Pickthall's Shortcomings in Translating Images
of Qur'anic Symbolic Sounds

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Abstract

The rendition of Qur'anic onomatopoeic or smbolic words into English seems to be a challenging task for a translator because the sense of the Arabic sound suggests an array of meanings that a translator may fail to capture. The translator often tends to use an inadequate translation by omitting or overlooking other senses of the onomatopoeic word and limiting himself/herself just to one sense, giving the impression that their potential is limited. This is due to the lack of familiarity with the Arabic phonological system, namely the function of Arabic sounds, their manner of articulation, and their suggestive power in portraying the image. This paper is thus an inquiry into Pickthall's shortcomings in translating the sound images in the Glorious Qur'an. It specifically intends to demonstrate that onomatopoeic words are not only imitative of the natural sounds they denote, but more of a rhetorical device to maximize the effect of the message by developing rhythms and sounds. The paper ends by making recommendations and suggestions for translators interested in the Holy Qur'an.
Keywords: reduplication; features; phonological system; onomatopoeia.

Introduction

Onomatopoeia originally comes from Greek *onoma*, meaning "name" and *Poiein,* meaning "to make". It stands for words that are indicative of a sound that the object of the sound emits, or put differently, it describes the natural sound phonetically. Given the fact that humans tend to be influenced by the surrounding environment, the affinity between human languages and natural sounds is reasonable, Crystal (1992: 47), for example, refers to the how-wow theory, which stipulates "speech arose through people imitating the sounds of the environment, especially animal calls"

The extent to which humans can mimic sounds is limited. Anderson (1998:129) notes that there is a limit on the capacity of humans to imitate natural

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sounds because of the "constraints of the phonological system and the structure of the human vocal tract". For this reason, it may be not possible to mimic natural sounds with exact precision. There might be only partial mimicry of natural sounds (ibid).

Many linguists believe that the connection between the form of a word and its meaning is arbitrary except for the associations established by conventions. This might explain the reason Muller (1891) regards onomatopoeia as a mere playfulness, which has nothing to do with the linguistic system. Much of his argument stems from the notion that onomatopoeic words are rootless and thus useless in that they are not derivative or attributive. If this were the case, then we would not have to think of onomatopoeic words as essential elements of a linguistic system.

Whether this class of words applies "to a narrow semantic range" (falk 1973:60), or a broader range, writers and speakers make use of it to convey their messages. The use of onomatopoeias, it seems, rests on the fact that it is hard to describe natural sounds with words. Shervanloo (1975:338) contends that "natural things are far better than artificial ones" because there is much proximity between what is said and its meaning as a natural sound is more familiar and more genuine to humans. To make his point clearer, he argues that there is "an indirect relationship between the word "laugh" and its meaning, whereas the word "guffaw" stands for the act and voice of laughing" (ibid: 338)

As far as the glorious Qur'an is concerned, the onomatopoeic words are productive and derivative because they have radical roots that are both conjugable and inflectional. It follows that the relation between the word and its form is not entirely arbitrary since the intrinsic meaning of an onomatopoeic word is undeniable. What seems to be peculiar to Arabic onomatopoeias is that certain sounds have certain feel for the Arabic-speaking world because of their suggestiveness and power of portraying.

Given the fact that phonological systems differ across languages, onomatopoeic words likewise differ and have therefore to conform to the linguistic system in its broader sense. Since languages have different linguistic systems, different onomatopoeic words mimic different natural sounds. For example, the sound that the heart produces as it beats is *bom bom* in Arabic, whereas it is *dup dup* in Turkish. It is interesting to note, however, that not all languages have the same letters as parts of their phonological systems. There are letters such as *sad* (ṣ). ḍad (ḍ), and ṭaa (ṭ), which are peculiar to Arabic and rarely occur in other languages. The images associated with these sounds might make it even harder for translators to grasp because Arabic onomatopoeic words are not only imitative of natural sounds, but also symbolic and image inducing,

which are simply impressions they mentally make. Since the relationship seems to be illogical between sound images and their concepts, as Klages (2001) notes, the multiplicity of meanings is possible.

Before we delve into discussing the functions of Qur'anic onomatopoeic words and how sounds conform to the image they picture, it is of special importance at this point to shed some light on the features of the Arabic phonological system.

