

Rhetorical and Phonetic Function of Elision and Ellipsis in the Quran with Some Reference to English

Gatie Niema Risan al-Hilfy
Faculty of Education, Muthanna University, IRAQ

ABSTRACT

Elision and ellipsis are found in world languages. Both mean leaving out or dropping parts of words or utterances. As far as Arabic is concerned, elision relates to dropping sounds and single letters whether in isolation or in the case of one-letter particles while ellipsis relates to dropping parts of speech and complete sentences but for the sake of enhancing the inimitability and sublime style of the Qur'ān. Ellipsis in Arabic and the Qur'ān in particular has a special rhetorical function which is totally absent in English since authoritative lexicons exclude its effect on meaning which is the corner-stone of rhetoric. This study concentrates on the rhetorical function of these two terms or concepts in the Qur'ān, which is employing both devices to enhance its inimitability and the superiority of its text over all other literary texts. Extensive verses have been given in original Arabic accompanied by their transliteration alongside their translations into English by three well-known translators to check whether the translator of the Qur'ān captures the fine function of elision or ellipsis or not. The study shows that some translators have managed to do so while others have failed to trace this fine rhetorical device. As far as English is concerned, the study argues counter to the commonest definitions of elision and ellipsis, by assuming that both elision and ellipsis have no role in any rhetorical function. The neutralisation of these two terms is caused by a "stiff", non-flexible and maybe artificial writing system which hinders the natural actualisation of letters into sounds matching their written form. Accordingly, the English writing system is considered defective because it allows consonant clusters to thrive at the expense of natural alternation of consonant and vowels which is crucial for the natural flow of Arabic speech which has helped in committing the whole Qur'ān to memory with little effort. The researcher supports this argument by referring to the physiological fact that the speech organs cannot produce two or even more consonants from the same point of articulation at the same time. The language of the Qur'ān, therefore, is largely superior to English because the latter neutralises the linguistic and rhetorical role of these two concepts in sharp contrast to Arabic.

Key words: elision, ellipsis, Qur'ān, rhetoric, cohesion, consonant clusters, Arabic

INTRODUCTION

According to Arab grammarians *ḥadhf*, lit. elision or ellipsis, etymologically means the act of leaving out or discarding and by usage it means leaving out part of the speech or utterance. However al-Zarkashī refers to dropping or leaving out a one-letter particle (or a sound) as *qaṭc*. (al-Zarkashī, 1999, 3:120.) However, the term *ḥadhf* seems to be the general term for both elision and ellipsis. It is when this term is subdivided into "minute" elements that a kind of distinction is made. Accordingly, Arabic authoritative lexicons distinguish three notions or concepts for *ḥadhf*.

Ibn Manẓūr (1999, 3:93-94) mentions these three concepts or meanings as follows: The *qaṭf* lit. snatching, *qatc*, lit. cutting off and *isqāt*, lit. dropping.

Al-Khalīl (1988, 3:201) adopts the first concept i.e. *qaṭf*, while the second concept is adopted by Ibn Duraid (1345 A.H., 2:128) and the third meaning by al-Jawhari (1999, 4:38). All these views are supported by examples from the classical speech of the Arabs. The *ḥadhf*, therefore, encompasses these three sub-meanings or concepts. The three terms are interchangeable and cannot be used as a basis for differentiating between ellipsis and elision in English because there is no reference as to whether the concepts or terms are restricted to "snatching, cutting off or dropping" particles or vowels as meant by elision or larger construction such as sentences or complete clauses as meant by ellipsis.

However, Sibawayh, the renowned grammarian, uses two terms which are *idmār* lit "suppression" and *ḥadhf*, but he uses them interchangeably for all linguistic levels (Hammūdāh, 1998, 19-20)

Now we are moving to examine the views of rhetoricians over this issue. It is clear that rhetoric is much concerned with the pragmatic and semantic aspects of the term *ḥadhf*. They are less concerned with its linguistic meaning. They stick to what they call frequent usage and as such the term for them is necessitated by brevity and concision especially as the Quranic text is concerned.

