JJMLL

The Translatability of Qur'anic Onomatopoeic Words into English

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Abstract

The present study tackles the problem of translating onomatopoeic words in the Qur'an from Arabic into English. The study examines the translations through analysis and comparison of three different avowed Qur'anic translations with a special reference to four Qur'anic exegeses. The collected data are classified into three types according to their onomatopoeic representations of the sounds they include. The study subjoins extra evidence for the untranslatability of most of the Qur'anic onomatopoetic words, which is mainly due to their unique phonological features. The study has offered some suggestions to deal with the problematic issue of finding an equivalence in translating onomatopoeic words, such as: the use of footnotes and/or transliteration, which might, if necessary, be followed by an explanation to keep their phonological value in the TL and to give a better indication of their value and significance, rather than translating them inadequately.

Keywords: Translatability, Qur'anic, Onomatopoeic, Arabic, English.

1. Introduction

Translation has played a significant role in up swinging nations culturally, linguistically, scientifically, spiritually, etc. It is an art when it reveals the sense of the SL text, and it is a means of bridging the distances between cultures and nations. Therefore, the duty of the translator is critical and sensitive whatever the text is. The translator should be honest and straightforward, especially when he/she is dealing with sensitive texts, like the holy books.

Dealing with Qur'anic utterances needs a very deep understanding of their meanings as well as a discerning translator as to extrapolate adequate translation strategies in this respect, especially when it comes to translating complicated phenomena, like onomatopoeia, the main topic of the present study. Translating onomatopoeia is never an easy task as every language has its own distinguished system of onomatopoeia. According to *Dictionary.com* (2015), onomatopoeia is "the use of imitative and naturally suggestive words for rhetorical, dramatic, or poetic effect." Indeed, Arabic is rich in onomatopoeic lexical items that are expressive and generative. "Standard Arabic has a fair number of words that represent the

onomatopoeic phenomenon" (Dickins *et al.* 2002, 85), and it is "widely used in the Qur'an" (Abdul-Raof 2001, 124).

In Qur'anic discourse, onomatopoeia is a fertile field of study; it is a field where different stylistic features are operated and cooperated to form lexical items which are semantically, phonetically and linguistically genuine and unrivaled. Hence, producing total translation equivalents for the Qur'anic onomatopoeic words and expressions is difficult to achieve, especially between two remotely different languages, like Arabic and English. It is necessary to use functional strategies as to convey the sense of the original onomatopoeic words into the target text. Frequently, the safest approach may be to translate the ST onomatopoeia with something other than a TT onomatopoeia, with or without some form of compensation (Dickins *et al.* 2002, 85). Additionally, referring to the different formal Qur'anic exegeses will help the translator to get the exact meaning of the onomatopoeic words, and, as a result, will enable him/her to work on their appropriate translations.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 Definition of Onomatopoeia

The word onomatopoeia comes from the Greek *ονοματοποιΐα* which means 'name making.' It is defined as a "word which imitates the natural sounds of a thing, it creates a sound effect that mimics the thing described, making the description more expressive and interesting" (*literaraydevices.net*). For example, if we take the word *drip*, the first thing which comes to mind is the sound of the drops of water that comes out of the tap. Onomatopoeia, to given another meaning, is the "the formation of words in imitation of the sounds associated with things concerned" (Oxford English Dictionary 1989). Assaneo *et al.* (2011) point out that onomatopoeias "aim at imitating sounds produced by people, animals, nature, machines and tools" (p. 4). It indicates the formation, and the use, of the imitative sounds associated with the object and the action it designates, it is a word which suggests its meaning from the sounds it has (Holman, 2000, 309). In addition, Barnet *et al.* (1985, 530) clarify that onomatopoeia is a word whose sound suggests its meaning. Furthermore, Perrine (1978, 744) points out that onomatopoeia embraces, at least, the use of words which "sound like what they mean". It is also introduced as the "naming of a thing or action by a vocal imitation of the sound associated with it" (*Britannica*).

Muhaidat (2009) stated several problems in the translation of onomatopoeias into Arabic and she established different techniques such as explication, rewording, etc. for dealing with onomatopoeias. Sharifi Moghadam and Ghazizade (2016, 13) discussed the strategies used to translate the Persian onomatopoeias in Holy Defense literary works. They emphasized that the translators tend to use an equivalent onomatopoeia in English. They revealed that "if the equivalent onomatopoeia exists in the TL, it is not only the most appropriate strategy but also the only acceptable way to translate onomatopoeia".

Some linguists consider onomatopoeias as "second class citizens among words, since they are often polysemous," and paradoxically, narrowly applicable in some semantic framework (Falk 1973, 60). Seyyedi and Akhlaghi (2013, 18) clarify that onomatopoeia is "a figure of speech and is especially useful for rhetorical effect" and widely used in comic books.

2.2. Onomatopoeia in Arabic and English Literatures

The Arabic language, a language of rhetoric, is rich with lexical items that are expressive and generative. In this language, onomatopoeia is a fertile field to study; it is a field where different linguistic and stylistic elements operate and cooperate to form lexical items that are semantically, phonetically and linguistically genuine and unrivaled.

This linguistic phenomenon is used in Arabic literature and it is "widely used in the Qur'an" (Abdul-Raof 2001, 124). In addition, Dickins *et al.* (2002, 85) state that "Standard Arabic has a fair number of words that represent the onomatopoeic phenomenon". The cases that are almost famous in onomatopoeic words are "doubled and reduplicative verbs"; examples of the doubled verbs are "صرَّ" (Eng. "to creak") and دقَّ (Eng. "to knock"). Further examples of onomatopoeic reduplicative verbs are: طقطق (Eng. "to crack" and همهم (Eng. "to mumble") (Dickins *et al.* 2002, 85).

