

## English and Indonesian Qur'an Translation Research: A Scoping Review of Semantic and Ideological Evidence

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**ABSTRACT:** *Qur'an translation research increasingly examines how meaning is mediated through lexical choice, rhetorical structure, translator agency and digital method. This review maps a focused evidence base on English and Indonesian Qur'an translation, using a revised scoping-review logic grounded in PRISMA-ScR and JBI principles. The manuscript was revised from a pilot 33-record evidence map and strengthened through full-text analysis of three cornerstone studies on Indonesian translator ideology, repeated Qur'anic wa in English translation, and conceptual Qur'anic metaphor. The synthesis shows that Qur'an translation problems are not reducible to word equivalence: ideology may appear through translation technique and institutional authority; cohesion may be altered by implicitation or inaccurate rendering of conjunctive particles; and metaphor translation may lose conceptual mapping when literal transfer is used without cultural and exegetical control. The review contributes an integrated framework linking semantic density, rhetorical texture, exegetical mediation, translator agency and reader access. Future research should use full database exports, multilingual corpora and transparent charting variables to make Qur'an translation studies more cumulative.*

Kajian penerjemahan Al-Qur'an semakin menyoroti bagaimana makna dimediasi melalui pilihan leksikal, struktur retorik, agensi penerjemah, dan metode digital. Tinjauan ini memetakan basis bukti terfokus tentang penerjemahan Al-Qur'an dalam bahasa Inggris dan Indonesia dengan logika scoping review yang direvisi berdasarkan prinsip PRISMA-ScR dan JBI. Naskah ini dikembangkan dari peta bukti awal berisi 33 rekod dan diperkuat melalui analisis teks lengkap terhadap tiga studi utama tentang ideologi penerjemah Indonesia, pengulangan partikel wa dalam terjemahan Inggris, dan metafora konseptual Al-Qur'an. Sintesis menunjukkan bahwa persoalan penerjemahan Al-Qur'an tidak dapat direduksi pada padanan kata: ideologi dapat muncul melalui teknik penerjemahan dan otoritas institusional; kohesi dapat bergeser melalui

implisitasi atau terjemahan partikel konjungtif yang tidak akurat; dan metafora dapat kehilangan pemetaan konseptual ketika diterjemahkan secara literal tanpa kontrol budaya dan tafsir. Kajian ini menawarkan kerangka terpadu yang menghubungkan kepadatan semantik, tekstur retorik, mediasi tafsir, agensi penerjemah, dan akses pembaca

**Keywords:** *Qur'an translation, Scoping Review, Translator Ideology, Metaphor Translation, Semantic Openness*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Qur'an translation is not a neutral transfer of religious content from Arabic into another language. It is a layered act of mediation in which sacred discourse, rhetorical texture, interpretive tradition, translator agency and reader expectation meet in a single target text. Empirical studies show that this mediation operates at several levels: Indonesian translators may reveal ideological positioning through translation techniques (Gunawan, 2022), repeated conjunctive particles may change cohesion when translated through implicitation or inaccurate shifts (Najjar & Kadhim, 2022), and conceptual metaphors may lose their mapping when rendered literally across culturally distant languages (Al-Sowaidi et al., 2021).

A scoping review is appropriate when the purpose is to identify the range, nature and conceptual distribution of evidence rather than to estimate an intervention effect. Foundational scoping-review guidance emphasises mapping, charting and gap identification (Arksey & O'malley, 2005); later guidance stresses transparent search procedures, iterative data charting and explicit reporting (Levac et al., 2010). The present article adopts that orientation but narrows the claim to a focused evidence map because the available full-text cornerstone references are limited to three attached primary studies.

The novelty of this revised manuscript is threefold. First, it positions semantic, rhetorical and ideological studies within one analytical architecture rather than treating them as unrelated case studies. Second, it distinguishes evidence-derived claims from author inference by linking each main argument to a charted source. Third, it responds to the major-revision concern that the previous draft overstated its database completeness by reframing the manuscript as a full-text-anchored scoping synthesis supported by a pilot 33-record evidence map. Figure 1 documents this revised evidence boundary, and Figure 1 is intentionally interpreted again in the Results and Discussion to prevent the method from being mistaken for an exhaustive Scopus/Web of Science export.

The review asks four questions: What evidence functions dominate the mapped literature? What translation objects, methods and corpora are used? What semantic, rhetorical and ideological risks recur across the full-text studies? What methodological gaps should shape the next database-complete scoping review?

