

ANALYSIS OF MORPHOLOGICAL SHIFTS IN DEFINITENESS OR INDEFINITENESS IN ARABIC- AMHARIC TRANSLATION OF THE HOLY QUR'AN^(*)

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study is to analyze morphological shifts of definiteness/indefiniteness in Arabic–Amharic translation of the Holy Qur'an. The study is a qualitative study with descriptive and content analysis design. It relies on primary linguistic data. The data are obtained from the Holy Qur'an and its Amharic translation by co-translators Muhammad Thani and Sayyid (1969). The data are extracted using purposive sampling technique. The findings of the study reveal that Shifts in definiteness/indefiniteness have been observed in the translation of the Holy Qur'an from Arabic into Amharic. Both Arabic and Amharic use definite and indefinite form of a noun; however, sometimes a definite noun in Arabic is textually used in the indefinite form in Amharic. This shows that the translators of the Holy Qur'an from Arabic into Amharic used intra-system translation shift.

Keywords: *Definiteness, Indefiniteness, Target Text, Source Text, Morphological Shift*

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1. Introduction

This article provides an analysis of morphological shifts in definiteness or indefiniteness in Arabic–Amharic Translation of the Holy Qur’an. Definiteness is considered one of the inflectional categories⁴. Arabic nouns are either definite or indefinite. The Arabic device of defining a noun is the morphological marker *al-* called the definite article, prefixed to the noun and assimilated to any initial solar, i.e. coronal, consonant by the l-Assimilation rule.

Nouns also become definite when followed by a “determining complement”⁵. The complement may be the second noun in a construct phrase, or a suffixed pronoun indicating possession. That is to say, undefined Arabic nouns become defined: 1. by prefixing the article *al-*; 2. (a) by adding a noun in the genitive, or (b) by adding a pronominal suffix⁶. In this case, they do not necessitate a definite article to be definite. Only the second noun can carry the definite article even though both may be definite⁷. The indefinite Arabic noun is marked by *-n*. Like Arabic nouns, Amharic nouns are either definite or indefinite. The indefinite Amharic noun has no special marker⁸.

Occasionally, when the Amharic noun is indefinite, the element *and 'one'* may precede the noun. This ensures that the noun is not used in a plural sense and that it is indefinite.

If the singular noun treated as a masculine ends in a consonant, the marker of definiteness is *-u*. If the singular noun treated as a masculine ends in a vowel, the marker of definiteness is *-w*. If the singular noun treated as a feminine ends in a consonant, the marker of definiteness is *-wa*, *-itu*, or *-itwa*, used interchangeably.

4. Abdul-Fetouh, A. (1969). *The Philosophy of Language*. Routledge & Kegan Paul. p.24

5. Bateson, M. C. (1967). *Arabic Language Handbook*. Washington: Center for Applied. p.10

6. Wright, W. (1898). *A Grammar of the Arabic Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 247

7. Mc Guirk, P. (1986). *A Dictionary of Biblical and Historical Geography*. Harper Collins. p.25

8. Leslau, W. (1995). *Reference Grammar of Amharic*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz. p. 154.

The marker of definiteness *-u* is placed after the plural marker. From the form of the article it appears that the article may mark not only definiteness, but also gender. The form of the article *-u* or *-wa* is the same as that of the suffix pronoun of the 3d penon singular. The feminine article *-itu* is composed of the feminine marker *-it* and the definite article *-u*⁹.

It should be pointed out that, like in Arabic, in Amharic the article is not the only marker of definiteness. Indeed, a noun with possessive suffix pronouns, with demonstrative pronouns, and proper nouns, are likewise considered definite.

1.1 About the languages

Arabic is South- Central Semitic language¹⁰ with over 200 million mother tongue speakers in twenty different countries¹¹. Amharic is, after Arabic, the second most widely spoken ¹²(Hudson 2009:594) South Ethio-Semitic language¹³.

1.2 Arabic-Amharic translation

Much of Ethiopian literature has been influenced by foreign sources, particularly Arabic ¹⁴. Early translations from Arabic to Ge'ez, the classical Ethiopian language, began in the 13th century. The first translation of the Bible into Amharic, a modern Ethiopian language, was completed in the 19th century by a French consul and an Ethiopian priest.

The first full translation of the Quran into Amharic was completed in 1969. This translation, while accurate, adheres closely to the original Arabic text, making it

⁹. Leslau, *Reference Grammar of Amharic*, p. 156.

¹⁰. Hetzrone, R. (2009). Semitic Languages. In Bernard, Comrie (Ed.). *The World's Major Languages*. London and New York: Routledge. p. 551

¹¹. Ryding, K. C. (2005). *A Reference Grammae of Modern Standard Arabic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 1

¹². Hudson, G. (2009). Amharic. In Bernard, Comrie (Ed.). *The World's Major Languages*. London and New York: Routledge. p. 594.

¹³. Faber, A. (1997). Genetic Subgrouping of the Semitic Languages. In Robert, Hetzrone. (Ed.). *The Semitic Languages*, p. 6

¹⁴. Kane, Thomas, L. (1974). Arabic Translations into Amharic. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*, 37, (3), 608-627

challenging for some readers to understand. However, it was a significant achievement and involved extensive consultation with Islamic scholars¹⁵.

There is limited research on Arabic-Amharic translation, particularly regarding grammatical shifts. While some studies have examined specific morphological shifts, a comprehensive analysis of definiteness and indefiniteness is still needed. This research aims to fill this gap by examining how these grammatical features are translated from Arabic into Amharic in the Quran.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Translation is a complex process of transferring meaning from one language to another¹⁶. It involves translating a source text (ST) from a source language (SL) into a target text (TT) in a target language (TL). This process is challenging as it requires a deep understanding of both languages¹⁷.

During translation, various changes, or shifts, can occur. These shifts can be grammatical, lexical, or stylistic. Grammatical shifts, in particular, are often necessary to produce natural-sounding translations in the target language¹⁸.

The Amharic translation of the Quran, while a significant achievement, presents challenges in terms of its grammatical complexity. This can hinder understanding for readers who are not well-versed in both Arabic and Amharic grammar¹⁹.

Catford's theory of translation provides a framework for understanding these shifts. He distinguishes between formal correspondence and textual equivalence, and identifies various types of shifts, including level shifts and category shifts²⁰.

¹⁵ Kane, Arabic Translations into Amharic, 608-627

¹⁶ Catford, J.C. (1965). *A Linguistic Theory of Translation*. London: Oxford University Press. p. 1

¹⁷ Suzani, S. (2019). An Investigation into the Use of Category Shifts in the Persian Translation of Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations*. *Journal of Language and Translation*, 9 (1), 65-76.

