simultaneously demonstrates foreignization through the retention of Arabic-origin religious terms such as '*salat*', '*zakat*', and '*rukuk*'. These words are not replaced with more familiar everyday Indonesian equivalents like '*sembahyang*', '*sedekah*', or '*membungkuk*', even though such alternatives would create a more natural target-language expression. By preserving these Qur'anic terms, the translator maintains the original Islamic conceptual framework and allows Indonesian readers to encounter the text with its distinctive theological identity intact. This illustrates how a single translation can embody both domestication and foreignization: the sentence structure is adapted to Indonesian norms for readability, while the key religious terminology is retained in its original form to protect doctrinal precision and preserve the cultural and spiritual "texture" of the Arabic source text.

ST : "Remember My favors which I bestowed upon you..."

TT : "Ingatlah nikmat-Ku yang telah Aku berikan kepadamu..."

In this verse, the rendering of "*Remember My favors*" as "*Ingatlah nikmat-Ku yang telah Aku berikan kepadamu*" reflects a distinct use of foreignization. The translator deliberately chose the word '*nikmat*', a term that originates from Arabic and is widely used in Qur'anic discourse, instead of selecting a more domesticated Indonesian equivalents, such as '*karunia*', '*anugerah*', or '*kebaikan*'. While these Indonesian words might sound more natural in everyday usage, they do not fully capture the layered theological nuance inherent in the Arabic term '*ni'mah*'. Through the use of '*nikmat*', the translator preserved the verse's doctrinal significance, Qur'anic tone, and cultural distinctiveness. This choice highlights the translator's intention to keep readers aware of the Qur'an's linguistic and religious origins rather than assimilating the message into ordinary Indonesian vocabulary. Through this strategy, the translation emphasizes doctrinal precision and the sacred resonance of Qur'anic terminology, demonstrating how foreignization works to maintain the authenticity and distinctiveness of the source text within the Indonesian context.

ST : "Hold firmly to what We have given you..."

TT : "Peganglah teguh apa yang Kami berikan kepadamu..."

The translation of "*Hold firmly to what We have given you*" as "*Peganglah teguh apa yang Kami berikan kepadamu*" demonstrates foreignization because the translator intentionally preserved the source-text image and structure rather than replacing it with a more idiomatic Indonesian expression. In Arabic, the imperative '*khudhu mā ātaynākum biquwwah*' uses a vivid metaphor of physically "holding firmly," which carries a strong rhetorical and spiritual force. Instead of adapting this into a smoother Indonesian alternatives, such as '*patuhilah perintah Kami*' or '*taatilah ketentuan Kami*', the translator kept the literal imagery of "*peganglah teguh*," even though Indonesian does not typically express obedience using this metaphor. The choice to keep this distinctive and source-oriented expression allows the translated text to convey the Qur'an's original metaphorical meaning to Indonesian readers. This is precisely what foreignization seeks to achieve, *viz.* preserving the linguistic identity, rhetorical character, and cultural worldview of the source language, even when the result feels less natural or less idiomatic in the target language. Through this choice, the translator emphasized fidelity to the Qur'anic style and message, giving priority to maintaining the sacred texture of the Arabic formulation rather than adapting it into more familiar Indonesian phrasing.

ST : "Submit yourself to Him."

TT : "Tunduk patuhlah kepada-Nya."

The translation of "*Submit yourself to Him*" as "*Tunduk patuhlah kepada-Nya*" reflects foreignization because the translator preserved the core conceptual meaning of the Arabic imperative '*aslim*' rather than replacing it with a more domesticated or culturally familiar Indonesian alternative. In Indonesian, ideas of obedience could be conveyed through simpler expressions, such as '*taatilah perintah-Nya*' or '*patuhlah kepada-Nya*'. However, the

translator's choice of '*tunduk patuhlah*' retains the layered theological nuance of the original Arabic command, which conveys not only obedience but a deep sense of surrender, humility, and submission before God. By choosing an expression that mirrors the conceptual depth of *aslim*, even though it may sound more formal and less idiomatic in everyday Indonesian, the translator kept the Qur'anic worldview visible in the translation. This aligns with foreignization ideology, in which linguistic and conceptual elements from the source text are allowed to remain prominent so that the reader encounters the text with its original religious force, spiritual tone, and doctrinal precision. Through this strategy, the translation prioritizes fidelity to Qur'anic meaning over linguistic naturalness, allowing Indonesian readers to experience the command with its intended theological gravity.