Al-Jurjānī, the "father" of rhetoric, (Dhayf, 1965, 160; Sallūm, 1981, 347), outlines the process of *ḥadhf* as regards the superiority of the Quranic text over other literary texts as follows: cited in (al-Liḥeibi, 1999, 276.).

"Whenever a noun or a verb has been ellipted and the indication of its position has been gauged correctly and has been ellipted in a situation where it should be ellipted, you will find that its ellipsis in that situation is better than its being mentioned."

From the rhetorical point of view elision in Arabic is considered one of the "smart" Quranic styles of expression

which played a conspicuous role in depicting the Quranic images According to al-Jurjānī, "It (i.e. elision) represents an adequate method, nice undertaking, wonderful affair closer to magic because through it one finds that leaving out (something) is of more eloquence than making mention of that thing." (al-Jurjānī, 1961, 95-96)

Rhetoricians state in defense of the Quranic style of elision that making mention of the word is the rule while leaving it out or dropping it is the exception.; thus elision must have a wise reason hiding eloquence behind it.

On the other hand, the celebrated linguist Ibn Jinnī considers elision as the "courage of the Arabic language" (al-Zarkashi, 1999, 3, 119-120)

The expression "courage of the Arabic language" is clarified by Ibn Jinnī as follows: elision means leaving out some parts of the speech which "encourages" the speaker to go ahead or ask for more. This has been mentioned by al-Suyūfī who explains that "Ibn Jinnī called elision a kind of the courage of Arabic because it encourages one to speak more." (al-Suyūfī, 1988, 1, 234)

The second reason for considering elision as a type of courage of Arabic is due to the fact that elision is a sublime style which is mainly applied by master rhetoricians whose speech is unlike ordinary people. So the person whose speech implies elision resembles a courageous or brave man who performs things not performed by others." (al-calawī, (n.d), 2, 131-132)

As far as the elision consistency with the speech of the Arabs, Arab grammarians and rhetoricians as well confirm that this stylistic device is in line with the classical speech of the Arabs.

So when Abu Obaidah explains the Quranic verse

" وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَسْرُ / الفجر 4

Transliteration: *Waallayli itha yasri* / Chapter 89, v4

Translation 1: And the night when it departs / M.H. Shakir

Translation 2: And by the Night when it passeth away/ Abdullah Yusuf Ali,

Translation 3: And the night when it departeth /M.M.Pickthall

he states that the Arabs leave out this *yā* (i.e. original يَسْرِي) when it is in the nominative. An example of this is when the Arabs say

لَا أُدْرِ *lā 'adri*, (Sazkīn, n.d, 253-254.)

Types of Elision

Elision has many types and all are relevant to understanding this phenomenon better.

Though Arab grammarians distinguish between optional and obligatory elision, we shall go straightforward to the types of elision as commonly shared by grammarians.

These types are as follows:

1. Rhetorical Elision
2. Phonetic Elision (dealing mainly with sounds or letters deletion)
3. Noun Elision
4. Verb Elision
5. Elision of a complete grammatical construction or whole clause.

All these types are studied normally under ellipsis except the second type because it deals with sound and single letters which are sometimes independent particles.

1. Rhetorical Elision

As a matter of fact all types of elision mentioned above have a rhetorical function as far as the Quranic style is concerned: no phonetic or syntactic technique is used in the Quran without a function in confirmation of its inimitability. All these types have been employed to achieve this objective.

Yet we are studying the cases independently just to show the difference between one type and the other.

So a rhetorical elision can cover examples containing particle elision, noun elision and so on and so forth.

The very function of rhetorical elision is to achieve an effect in addition to the very nature of elision which is concision and brevity.

Thus a hearer can recover some elements by judging the intention of the speaker such as making generalisations irony, intentionally leaving out something vague etc.