Arab writers frequently use onomatopoeia in their poetry or prose; for example, Bader Shakir al-Sayyab is interested in using Arabic onomatopoeic words to color the context of his poetry with sounds and music. Al-Zubbaidi (2014, 187) argues that al-Sayyab "finds in the Arabic onomatopoeic words, which are numerous, a useful channel to enhance the music and rhythm he is seeking to attain". To illustrate this point, Al-Zubbaidi (2014, 187) gives examples from al-Sayyab's poetry. The following example is from a poem titled as "Ghareeb-un ala al-Khaleej" (غريبٌ على الخليج) (Eng. "A Stranger at the Gulf")):

<div dir="rtl">

أعلى من العبأَب يِهدِر رغوُه ومن الضجيج

صوتُ تفجَر في قرارة نفسيَ الثكلى: عراق

</div>

Higher than the high torrents whose foam is roaring, than the clamor
A voice that burst in the bottom of my grief-stricken soul: Iraq (Al-Zubbaidi 2014, 187).

Al-Sayyab "emphasizes the idea that all sounds he heard were echoing the name of his country due to the overwhelming sense of estrangement he suffered from" (Al-Zubbaidi 2014, 187).

Al-Zubbaidi (2014, 187 gives another example from Bader Shakir al-Sayyab's "Unshudat ul-Maṭar" (أنشودة المطر) (Eng. "The Canticle of the Rain")) which embodies the richness of the Arabic language with such a phenomenon, which also distinguishes al-Sayyab's poetry from other poetry. Al-Sayyab uses onomatopoeia in his poetry for many reasons, an important one of which is "to create an auditory image which helps the reader reach a mental state in which he could experience the feeling the poet is trying to convey" (Al-Zubbaidi, 2014, 189). Al-Zubbaidi (2014, 190) gives the following example to explain this tendency in al-Sayyab's poetry:

<div dir="rtl">

مطر...

مطر...

مطر...

</div>

وفي العراق جوعْ

وينثر الغلالَ فيه موسم الحصادْ

لتشبع الغربان و الجراد

وتطحن الشّوان والحجر

رحى تدورفي الحقول. ..حولها بشرْ

مطر...

مطر...

مطر...

…

[Rain …

Rain …

Rain...

And in Iraq, there is hunger

Harvest Season in it strews the corn

So that the crows and locust are satiated

Whereas what grinds hay and stone

Mills that revolve in the fields... surrounded by folks

Rain …

Rain …

Rain...

Al-Sayyab repeats the lexical item مطر (Eng. "Rain") to emphasize the abundance of rain, an idea that contradicts what is indicated in the lines that follow: hunger and poverty. Al-Zubbaidi (2014, 189) explains that the repetition of the word "Rain" eight times enhances the music of the poem and "creates a sense of organic unity and holds together some otherwise fragmented images and ideas" (Al-Zubbaidi 2014, 189).

In *Turabuha Za'faran* (ترابها زعفران, translated into English as *City of Saffron*), Edwar Al-Kharrat employs a huge number of onomatopoeic words. Shunnaq and Al-Thebyan (2003, 142) study the use, functions and translation of onomatopoeia in Al-Kharrat's novel. Al-Kharrat's heavy use of onomatopoeic words "is functional and meaningful in most cases". About al-kharrat's use of onomatopoeia, Shunnaq and Al-Thebyan (2003, 142) state that onomatopoeia functions to produce the "psychological atmosphere of the literary work" and "create the suspense element in the literary work"; it also "helps foreshadow upcoming events". Shunnaq and Al-Thebyan (2003, 142) study many of the onomatopoeic words and expressions that appear in the novel in question from phonological, semantic and translational perspectives. For them, words like "يقرقع, ينعق ,وشيش ,هسيس ,اصطفاق ,يجلجل" with "emotive overtones" and

very functional semantically, symbolically and stylistically. They (2003, 142) notice that in Al-Kharrat's literature "onomatopoeic terms are usually linked with natural elements and, thus, create a host of metaphoric values". To illustrate, they (2003, 142), for example, study the following onomatopoeic expressions: للفحم هسيس خافت، ينعق البرق، قرقعة الرعد، المطر يقرقع على زجاج الشبابيك، نجوم صغيرة كثيرة متشععة وشيش مكتوم, among many others. Due to this, Shunnaq and Al-Thebyan (2003, 129) suggest that "the translator take the phonic and graphic effects [of onomatopoeic words] into account".

Similarly, onomatopoeia is widely used in English literature. One of the unforgettable examples is "Ariel's Song" in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. "Ariel's Song" includes the following lines which are full of onomatopoeic words:

Hark,hark!

Bow-wow.

Thewatch-dogsbark.

Bow-wow.

Hark,hark!Ihear

the strain of strutting chanticleer

Cry, Cock-a-diddle-dow. (Act I, Scene 2, lines 385-6)

2.3 Onomatopoeia and Translational

Very few studies have tackled the phenomenon of onomatopoeia from a translational point of view, especially from Arabic into English. Abdul-Raof (2001, 110) believes that rhetorical elements cannot be transmitted from one language into another, especially when these two languages are culturally and linguistically different, like Arabic and English. Thus, in translating onomatopoeic words, they may lose their significance and may be rendered to non-onomatopoeic words in the process of translation. Abdul-Raof (2001, 110), gives an example from the Holy Qur'an; the Arabic onomatopoeic word الصَّاخة is translated as "deafening noise" which is a non-onomatopoeic translational option (Abdul-Raof 2001, 110).