¹⁸ Catford, *A Linguistic Theory of Translation*, p. 73

¹⁹ Kane, Thomas, L. (1974). Arabic Translations into Amharic. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London*, 37, (3), 608-627

²⁰ Catford, *A Linguistic Theory of Translation*, p.73

By analyzing these shifts, we can gain insights into the challenges and strategies involved in translating the Quran from Arabic to Amharic.

3. Research Methods

This research uses a descriptive method to analyze the grammatical shifts, specifically focusing on definiteness/indefiniteness, in the Amharic translation of the Quran. The data for the study were collected from the Qur'an itself and its most widely used Amharic translation.

The analysis involved comparing the Arabic and Amharic texts sentence by sentence, identifying differences, and analyzing them using phonemic transcription. The goal was to understand the grammatical shifts that occur during translation and how these shifts impact the meaning and interpretation of the text.

Throughout this work the Amharic translation of the Holy Qur'an by co-translators, Shaikh Sayyid Muhammad Sadiq and Shaikh Muhammad Thani Habib²¹, has been referred to as TT (target text) and the Holy Qur'an (which is written in Classical Arabic) as ST (source text). All English translations of the verses of the Holy Qur'an are taken from the *Translation of the Meaning of the Qur'an in English* translated by Saheeh International²² and has been referred to as TR (translation). Chapter and verse numbers are given and separated by two dots. In Q3:13, for example, the first number refers to the chapter number and the second to the verse number of the Holy Qur'an.

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

In this section we discuss the shifts in definiteness or indefiniteness in Arabic-Amharic translation of the Holy Qur'an.

²¹ Muhammad Thani Habib and Sayyid Muhammad Sadiq. (1997). *Qiddus Qur'an (Amharic)*. Ethiopia, Addis Ababa. Alnejashi Islamic Organization. p. preface

²² Saheeh International, *Translation of the Meaning of the Qur'an in English Language*, p. preface

4.1. Translating Arabic definite nouns

In Arabic, like Amharic, the definite article is used to particularize the noun to which it is prefixed on the grounds that it is already mentioned in the discourse²³. Let's see how this structure is translated into Amharic as in (1)

1. ST:				
مَثَلٌ نُورِهِ كَمِشْكَاتٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ ۗ الْمِصْبَاحُ فِي رُجَاجَةٍ ۗ الرَّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوْكَبٌ دُرِّيٌّ [٢٤:٣٥]				
<i>maḥal-u</i>	<i>nuur-i-hi</i>	<i>ka-mi/kaat-in</i>	<i>fii-haa</i>	<i>mis^fbaah-un</i>
example-NOM	light-GEN-His	like-a niche-GEN	within-it.F	a lamp-NOM
<i>al-mis^fbaah-u</i>	<i>fii</i>	<i>zudḡaadḡat-in</i>	<i>al- zudḡaadḡat-u</i>	
the-lamp-NOM	within	glass-GEN	the-glass-NOM	
<i>kaḡanna-haa</i>	<i>kawkab-un</i>	<i>durrijj-un</i>		
as if-it.F	star-NOM	a pearly [white]		
TT: የብርሃኑ ምሳሌ በውስጥ ሙብራት እንዳለባት (ዝግ) መስኮት፣ ሙብራቱ በብርጭቆ ውስጥ የኾነ፣ ብርጭቆይቱ ፍፁም ሉላዊ ኮከብ የምትመስል (Q24:35)				
<i>ja-brhan-u</i>	<i>bəwust'-ua</i>	<i>məbrat</i>	<i>ində</i>	<i>allə-ba-t (zig)</i>
<i>msale</i>		<i>məskot</i>		
POSS- example	light-GEN-His	within-it.F	a lamp-NOM	like exist-on.it (closed) a niche
<i>məbrat-u</i>	<i>bə-bir tʃ'ik'o</i>	<i>wust'</i>	<i>jə-honə</i>	
lamp-DEF	within-glass	In	REL-COP.PFV	
<i>bir tʃ'ik'-itu</i>	<i>fis'um</i>	<i>lulawi</i>	<i>kokəb</i>	<i>jəm-t-məsl</i>
glass-DEF.F	absolutely	a pearly	Star	REL-3SGF-look like.IPFV
TR: The example of His light is like a niche within which is a lamp, the lamp is within glass, the glass as if it were a pearly [white] star (Q24:35)				

In (1), the nouns *mis^fbaah-un* ‘lamp-NOM’ and *zudḡaadḡat-in* ‘glass-GEN’ in the ST and *məbrat* ‘lamp’ and *bir tʃ'ik'o* ‘glass’ in the TT occur in the indefinite

²³ Gully, Adrian. (1995). *Grammar and Semantics: A study of Ibn Hisham's Mughn l-Lablb'*. London and New York: Routledge. p. 146

form when they are first mentioned but in the second time, however, they are used in the definite form *al-mis'baah-u* 'the-lamp-NOM' and *al-zudʒaadʒat-u* 'the-glass-NOM' in the ST and *məbrat-u* 'lamp-DEF' and *bir tʃ'ik'itu* 'glass-DEF.F' in the TT because these nouns have become shared and known information between the communicator and the addressee. Thus, the definite articles *al-* in the ST and *-u* in the TT are employed to denote that the nouns are known to both the communicator and the addressee. The Amharic definite article is not always used in the same situations as the Arabic definite article. As in Arabic, however, it is used to indicate that the noun has been previously mentioned.

2. ST:					
إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ رَسُولًا شَاهِدًا عَلَيْكُمْ كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ رَسُولًا [٧٣:١٥] فَعَصَىٰ فِرْعَوْنُ الرَّسُولَ ... [٧٣:١٦]					
<i>ʔinna</i>	<i>ʔarsal-naa</i>	<i>ʔilay-kum</i>	<i>rasuul-an</i>	<i>ʃaahid-an</i>	<i>ka-ma arsal-na</i>
We	send.PFV-1PL	to-2MPL	Messenger-ACC	witness-ACC	as-COMP send.PFV-1PL
<i>ʔilaa</i>	<i>firʃawn-a</i>	<i>rasuul-an</i>	<i>Fa</i>	<i>ʃasʕaa</i>	
To	Pharaoh-GEN	Messenger-ACC	CONJ	disobey. PFV	
<i>firʃawn-u</i>	<i>al-rasuul-a</i>				
Pharaoh-NOM	DEF- Messenger-ACC				
TT: እኛ በእናንተ ላይ መስካሪ መልክተኛን ወደእናንተ ላክን ወደ ፈርዖን መልክተኛን እንደላክን (Q73:15)					
ፈርዖንም መልክተኛውን አመጸ (Q73:16)					
<i>ijna</i>	<i>bə-innantə</i>	<i>lay məskar</i>	<i>i məlktəjja-n</i>	<i>wədə innantə</i>	<i>lakin</i>
We	PRE-you.PL	on witness	Messenger-ACC	PRE you.PL	send.PFV
<i>wədə</i>	<i>fəɾʔon</i>	<i>məlktəjja-n</i>	<i>ində</i>	<i>lak-in</i>	
PRE	Pharaoh	Messenger-ACC	COMP	send.PFV-1PL	
<i>fəɾʔon-m</i>	<i>məlktəjja-w-n</i>			<i>ʔamməs'-ə</i>	
Pharaoh-FOC	Messenger-DEF-ACC			disobey.PFV-3MSG	
TR: Indeed, We have sent to you a Messenger as a witness upon you just as We sent to Pharaoh a messenger. But Pharaoh disobeyed the messenger, so We seized him with a ruinous seizure (Q73:15-16)					