Arabic Phonological Features

Arabic words essentially derive from tri-literal roots, which consist of three radicals like *daraba*, to hit. The root morpheme is discontinuous, because vowels can be interspersed between consonants. When a tri-literal root is geminated or stressed: that is the second letter is doubled, it looks as though it were bi-consonantal like *madda*, to stretch, which is actually composed of a three- radical root *m, d, d.* The sign of stressing or doubling consonants is called *tashdid*. This sign means that the two identical letters are compressed into one single geminated letter.

From geminated tri-literal roots, quadri-lateral roots clearly derive. This form involves four radical consonants and can be regular, reduplicative, or complex. As regards the regular quadri-lateral, all the four consonants that make up the root are different like *tarjama*, to translate. In the reduplicated quadric-**lateral** the "first two letters are repeated either in imitation of a sound or to refer to a movement or repeated action such as *rafrafa*, to flutter. As for the complex root, the way it works is similar to English acronyms, which is not a focus in this study.

With respect to reduplicative roots, the closing letters of the word are identical with the opening letters like *ṣalṣala*, to make a ringing sound. Many quadri-lateral roots come from geminated tri-lateral roots where the doubled sound implies a lengthening or stretching out of the sound. According to Haywood (1965**)**, the geminated root, *ṣalla*, to make a ringing, can be reduplicated like *ṣalṣala* as in *ṣalṣala alliğām*, the rein made a ringing or emitted a sound, where the closing letters are identical with the opening letters. He mentions that reduplication here involves a repetition that has the effect of lightening in the sound of the rein. It is "as if the Arabs had assumed that the reduplicative forms imply repetition and geminated tri-lateral roots prolongation" (Ibid: 34)

Arabic has twenty- nine alphabets of which twenty -five are sounds. These alphabets can be arranged in terms of their manner of articulation. According to Haywood (1965:35), only "four of the Arabic alphabets are considered heavy

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letters because they issue from the abdomen rather than any part of the tongue, throat, or uvula". With the exception of these letters, he treats the other letters more of sounds than of letters. Some of these letters like *ra* and *lam* are sharp because of their articulation with the edge of the tip of the tongue, others issue from the middle part of the throat like *kha* and *ein*. Still, others are emphatic sounds like *ṭa* and *ṣad*, which have stronger pronunciation than regular English t and s, because their pronunciation is with a raised and tensed tongue, especially the letter *ta*, whose pronunciation is further back in the mouth. Some other sounds are hoarse like *ḥa*, which is much heavier and forceful than the English regular h.

It is interesting to note that words, which are phonologically close with respect to their point of articulation, are more or less semantically identical. Annajjar **(**1999**),** for example, mentions that the two verbs *qaḍama* and *khaḍama* are close in meaning, due to their shared point of pronunciation, with just a slight difference triggered by the first letter of each word. That is, *qaḍama* is said of biting into something hard and dry, whereas *khaḍama* is said of munching something that is lush and juicy like watermelon.More to the point, Ibn manzur (1990) mentions that the act of eating *qadama* is with the nearer of the teeth, whereas *khaḍama* is with the remote of the teeth. It is evident that *qāf* as voiced pharyngeal and *kha* as voiceless velar have a subtle difference due to their point of pronunciation. The first seems harsher and heavier than the second that is weaker. The point to make here is that when voices are strong, they seem to fit strong actions, whereas weak voices seemingly fit weak actions

Likewise, the verbs *qaṭ ṭa* and *qadda* are stressed tri-lateral roots whose points of pronunciation are almost the same. However, there is a subtle difference between the two roots. Annajjar (1999: 160**)** notes that the sense associated with *qadda* is "tearing or cutting lengthways, while *qa ṭ ṭa* suggesting tearing breadthways".The reason is that cutting breadthways is more difficult than cutting lengthways. This difference is made by combining two harsh sounds *qāf* and *ṭa*, the latter is an emphatic Arabic sound that is stronger than *dal*, thus suggesting swiftness of action as opposed to a more tenuous action signaled by *dal*, which suggests that the act of cutting things lengthways is no easy task. The translator should be fully aware of such slight differences that clearly derive from sense variations of Arabic sounds and the sequence in which they occur.

The foregoing description is only a glimpse of Arabic sound features and their associated senses. It is important to point out here that there are harsh voicing sounds as well as soft pleasing ones. Both groups derive their senses from their point of articulation and manner of pronunciation with respect to the setting of the context in which they occur. Interestingly enough, Arabic has sounds that do not occur in English, as we have pointed out earlier. When these

sounds occur in onomatopoeic words, they spell a greater challenge for translators, as we will see next.