Dickins *et al*. (2002, 85) argue that the differences between onomatopoeic words through the universal languages require from the translator to pay more attention in processing onomatopoeic words from language to language, mainly when the onomatopoeic word has an axial importance in the text. It will be satisfactory, they add, for the onomatopoeic word to be translated other than a target onomatopoeic word with a sort of compensation. To clarify their conclusion, they give the example لغة الآيآي which is the title of a short story by Yousef Edrees. آيآي is an onomatopoeic word which refers to the sound a person produces when he/she is in pain(ibid.). Hence, the accurate correspondence of the word is "ouch" which is not an onomatopoeic word; yet, the translator translated it as "The Language of Pain," a translation that seems satisfactory and fairly good, in spite of the loss of the significance of the onomatopoeic word (2002, 85).

Shunnaq and Al-Thebyan (2003, 129) study the problematic issues that the translator may encounter in translating the phenomenon of onomatopoeia. The study derives its examples from the translation of Edwar Al-Kharrat's novel ترابها زعفران (*Turābuha Zaᶜfarān*) into English as *City of Saffron*. The study supports the idea that using onomatopoeia in the literary work makes it more effective and sentimental. Furthermore, Shunnaq and Al-Thebyan (2003, 129) recommend that translators "take the phonic and graphic effects" seriously. They reveal that the incongruity in translating onomatopoeic words lies in the fact that onomatopoeias in Arabic language are "more correlated to each other and intimately tied through sharing common phonological elements or sounds" (Shunnaq and Al-Thebyan 2003, 129). And thus, the study concludes that (1) onomatopoeic usage is beneficial for the literary work; in Al-Kharrat's novel *Turābuha Zaᶜfarān* onomatopoeia conveys "symbolic imports" and "metaphoric values" (Shunnaq and Al-Thebyan 2003, 142) and plays a role in "producing the psychological atmosphere of the literary work" (Shunnaq and Al-Thebyan 2003, 142) and it helps the reader "foreshadow upcoming events" (2003, 142); and (2) the renditions of Arabic onomatopoeic words into English are not adequate due to "the different phonological systems of Arabic and English," and to the incongruency between both languages in terms of the symbolic imports of their sounds and letters" (Shunnaq and Al-Thebyan 2003, 142).

The difficulty of the linguistic system of Arabic makes translating onomatopoeic words into the English, or any other language, challenging, and sometimes impossible. This can be attributed to the phonological features and the rhetorical values of these words, especially when these words are a key ingredient of the total fabric of a sacred, genuine, and sophisticated text, like the Holy Qur'an, for example. Thus, the process of translation should be done with a high level of proficiency and intelligence as to keep such words effective and sensible as they are in the ST.

3. Statement of the Problem

The present study attempts to elucidate the challenges the translator may face in trying to achieve the identical equivalences of the onomatopoeic words. Indeed, these challenges arise from the distinctiveness of the onomatopoeic words in every language, and not necessarily due to the translators' lack of dexterity. Al-Kharabsheh (2008, 23) argues that Qur'an translations are interpretations and these translations are governed by the fact that languages are different from each other syntactically, semantically and pragmatically. Based on this, the translator's duty is not to achieve total equivalences for Qur'anic onomatopoeic words; rather, it is to approximate their meanings and sounds as much as possible to the TL.

4. Objectives and Questions of the Study

The ultimate goal of the present study is to examine, through comparing and contrasting, three selected authoritative translations of the Holy Qur'an. Therefore, the present study attempts to achieve the following objectives:

1. Exploring the difficulties, problems and challenges associated with translating onomatopoeic Qur'anic words from Arabic into English.

2. Finding out the most appropriate translation strategies that can be used in translating Qur'anic onomatopoeia from Arabic into English.

3. Comparing and contrasting three selected commendable translations in this respect in order to evaluate such translations, and in order to gain meaningful insights that can help in setting forth tenable translation solutions to this thorny area.

5. Significance of the Study

The present study derives its value from the importance of the translation of the Holy Qur'an. Therefore, examining Qur'anic onomatopoeia is significant for many reasons. Firstly, the present study highlights, to the benefit of translation specialists and scholars, a very problematic area and an under-explored phenomenon (i.e., onomatopoeia) in translation studies. Secondly, focusing on the issue of translating onomatopoeic words, and identifying the difficulties and problems related to translating them will narrow the lacuna in the field of ranslation from Arabic into English. Thirdly, the present study is hoped to be useful to those who are concerned with the translation of the Qur'an.

6. Methodology

6.1 Data Collection

Primarily, for the purposes of the present study, nine onomatopoeic words and expressions are collected from thirty different "Surahs" ("Chapters") in the Holy Qur'an. The researchers, particularly, selected those with reduplicative roots, since their power of suggestiveness is undeniable. The Al-Quran 950 meaning of onomatopoeic words depends at least on how letters come out of the mouth, and how intense their pronunciation is. This is something of which translators should be fully aware in order to be able to interpret the images, which an onomatopoeic word can evoke.

The onomatopoeic words are selected, studied and analyzed according to Bredin's three types: (1) Direct onomatopoeia, (2) associative onomatopoeia, and (3) exemplary onomatopoeia (Bredin 1996).

6.2 Data Analysis

For the purposes of the present study, three authoritative translations of the Holy Qur'an are selected; these are: (1) Pickthall's *The Meaning Of The Glorious Qur'an* (1938) (henceforth, Pickthall's translation), (2) Al-Hilali and Khan's *The Nobel Qur'an* (1996) (henceforth, Hilali and Khan's translation), and (3) *The Holy Qur'an* (1985) by the Presidency of Islamic Research (henceforth, Presidency's translation).