Translation Techniques

The recent findings presented in this section are based on the data collected, specifically 30 imperative utterances from Surah Al-Baqarah. This study had identified four translation techniques utilized in the translations provided by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. These techniques—literal translation, adaptation, communicative translation, and transference—are grounded based on the theoretical frameworks proposed by Newmark (1988) and Nida (1964).

Literal Translation

- "Fight in the cause of Allah..." → "Berperanglah di jalan Allah..."
- "And fight them..." → "Dan perangilah mereka..."

These examples demonstrate the translator's reliance on syntactic mirroring, where the structure of the Arabic imperative '*qātilū*' is reproduced almost verbatim in Indonesian through '*berperanglah/perangilah*'. Using Newmark's (1988) framework, this aligns with word-for-word and literal translation, where the translator minimizes modification to the source text's lexicon and grammatical pattern. From Nida's perspective, these translations strongly favor formal equivalence, prioritizing grammatical parallelism and morphological similarity over naturalness. The translator retained not only the imperative verb but also the ideological weight of the command, preserving the Qur'an's legal-rhetorical force. Theologically, "*fight in the cause of Allah*" carries both martial and spiritual connotations. By translating it literally, the Indonesian version maintains this dual-layered semantic range without reduction. The choice avoids interpretive paraphrasing that might soften, generalize, or mutate the Qur'anic command.

In terms of pragmatics, literal translation maintains the original illocutionary force of '*direct divine command*'. Qur'anic imperatives often function as legislative speech acts. The literal structure ensures that the command is perceived as authoritative, not advisory. Furthermore, through Venuti's lens, literal translation leans slightly toward foreignization, because the Indonesian structure mimics the Arabic rhythm and syntax, making the translation feel more "scriptural" than conversational Indonesian. The translator thereby signaled respect for the sanctity of the original discourse.

Communicative Translation



- “Complete the Hajj and ‘Umrah...” → “Sempurnakanlah haji dan umrah...”
- “Do not prevent them from remarrying...” → “Janganlah kamu menghalangi mereka untuk menikah kembali...”

Communicative translation, as per Newmark (1988), seeks to recreate equivalent effect rather than structural equivalence. Here, the translator adjusted diction and structure to match Indonesian legal-religious discourse. For example, ‘complete’ becomes ‘sempurnakanlah’, a culturally-loaded Indonesian spiritual term associated with fulfilling obligations with thoroughness—a nuance particularly relevant in ritual contexts. In Nida’s theory, this represents dynamic equivalence, where meaning is reshaped to ensure the receptor language audience receives the intended instructional or ethical effect. Instead of rigid literalness, the translator prioritized communicative clarity, conveying not just the command but the *purpose* of the command.

From a pragmatic perspective, communicative translation adjusts the level of directness to Indonesian norms. Indonesian imperatives often require softeners for politeness (e.g., ‘*harap*’, ‘*silakan*’), but the Qur’anic tone is inherently authoritative. The translator balanced this by using clear imperatives while maintaining cultural acceptability. Using Venuti’s terms, this translation leans toward domestication because the translator reformulates expressions to sound natural in Indonesian jurisprudential and social contexts. This is particularly seen in the second example, where the translator expanded syntactically to ensure legal clarity in matters of remarriage. The communicative technique thus functions not merely to simplify but to align the message with Indonesian socio-religious interpretive frameworks, preserving doctrinal accuracy while enhancing readability.

Adaptation

- “Maintain your prayers...” → “Peliharalah (jagalah) salat kalian...”
- “Call on Allah...” → “Berdoalah kepada Allah...”

Adaptation is used when a cultural reference or specific term in the source text is replaced or clarified for better understanding by the target audience. It is the most culturally sensitive strategy within Newmark’s hierarchy, used when literal transfer would fail to communicate the intended meaning to the target audience. In the first example, ‘*Maintain your prayers*’ carries the notion of consistent observance. The translator chose ‘*peliharalah*’ (and its gloss ‘*jagalah*’), which in Indonesian religious discourse conveys careful preservation and continuous practice, central concepts in Islamic worship. Nida would describe this as using cultural substitution, where a term is replaced with an alternative deeply rooted in the target culture’s religious vocabulary. The translator must balance between clarity and doctrinal preservation; hence, ‘*salat*’ is kept (transference), while the verb undergoes adaptation. From a theological-linguistic perspective, the Arabic imperative ‘*hāfiżū*’ entails preservation, discipline, and punctuality. Indonesian lacks a single term that fully encapsulates this tri-layered meaning, thus requiring adaptation to convey the full pragmatic intent. The second example shows adaptation for conceptual clarity: “*Call on Allah*” becomes “*Berdoalah kepada Allah*,” which aligns with Indonesian devotional