Semantic Value of Onomatopoeias

The phonic level of Arabic is crucial for rendering meanings, since meanings are intertwined with sounds and are capable of depecting pictures and bringing scenes to life This is, as Alamri (2007) notes, is called in Arabic "artistic depiction" (163) where senses as diverse as associatve, denotative, allusive, and metaphorical being evoked as a result of the sound and meaning being conflated. The sound structures of onomatopoeic or symbolic words are indicative of the nature of the actions being exerted for a particular purpose. For example, *ḥ* and *z* as in *zuhziḥa* are articulated in such a way that the air produced causes an almost audible friction. The two fricative sounds *z* and *ḥ* denote an action that requires a great deal of effort to pull away something that almost does not budge. The repetition of the two fricatives indicates that the action is durable and requires a strained effort.

Only by anlyzing such onomatopoeic or symbolic words can one reveal the hidden semantic properties of such symbolic or onomatopiec words. That is, "the phonetic devices, as Tzortzis (2008) notes, construct powerful and emotive images by the selection of the most apt words to depict the meaning while triggering semantically oriented sounds". These sounds tend to build either intense or smooth images depending on the sound structures.

Methodology

This study intends to highlight the inadequate renditions of some Qur'anic onomatopoeic words by Pickthall as a representative model of great Qur'anic translators. The rationale behind selecting Pickthall, the orthodox Muslim, as a model clearly stems from his fluency in both Arabic and English, and his elegant style to preserve the nature of the Qur'an by keeping close to the origin, with minimal annotations. This tendency, however, seems to have had difficulties in renderig Qur'anic onomatopoeias,which have emotional and imaginative associations connected with the word. Despite his assiduous efforts to undersand meanings and themes in a coherent way through consulting the highest Islamic authority of Al Azhar, he was still unable to unearth the hidden semantic properties that include a combination of denotative, associative, allusive, and affective meanings of onomatopoeic words. Unlike most other translators, his translations are direct from Arabic into English, and mostly lack annotations or square brackets compared with at at least those of Abdallah Yousif and Khan.

The study will deal with some onomatopoeic words, particularly those with reduplicative roots, since their power of suggestiveness is undeniable. The

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.

To this end, the current author will dwell, for appropriate rendition, on great Arab dictionaries like *lisān ' al ' arab*, ' *assihāh*, ' *alḫasā'is* and other references that are considered more of an encyclopedia than of a mere dictionary. These references are an indispensable aid for the translators.

As for the transliteration system, the author will utilize the International Romanization System (ISO 233), which applies stringent conversion principles that facilitate the international communication of the written message in such a way that makes automatic transmission and reconstruction quite possible.

Analysis and Discussion

The letters in onomatopoeic words do not occur randomly. There are certain letters whose occurrences come in certain sequences to give a clear indication of meaning. To elucidate the point, let us consider the following verse:

"فكذبوه فعقروها فدمدم عليهم ربهم بذنبهم فسواه"

"fakaḏabuhu faʿ qaruhā fadamdama ʿ lyhim rabbuhum biḏanbihim fasawwahā"

Pickthal renders this verse thus: "But they denied him, and they hamstrung her, so Allah doomed them for the sin and razed their dwellings" (91:14)

This translation is inadequate since the word *damdama* suggests other meanings that should not remain hidden. The Arabs dwell on the reduplicative radical root in which both sound and weak consonants are joined to portray the image, the stronger consonant comes first to depict the intense image. The letter *dal*, in English d, is stronger than the labial *mim* because its point of articulation is the edge of the tip of the tongue, whereas *m* is produced with the lips being closed. The reduplicative root originally derives from the tri-literal *damama*, literally to mutter, but when conjugated, the letter *m* is stressed with a *shadda,* a small marking looking like *w* and is placed above the stressed letter. The stressed tri-literal root suggests that the action is prolonged, but when duplicated, it induces an image of repetitive in such a way that echoes the reduplicate root of the word.