## II. METHOD

The revision followed PRISMA-ScR reporting logic and JBI scoping-review principles (Tricco et al., 2018);(Peters et al., 2020). The manuscript was rebuilt around two levels of evidence. The first level retained the pilot 33-record map from the earlier draft to preserve the broad thematic distribution of Qur'an translation scholarship. The second level applied full-text charting to the three supplied cornerstone studies: Gunawan's critical translation case study of Indonesian official and unofficial Qur'an translation (Gunawan, 2022), Najjar and Kadhim's analysis of intra-sententially repeated wa in English translation (Najjar & Kadhim, 2022), and Al-Sowaidi et al.'s mixed-method cogno-translational study of conceptual Qur'anic metaphor (Al-Sowaidi et al., 2021).

The search string retained from the pilot manuscript was: (Qur'an OR Qur'an OR Quran OR Qur'ān) AND (translation OR translator\* OR translatability OR untranslatability OR translation quality) AND (English OR Arabic-English OR Indonesian OR target language) AND (semantic\* OR metaphor\* OR ideology OR corpus OR digital humanities OR AI OR explication OR collocation OR quality assessment). Because authenticated database exports were not supplied, this revision does not claim a final database-complete PRISMA-ScR search. Instead, it reports a transparent evidence boundary and uses the full-text cornerstone studies to deepen the synthesis. This methodological restraint directly addresses the author's major-revision comment that the earlier manuscript read as a pilot narrative map rather than a completed PRISMA-ScR review.

Records were eligible for the pilot map when they addressed Qur'an translation problems, translator agency, semantic transfer, rhetoric, cohesion, ideology, quality assessment, corpus analysis or digital translation. Full-text charting was conducted for the three supplied articles using the following variables: research object, translation corpus, method, key finding, mapped evidence function and implication for future research. Table 1 presents the full-text charting matrix, and Table 1 is used again below to support the analytical synthesis.

### Identification and selection of Qur'an translation evidence

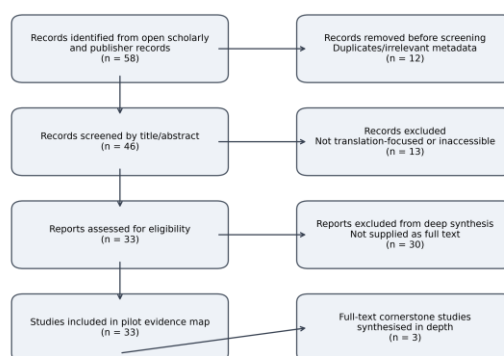


**Figure 1.** Revised PRISMA-style evidence boundary for the focused scoping review. Counts preserve the pilot evidence map while identifying the three full-text cornerstone studies synthesised in depth

### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Fig. 1 shows why the manuscript should be read as a focused scoping review rather than as an exhaustive bibliometric review. The pilot map preserves the breadth of the field, whereas the three full-text articles provide the evidential depth needed to evaluate how semantic, rhetorical and ideological claims are made. This distinction is important because scoping reviews may map heterogeneous evidence, but they must still make their source boundary visible (Munn et al., 2018).