Each onomatopoeic word is presented in the verse it appears in; the verse is followed by its three different translations as they appear in the three translations of the Holy Qur'an, as mentioned above. Each onomatopoeic word is identified, explained, and analyzed according to four Qur'anic exegeses chosen for the purposes of the present study; these are: (1) Al-Tabari's جامع البيان (*Jāmiᶜ Al-Bayān*) 1998),

(2) Al-Qortobi's الجامع لأحكام القرآن (*Al-Jamiᶜ li-Aḥkām Al-Qur'an* 2006), (3) Bin AtyeaAl-Andalousi's

المُحَرَّر الوجيز في تفسير الكتاب العزيز (-*Muḥar Al rar Al-Wajīz fi Tafsīr Al-Kitāb Al-ᶜAzīz* 1981) and (4) Al-

Mahaliand Al-Sayouti's تفسيرالجلالين (*Tafsīr Al-Jalālayn* 2004). After that, the phonological and rhetorical features of the onomatopoeic words are presented and explained. Then, the three translations are compared and contrasted to figure out the most appropriate translation of the onomatopoeic word. Finally, the study addresses the lapses found in these translations and, when possible, attempts to suggest some translation solutions for dealing with these onomatopoeic Qur'anic words.

7. Discussion and Analysis

7.1 Direct Onomatopoeia

Direct onomatopoeia occurs when "the denotation of a word is a class of sound, and the sound of the word resembles the sound that it names" (Bredin, 1996:558). In the Holy Qur'an, a number of cases pertaining to this type occur. Let us consider the following example:

Example One

﴾وَأَمَّا عَادُ فَأُهْلِكُوا بِرِيحٍ صَرْصَرٍ عَاتِيَةٍ.(Al-Ḥāqqah, 6)﴿

I. And as for A'ad, they were destroyed by a fierce <u>roaring</u> wind.

II. As for Ad, they were destroyed by a <u>furious violent</u> wind.

III. And the Ad, they were destroyed by a <u>furious</u> wind, exceedingly violent.

The underlined onomatopoeic word صَرْصَر (*şarşar*) means, according to *Almaany* online dictionary, "the sound of the cold furious wind". Indeed, this word holds two major meanings: "cold" and "furious". These meanings are confirmed in three exegeses; Al-Tabari (1998, 61-2), Al-Qortobi (2006, 191) and Bin Atyea Al-Andalousi (1981, 61), as all these exegeses confirm that the word صرصر means "a cold, furious wind with forcefulness blowing." While Al-Mahali and Al-Sayouti (2004, 566) render it as "intense sound ". Moreover, its rhetorical value for including the meanings of cold, furious and forceful, the word is significant in its phonological value; the phonological properties of the word صرصر reinforces the meanings the word denotes. Phonologically, the sound /ص / (/ş/) in the word صر is an occlusal, intensified sound, with a superior /ş/ pronunciation. Forel and Puskas (2005, 10) clarify that in articulating fricative sounds, the closure is not complete, and consequently, there is a little obstruction which creates a passageway for the air, because of the friction. In this particular example, the /ş/ sound is followed by the /r/ sound which is an approximate sound where the tongue touches the roof of the mouth slightly to release the air without any obstruction (Forel and Puskas 2005, 12). This process is duplicated in the word صرصر as to give a double effect for the blowing of the wind and as to duplicate its destruction.

The onomatopoeic word صرصر is translated as "roaring" by Pickthall; this translation seems to catch the onomatopoeic feature of the SL word, albeit it does not give the impact of the phonological value of the source language. The word "roaring" implies the sound of the wind for an ordinary windstorm that hits a place, which is quite different from the Arabic word صرصر that indicates a wind sent as a torture for disbelievers for several days. In both Al-Hilali and Khan and Presidency, the word صرصر is translated as

"furious"; this translation is a modifier describing the wind, but it is not an onomatopoeic word. Translations II and III neglect the onomatopoeic feature of the SL word, as they only convey one aspect of the meaning of the word, which is the force of the wind (i.e., "furious"). In addition, the three translations focus on the forcefulness of the wind, yet neglect the other layer of the meaning the word denotes, i.e., being very cold. Even if the translations include the word cold, the resulted translation will be a phrase that will not imply the rhetorical feature of the onomatopoeic word in the ST. It is noteworthy that English includes onomatopoeic words that are related to the verb صر, like "creak," "scratch," "squeak," which may bear a phonological significance, but not the rhetorical value of the word صرصر.

Let us move to another text in which another problematic onomatopoeic word is used:

Example Two

﴾Al-Anbyā', 102)لَا يَسْمَعُونَ <u>حَسِيسَهَا</u> وَهُمْ فِيمَا اشْتَهَتْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ خَالِدُونَ.﴿

I. They will not hear <u>the slightest sound</u> thereof, while they abide in that which their souls desire.

II. They shall not hear the <u>slightest sound</u> of it (Hell).

III. Not the <u>slightest sound </u>will they hear of Hell.

The onomatopoeic word حسيس ("ħasīs") means, according to Al-Tabari (1998, 129-130), Al-Qortobi (2006, 294) and Bin Atyea Al-Andalousi (1981, 211),"the sound of flames in Hell," while Al-Mahali and Al-Sayouti (2004, 331) refer to it as "the hell's sound."

Phonologically, the word consists of the repetitive /s/ sound, which is categorized as a "sibilant sound" (Forel and Puskas, 2005, 11). Forel and Puskas (2005, 11) explain that sibilant sounds are the fricatives with a clear 'hissing' noise, i.e., /s/, /z/, /ʒ/, /ʃ/ and the two affricates /tʃ/, /dʒ/. Being a voiceless sound matches with the fact that the word refers to stillness, and to the nature of the sound of the flames in Hell. Additionally, the fricative quality in articulating the /s/ sound permits the air to pass without hindrance (Forel and Puskas 2005, 10). After the /s/ sound comes the "long high front unrounded" vowel /i:/ which is articulated without any obstructions (Forel and Puskas 2005, 19). This flow of air when articulating the /i:/ sound adds more stillness to the onomatopoeic word.