When *damdama* is looked up in the great Arab dictionary *lisān ' al ' Arab* by Ibn Manzur (1990), it seems to be capable of a myriad of interpretations. For

example, *damdama ʿ laihi,* he doomed him, muttered angrily against him, and closed in on him. When this onomatopoeic word is said of a she-camel: *damdamat annaqah***,** it suggests accumulation of fat layer over layer on the camel's body. This type of accumulation is echoed by the reduplicative *damdama* that suggests not only that God brought wrath upon the tribe of ṯamūd, but that their dwellings were shaken repeatedly and squeezed with heaps of destruction that have closed in on them fully and completely that none had escaped the chastisement**.**

For this reason, it should not suffice in the translation of *damdama* to refer only to the reality of destruction without pointing out the above -mentioned senses. There is a difference between these two interpretations: Allah doomed them for their sin and razed their dwellings, as Pickthal suggests, and Allah made the ground to quake with them vehemently, muttered angrily, and closed in on them fully so that no one survived, as suggested by the onomatopoeic word. Let alone the repetitive sense of punishment inspired by the reduplicative root. The reduplicative root runs parallel to the double sin committed by ṯamūd: denying the messenger of God on the hand and hamstringing the she-camel on the other.

There is no escape from admitting, however, that an onomatopoeic word is capable of several interpretations because it appeals to more than one sense and evokes multiple images simultaneously. Let us consider the following verse:

"وَأَمَّا عَادٌ فَأُهْلِكُوا بِرِيحٍ صَرْصَرٍ عَاتِيَةٍ"

"wamma ādun fa'uhlikū birihin sarasrin ātiyah": "<u>As for Ad, they were destroyed by a fierce roaring wind</u>". (69:6)

The very concrete nature of onomatopoeia is quite evident in *ṣarṣar*, which echoes aurally the thing it denotes. *Sarsar*, as a modifier of the wind, derives from the stressed tri-literal root *ṣarra*, which suggests that there is prolongation in the action, but no repetition. When the stressed *r* is stretched out, a new coined word comes into being- *sarir*. khatir (1987) mentions that this onomatopoeic word signifies whistling of the wind, and further is said of the sounds emitted by the door, writing-reed, locust, and a small bird known for sharp cries. In these sounds, there is a prolongation in their articulation as if echoing the stretched *r* in *ṣarir*.

On the other hand, the reduplicative form *ṣarṣar* implies that there is a repetition or reiteration in the sound. Thus, the wind blew repetitively and violently adding more destruction to the people of ' **Ad**. The intensity of the scene shows the fact that the letter *sad* is an intense, full letter, and when

articulated, the tongue rises to the top of the mouth and embraces the palate. When it occurs with a lingual letter like *r* whose pronunciation causes the tongue to shiver and vibrate, it maximizes the effect of the image, thereby portraying a full and complete physical punishment. The letter *ṣad* is stronger than *r* to depict a stronger action. Thus, a combination of a sonorous sound and a vibrating sound may echo the whistling of the wind and its power in shaking the palm-trees and Ad's dwellings.

More to the point, Ibn Manzur in Lisān ' Al ' Arab mentions that the word *ṣarṣar* evokes images other than the aural images it denotes. This word is also said of animal ears being contracted to heads out of acute apprehension or unpleasant sensation. This image that *ṣarṣar* evokes may conform to the direct sense of the tri-literal radical root of the word, to compile or bring things together. This is in line with the fact that a combination of a full - letter *sad* and a vibrating *r* in a reduplicative root echoes a repetitive punishment that had inflicted physical ailments upon Aa'd' s people before falling down dead as a pile of smashed trunks of palm-trees. According to Ibn manzur (1990: 453), the wind "was not only fierce, but smiting to their ears and intensely cold and furious to the extent that it set fire to every thing it came upon.

These images to *ṣaṣar* indicate that there is more to the onomatopoeic word. In other words, the sound is likely to evoke multiple images at once. It follows that the sound should not be reduced to one single sense, no matter how close substitute it might be. Instead, the translator has to strive to paraphrase or elaborate by adding descriptions or explanations to make better understanding of the onomatopoeic word, which means more than what it sounds like. In a word, *ṣaṣar* alludes not only to the wind being violent, but also to its being piercing, icy, and terribly roaring. All of these interpretations are condensed in, and reduced to, one single word *sarsar*

The bottom line is that, although onomatopoeic words have a direct and intrinsic association with the thing they describe, they evoke senses that might be at a semantic distance from the thing they literally denote. The direct use of a word thus is only literal in a relative sense, especially when it comes to the Qur'anic onomatopoeic words, which are rich in their allusions.

As far as Arabic onomatopoeic words are concerned, it is incumbent upon the translator that he be familiar with the phonological features of the target language, and what makes certain sound combinations onomatopoeic. Such kind of knowledge makes it easier for him to delve into the multiple images associated with it in a particular context. For example, letters of the same group whose point of pronunciation almost the same such as *ṣad, ḍaḍ*, and *ṭa* do not

combine unless separated by an intermediate letter of another group Heywood (1965.)