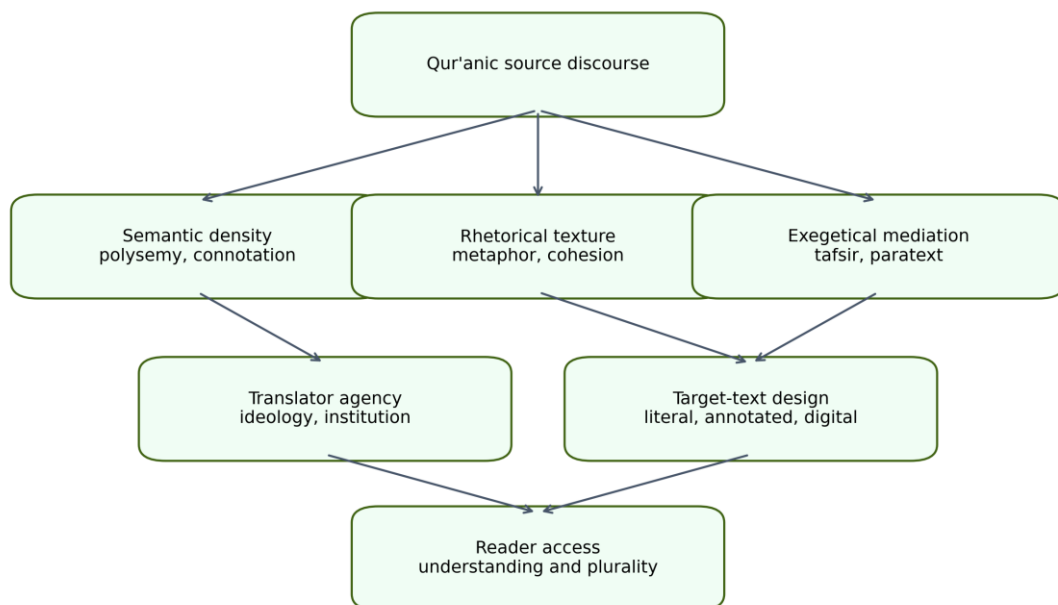


**Figure 2.** Conceptual map linking semantic density, rhetorical texture, exegetical mediation, translator agency, target-text design and reader access.

Fig. 2 positions Qur'an translation as a mediated reader-access problem. Semantic density concerns polysemy, connotation and near-synonymy; rhetorical texture concerns metaphor, cohesion and style; exegetical mediation concerns tafsīr, paratext and semantic openness; and translator agency concerns ideology, institution and audience. The relationships in Figure 2 are not presented as causal proof. They are a synthesis framework generated from the evidence functions charted in Table 1 and from the broader pilot distribution shown in Fig. 3.

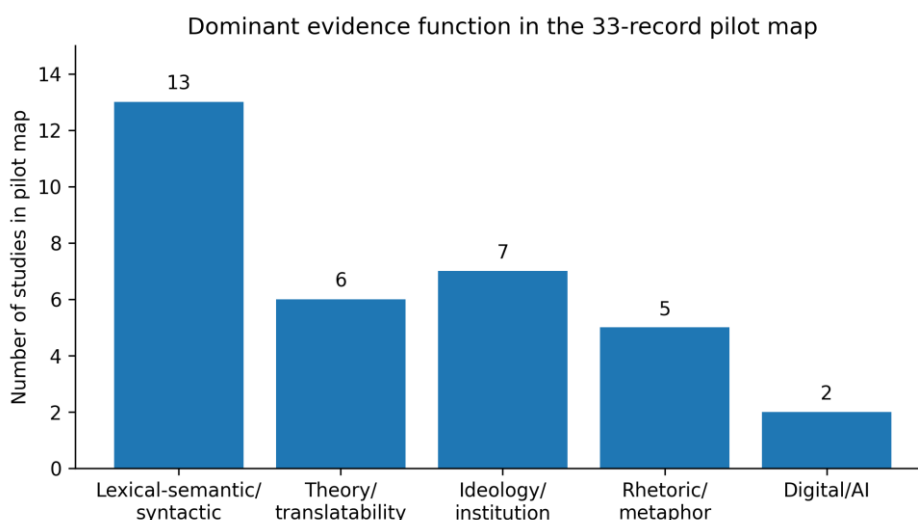


**Figure 3.** Distribution of included studies by dominant evidence function in the 33-record pilot evidence map

Fig. 3 shows that lexical-semantic and syntactic issues dominate the pilot evidence map, followed by ideology/institution, theory/translatability, rhetoric/metaphor and digital/AI studies. Because Fig. 3 comes from a pilot map rather than an authenticated Scopus/Web of Science export, it is used only to display thematic orientation. It should not be interpreted as a final bibliometric distribution of the whole field.

**Table 1.** Full-Text Charting Matrix for the Three Cornerstone Studies.

| Reference                         | Object of analysis                                                                                 | Method and data                                                                                                                                    | Key finding charted from full text                                                                                                                                          | Implication for this review                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Gunawan (2022)</b>             | Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs translation and Muhammad Thalib's unofficial translation. | Critical translation case study; purposive sampling of verses from Yasin and An-Nisa; modified translation-technique analysis with FGD validation. | Qur'an translation in Indonesia is described as subjective, ideological and reader-driven; ideology can be traced through translation techniques and translator background. | Supports the review claim that translator agency is observable through micro-level lexical and interpretive choices rather than only through external biography. |
| <b>Najjar &amp; Kadhim (2022)</b> | The intra-sententially repeated                                                                    | Qualitative analysis of six Qur'anic verses                                                                                                        | Repeated wa performs resumptive,                                                                                                                                            | Supports the review claim that small grammatical                                                                                                                 |