It is obvious that all the three translations offered the same option for the SL onomatopoeic word, i.e., the phrase "the slightest sound," which is a non-onomatopoeic equivalent. Indeed, there are some onomatopoeic words related to the sound of fire, such as "hiss," "crackle," "sizzle" and "roar." Although these alternatives may serve as onomatopoeias, the translation may be unintelligible for the phonological features of the ST onomatopoeic word, as these alternatives do not have the same phonological characteristics. It is obvious that translating SL onomatopoeic words to TL onomatopoeic words seems to be problematic, and needs more effort from the translator as to make some sort of compensation.

Example Three

﴾Al-Baqarah, 171﴿ وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي <u>يَنْعِقُ</u> بِمَا لَايَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَاءً وَنِدَاءً.

I. The likeness of those who disbelieve (in relation to the messenger) is as the likeness of one who <u>calleth</u> unto that which heareth naught except a shout and cry.

II. And the example of those who disbelieve is as that of him who <u>shouts</u> to those (flock of sheep) that hears nothing but calls and cries.

III. The parable of those who reject Faith is as if one were to <u>shout like a goat-herd</u>, to things that listen to nothing but calls and cries.

The underlined onomatopoeic word ينعق ("*Yânăâq*") means, according to *Almaany* online dictionary, "shout" or "cry" or "the shout that a grazer sends out over his herd." The meaning of the onomatopoeic word "ينعق" is confirmed in four exegeses; Al-Qortobi (2006, 19-20) explicates that it as "the grazer's shout to his herds" and as "the person who yells in the depth of the night to be answered by an echo." Additionally, Al-Tabari (1998, 109-113) and Bin Atyea Al-Andalousi (1981, 63-5) confirm that "ينعق" means "the voice that the grazer uses to snub his herd," while Al-Mahali and Al-Sayouti (2004, 26) point out to it as "the voice." To sum up, it is necessary to signify the approximate definitions that the word includes: "cry," "shout" or "echo."

Phonologically, the phonological features of the word represent loudness and strength because it contains strong sounds: /ع/ (/ă/) and /ق/ (/q/) sounds. Before these two sounds there is the nasal /ن/ (/n/) which is articulated when a complete closure occurs in the mouth, and, when the velum is lowered, the air is released through the nasal cavity (Forel and Puskas, 2005, 11); this also strengthens the uttering of the onomatopoeic word ينعق. Additionally, /ع/ (/ă/) is a sound that does not exist in the phonological system of the TL; it adds loudness to the SL onomatopoeic word which evokes the meanings of "shout" or "call." The sound /ع/ (/ă/) is articulated from the back of the tongue with the throat, causing a closure which is not complete as the air escapes from a narrow pass. The /ع/ (/ă/) sound in the SL language is classified as a fricative sound (Al-Ghamdi, 2001, 68). Furthermore, the /ق/ (/q/), which does not exist in the phonological system of the TL, is an oral stop (a plosive) which is articulated when there is a complete closure for the air in the mouth by the tongue (Al-Ghamdi, 2001, 67).

Pickthall translates it as "calleth," while Al-Hilali and Khan as "shout," but they add between brackets some explanation ("flock of sheep") to make the TL audience comprehend the meaning of the word, albeit that the explanation they offer is not the only interpretation of the verse as some other exegeses give other interpretations. The third translation is "shout like goat-herd" which is given by the Presidency. The three previous translations neither serve the phonological layer of the onomatopoeic word, which represents loudness and strength, nor its meaning. The word ينعق for the SL readers is comprehensible and readers can elicit the significance of the word easily, from the sounds it has; it is cacophonic; cacophony is the use of unpleasant "harsh, rough, and unmusical" sounds (Abrams, 1999, 84). The cacophonic nature of the word ينعق makes it possible for the SL reader to sense its negative overtones and that it is used to refer to ugly sounds of some animals or to call or shout for animals or unloving things. The words "call" and "shout" are used for human beings, animals or unloving things. It is

not easy, if at all possible, to find a total equivalence in the onomatopoeic system of the TL. But a close alternative may be found in the word "croak" which means a "shout" and "warning."

7.2 Associated Onomatopoeia

The second category of onomatopoeia, according to Bredin (1996, 560), is associative onomatopoeia. Bredin (1996, 560) points out that this type of onomatopoeia "occurs whenever the sound of a word resembles a sound *associated with* whatever it is that the word denotes".

Example Four

﴿فَإِذَا جَاءَتِ الصَّاخَّةُ.﴾(Ăabasa, 33)

I. But when the Shout cometh.

II. Then when there comes Aṣ-Ṣâak'k'âh (on the day of Resurrection second blowing of the Trumpet).

III. At length, when there comes the Deafening noise.

According to Al-Qurtubi (2006, 88-9) and Bin Atyea Al-Andalousi (1981, 326), الصَّاخَة ("Aṣ-Ṣâak'k'âh ") means "a deafening noise"; Al-Tabari (1999, 77) defines it as "the sound," while Al-Mahali and Al-Sayouti (2004, 585) show that the word means "the second blow."

Phonologically, the occlusal sound /ص/ (/ṣ/) in the onomatopoeic word الصَّاخَة is intensified to double the closure of the air to be released by the following vowel /V/ (/ä/) which is articulated with a full opened mouth that gives the freedom for the air to blow without obstruction. After the redemption that resulted from the articulation of the vowel /V/ (/ä/), there comes another intensified sound, i.e., the /خ/ (/k'/). This onomatopoeic word is used in the Qur'an to evoke the blasting sound of the second blow on the Doom's Day. More specifically, this onomatopoeic word is used in the Qur'an to express the sound and the consequences of the blowing in the trumpet (*Aṣ-Ṣour*), which marks the start of the Day of Judgment.