This being said, it might be the case that two or more letters of the same group may combine to echo the harshness of the scene in the hereafter wherein the unbelievers lose hope of getting out of the Hellfire. For example, the emphatic letter *ṭa* when combined with *ṣad* in *yasṭerikhun,* they cry, shout, scream, means more than when it is omitted.

"وهم يصطرخون فيها ربنا اخرجنا نعمل غير الذي كنا نعمل"

"wahum yeṣṭeriḥun fiḥā rabbanā ' ḫriǧna n' mal gair alldi kunna n' mal":
"and they cry for help there, (saying): Our Lord! Release us; we will do right, not (the wrong) that we used to do". (35:37)

This translation is again inadequate and seems to be identical with the sense that *yesraḥun* evokes, for there is more meaning to *yesṭeriḥun* since it derives from a quadrilateral radical root *sṭaraḥa*, not from *ṣaraḥa* as in the second case. Pickthall seems to have overlooked a basic Arabic philological rule that any increase in the structure of a word necessarily entails more in meaning. Thus the emphatic *ṭa* when combined with the sonorous sad in such a word makes the setting and descriptions more realistic and almost audible. According to kḫatir (1987), this onomatopoeic word implies that they cry out of severe pain where there is no way out of the chastisement. This combination also implies that the unbelievers yell, cry, and scream in cacophony, at one another. This weeping and lamentation are not ultimately cries, but words of appeal to Allah" Our Lord release us and we will do right, not the wrong we used to do.

The translator needs to keep in mind that a more emphatic sound may substitute a weaker one because it suggests more to the meaning. For example, *hamza* replaces *h* in the following verse:

"انا ارسلنا الشياطين على الكافرين تؤزهم ازا"

"inna ' rsalnā lšyāṭin ' lalkāfirina t' uzzuhum ' zza"

Pickthall translates this verse thus:" seest thou not that we have sent the devils on the unbelievers to confound them with confusion" (19: 83)

Annajjar (1999) mentions that the word ' zza and tau'zz originally refer to the sounding of the cooking pot when simmering. They also refer to the sounding of thunder and millstone, the sounding of bullets, and the buzzing of bees. It is clear from these sounds that when hamza- a stop sound produced by

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closing the vocal cords, is combined with zay- sounding like z in English, it suggests vigor and depth and emits a slight whistle in pronunciation

The word ' *zza* is taken to mean *hazza* (ibid:160), to shake, to move, but the Qur'an opted for ' *zza* to "suggest more to the scene being depicted, based on the fact that its power is suggestive". In other words, ' *zza* implies more than shaking, because shaking or moving is true of objects, trees, etc. Whereas it incites, not only shakes or moves, unbelievers strongly and even pricks them into sin by way of deception. This means that *t'uzz* is used for a purpose in this context, and cannot be substituted by *tahuzz*, although the two words share some meaning by virtue of their place of articulation. The meaning is more than "to confound them with confusion" as pickthall proposes for tu'zzuhum 'zza. Unlike in Arabic where 'zza, tu'zzuhum come from the same verb root, the English word " confusion" and confound do not share the same verb root, and thus Pickthall loses sight of one basic quality of the Qur'anic sound that governs the choice of words that can have aesthetic and communicative effect on the reader. Actually, the Qur'anic choice of a verb from which an absolute object clearly derives is one basic quality of the Qur'anic sound, which serves to emphasize the meaning of the main verb and considerably maximize the intensity of the image. That is, the unbelievers are subject to devils' incessant pricks and incitements by acts of deceit. More to the point, Pickthall's attempt to match the Arabic cognate accusative (absolute object) with the English noun (confusion) falls short of our expectation since English language tends to use an adverb to express the absolute object. Thus, confusion "can be replaced by an adverb like fully, to confound them fully and completely in stead of saying " to confound them with confusion"

Contrary to these onomatopoeic words used to portray a terrible, dreadful scene in the hereafter, Quran has a rich stock of melodic words that accompany pleasing scenes, suggesting delicate sensational beauty to conform to the nature of the image. Consider this verse:

" متكئين على رفرف خضر وعبقري حسان "

"muttakiina ' la rarafin ḫudrin wa' bqariyyin ḥisān"

Pickthall translates it as such: "Reclining on green cushion and fair carpets" (55: 76)

Again, Pikthall limits himself to one sense of *rafraf*. Although the Arabic word *muttaki*, reclining, necessarily entails having something to lean on like a green cushion, the image of fluttering inspired by the quadric-literal word *rafraf* remains implicit. According to Ibn Manzure (1990) in Lis.ān ˈ Al ˈ Arab, *raffa* is a flash of lightening. It is true of any loose garment or piece of cloth, of teeth when exposed and of verdant and succulent plants and glistering trees. Consequently, the type of *rafraf* must be something verdant and glistering by nature, not a mere cushion with a green color as suggested by Pickthall.