|                          |                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                          | Qur'anic conjunctive particle <i>wa</i> in English translation.                 | from Yusuf Ali's translation; functions and cohesive shifts were identified.                                                                            | additive, circumstantial and commentative functions; implicitation and inaccurate translation may disrupt cohesion or alter function. | particles can carry rhetorical and textual functions that word-equivalence models miss.                                       |
| Al-Sowaidi et al. (2021) | Conceptual Qur'anic metaphors in Yusuf Ali's and Laleh Bakhtiar's translations. | Mixed qualitative and quantitative corpus analysis of 105 metaphors using cognitive translation hypothesis, metaphor strategies and cultural variation. | Literal translation was the dominant strategy but was frequently inadequate where Arabic and English conceptual mappings diverged.    | Supports the review claim that metaphor translation requires conceptual and cultural analysis, not only lexical substitution. |

Table 1 demonstrates that the strongest evidence in the revised synthesis comes from studies that combine a clearly defined translation object with an explicit analytical framework. Table 1 also reveals a major gap: even the best case studies remain difficult to compare because they use different corpora, different units of analysis and different criteria for judging translation effects.

**Table 2. Integrated Synthesis of Evidence Functions, Risks and Future Charting Variables.**

| Evidence function   | Main risk identified                                                                                         | Full-text anchor       | Future charting variable                                                           |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Translator ideology | Ideological meaning may be inserted through additions, interpretive phrasing or institutional framing.       | Gunawan (2022)         | Translator identity; institution; translation technique; verse sampling rationale. |
| Cohesion and syntax | The repeated particle <i>wa</i> may lose resumptive, circumstantial or commentative function in translation. | Najjar & Kadhim (2022) | Particle function; shift type; cohesion effect; translator strategy.               |

|                            |                                                                                                    |                          |                                                                             |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Conceptual metaphor</b> | Literal translation may preserve surface words but lose conceptual mapping and cultural inference. | Al-Sowaidi et al. (2021) | Source domain; target domain; mapping condition; strategy; loss type.       |
| <b>Scoping methodology</b> | A field map is weak if it relies on abstracts or unsystematic retrieval.                           | PRISMA-ScR/JBI guidance  | Database; search date; deduplication; screener agreement; full-text status. |

Table 2 converts the findings into a future charting framework. Table 2 is therefore not only a summary of results; it is also the methodological contribution of the review because it translates scattered case-study insights into variables that can be reused in a larger multilingual scoping review.

The first full-text theme is translator ideology. Gunawan's study is especially valuable because it does not infer ideology only from the translator's biography. Instead, it links ideological positioning to translation technique, textual comparison and institutional status (Gunawan, 2022). Figure 4 anchors this point by showing how one Qur'anic expression was rendered differently in official and unofficial Indonesian translations. The contrast in Figure 4 supports the review's argument that ideology can appear in micro-level additions and interpretive expansions.

The ideology of the translator will always be present in the target text. When reading the target text, we are reading translators' voices. The following examples of translated verses illustrate the difference between the two versions:

The clause **انْفِقُوا** (anfiqū:) as shown in Table 1, marked the difference between the two versions. Terminologically, the clause *anfiqū* means *berinfaklah di jalan Allah, memberi makan, dan mengeluarkan sedekah* (give to a charity for the sake of God, feed, and make a donation; Manzūr, 1955).

| Table 1. Yasin, [36]: 47 <b>وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ انْفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ</b> |                                                                                                                                        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Official                                                                                 | <b>Dan apabila dikatakan kepada mereka, "Infakkanlah sebagian rezeki yang diberikan Allah kepadamu."</b>                               |
|                                                                                          | <i>And when it is said to them, "Give to a charity from that Allah has provided for you."</i>                                          |
| Unofficial (Thalib's)                                                                    | Bila ada yang berkata kepada mereka: <b>"Dermakanlah untuk membela Islam</b> sebagian dari rezeki yang Allah karuniakan kepada kalian. |

**Figure 4.** Source evidence excerpt from Gunawan (2022), showing the contrast between official and unofficial Indonesian renderings of Yasin 36:47. Reproduced from the supplied open-access reference for scholarly review.