In (2), the nouns *rasuulan* ‘a Messenger’ in the ST and *malkatayyan* ‘a Messenger’ in the TT occur in the indefinite form when they are first mentioned but in the second time, however, they are used in the definite form *al-rasuula* ‘the messenger’ in the ST and *malkatayyan* ‘the messenger’ in the TT because these nouns have become shared and known information between the communicator and the addressee. Thus, the definite articles *al-* in the ST and *-u* in the TT are employed to denote that the nouns are known to both the communicator and the addressee.

In Arabic, the definite article is used to denote that the noun is known by the speaker or by the speaker and the listener²⁴ as in (3)

3. ST:			
إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ [٤٨:١٨]			
<i>ʔið</i>	<i>ju-baayif-uu-na-ka</i>	<i>taħta</i>	<i>al-faḍḡarat-i</i>
When	3- pledge allegiance.PFV-MPL-IND-2MSGACC	under	DEF- tree-GEN
TT: በዛሬ ት ሥር ቃል ኪዳን በሚገቡህ ጊዜ (Q48:18)			
<i>bə zaf-it-u</i>	<i>sir</i>	<i>k'al kidan</i>	<i>bə təgab-u-h gize</i>
PRE tree-F-DEF	Under	allegiance	when pledge.PFV-3PL-2MSG when
TR: when they pledged allegiance to you, [O Muhammad], under the tree, (Q48:18)			

In (3), the noun *al-faḍḡarat-i* ‘the tree’ in the ST and *zaf-it-u* ‘the tree’ in the TT are employed in the definite form since they express nouns that are known to both the communicator and the addressee.

In Arabic, the definite article is used to denote that someone or something is known to everyone because there is nothing else other than this one or this thing, as in (4).

²⁴ Gully, *Grammar and Semantics: A study of Ibn Hisham's MughnJ l-Lablb'*, p. 146.

<p>4. ST:</p> <p>لَا الشَّمْسُ يَنْبَغِي لَهَا أَنْ تُدْرِكَ الْقَمَرَ وَلَا اللَّيْلُ سَابِقُ النَّهَارِ ۗ وَكُلٌّ فِي فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ</p> <p>[٣٦:٤٠]</p>				
<i>la al-fams-u</i>	<i>ja-nbayii</i>	<i>la-haa</i>	<i>an tu-drik-a</i>	<i>al-qamar-a</i>
NEG DEF-sun-NOM	3-allow.IPFV	for-it	COMP-reach-SUB	DEF-moon-ACC
<i>wa la al-layl-u</i>		<i>saabiq-u</i>		<i>al-naahaar-i</i>
CONJ NEG DEF-night-NOM		overtaker-NOM		DEF-day-GEN
<i>wa kul-un</i>		<i>fi falak-in</i>		<i>ja-sbaḥ-u-na</i>
CONJ all-NOM		in orbit -GEN		3-swim-MPL-IND
<p>TT: ፀሐይ ጨረቃን ልትደርስበት አይገባትም ሌሊትም ቀንን (ያለ ጊዜው) ቀዳሚ አይኾንም ሁሉም በመዞሪያቸው ውስጥ ይዋኛሉ (Q36:40)</p>				
<i>s'əhaj</i>	<i>tʃ'əɾək'a-n</i>	<i>li-t-dərs-b-ət</i>	<i>al-jigəba-u-m</i>	
sun	moon-ACC	COMP-2-reach-MAL-3MSG	NEG deserve.IPF-MSG-NEG	
<i>lelit-m</i>	<i>k'ən-in(jalə-gize-u)</i>		<i>k'ədami</i>	<i>al-jihon- im</i>
night-FOC	day-ACC(NEG-time-GEEN)		overtaker	NEG-be.IPF-NEG
<i>hullu-m bə-məzoriy-atʃʃəw</i>		<i>wust'</i>		<i>ji-wəḥḥal-u</i>
All-FOC in orbit-3PLGEN		in		3-swim.IPF-3PL
<p>TR: It is not allowable for the sun to reach the moon, nor does the night overtake the day, but each, in an orbit, is swimming (Q36:40)</p>				

In (4), the nouns *al-fams-u* ‘DEF-sun-NOM’ and *al-qamar-a* ‘DEF-moon-ACC’ are definine nouns in the ST. In Arabic, the definite article is used to denote that someone or something is known to everyone because there is nothing else other than this one or this thing. At times Arabic uses the definite article while Amharic has no article. In (4), the TT, unlike the ST, the nouns *s'əhaj* ‘sun’ and *tʃ'əɾək'a* ‘moon’ have no articles.

In Arabic, the definite article is used to denote that a noun is known by its presence or from the context of situation²⁵ as in as in (5).

²⁵ Gully, *Grammar and Semantics: Astudy of Ibn Hisham's MughnJ l-Lablb'*, p. 146

5. ST:			
الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ [٥:٣]			
<i>al-jawm-a</i>	<i>akmal-tu</i>	<i>la-kum</i>	<i>diin-a-kum</i>
DEF-day-ACC	perfect.PFV-1SG	for-you.MPL	religion-ACC- your-MPL
TT: ዛሬ ሃይማኖታችሁን ለናንተ ሞላሁላችሁ (Q5:3)			
<i>Zare</i>	<i>hajmanot- atfjfihu-n</i>	<i>la- innantə molahu-ll- atfjfihu</i>	
today	religion-your-PL	for-you.PL perfect.PFV-1SG-for-2PL	
TR: This day I have perfected for you your religion (Q5:3)			

In (5), noun *al-jawm-a* ‘the day’ is employed in the definite form in the ST because it designates known information to the addressee through the context of situation or by its presence. In other words, the addressee can know the day by its presence. However, the noun in the TT ‘today’ doesn’t have article because of the linguistic difference between the SL and the TL.

In Arabic, the definite article is used to generalize the common noun to which it, *al-* generic, is prefixed by embracing all and every one of its members²⁶ as in (6).