Examples: اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ / الفاتحة 6

Transliteration: *ihdina alssirata almustaqeema* / Chapter 1 v.6

Translation 1: Keep us on the right path/ M.H. Shakir

Translation 2: Show us the straight way./ Abdullah Yusuf Ali

Translation 3: Show us the straight path/ M. M. Pickthall

In English many translations can be provided here since the Arabic construction is missing. The missing element is the preposition (إلى *lā*) lit. "to" which normally accompanies the verb " *ihdina*" which is in its turn " transitive

through a preposition" as the Arab grammarians put it.

The rationale behind this intentional elision as provided by the exegetes of the Quran as follows:

The "guidance or keeping on" does not only mean "to be shown" the right path but

also to keep us on the right path. This a rhetorical device. Here the accuracy of the translations is judged in which case translating " *ihdina*" as "keep...on" is supposed to be more accurate and closer to the original Arabic text.(Darrir ,2007).

This elision can be contrasted with the manifestation of the verb هَدَى "to guide" with the preposition "إلى" lit."to"
وَهُدُوا إِلَى الطَّيِّبِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ/ الحج 24

Transliteration: Wahudoo ilā alṭṭayyibi mina alqawli/ Chapter22 v.24

Translation1: And they are guided to goodly words/ M.H. Shakir

Translation2: For they have been guided (in this life) to the purest of speeches/ Abdullah Yusuf Ali

Translation3: They are guided unto gentle speech/M.M. Pickthall

We notice here that the preposition "إلى" is "naturally" used. This does not mean that the verse has no eloquence; to the contrary the manifestation of this preposition serves in this verse a rhetorical function which makes its manifestation more eloquent than its elision according to the context of the verse and its grammatical surroundings.

2. Phonetic Elision

Phonetic elision covers specifically the deletion or omission of a particle or a letter leaving something indicating the process of elision:

Example:

"وسيق الذين كفروا إلى جهنم زمراً حتى إذا جاءوها فُتحت أبوابها"/ الزمر 71

Transliteration: Waseeqa allatheena kafaroo ilā jahannama zumaran ḥatta itha jaooḥa futiḥat abwabuḥa/ Chapter 39.v.71

Translation1: And those who disbelieve shall be driven to hell in companies; until, when they come to it, its doors shall be opened/M.H. Shakir)

Translation2: The Unbelievers will be led to Hell in crowd: until, when they arrive, there, its gates will be opened/Abdullah Yusuf Ali

Translation3: And those who disbelieve are driven unto hell in troops till, when they reach it and the gates thereof are opened/ M.M. Pickthall

The verb " *futiḥat*" lit. "to be opened" in the passive is used with the coordinating conjunction "wa" lit. "and". But in a nearby verse in the same chapter, the whole text is repeated with the coordinating particle annexed, just because of a replacement of one word instead of another:

وسيق الذين اتقوا ربهم إلى الجنة زمراً حتى إذا جاءوها فُتحت أبوابها/ الزمر 73

Transliteration: Waseeqa allatheena ittaqaw rabbahum ilā aljannati zumaran ḥatta itha jaooḥa wafutiḥat abwabuḥa/Chapter 39v.73

Translation1: And those who are careful of (their duty to) their Lord shall be conveyed to the garden in companies; until when they come to it, and its doors shall be opened /M. H. Shakir

Translation2:And those who feared their Lord will be led to the Garden in crowds: until behold, they arrive there; its gates will be opened/Abdullah Yusuf Ali

Translation3: And those who disbelieve are driven unto hell in troops till, when they reach it and the gates thereof are opened/M.M. Pickthall

The conjunction *waw* (*wa* = and) is not annexed to the verb *futiḥat*(to be opened) while in verse 73 the same verb contains *wa* (i.e. *wafutiḥat* (and+to be opened).