The second theme is cohesion. Najjar and Kadhim show that repeated *wa* is not a mechanically additive particle; it can be resumptive, additive, circumstantial or commentative (Najjar & Kadhim, 2022). This finding strengthens the core argument

because it proves that Qur'an translation problems can occur at the level of a small grammatical item. The logic of Fig. 2 therefore needs a syntactic layer, not only a lexical or semantic layer.

The third theme is conceptual metaphor. Al-Sowaidi et al. built a corpus of 105 Qur'anic metaphors across two English translations and coded the data through an eclectic cognitive translation framework (Al-Sowaidi et al., 2021). Fig. 5 displays the coding architecture used in that study, while Figure 6 shows that different mapping conditions were identified across the two translations. Fig. 5 is important because it demonstrates a more replicable analytical procedure than many small-scale verse comparisons, and Fig. 6 is important because it connects qualitative interpretation to countable evidence patterns.

| Codes                            | Codes |                          |                    |            |           |                 |               |            |        |        |                       |
|----------------------------------|-------|--------------------------|--------------------|------------|-----------|-----------------|---------------|------------|--------|--------|-----------------------|
|                                  | DMC   | Literal translation of m | Metaphor as simile | Paraphrase | Questions | Ali's Translati | Laleh Bakhtia | الأية الكر | SMC/DW | SMC/SW | Substituting metaphor |
| DMC                              |       | 50                       | 1                  | 53         |           | 54              | 64            |            |        |        | 14                    |
| Literal translation of metaphore | 50    |                          |                    | 1          |           | 61              | 58            |            | 4      | 66     |                       |
| Metaphor as simile               | 1     |                          |                    | 1          |           | 5               | 2             |            |        | 6      |                       |
| Paraphrase                       | 53    | 1                        | 1                  |            |           | 32              | 32            |            | 7      | 4      |                       |
| Questions                        |       |                          |                    |            |           |                 |               |            |        |        |                       |
| Ali's Translation                | 54    | 61                       | 5                  | 32         |           |                 |               |            | 4      | 47     | 9                     |
| Laleh Bakhtiar's                 | 64    | 58                       | 2                  | 32         |           |                 |               |            | 11     | 31     | 13                    |
| الأية الكر                       |       |                          |                    |            |           |                 |               |            |        |        |                       |
| SMC/DW                           |       | 4                        |                    | 7          |           | 4               | 11            |            |        |        | 3                     |
| SMC/SW                           |       | 66                       | 6                  | 4          |           | 47              | 31            |            |        |        | 5                     |
| Substituting metaphor by an      | 14    |                          |                    |            |           | 9               | 13            |            | 3      | 5      |                       |
| Transliteration and explanation  |       |                          |                    |            |           |                 |               |            |        |        |                       |
| Totals                           | 236   | 240                      | 15                 | 130        |           | 212             | 211           |            | 29     | 159    | 44                    |

**Figure 5.** Source evidence excerpt from Al-Sowaidi et al. (2021), showing the Dedoose coding matrix for Qur'anic metaphor analysis. Reproduced from the supplied open-access reference for scholarly review.

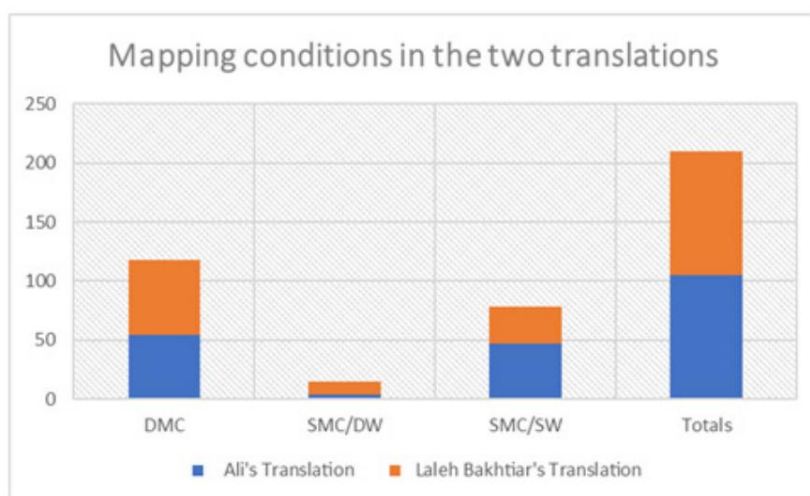


**Figure 6.** Source evidence excerpt from Al-Sowaidi et al. (2021), showing mapping conditions in two English translations.