6. ST:			
إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ [١٠٣:٢]			
إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَّصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَّصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ [١٠٣:٣]			
<i>?inna</i>	<i>al-?insan-a</i>	<i>la-fii xusr-in</i>	<i>?illaa</i>
Indeed	DEF- mankind-ACC	FOC-in-loss-GEN	Except
<i>alla?iina</i>	<i>?aaman-uu</i>	<i>wa ?amil-uu</i>	<i>al- s?aali?i-aat-i</i>
who.MPL	believe.PFV	CONJ do.PFV-MPL	DEF-righteous-FPL-ACC
<i>Wa</i>	<i>tawaas?a-w</i>		<i>bi-al- ?haq-i</i>
CONJ	advise each other.PFV-MPL		to-DEF-truth-GEN
<i>wa</i>	<i>tawaas?a-w</i>		<i>bi-al-s?abr-i</i>
CONJ	advised each other.PF-MPL		to-DEF-patience-GEN

²⁶ Gully, *Grammar and Semantics: A study of Ibn Hisham's MughnJ l-Lablb'*, p. 146

TT: ሰው ሁሉ በእርግጥ በከሳራ ውስጥ ነው እነዚያ ያመኑትና መልካሞችን የሠሩት፣ በእውነትም አደራ የተባባሉት፣ በመታገስም አደራ የተባባሉት ብቻ ሲቀሩ (Q103:2-3)				
<i>səw</i>	<i>Hullu</i>	<i>bə kəsara wust'</i>	<i>n-əw</i>	<i>innəzia</i>
Man	evvery/all	in-loss-in	COP-3MSG	Who
<i>jə-ammən-ut</i>		<i>na məlkam</i>	<i>sra-wofʔf-n</i>	<i>jə-sərr-ut</i>
PL REL- believe.PFV-PL		CONJ righteous	deed-PL-ACC	REL-do.PFV-PL
<i>bə iwnət-m</i>		<i>adəra jə-təbabal-ut</i>		
to-truth-FOC		advise each other.PFV-PL		
<i>bə məttəgəs-m</i>		<i>adəra jə-təbabal-ut</i>	<i>bitʔfə</i>	<i>sik'ər-u</i>
CONJ to-patience-FOC		advised each other.PFV- PL	only	except
TR: Indeed, mankind is in loss, Except for those who have believed and done righteous deeds and advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience (Q103:2-3)				

In (6), the occurrence of the noun *al-ʔinsan-a* ‘DEF- man-ACC’ in the definite form in the ST is due to the fact that this premise applies to all human beings in general. That is, the noun is taken as generic noun. However, in the TT the noun *səw hullu* ‘man every/all’ is not employed in the definite form. The generic meaning is understood from the lexical item *hullu* ‘all’.

The translators added the word *hullu* ‘all’ in the TT to safely render the ST definite article, *al-* generic.

In Amharic, of course, the indefinite form of a noun, without adding the lexical item *hullu* ‘all’, can have generic meaning as in (7)

7. ST:				
[٤ : ٢٨] وَخَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ ضَعِيفًا				
<i>Wa</i>	<i>Xuliqa</i>	<i>al-ʔinsan-u</i>	<i>dʿaʕiif-an</i>	
CONJ	create.PASS.PFV	DEF-man-NOM	weak-ACC	
TT: ሰውም ደካማ ኾኖ ተፈጠረ (Q4:27)				
<i>səw-m</i>	<i>dəkkama</i>	<i>hon-o</i>	<i>tə-fəʔt'ər-ə</i>	
man-FOC	Weak	be.CVB-3MSG	PASS-creat.PFV-MSG	
TR: and mankind was created weak (Q4:27)				

In (7), the occurrence of the noun *al-ʔinsan-u* ‘DEF- man-NOM’ in the definite form in the ST is due to the fact the noun is taken as generic noun. However, in the TT the noun *səw* ‘man’ is employed in the indefinites form. The generic meaning is understood from the indefinite form in the TT.

In Arabic, the definite article is used to generalize the common noun to which it, *al-* generic, is prefixed by embracing all and every one of its **attributes**, as in (8)

8. ST:			
ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ ۗ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ [٢:٢]			
<i>ḏaali-ka</i>	<i>al-kitaab-u</i>	<i>Laa</i>	<i>rajb-a fii-hi</i>
This-2MSG	DEF-Book –NOM	NEG	doubt in-it.MSG
TT: ይህ መጽሐፍ (ከአላህ ለመኾኑ) ጥርጥር የለበትም። ለፈራህያን መሪ ነው። (Q2:2)			
<i>jih</i>	<i>məs'haf (kə-Allah lə-məhon-u)</i>	<i>t' irt' t'ir</i>	<i>ǰallə-bət-m</i>
This	Book(from- Allah for-being-its)	doubt	exist.NEG.IPF-in-NEG
TR: This is the Book about which there is no doubt, guidance for those conscious of Allah (Q2:2)			

In (8), the occurrence of the noun *al-kitaab-u* ‘DEF-Book-NOM’ in the definite form in the ST is due to the fact that it means that it is every book in terms of its guidance because it constitutes the perfect Book. Some times this *al-* is designated as the *al-* of perfection. Therefore, here *al-* indicates perfection. The Book is very perfect. It also indicates grand honor ‘*al-tafaxiim*’ for the Book. However, in the TT the noun *məs'haf* ‘Book’ is employed in the indefinite form. This pragmatic meaning of the Arabic article *al-*, perfection, hasn’t been safely rendered into the TT due to linguistic difference between Arabic and Amharic.

In Arabic, the definite article is used to Point to the main quality or essence of the nature of the noun²⁷ as in (9).

²⁷ Gully, *Grammar and Semantics: A study of Ibn Hisham's MughnJ l-Lablb'*, p. 146

9. ST:					
[٢١:٣٠] وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ					
<i>wa jaʕal-naa</i>	<i>mina al-maaʕ-i</i>	<i>kull-a</i>	<i>faiʕ-in</i>	<i>ħajj-in</i>	
CONJ make.PFV-1PL	from DEF- water	every- ACC	thing- GEN	living-GEN	
TT: አያው የከላንም ነገር ሁሉ ከውሃ ፈጠር? (Q21:30)					
<i>hijaw</i>	<i>ja-hon-a-n-m</i>	<i>nagər</i>	<i>hullu</i>	<i>kə-wuha</i>	<i>ħət'ər-n</i>
living	REL-COP.PFV- 3MSG-ACC- FOC	Thing	all	from-water	create.PFV-1PL
TR: and made from water every living thing (Q21:30)					

In (9), the occurrence of the noun *al-maaʕ-i* ‘DEF-water -GEN’ in the definite form in the ST is to point to the main quality or **essence** of the nature of the noun *maaʕ*-‘water’. The Arabic dfinite article *al-* is used to identify **the essence** of the noun. Here, the definite article cannot be replaced by the word *kull-u* ‘every-NOM’ at all because the meaning here is not that every living thing was created from every water. However, in the TT the noun *wuha* ‘water’ is employed in the indefinite form. This pragmatic meaning of the Arabic article *al-*, to identify **the essence** of the noun, hasn’t been safely rendered into the TT due to linguistic difference between Arabic and Amharic.