According to al-Jurjānī, the difference in meaning stems from the sharp distinction between those who disbelieve(Ar. *allatheena kafaroo*) in verse 71, and those who fear their Lord (*allatheena ittaqaw rabbahum*) in verse 73.The *waw* means that the gates of paradise were already opened for those who feared their Lord whereas the gates of fire hell are opened upon the immediate arrival of those who disbelieve. (al-Zarkashi ,1999, 3:223-224)

So the elision of the conjunction *waw* as well as attaching it serve a very delicate rhetorical function. This is also part of the inimitability of the Quran.

A second example which applies similarly can be found in the following verses:

First Verse:

"لا يَجِزُ لَكَ النِّسَاءُ مِنْ بَعْدُ وَلَا أَنْ تَبَدَّلَ بِهِنَّ مِنْ أَزْوَاجٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكَ حُسْنُهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ يَمِينُكَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ رَاقِبًا ۖ" /الأحزاب 52

Transliteration: La yahillu laka alnnisao min baAAadu wala an tabaddala bihinna min azwajin walaw aAAajabaka husnuhunna illa ma malakat yameenuka wakana Allahu AAala kulli shayin raqeeban/ Chapter 33,v.52

Translation1: It is not allowed to you to take women afterwards, nor that you should change them for other wives, though their beauty be pleasing to you, except what your right hand possesses and Allah is Watchful over

all things/ M. H. Shakir.

Translation2:It is not lawful for thee (to marry more) women after this, nor to change them for (other) wives, even though their beauty attract thee, except any thy right hand should possess (as handmaidens): and Allah doth watch over all things./Abdullah Yusuf Ali

Translation3: It is not allowed thee to take (other) women henceforth, nor that thou shouldst change them for other wives even though their beauty pleased thee, save those whom thy right hand possesseth. And Allah is ever Watcher over all things/M.M.Pickthall

Second Verse:

وَأْتُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ أَمْوَالَهُمْ ۖ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْخَبِيثَ بِالطَّيِّبِ ۖ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَمْوَالِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حُوبًا كَبِيرًا/ النساء2

Transliteration: *Waqoo alyatama amwalahum wala tatabaddaloo alkhabeetha bialtayyibi wala takuloo amwalahum ila amwalikum innahu kana hooban kab/eraan/Chapter 4,v.2*

Translation1: And give to the orphans their property, and do not substitute worthless (things) for (their) good (ones), and do not devour their property (as an addition) to your own property; this is surely a great crime./M.H. Shakir

Translation2: To orphans restore their property (When they reach their age), nor substitute (your) worthless things for (their) good ones; and devour not their substance (by mixing it up) with your own. For this is indeed a great sin/Abdullah Yusuf Ali

Translation3: Give unto orphans their wealth. Exchange not the good for the bad (in your management thereof) nor absorb their wealth into your own wealth. Lo! that would be a great sin./M.M. Pickthall

The evidence here comes from the two verbs *tabaddala* and *tatabaddala* respectively where the prefix "*ta*" is attached to the second one.

The meaning is not far from the previous two verses.(al-Samarāī , 2000, 12)

3.Elision of the Noun:

Eliding or omitting the noun relates normally to the syntactic or grammatical construction since the noun is used in the position of a subject, predicate, object etc.

But the elision here has a rhetorical effective function which attracted the Arab master rhetoricians to the miraculous and inimitable nature of the Quran.

Example:

سُورَةٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهَا/ النور 1

Transliteration: *Sooratun anzalnahal/Chapter 24,v.1*

Translation 1 : (This is) a chapter which We have revealed(M.H. Shakir)

Translation 2: A sura which We have sent down(Abdullah Yusuf Ali)

Translation3: (Here is) a surah which We have revealed/M. M. Pickthall

According to Arab grammarians, the Quranic sentence is missing in one part of it which means that the sentence will have more than one " structural description" according to transformational grammarians.

Translation 1&3 may be more accurate and closer to the Arabic text because the translators have provided in parentheses the missing part which is the subject for the predicate in a nominal Arabic sentence.