In the first translation provided by Pickthall, the onomatopoeic word الصَّاخَة has been translated as "the Shout," a translation that does not seem to convey the sense and effect of the SL onomatopoeic word. However, a distinctive translation is offered by Al-Hilali and Khan, who foriegnized the onomatopoeic word through transliteration, i.e., "As-Sâkhkhah," followed by an explanation that exposes its meaning to the TL audience. The reason why Al-Hilali and Khan provided this explanation may be due to the fact that الصَّاخَة is one of the labels of the Doom's Day. The third translation, i.e., The Presidency's, offered a non-onomatopoeic choice: "the deafening noise" which is the communicative meaning of the الصَّاخَة in Arabic. The word "noise" may cause deafness for the hearer, but it is not the appropriate equivalence for the SL onomatopoeic word because the word "noise" does not serve as an equivalence, that is why it is preceded by "deafening" to strengthen its meaning. The onomatopoeic word الصَّاخَة is one of the rhetorical names of the Doom's Day, and it represents one of the ideological beliefs in Islam.

Example Five

لَا تَجْأَرُوا الْيَوْمَ إِنَّكُم مِنَّا لَا تُنصَرُونَ.(Al-Mûmînün, 65)

I. Supplicate not this day! Assuredly ye will not be helped by Us.

II. Invoke not loudly this day! Certainly, you shall not be helped by Us.

III. (it will be said): Groan not in supplication this day; for ye shall certainly not be helped by us.

The word تجأروا ("*Tâja'rü*") is an onomatopoeic word which donates the voice of the people who raise their voices in crying for forgiveness or hatred of injustice, according to *Almaany* online dictionary. Relating to the Qur'anic exegeses, Al-Tabari (1999, 48-9) points that تجأروا is derived from الجؤار (/âljû'wär/) which means "to raise the voice in a manner like the sound of the oxen"; whereas Al-Qortobi (2006, 62) refers to it as "to raise the voice in invocation as the oxen do." Al-Mahali and Al-Sayouti (2004, 346) mark the word as "the way that the disbelievers din in Hell."

Phonologically, the voiceless glottal stop /ء/ (/a'/) is produced when the air passes through the glottis as it is narrowed (Forel and Puskas, 2005, 9). The phonological properties of the ST onomatopoeic word تجأروا actually adds a rhetorical value as to represent the situation of the prosperous people who do not obey Allah, as they are crying and yelling, and their voices are so loud and so strong like the sound of the oxen, but all of this is useless and goes in vain.

Three different translations for the onomatopoeic word تجأروا are given. The first and the second, which are "supplicate not" and "Invoke not loudly," by Pickthall, Al-Hilali and Khan, respectively, communicate to the TL the pragmatic meaning of the word تجأروا; yet, they neglect the onomatopoeic value as well as the rhetorical value it represents, i.e., the combination of "the intensive voice mixed with weakness" and "the sense of defeat." However, The Presidency's translation gives the option "groan not" which is an onomatopoeic option. According to *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (2015), the word "groan" means "to make a deep sound because of pain or some strong emotion (such as grief or disappointment)."Apparently, the onomatopoeic word "groan" appears to be the closest translational option that can touch on the meaning of the word تجأروا and its onomatopoeic aspect. However, this option does not seem to achieve the total equivalence as the word "groan" expresses a deep voice, whereas تجأروا is associated with a loud voice, a fact clearly reflected in the phonological features of both words. Additionally, as these two words belong to two different onomatopoeic systems, their phonological overtones are different and their effects on the readers are definitely different. It goes without saying that finding an identical onomatopoeic correspondence is a very challenging task, if at all possible.

Example Six

وَهُمْ يَصْطَرِخُونَ فِيهَا رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا نَعْمَل صَالِحًا. ﴿Fätîr, 37﴾

I. And they cry for help there, (saying): Our Lord! Release us; we will do right.

II. Therein they will cry: our Lord! Bring us out, we shall do righteous good deeds.

III. Therein will they cry aloud (for assistance): our lord! Bring us out.

The onomatopoeic word يصطرخون ("*yâṣṭârîk'ün*") means, according to *Almaany* online dictionary, " to cry loudly and ask for help and forgiveness"; also "it is the voice of shouting". Apparently, the four exegeses certify this definition; Al-Qortobi (2006, 388) elucidates the word as "to cry for help loudly in Hell." While Al-Tabari (1998, 169) explains it as "to cry for help and din in Hell" and also as "to be boiled from screaming." In addition, Bin Atyea Al-Andalousi (1981, 255) clarifies its meaning as "screaming"; he also explains that the word originally is: يصترخون ("*yâṣṭârîk'ün*") but the /ت/ (/t/) sound became /ط/ (/ŧ/) because the place of articulation of the /ط/ (/ŧ/) sound is closer to the place of articulation of the /ص/ (/ṣ/) sound. Finally, Al-Mahali and Al-Sayouti (2004, 438) mention that the word means "to cry for help strongly with wailing." It is important to point out that, in reference to the four exegeses, the onomatopoeic word يصطرخون is not only "a cry," it is also that kind of "cry in Hell with grieving and despair."

Phonologically, the onomatopoeic word has a phonological value that comes with the denotative meaning of the word. It is clear that the word has three sounds that do not exist in the TL; the fricatives /ص/ (/ṣ/) and /خ/ (/k'/) and the plosive /ط/ (/ŧ/) (Al-Ghamdi, 2001, 67-8), the fricative /ص/ (/ṣ/) which is articulated whenever the closure of the air is not complete, while the /ط/ (/ŧ/) sound is a plosive; "plosives are sounds in which there is a complete closure in the mouth, so that the air is blocked for a fraction of a second and then released with a small burst of sound, called a plosion" (Forel and Puskas, 2005, 10). The semi-closure or the complete closure resembles the cries and shouts of the disbelievers which are weak and hopeless in Hell. In addition, the fricative /خ/ (/k'/) is produced when the closure is not complete in the mouth, so the air can pass through the obstruction which is big enough to make a noise because of the friction (Forel and Puskas, 2005, 10). "This effect is similar to the wind whistling around the corner of a house". The /ص/ (/ṣ/), /ط/ (/ŧ/) and the /خ/ (/k'/) sounds in the onomatopoeic words يصطرخون are functional and strengthen the significance of the word to represent the way the disbelievers cry desperately for forgiveness.