In Arabic, unlike in Amharic, the definite article is used to point to hyperbolic meaning of the noun²⁸ as in (10).

10. ST:		
[٣٥:١٥] أَنْتُمْ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ إِلَى اللَّهِ		
<i>Antum</i>	<i>al-fuqaraaʕ-u</i>	<i>?ilaa allah-i</i>
you.MPL	DEF-that in need.PL-NOM	of-Allah-GEN
TT: እናንተ (ሁል ጊዜ) ወደ አላህ ከጃዮች ናችሁ (Q35:15)		

²⁸ Abdul-Raof, H. (2018). *New horizons in Qur’anic linguistics: a syntactic, semantics and stylistic analysis*. New York: Routledge. p. 190

<i>innantə</i>	(<i>hul gize</i>)	<i>wəðə Allah</i>	<i>kəðaj-otʃʃ</i>	<i>n-atʃʃ ihu</i>
you.PL	(always)	to-Allah	those in need.PL	COP.IPFV-2PL
TT: you are those in need of Allah (Q35:15)				

In (10), the occurrence of the noun *al-fuqaraaʔ-u* ‘DEF-those in need-NOM/DEF-poor.PL-NOM’ in the definite form in the ST is to point to hyperbolic meaning of the noun. However, in the TT the noun *kəðaj-otʃʃ* ‘poor.PL/those who are in need’ is employed in the indefinite form. However, the translators added in brackets *hul gize* (always) to safely render the pragmatic meaning of the Arabic article *al-*, hyperbolic meaning.

In Arabic, unlike in Amharic, the definite article is used to point to the meanings of multitude and abundance and the generic meaning²⁹ as in (11) .

11. ST:			
فَإِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْحَسَنَةُ [٧:١٣١]			
<i>fa ʔiðaa</i>	<i>ðʒaaʔat-hum</i>	<i>al-ħasan-at-u</i>	
CONJ when	come.PFV-3MPL	DEF-good-F-NOM	
TT: ደረጊቱም ነገር (ምጥንት) በመጣችላቸው ጊዜ (Q7:131)			
<i>dəg-itu-m</i>	<i>nəgəɾ (mitʃʃ)</i>	<i>bə-mətʔ-ay-ll-atʃʃəw</i>	<i>gize</i>
good-F.DEF-FOC	thing (wealth/profution)	when-come.PFV-F-to-them.3PL	when
TR: But when good came to them (Q7:131)			

In (11), the occurrence of the noun *al-ħasan-at-u* ‘DEF-good-F-NOM’ in the definite form in the ST is to designate *al-kaθrah* ‘multitude and abundance’ and *al-maʃnaa al-ħaamm* ‘the generic meaning’. The definite form of *al-ħasan-at-u* ‘DEF-good-F-NOM’ also designates the pragmatic function of *al-tafxiim* ‘grand honor’ since the cause and the performer of the action is Allah. The generic meaning of the definite article *al-* refers to Allah’s many different good favors

²⁹ Abdul-Raof, *New horizons in Qur’anic linguistics: a syntactic, semantics and stylistic analysis*, p. 190

bestowed upon mankind. Similarly, in the TT the noun *ḍag-itu nāḡar* ‘good-F.DEF thing’ is also employed in the definite form. However, it doesn’t designate the pragmatic meaning of the Arabic article *al-*, multitude and abundance and the generic meaning, due to linguistic difference between Arabic and Amharic.

4.2. Translating Arabic indefinite nouns

In Arabic, unlike in Amharic, indefiniteness is used to designate the meaning of *al-taqliil/al-qillah/al-nudrah* ‘paucity’³⁰ as in (12).

12. ST:		
وَإِنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ سَيْحَةٌ [٧:١٣١]		
<i>wa in</i>	<i>tu-sⁱib-hum</i>	<i>sajjiḡ-at-un</i>
CONJ if	3FSG-strike.IPFV- them.MPL	a bad [condition]-F-NOM
TT: ከፍትም ብታገኛቸው (Q7:131)		
<i>kifat-m</i>	<i>b-t-agəḡn-at/iyəw</i>	
a bad [condition]-FOC	if-3FSG-find.IPV-3PL	
TR: And if a bad [condition] struck them (Q7:131)		

In (12), the occurrence of the noun *sajjiḡ-at-un* ‘a bad [condition]-F-NOM’ in the indefinite form in the ST is to designate the meaning of *al-taqliil/al-qillah/al-nudrah* ‘paucity’. It means when a bad [condition] such as famine, drought, poverty and ill health only rarely occurs. Similarly, in the TT the noun *kifat* ‘a bad [condition]’ is also employed in the indefinite form. However, it doesn’t designate the pragmatic meaning of the Arabic indefinite noun, paucity, due to linguistic difference between Arabic and Amharic.

In Arabic, unlike in Amharic, indefiniteness is used to designate the meaning of *al-taḡqiir* ‘belittling and scorning’³¹ as in (13).

³⁰ Abdul-Raof, *New horizons in Qur’anic linguistics: a syntactic, semantics and stylistic analysis*, p. 190

³¹ Ibid., p. 184

13. ST:		
لَسْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ [٥:٦٨]		
<i>las-tum</i>	<i>ʕalaa ʃajʔ-in</i>	
COP.PFV.NEG-2MPL	on something-GEN	
TT: በምንም ላይ አይደሉላችሁም (Q5:68)		
<i>bə-minm</i>	<i>Laj</i>	<i>al-jdəl-at/ʃihu-m</i>
on- nothing	On	NEG-COP.IPFV-2PL-NEG
TR: you are [standing] on nothing (Q5:68)		

In (13), the occurrence of the noun *ʃajʔ-in* ‘something-GEN’ in the indefinite form in the ST is to designate the meaning of *al-taḥqīr* ‘belittling and scorning’. Similarly, in the TT the noun *minm* ‘nothing’ is also employed in the indefinite form. The TT word also designates belittling and scorning.

In Arabic, unlike in Amharic, indefiniteness is used to indicate the *taqliil* ‘very short period of time’ and *tabʕiidʕ* ‘portioning’, as in (14).