It is also of special importance to point out that Arrāzi cited in Khātir (1987) notes that the word *rafraf* suggests more than vibrant or verdant plant, it refers to a thing that looks like a slinger that flutters when people sit on and take them wherever they like to go.

Phonologically, *r* is a lingual sharp letter pronounced with the tip of the tongue and causes the tongue to vibrate during its articulation. When followed by letter f, which is both weaker and voiceless, it no longer signifies a strong action. It rather produces a tranquil tone and a smooth sound that echoes bird wing flapping, an image that Pickthall fails to capture.

The use of delicate sounds combined such as š and ǧ in سجى اذا والليــل " 93:2"

and by the night when it is stillest", still produces a tranquil tone and smooth sound that invites peace, quietness, and serenity that is characteristic of night time. Stillness, thus, is not limited to people falling a sleep. According to **Lisān Al-arab**, *sajā* is to cover the day time, as if covering sleepers with sheets, and also suggests a cloudless, windless, an intensely dark, and cool night.

When the letters combined are othewise, for example, *d* with a fricative sound *ḥ*" in gadḥan, sparks striking, the outcome is different. The approximity of *d* and *ḥ* accounts for developing the sense of this image, which is in contast to the delicate scene provided by *sajā*.

Undoubtedly, a translator' s commitment to conveying only one image might give the impression that the Arabic onomatopoeic word is only capable of a single standard meaning. This runs contrary to the nature of Arabic onomatopoeic or symbolic words and might obscure English readers' understanding of their potential interpretations. After all, translation is by its nature an act of interpretation.

In conclusion

It is obvious from the foregoing discussion that the Qur'an achieves its commuicative effect by using phonetic devices with the aim of constructing an emotive or powrful image. The way the sounds are selected and constructed depends on the nature of the scene to be depicted and the senses to be developed. The meaning and the sound are inseparable, simply because the sound represents the action that it denotes. onomatopoeic words are thus not arbitrary, but meant to create sounds to conform to the image, scene, and message. Given the fact that the onomatopeic words are suggestive, the translator needs to strive to add explanations to bring about vivid descriptions to the portrayed image, with the help of great Arab references such as Lisān al-Arab.

For future research I recommend a focus on onomatopoeic or symbolic nouns such as الطامة, الصـاخة, القارعــة, الصاعقة, to mention a few, to show how the approximity of sounds and rhythms can develop the sense of the image and thus represent an array of implicatiions and associations that are inaccessible in the ordinary dictionaries.

عيوب ترجمة بكثال لظلال الأصوات ومعناها في القرآن

محمد أحمد القرعان، قسم الترجمة، جامعة اليرموك، إربـد، الأردن.

ملخص

تبدو ترجمة الأصوات من العربية إلى الإنجليزية مهمة عسيرة على المترجم؛ لأن دلالة الصوت العربي توحي بتعدد المعاني التي قد لا يحيط بها المترجم. إذ يعمد المترجم غالبا إلى الأخذ بمعنى واحد متجاهلا المعاني والإيحاءات الأخرى للصوت. وهذا يتأتى من جهل المترجم بالنظام الصوتي العربي، أي بوظائف الأصوات، وطرائق لفظها، ومن ثم قدرتها على التعبير عن ظلال المعاني في الأصوات. وبناء على ما تقدم، تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استقصاء بعض عيوب الترجمة التي وقع فيها بكثال في ترجمة معاني الأصوات في القرآن الكريم، والتدليل والبرهنة على أن أصوات الكلمات لا تحاكي الأصوات الطبيعية التي تشابهها فحسب، بل تعد وسيلة لبلوغ الأثر المنشود من المعنى المتأتي من إيقاع الصوت ومخارج لفظه. وتختم الدراسة بإبداء مجموعة من التوصيات والاقتراحات لذوي الاهتمام في ترجمة القرآن الكريم.

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