The rationale behind this intentional elision is attributed to the clarity of the structure to draw the attention of the hearer that this is a speech immediately following another.(al-Zarkashi,1999,.3,15) .See also .(Ibn ʿāshūr, n.d, 289). A similar example where the subject is left out is:

ثُلَّةٌ مِنَ الْأُولَىٰ/ الواقعة13

Transliteration: *Thullatun mina alawwaleena/Chapter 56 v.13*

Translation1: A numerous company from among the first/M.H. Shakir

Translation2: A number of people from those of old,(Abdullah Yusuf Ali)

Translation3: A multitude of those of old/M.M. Pickthall

It is noticed in all three translations that the translators have not taken into consideration the intentional elision where the subject of a predicate in a nominal sentence is missing which is provided as *hum*, Ar. They .(Ibn ʿāshūr ,n. d,289)

The reverse also is applicable in the sense that the predicate of a subject in a nominal sentence is elided.

Example:

وَالسَّارِقُ وَالسَّارِقَةُ فَاقْطَعُوا أَيْدِيَهُمَا/ آل عمران 38

Transliteration: *Waalssariqu waalssariqatu faiqtalAAoo aydiyahumal/ Chapter 5,v.38*

Translation1: And (as for) the man who steals and the woman who steals, cut off their hands/M.H. Shakir

Translation2: As to the thief, Male or female, cut off his or her hands /Abdullah Yusuf Ali

Translation3:As for the thief, both male and female, cut off their hands/M. M. Pickthall

Certainly all translations are neither accurate nor closer to the Arabic text because they (translations) do not show that an integral part of the Quranic sentence is missing for rhetorical purposes. Sibawayh provides the

elided predicate as "in what is reciting among you". Other grammarians argue differently but Sibawayh view is given more prominence. (al-Zarkashi ,1999, 3:166) which makes the translation as follows:

"In what I am reciting among you(subject) (is that) *alssariqu waalssariqatu*(predicate)"

This also shows in passing that translators of the Quran are unable to convey to non-Arabic reader the rhetorical devices employed by the Quran.

A Similar example can be found in the following two verse:

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا هِيَ/ الفارعة 10

Transliteration: *Wama adraḳa mā hiyah* /Chapter101,v.10

Translation1: And what will make you know what it is?/M.H. Shakir

Translation2: And what will explain to thee what this is?/ Abdullah Yusuf Ali

Translation3: Ah, what will convey unto thee what she is!/M. M .Pickthall

In addition to so many verses scattered throughout the Quran confirming the inimitability of the Quran in an open challenge to the Arab master rhetoricians who were forced to bow in admiration to this unrivalled eloquence throughout their literary history.

4.Elision of the Verb:

The elision of the verb strongly indicates many rhetorical and syntactic phenomena which have attracted the attention of many Quranic researchers whether in Arabic or foreign languages:

Examples:

وَيَوْمَ يُعْرَضُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا عَلَى النَّارِ أَلَّذِينَ ظَلَمْتُمْ فِي حَيَاتِكُمُ الدُّنْيَا/ الأحقاف 20

Transliteration: *Wayawma yuAraḍu allatheena kafaroo AAala alnnari athhabtum tayyibatikum fee hayatikum alddunya* / Chapter 46 V20

Translation1: And on the day when those who disbelieve shall be brought before the fire: You did away with your good things in your life of the world/ M.H. Shakir

Translation2: And on the Day that the Unbelievers will be placed before the Fire, (It will be said to them): "Ye received your good things in the life of the world/Abdullah Yusuf Ali

Translation3: And on the day when those who disbelieve are exposed to the Fire (it will be said): Ye squandered your good things in the life of the world/M.M. Pickthall

The verb here is understood and supplied as "فَقِيلَ لَهُمْ" *faqīla lahum* "Ar." And(then)said unto them". Two translators have provided the missing or elided verb.