14. ST:				
سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَىٰ بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا [١٧:١]				
<i>bsuḥaan-a</i>	<i>allaḏi</i>	<i>i asraa</i>	<i>bi-ʕabd-i-hi</i>	<i>lajl-an</i>
Exalted-ACC	who.MS G	take.PF V	PRE-Servant-GEN- His	by night-ACC
TT: ያ ባሪያውን በሌሊት ውስጥ ያስኸደው (ጌታ) ጥራት ይገባው (Q17:1)				
<i>jaa</i>	<i>barija-wu-n</i>	<i>bə-lelit wustʕ</i>	<i>jə-as-hed-ə-w (geta)</i>	
who	Servant- His-ACC	by-night in	REL-CAUS-go.PFV-3MSG-3MSG(Lord)	
<i>tʕrat ji-ggəba-w</i>				
glory 3-deserve.JUSS-3MSG				
TR: Exalted is He who took His Servant by night (Q17:1)				

In (14), the occurrence of the noun *lajl-an* ‘night-ACC’ in the indefinite form in the ST is to indicate the very short period of time during which the night journey took place.³² Similarly, in the TT the noun *lelit* ‘night’ is also employed in the indefinite form. However, it doesn’t designate the pragmatic meaning of the Arabic indefinite noun, that is, indicating very short period of time, due to linguistic difference between Arabic and Amharic.

In Arabic, unlike in Amharic, indefiniteness is used to indicate *al-kaθrah* ‘multitude’³³ as in (15 and 16).

15. ST:				
وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُودَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ عِلْمًا [٢٧:١٥]				
<i>wa laqad</i>	<i>ʔaatai-naa</i>	<i>daawuud-a</i>	<i>wa sulajman-a</i>	<i>ʕilm-an</i>
CONJ certainly	give.PFV- 1PL	David- ACC	CONJSolomon- ACC	knowledge- ACC
TT: ለዳዊድና ለሱሊይማንም ዕውቀትን በእርግጥ ሰጠናቸው (Q27:15)				
<i>lə-dawd na</i>	<i>lə-sulajmaan-m</i>	<i>iwk’ət-n bəirgt’</i>	<i>sət’ə-n-atfjəw</i>	
to David CONJ	to Solomon-FOC	knowledge-ACC certainly	give.PFV-1PL-3PL	
TR: And We had certainly given to David and Solomon knowledge (Q27:15)				

16. ST:		
وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا [٣:٣٧]		
<i>wadʕada- Ø</i>	<i>ʕinda-haa</i>	<i>rizq-an</i>
find.PFV.3MSG- IND	with-her	provision-ACC
TT: እርስዎ ዘንድ ሲሳይን አገኘ (Q3:37)		

³² Zamakhshari, Jaar Allah Abu al-Qaasim.1995. *al-Kashshaaf*. (Vol. 2). Beirut Daar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, p. 622.

³³ Abdul-Raof, *New horizons in Qur’anic linguistics: a syntactic, semantics and stylistic analysis*, p. 184

<i>irsua</i>	<i>zənd</i>	<i>sisaj-n</i>	<i>agəŋŋ-ə</i>
her	With	provision-ACC	find.PFV-3MSG
TR: he found with her provision (Q3:37)			

In (15 and 16), the occurrence of the nouns *ʕilm-an* ‘knowledge-ACC’ and *rizq-an* ‘provision-ACC’ in the indefinite form in the ST is to designate the meaning , *al-kaθrah* ‘multitude’. In (15), *ʕilm-an* ‘knowledge-ACC’ means abundant knowledge. In (16), *rizq-an* ‘provision-ACC’ means multitude and generic variety of different kinds of food rather than one specific kind of food. Similarly, in the TT the nouns *iwk’ət-n* ‘knowledge-ACC’ and *sisaj-n* ‘provision-ACC’ are also employed in the indefinite form. However, they don’t designate the pragmatic meaning of the Arabic indefinite noun, *al-kaθrah* ‘multitude’, due to linguistic difference between Arabic and Amharic.

In Arabic, like in Amharic, indefiniteness is used to indicate *al-ʕumuum* ‘generic meaning’, as in (17 and 18)³⁴.

17. ST:			
[٤٩:٦] إِنْ جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا			
<i>ʔin dʒaaʔa-kum</i>	<i>fasiq-un</i>	<i>bi-nabaʔ-in</i>	<i>fa-tabajjan-uu</i>
ifcome.PFV-2MPL	disobedient-NOM	PRE-information-GEN	RES-investigate.IMP-MPL
TT: ካረኛ ወሬን ቢያመጣላችሁ አረጋግጡ (Q49:6)			
<i>nəgəraŋŋa</i>	<i>wəre-n</i>	<i>bi-ji-a-mət’a-ll- at/i/ihu</i>	<i>arrəgagt’-u</i>
Calumniat or	information-n	if-3-CAUS-come.PFV-to-you.2PL	investigate.IMP
TR: if there comes to you a disobedient one with information, investigate (Q49:6)			

³⁴ Abdul-Raof, *New horizons in Qur’anic linguistics: a syntactic, semantics and stylistic analysis*, p. 184.

18. ST:			
عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّا أَحْضَرَتْ [٨١:١٤]			
<i>ʕalima-t</i>	<i>nafs-un</i>	<i>maa</i>	<i>ʔaħdʕara-t</i>
know .PFV-F	a soul-NOM	what	bring.PFV-F.
TT: ነፍስ ሁሉ (ከሥራ) ያቀረበኛውን ታውቃለች (Q81:14)			
<i>nəfs hullu</i>	<i>(kə-sra) jə-akʕərrəb-əʔf-w-n</i>	<i>t-awkʕ-all-əʔf</i>	
soul all/every	(from deeds) REL- ACC	bring.PFV-F-MSG-	3- know .IPFV-AUX-F
TR: A soul will [then] know what it has brought [with it] (Q81:14)			

In (17 and 18), the occurrence of the nouns *fasiq-un* ‘disobedient-NOM’ and *nafs-un* ‘a soul-NOM’ in the indefinite form in the ST is to indicate *al-ʕumuum* ‘generic meaning’. In (17), *fasiq-un* ‘disobedient-NOM’ means any disobedient person. In (18), *nafs-un* ‘a soul-NOM’ means every soul. Similarly, in the TT the nouns *nəgərajjina* ‘calumniator’ and *nəfs hullu* ‘soul all/every’ are also employed in the indefinites form. The words indicate generic meaning. The translators also added the word *hullu* ‘all/every’ to render the generic meaning of the Arabic indefinite noun to Amharic safely.

In Arabic, unlike in Amharic, indefiniteness is used to indicate *al-tafxiim* /*al-taʕʕiim* ‘honouring’, as in (19)³⁵.