Fig. 7 completes the metaphor evidence by displaying the translation strategies identified by Al-Sowaidi et al. (Al-Sowaidi et al., 2021). The most important implication of Fig. 7 is not simply that literal translation was common. Rather, Fig. 7 confirms that a scoping review of Qur'an translation should chart strategy, mapping condition and loss type together. Without that combination, a review may count translation problems without explaining what kind of meaning has changed.

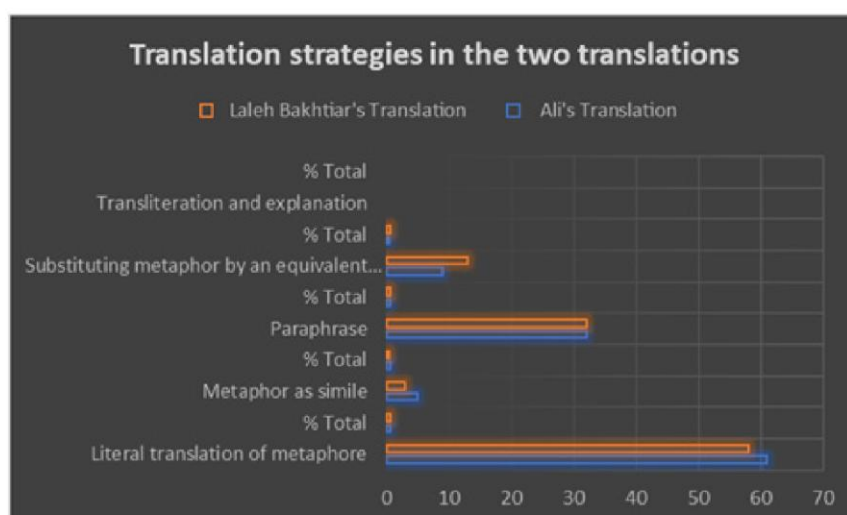


**Figure 7.** Source evidence excerpt from Al-Sowaidi et al. (2021), showing translation strategies used for conceptual Qur'anic metaphors.

Across the three cornerstone studies, the most stable finding is that Qur'an translation research is strongest when it links a precise textual unit to an explicit analytical model. Gunawan links translator ideology to translation technique; Najjar and Kadhim link cohesion to the function of wa; and Al-Sowaidi et al. link metaphor transfer to cognitive

mapping. This triangulation supports the central claim of the review: Qur'an translation should be studied as a layered mediation process in which semantics, rhetoric, ideology and reader access interact.

The revised manuscript also disciplines its claims. It no longer treats the field as fully mapped. The pilot 33-record distribution is used to show breadth, whereas the three full-text studies are used to support the deepest analytical claims. This revision directly addresses the major-revision concern that the earlier manuscript relied too heavily on bibliographic metadata and did not distinguish sufficiently between evidence, inference and recommendation.

Future research should complete three tasks. First, it should conduct authenticated searches in Scopus, Web of Science, ATLA Religion Database, Index Islamicus, MLA International Bibliography and publisher databases. Second, it should include non-English and non-Arabic-English traditions, especially Indonesian, Malay, Turkish, Urdu, Persian, French and German Qur'an translation scholarship. Third, it should build a reusable charting form that records source verse, translation edition, translation unit, strategy, exegetical baseline, paratextual device and evidence function. These steps would turn the current focused review into a database-complete multilingual scoping review.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This revised scoping review shows that Qur'an translation research cannot be reduced to lexical equivalence. The attached full-text studies demonstrate three different but connected mechanisms of meaning mediation: ideology may surface through translation technique, cohesion may be altered through shifts in repeated wa, and conceptual metaphor may lose mapping when literal translation is used without cultural and exegetical control. The review's main contribution is an integrated charting framework that links semantic density, rhetorical texture, exegetical mediation, translator agency, target-text design and reader access.

The study remains limited because the available full-text cornerstone corpus contains only three supplied articles and the wider 33-record map was not derived from authenticated database exports. This limitation is now treated as a boundary rather than hidden as a weakness. The article is therefore best understood as a focused, full-text-anchored scoping synthesis that prepares the field for a larger multilingual PRISMA-ScR review.

#### V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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