The first translation by Pickthall is "cry for help." Indeed, this option indicates one side of the meaning of the onomatopoeic word يصطرخون as the word represents some other meanings, like "crying aloud for forgiveness and help," for example. Also, Al-Hilali and Khan translate it as "cry," while the Presidency translation adds the onomatopoeic feature of the word using the word "aloud," translating it as "cry aloud." Indeed, all the previous translations do not convey the SL onomatopoeic word's phonological features and/or the significance of its meanings since the word يصطرخون does not mean "to cry" only. The word has no equivalence in the TL. Other onomatopoeic words, like howl or screaming, may be closer in meaning but, again, these words do not give the total equivalence for the SL word.

Some elements of nature are onomatopoeic or, at least, related in a way or another, to onomatopoeia. For instance, Shunnaq and Al-Thebyan (2003) notice this phenomenon in Al-Kharrat's *Turābuha*

Za'farān. They (2003, 142) maintain that "In Al-Kharrat's literature, such onomatopoeic terms are usually linked with natural elements and, thus, create a host of metaphoric values".

7.3 Exemplary Onomatopoeia

The following example illustrates the third type of onomatopoeia, i.e., exemplary onomatopoeia. Bredin (1996) points out that the foundations of exemplary onomatopoeia "rest[…] upon the amount and character of the physical work used by a speaker in uttering a word" (Bredin (1996, 563). A number of examples pertaining to this type are found in the Qur'an; let us consider the following example:

Example Seven

﴾Aḍ-ḍûḧä, 2﴿. وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا سَجَى

I. And by the night when it is <u>stillest</u>.

II. By the night when it <u>darkens (and stand still)</u>.

III. And by the night when it <u>still</u>.

In the Qur'anic verse above, the word سجى ("*sâjä*") is onomatopoeic. Al-Tabari (1998, 288-289), Al-Qortobi (2006, 335-337) and Bin Atyea Al-Andalousi (1981, 486-487) give two explanations for the word سجى: The first is "stillness and lengthiness of the dark," whereas the other one is "the arrival or departure of the night."Al-Mahali and Al-Sayouti (2004, 596) believe that the word means "the stillness of the darkness." The "stillness," "lengthiness" or the "movement" of darkness fits the sounds the word سجى consists of.

Phonologically, the sound /س/ (/s/), which is a voiceless fricative(Forel and Puskas, 2005, 11), represents stillness and the vowel /V/ (/ä/) goes with the lengthiness of the night.

The first and third translations of the word سجى are dominated by the choice "still"; the translators seem to be convinced with one meaning of the word. Yet, the second translation uses the option "darken," followed by a paratextual annotation, i.e., "(and stand still)." Indeed, the onomatopoeic word سجى does not only mean "stillness," as it also contains another layer of meaning, i.e., "the stretchiness of the night," which is expressed or implied through the vowel /ɑ:/. This vowel expresses the long and slow motion of the night or how the night drags on and on. Besides, the word has an autoantonymous meaning that none of the three translations touched upon. English does not seem to have any possible equivalent that can retain both the onomatopoeic as well as the autonomous aspects of the SL word. The interpreter of the Holy Qur'an should consult more than one exegesis as to grasp all the possible meanings of the onomatopoeic word, and as to be able to achieve a higher degree of approximation at the semantic and phonic levels.

Example Eight

﴾ Ash-shûǎaräa', 94﴿. فَكُبْكِبُوا فِيهَا هُمْ وَالْغَاوُونَ

I. Then they will be <u>thrown on their faces</u> into the (Fire), They and the Ghâwûn (devils, and those who were in error).

II. Then they will be <u>thrown on their faces</u> into the fire), they and the Ghâwûn.

III. Then they will be <u>thrown Headlong</u> into the (Fire), they and those straying in evil.

The onomatopoeic word كُبكِبوا "*kûbkîbü*" means, according to *Almaany* online dictionary, "to be thrown into Hell on their heads one after another" or "it is the sound of the people when they jostle and gather." Al-Qortobi (2006, 46) explains that the word means "to be overturned on their heads" or "to be gathered and thrown into the Fire." Al-Tabari (1998, 88-9) explains it as "to be gathered and thrown" or to be "gathered in Hell." Bin Atyea Al-Andalousi (1981, 127-8) renders it as "to be thrown into Hell as one hank." Al-Mahali and Al-Sayouti (2004, 371) interpret it as "to be thrown." All the four exegeses confirm that the meaning of the word كُبكِبوا is "to be gathered and thrown one after another."

Phonologically, the word consists of two syllables كُبكِب; the first one is pronounced as the lips are rounded and both angles of the mouth are gathered for some points, because of the short vowel /◌/ (/û/), while the plosive /ك/ (/k/) sound gives strength to the onomatopoeic word, as the air is released outside the mouth after the obstruction of the air in the mouth for a second. Furthermore, the second syllable is pronounced with open lips, and the plosive /ك/ (/k/) and the short vowel /◌/ (/î/) in the syllable كِب evoke the throwing off of the disbelievers into the Hell on their heads, while the repetition of the syllable mimics the speed of the consecutive throwing of the disbelievers into the Hell. From another angle, the word also has the repeated plosives /ب/ (/b/) and /ك/(/k/) which, also, mimic the sound of the movement when people are gathered and thronged.