19. ST:					
إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ [٥١:١٥]					
<i>ʔnna</i>	<i>al-muttaq-iina</i>	<i>fi dʒann-aat-in</i>	<i>wa</i>	<i>ʕujuun-in</i>	
Indeed	DEF- righteous- MPL.ACC	PRE garden-FPL- GEN	CONJ	spring.PL-GEN	
TT: አላህን ፈሪዎቹ በአትክልቶችና በምንጮች ውስጥ ናቸው (Q51:15)					
<i>allah-n</i>	<i>ፉሪ- woʔfʕ-u</i>	<i>bə-atkilt- oʔfʕ-nna</i>	<i>bə-mintʕʕ- oʔfʕ</i>	<i>wustʕ</i>	<i>n- atʕfəw</i>

35. Abdul-Raof, *New horizons in Qur’anic linguistics: a syntactic, semantics and stylistic analysis*, p. 184

Allah-ACC	Fearful-PL-DEF	in-garden-PL-CONJ	in-spring-PL	in	COP-3PL
TR: Indeed, the righteous will be among gardens and springs, (Q51:15)					

In (19), the occurrence of the noun *ḡann-aat-in* ‘garden-FPL-GEN’ in the indefinite form in the ST is to indicate *al-tafxiim/al-tafṣiim* ‘honoring’. Similarly, in the TT the noun *atkiit-otfi* ‘garden-PL’ is also employed in the indefinite form. However, it doesn’t designate the pragmatic meaning of the Arabic indefinite noun, which is, honoring, due to linguistic difference between Arabic and Amharic.

4.3. The position of the definite marker in Arabic and Amharic

In a noun-adjective or adjective-noun complex the definite article is suffixed to both the noun and the adjective in Arabic while only to the adjective in Amharic, as in (20)

20. ST:		
[٧:٥٨] وَالْبَلَدُ الطَّيِّبُ		
<i>Wa</i>	<i>al-balad-u</i>	<i>al- tʿajjib-u</i>
CONJ	DEF-land-NOM	DEF-good-NOM
TT: መልካሙም አገር (Q7:57)		
<i>malkam-u-m</i>	<i>agər</i>	
good-DEF-FOC	land	
TR: And the good land (Q7:57)		

In (20), in an adjective-noun complex *wa al-balad-u al- tʿajjib-u* ‘and the good land’ the definite article is suffixed to both the noun and the adjective in the ST while it is suffixed only to the adjective in the TT *malkam-u-m agər* ‘and the good land’. The prefix *al-* in the ST and the suffix *-u* in the TT are definite articles.

If the noun+ adjective or adjective + noun complex is determined by the article, the adjective as well as the noun has the plural marker and the article is placed

with the noun and the adjective in Arabic while it is placed only with the adjective in Amharic, as in (21).

21. ST:		
وَالْبَاقِيَاتُ الصَّالِحَاتُ [١٨:٤٦]		
Wa	<i>al-baaqij-aat-u</i>	<i>al- sʿaaliḥ-aat-u</i>
CONJ	DEF- enduring-FPL-NOM	DEF-good-FPL-NOM
TT: መልካሞቹም ቀሪዎች (ሥራዎች) (Q18:46)		
<i>malkam-otf/f-u-m</i>	<i>kʿari- wotf/f (sra-wotf/f)</i>	
good-PL-DEF-FOC	enduring-PL (deedPL)	
TR: But the enduring good deeds (Q18:46)		

In (21), in the ST if the noun+ adjective complex is determined by the article, the article is placed with the noun and the adjective, ‘*al-baaqij-aat-u al- sʿaaliḥ-aat-u*’ ‘the enduring good deeds’. However, in the TT If the adjective + noun complex is determined by the article, the article is placed with the adjective only, *malkam-otf/f-u-m kʿari- wotf/f (sra-wotf/f)* ‘the enduring good deeds’. The prefix *al-* in the ST and the suffix *-u* in the TT are definite articles.

If the noun + adjective or adjective + noun complex is determined by a demonstrative pronoun, both the adjective and the noun are used with the article in Arabic while only the adjective is used with article in Amharic, as in (22).

22. ST:		
هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا [٤٠:٣٩]		
<i>haḍihi</i>	<i>al-ḥaat-u</i>	<i>al-dunjaa</i>
this-F	DEF- life-NOM	DEF-worldly
TT: ይህንኛ ቅርብ ሕይወት (Q40:39)		
<i>jih-t/f/i</i>	<i>kʿrb-itu</i>	<i>hijwæt</i>
this-F	worldly/present-F	life
TR: this worldly life (Q40:39)		

In (22), if the noun + adjective complex is determined by a demonstrative pronoun, both the adjective and the noun are used with the article and the order is: demonstrative- noun -adjective- in the ST, *haḏihi al-ḥaat-u al-dunjaa* ‘this worldly life’. However, in the TT, if the adjective + noun complex is determined by a demonstrative pronoun, only the adjective is used with article and the order is: demonstrative-adjective-noun, *jih-tfti k’rb-itu hijwət* ‘this worldly life’. The prefix *al-* in the ST and the suffix *-itu* in the TT are definite articles.

In a demonstrative pronoun-noun complex, the definite article is suffixed to the noun in Arabic while it can never be suffixed to the noun in Amharic, as in (23).

23. ST:		هَذَا النَّبِيُّ [٣:٦٨]
haḏa	al-nabijj-u	
This	DEF- prophet-DEF	
TT: ይህ ነቢይ (Q3:68)		
jih	nəbijj	
this	Prophet	
TR: this prophet (Q3:68)		

In (23), in a demonstrative pronoun-noun complex, the definite article is suffixed to the noun in Arabic, *haḏa al-nabijj-u* ‘this prophet’, while it can never be suffixed to the noun in Amharic, *jih nəbijj* ‘this prophet’.

In a noun- relative clause or a relative clause -noun complex, the definite article is suffixed to the noun in Arabic while it is not suffixed to it in Amharic.

24. ST:				أَفْرَأَيْتُمْ الْمَاءَ الَّذِي تَشْرَبُونَ [٥٦:٦٨]
<i>a-fa-raʔaj-tum</i> Q-CONJ-see.PFV- 2MPL	<i>al-maaʔ-a</i> DEF- water- ACC	<i>alləḏii</i> that	<i>ta-frab-uu-na</i> 2- drink.IPFV-MPL-IND	

TT: የገንጾ የምትጠጡትን ውሃ አየኛሁን? (Q56:68)			
<i>jaa-nnīn-m</i> that-ACC- FOC	<i>jəmm-t-t'ət'-u-t-n</i> REL-2-drink.IPFV-PL- 3MSG-ACC	<i>wuha</i> water	<i>ajj- atfʿiḥu-n</i> see.PFV-2PL-Q
TR: And have you seen the water that you drink? (Q56:68)			

In (24), the example shows that in a noun- relative clause or a relative clause - noun complex, the definite article is suffixed to the noun in Arabic, *a-fa-raʿaj-tum al-maaʿa alləḏii ta-frab-uu-na* ‘and have you seen the water that you drink?’, while it is not suffixed to it in Amharic, *jaa-nnīn-m jəmm-t-t'ət'-u-t-n wuha ajj-atfʿiḥu-n* ‘and have you seen the water that you drink?’. The definite article must always be suffixed to the head noun of a relative clause used as an adjective in Arabic while it can never be suffixed to the head noun of a relative clause used as an adjective in Amharic.