According to the exegetes of the Quran ,this rhetorical elision depicts what happened and since what happened was their "placing before" or "bringing before" or "exposing to" their Lord in rows which means that they(disbelievers) heard the reprimand which was at the same time a concealed process, then this has necessitated that the verb should be concealed to fit the situation.(al-Rāzī ,1981, 13,200-201)

A second example can be found in the verse:

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ اسْوَدَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ أَكْفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ/ آل عمران 106

Transliteration: *faamma allatheena iswaddat wujoohuhum akafartum baAAda eemanikum fathooqoo alAAathaba bima kuntum takfuroona/* Chapter 3 v,106

Translation1: then as to those whose faces turn black: Did you disbelieve after your believing? Taste therefore the chastisement because you disbelieved/ M.H. Shakir

Translation2: and some faces will be (in the gloom of) black: To those whose faces will be black, (will be said): "Did ye reject Faith after accepting it? Taste then the penalty for rejecting Faith./ Abdulla Yusuf Ali

Translation3: And as for those whose faces have been blackened, it will be said unto them: Disbelieved ye after your (profession of) belief? Then taste the punishment for that ye disbelieved./M.M. Pickthall

The elided verb is provided as follows:" Then it will be said unto them, did you disbelieve?"

As for the particle "أما" *amma* ,Ar."as for", it requires the connective "فأ",Ar."then" accompanied by the suppression of the verb. So, the elision here is rhetorically good because the general speech or context refers to it. (al-Gharnāṭī,1983, 1:334-335). As for the accuracy of the translations, we notice that only two translators have provided in parentheses the elided element which means that the rhetoric of the English sentence does not relate so much to ellipsis or elision as it is in Arabic.

5.Elision of a Whole Clause or a Complete Construction

This type of elision may be unique to the Quran or Arabic in particular, to the exclusion of many world languages, as a rhetorical device.

The following example is about a sentence elision:

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ رَضُوا مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ سَيُؤْتِينَا اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَرَسُولُهُ إِنَّا إِلَى اللَّهِ رَاغِبُونَ/التوبة59

Transliteration: *Walaw annahum raḍoo mā atahumu Allahu warasooluhu waqaloo hasbuna Allahu sayuteena Allahu min fadlihi warasooluhu inna ila Allahi raghiboona/* Chapter 9,v.59

Translation1: And if they were content with what Allah and His Messenger gave them, and had said: Allah is

sufficient for us; Allah will soon give us (more) out of His grace and His Messenger too; surely to Allah do we make our petition./M.H. Shakir

Translation2: If only they had been content with what Allah and His Messenger gave them, and had said, "Sufficient unto us is Allah! Allah and His Messenger will soon give us of His bounty: to Allah do we turn our hopes!" (that would have been the right course)./ Abdulla Yusuf Ali

Translation3: (How much more seemly) had they been content with that which Allah and His messenger had given them and had said: Allah sufficeth us. Allah will give us of His bounty, and (also) His messenger. Unto Allah we are suppliants/M. M. Pickthall

This is a Quranic incomplete conditional sentence in which the whole apodosis is elided and supplied as "لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ *lakāna khayran lahum*", Ar. "it would have been better for them" (al-Ṭibirsī, n. d.,5,63). See also (al-Zamakhsharī, n.d.,2,269)

This elision, however, has been captured only by two translations as provided between parentheses.

It is worth mentioning here that the elided sentence is not supplied haphazardly (al-Makhzūmī, 1986, 289); rather, it should be consistent with the rules of the Arabic verbal sentence especially with conditional sentences because they have a protosis and an apodosis.

The same method and analysis of elided apodosis and even protosis in Arabic conditional sentence apply to "جمل القسم", Ar. "Oath Sentences"

Comparing Arabic and English Ellipsis and Elision

In English a clear-cut distinction is made between ellipsis and elision since the former applies to sentences or constructions larger than a single sound or letter; whereas elision applies to sounds or letters which makes it totally different from Arabic especially as far as the rhetorical function is concerned.