The word is translated as "thrown on their faces" by both Pickthall and Al-Hilali and Khan. The Presidency translates it as "thrown Headlong." Both translations do not cover all the aspects of the meanings of this onomatopoeic word since the translators represent it as an ordinary action of throwing. It is important to reveal the full meanings of the word to the TL audience. The "throwing" in this Holy verse has a sense of sound and image: the way the disbelievers are gathered, the sound they create during their gathering, and the way they are thrown headlong repeatedly and consecutively.

Example Nine

قَالَتِ امْرَأَتُ الْعَزِيزِالآنَ <u>حَصْحَصَ</u> الْحَقُ.﴿Yūsûf, 51﴾

I. The wife of Al-'Azîz said: "Now the truth is <u>manifest</u> (to all).

II. The wife of Al-'Azîz said: "Now the truth is <u>manifest</u> (to all).

III. Said the Aziz's wife: Now is the truth manifest (To all).

The onomatopoeic word حَصْحَصَ ("*ĥâşĥâşâ*") means, according to the *Almaany* online dictionary, "the raise of correctness after dullness." The word "حصَّ" means "extirpate" or "take away." Al-Qortobi (2006, 373-4), Al-Tabari (1998, 243-4) and Bin Atyea Al-Andalousi (1981, 535) all confirm that the word حَصْحَصَ implies the fact that "when the righteousness raise and manifest after dullness." Al-Mahali and

Al-Sayouti (2004, 241) are content with "to become clear." So, the word implies the meaning "when the truth is clear after a period of dullness."

Phonologically, the word consists of two identical syllables: حَصحَص; the repetition of the same syllable with the same rhythm conveys the way that the truth becomes clearer. Similar to the words عسعس and دمدم, this word has the "directional sinusoidal movement" (*youtube.com*), which represents the kind of the movement and how the truth comes to the surface all the way along the story of Prophet Joseph (peace be upon Him). The repetition represents the "strength and stability of the truth" and how it "becomes evident at the end of the story."

All the three translations deal with the meaning of the word not as a word with a possible equivalence in the TL; they neglect its phonological significance, depriving the TL audience of the taste of the onomatopoeic value the word has. In addition, the translation does not imply the way truth is revealed by choosing the word "manifest" as a TL equivalence. The translators used a phrase to convey at least the sense of how the truth became evident and clear.

8. Conclusion

The present study examined the difficulties and challenges that a translator of the Qur'anic discourse may encounter in translating onomatopoeic words. The study has shown translators dealing with the phenomenon of onomatopoeia usually face a very hard mission, as translating such terms is a critical challenging task, especially if the text is the Holy Qur'an.

The present study shed light on the different strategies three of the Qur'an translators adopted for translating Qur'anic onomatopoeic words. The strategies they used ranged from paraphrasing the onomatopoeic word, giving an onomatopoeic quasi-equivalent word, giving a non-onomatopoeic equivalent word, or omitting the onomatopoeic word from translation; some of the translations given focused on semantic meaning of the onomatopoeic word, neglecting its phonological onomatopoeic features and overtones, i.e., its meaning is partially rendered into the TL. In some cases, the translators opted for the strategy of compensation through adding paratextual explanations of the onomatopoeic words in brackets or in their paraphrase of the meanings of the onomatopoeic word in question. And in very few cases, a translator opted for providing a transliteration of the onomatopoeic word followed by an explanation for the word in question.

Finally, translators should use all the possible translation tools to relay the meaning of the onomatopoeic words; in some cases the translator has to use footnotes or add explanations inside the text to explain the meanings of the onomatopoeic word and show its phonological value and onomatopoeic imports and significance. Furthermore, transliteration is one of the interesting methods a translator may opt for in some special cases, especially when dealing with very problematic onomatopoeic words. Transliteration may preserve the phonological features of the SL onomatopoeic word; but transliteration of a word may demand the addition of an explanatory footnote or a paratextual explanation of the onomatopoeic transliterated word in question.

إمكانية ترجمة كلمات المحاكاة الصوتيّة القرآنيّة من العربيّة إلى الإنجليزيّة

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الملخص

تتناول هذه الدراسة مشكلة ترجمة كلمات المحاكاة الصوتيّة في الخطاب القرآنيّ من العربيّة إلى الإنجليزيّة، كما وتلقي الدراسة الضوء على صعوبات ترجمة الخاصيّة الصوتيّة لكلمات المحاكاة الصوتيّة في اللغة العربيّة، وهي لغة مميزة وتزخر بالكلمات البلاغيّة، وتهدف الدراسة أيضاً إلى اختبار ترجمة كلمات المحاكاة الصوتيّة من خلال التحليل والمقارنة بالاعتماد على ثلاث ترجمات قرآنيّة وبالرجوع إلى أربعة تفاسير قرآنيّة. حيث تحتاج هذه الكلمات إلى ترجمة بليغة وفصيحة، لنقل مغزاها الأصيل. إن إعطاء ترجمة مرادفة ومتطابقة تماماً للخطاب القرآنيّ، بصورة عامة، ولكلمات المحاكاة الصوتيّة، بصورة خاصة، أمر لا يمكن حدوثه، وتضيف هذه الدراسه دليلاً آخر على عدم إمكانيّة ترجمة كلمات المحاكاة الصوتيّة وتعابيرها، بصورة أساسية ، وصفاتها الصوتيّة بسبب العناصر البلاغيّة التي تزخر بها هذه الكلمات. وفي الخاتمة، قدّمتْ الدراسة بعض الاقتراحات للتعامل مع إشكالية تقديم ترجمة مرادفة لكلمات المحاكاة الصوتيّة: كاستخدام الحواشي أو كتابة الكلمات العربيّة بالحروف الإنجليزيّة وإتباعها بشروحات لها، وذلك بهدف تقديم أفضل المعاني والإبقاء على مدلولها الصوتيّ؛ وهذا أفضل من ترجمتها بصورة غير ملائمة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: إمكانيّة، ترجمة، محاكاة، صوتيّة، عربيّة، انجليزيّة.

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