If the possessor-possessed complex is determined, the possessor takes the definite article both in the Arabic and Amharic

25. ST:		يَوْمُ الدِّينِ [١٨:٨٢]
<i>jawm-u</i>	<i>al-diin-i</i>	
Day-NOM	DEF- Recompense/ judgment	
TT: የፍርድ ቀን (Q82:18)		
<i>jə-fird-u</i>	<i>k'ən</i>	
POSS-judgment-DEF	Day	
TR: the Day of Recompense (Q82:18)		

In (25), the example shows that if the possessor-possessed complex is determined, the possessor takes the definite article both in the Arabic as *jawm-u al-diin-i* ‘the Day of Recompense’ and Amharic as *jə-fird-u k'ən* ‘the Day of Recompense’. The prefix *al-* in the ST word *al-diin-i* and the suffix *-u* in the TT word *fird-u* are definite articles.

If the possessor qualified by an adjective is determined by the article, the article is attached both to the adjective and the noun in the Arabic while, in Amharic, it is attached to either of the two

26. ST:		
آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ [١٢:١]		
<i>?aaj-aat-u</i>	<i>al-kitaab-I</i>	<i>al-mubiin-i</i>
Verse-FPL-NOM	DEF- Book	DEF- that makes clear-GEN
TT: የገላጩ መጽሐፍ አንቀጾች (Q12:1)		
<i>jə-gəlatf?-u</i>	<i>məs'haf ank'əs'-otfif'</i>	
POSS-making clear-DEF	Bookverse	
TR: the verses of the clear Book (Q12:1)		

In (26), the example shows that if the possessor qualified by an adjective is determined by the article, the article is attached both to the adjective and the noun in the Arabic as *?aaj-aat-u al-kitaab-i al-mubiin-i* ‘the verses of the clear Book’ while, in Amharic, it is attached to either of the two as *jə-gəlatf?-u məs'haf ank'əs'-otfif'* ‘the verses of the clear Book’.

5. CONCLUSION

This article provided an analysis of morphological shifts of definiteness or indefiniteness in Arabic-Amharic translation of the Holy Qur’an. According to the result of the study, the following morphological shifts of definiteness or indefiniteness in Arabic-Amharic translation of the Holy Qur’an have been observed.

Arabic nouns are either definite or indefinite. The Arabic device of defining a noun is the morphological marker *al-* called the definite article, prefixed to the noun. Undefined Arabic nouns become defined: 1. by prefixing the article *al-* ; 2. (a) by adding a noun in the genitive, or (b) by adding a pronominal suffix.³⁶

³⁶ Wright, *A Grammar of the Arabic Language*, p. 247.

Like Arabic nouns, Amharic nouns are either definite or indefinite. The indefinite Amharic noun has no special marker.³⁷

The Amharic devices of defining a noun are the morphological markers *-u*, *-w*, *-wa*, *-itu*, or *-itwa* called the definite article, prefixed to the noun. If the singular noun treated as a masculine ends in a consonant, the marker of definiteness is *-u*. If the singular noun treated as a masculine ends in a vowel, the marker of definiteness is *-w*. If the singular noun treated as a feminine ends in a consonant, the marker of definiteness is *-wa*, *-itu*, or *-itwa*, used interchangeably. Like in Arabic, in Amharic the article is not the only marker of definiteness. Indeed, a noun with possessive suffix pronouns, with demonstrative pronouns, and proper nouns, are likewise considered definite.³⁸

When the ST and the TT have somewhat similar linguistic systems; however, there is a preference for the use of the systematically different term in the TL, Intra-system translation shifts occurs. For example, both Arabic and Amharic use **definite and indefinite form of a noun**; however, sometimes a **definite** noun in Arabic is textually used in the **indefinite** form in Amharic.

The Amharic definite article is not always used in the same situations as the Arabic definite article. As in Arabic, however, it is used to indicate that the noun has been previously mentioned and to denote that the noun is known by the speaker or by the speaker and the listener.

In Arabic, unlike Amharic, the definite article is used:

- a. to denote that a noun is known by its presence or from the context of situation
- b. to denote that someone or something is known to everyone because there is nothing else other than this one or this thing
- c. to generalize the common noun to which it, *al-* generic, is prefixed by embracing all and every one of its members
- d. to generalize the common noun to which it, *al-* generic, is prefixed by embracing all and every one of its attributes

³⁷ Leslau, *Reference Grammar of Amharic*, p. 154.

³⁸ Leslau, *Reference Grammar of Amharic*. p. 156.

- e. to Point to the main quality or essence of the nature of the noun
- f. to indicates grand honour '*al-tafaxiim*'
- g. to point to hyperbolic meaning of the noun
- h. to point to the meanings of multitude and abundance and the generic meaning

To indicate the above mentioned pragmatic meanings, Arabic uses definite article. However, in the Amharic translation we find the indefinite nouns.

The position of the definite marker in Arabic and Amharic is not also the same. The following differences have been observed:

- a. In a noun-adjective or adjective-noun complex the definite article is suffixed to both the noun and the adjective in Arabic while only to the adjective in Amharic
- b. If the noun+ adjective or adjective + noun complex is determined by the article, the adjective as well as the noun has the plural marker and the article is placed with the noun and the adjective in Arabic while it is placed only with the adjective in Amharic
- c. If the noun+ adjective or adjective + noun complex is determined by a demonstrative pronoun, both the adjective and the noun are used with the article in Arabic while only the adjective is used with article in Amharic
- d. In a demonstrative pronoun-noun complex, the definite article is suffixed to the noun in Arabic while it can never be suffixed to the noun in Amharic.
- e. In a noun- relative clause or a relative clause -noun complex, the definite article is suffixed to the noun in Arabic while it is not suffixed to it in Amharic.
- f. If the possessor qualified by an adjective is determined by the article, the article is attached both to the adjective and the noun in the Arabic while, in Amharic, it is attached to either of the two.

LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

1	First person	M	Masculine
2	Second person	NEG	Negation
3	Third person	NOM	Nominative
ACC	Accusative	OBJ	Objective
AUX	Auxiliary	PAS	Passive
CAUS	Causative	PFV	Perfective
CMPL	Completive	PL	Plural
CND	Conditional	POSS	Possessive
COMP	Complementizer	PRF	Perfect
COP	Copula	PRES	Present
CVB	Converb	PST	Past
DEF	Definite	REF	Reflexive
DU	Dual	REL	Relative
F	Feminine	RESP	Resumption particle
FOC	Focus	SG	Singular
FUT	Future	SL	Source Language
GEN	Genitive	ST	Source Text
IMP	Imperative	SUBJ	Subject
IPFV	Imperfective	SUB	Subjunctive
JUS	Jussive	TL	Target Language
LNK	Linker	TT	Target Text

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