expressions. This technique supports reader accessibility, ensuring that Indonesian Muslims understand the intended worship practice without needing additional exegetical background. Ideologically, these choices reflect controlled domestication—the translator adapted part of the phrase while retaining core religious terms. This hybrid approach protects Islamic terminology while ensuring intelligibility across cultural boundaries.

Transference

- “Whatever you spend...” → “Apa saja yang kamu nafkahkan...”
- “Write it down... and call two witnesses...” → “Tulislah... dan hadirkanlah dua orang saksi...”

Transference, according to Newmark (1988), involves carrying over a source-language term to preserve cultural specificity. In the first example, the concept of *spending* in the Qur’anic sense (*infāq*) is preserved through the term ‘*nafkah/nafkahkan*’. Although Indonesian has general verbs, e.g., ‘*mengeluarkan*’ or ‘*memberikan*’, using ‘*nafkah*’ retains the Qur’anic economic-ethical framework, signaling that spending here is not generic but tied to religious obligation. From Nida’s viewpoint, this is a case of minimal translation, where the translator intentionally preserves theological terminology because dynamic equivalence would risk altering or diluting meaning.

The second example reflects transference of legal-procedural terminology. Words like ‘*saksi*’ (witness) and ‘*tulislah*’ (write it contractually) are embedded in Islamic jurisprudence and Indonesian legal culture. The translator chose terms already familiar to Muslim readers but still tied strongly to Qur’anic legal discourse. Through Venuti’s ideological framework, transference clearly embodies foreignization, because it resists replacing Qur’anic legal-religious terminology with secular or colloquial Indonesian alternatives. This retains the foreign cultural identity of the text and preserves juristic nuance.

Additionally, from a semantic-pragmatic perspective, keeping legal terms ensures that the illocutionary force of the imperative—here functioning as a divine legislative directive—remains authoritative and unambiguous.

Conclusions

This study investigated the English-Indonesian translation of thirty imperative utterances in Surah Al-Baqarah by examining their themes, translation ideologies, and translation techniques. The analysis revealed that the imperative utterances in this surah serve not only as direct divine commands but also as guidance for worship, social conduct, ethical behavior, economic responsibility, and spiritual resilience. These imperatives function as authoritative speech acts, aligning with Searle’s taxonomy of directives, which aim to shape the behavior and moral consciousness of believers.

The findings showed that the Indonesian translation employed a combination of domestication and foreignization ideologies. Domestication appeared prominently when translators adapted Qur’anic commands into culturally familiar forms using natural Indonesian vocabulary, fluent grammatical structures, and clarifying additions. This strategy enhanced readability and ensured that the Qur’anic message can be easily

understood and implemented by Indonesian readers. Conversely, foreignization was observed when the translation preserved Arabic loanwords, Qur'anic metaphors, and source-like structures. This approach maintained the theological depth, doctrinal precision, and sacred linguistic identity of the original Arabic text, allowing Indonesian readers to encounter the Qur'an in a form that preserves its spiritual and cultural authenticity.

Four main translation techniques were identified, *viz.* literal translation, communicative translation, adaptation, and transference, all of which reflect different strategies to mediate meaning between the source text and Indonesian readership. Literal translation was used to maintain the solemn and authoritative tone of divine commands. Communicative translation reshaped expressions to ensure clarity and naturalness. Adaptation adjusted culturally specific concepts into forms familiar to Indonesian Muslims, and transference preserved Qur'anic terminology essential to Islamic theology and jurisprudence. These techniques, grounded in Newmark's and Nida's frameworks, demonstrate a deliberate balance between fidelity and accessibility.

Overall, the study concluded that the Indonesian translation of Surah Al-Baqarah reflects a careful negotiation between preserving the sacredness of the Qur'anic language and ensuring that its commands remain clear, meaningful, and applicable within the cultural and linguistic context of Indonesian readers. This balance underscores the translator's dual responsibility, *i.e.*, to remain faithful to the original text while effectively communicating its message to a modern and culturally diverse audience.

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