The commonest definition of elision in English is that by David Crystal who defines it as follows:

"A term used in phonetics and phonology to refer to the omission of sounds in connected speech. Both consonants and vowels may be affected, and sometimes whole syllables may be elided. Unstressed grammatical words, such as *and* and *of*, are particularly prone to be elided" (Crystal, 1988, 166)

Crystal extends his definition to include rhetoric in English by stating that:

"Traditional rhetoric was much concerned with the phenomenon of elision, because of the implications for constructing well-formed metrical lines, which would scan well. In rhetorical terminology, an elision in word-initial position was known as aphaeresis, or aposiopesis, in word medial position as syncope, and in word-final position as apocope. (Ibid.).

We are mentioning below the converse of elision which is *liaison* as defined by Peter Roach:

"The insertion of an extra sound in order to facilitate the articulation of the sequence." (Roach, 2000, 77)

I will argue as far as elision, and not ellipsis, is concerned that such a definition is an unreal and unnatural defense of a defective writing system in English in particular though this applies to all writing systems written in the non-Arabic script.

This may be judged by some linguists as against the Universals of world languages promulgated mainly by generative grammarians. But I do hope scholars will examine this claim in a good-will spirit.

The whole argument is based on the fact that "horrible" consonant clusters are the main obstacle in establishing a flexible phonetic system derived if not greatly identical with the English writing system. All English linguists do not want to acknowledge this simple fact of which they make mention from time to time unknowingly.

If we examine Roach's definition above of **liaison**, we shall discover on the spot that the English writing system is defective to such an extent that it cannot be equated with its phonetic system or manifestation.

All examples that are cited as elision examples reflect this problem.

David Crystal gives for his definition above the following examples:

"Cup of tea" which becomes in connected speech "cuppa tea" and "boys and girls" as "boys 'n' girls" etc.

This is completely in line with Arabic phonology which does not allow two consonants to follow one another except in a pause. It also never allows a sentence to begin with a single consonant. This is unique to Arabic and it is axiomatic in the Arabic sound system.

Once again, we can easily detect that elision is used as a "justification" for the continuity of a "haphazard" writing system that is breaking away with its phonetic realisation. Another scholar claims that "elision is a natural result of the speech organs cutting corners in connected speech, mainly to word boundaries." (Underhill, 1998, 61)

All these definitions represent an open escape from a writing system that is always in clash with its phonetic manifestation which is supposed to be realised naturally whether in rapid speech or normal speech. There is nothing that can be accepted as rapid speech. The best term the researcher is suggesting here is "actualised" speech. Normally, foreign learners of a language describe native language speech as rapid because of their immature mastery of the pronunciation of that language. If we accept the term "rapid speech", this means we are

converting the speech in any language into no more than pronouncing words in isolation.

So, words infested with consonant clusters are the main problem hindering producing a natural flexible speech:

Examples:

Handsome →/hændsəm/ →/ hænsəm/

It is claimed here that the /d/ sound is elided which is not true. It is not only the heaviness of two adjacent consonants to be pronounced at the same time ; rather the impossibility of doing so because it means that speech organs move to two points of articulations at the same time which is impossible. In our example above, if we want to keep the/d/ not elided , this means the concerned speech organs move to produce both/d/ and/s/ sounds from the same point of articulation.

All examples on elision can be explained exactly in the same method.

We are left only with the second part of elision which is according to *The World Book Dictionary*" the suppression of a vowel or a syllable and generally consists in cutting a vowel at the end of a word when the next word begins with a vowel as in " 'th' inevitable hour" (Barnhard ,1987)

The researcher believes that this has nothing to do with elision as explained above simply because this may be a tendency rather than a rule since it has nothing to do with consonants clash. This tendency could be traced back to the influence of French after the Norman Conquest. This applies whether this elision is " aphaeresis, aposiopesis, syncope or apocope "

As for the last part of David Crystal's definition as regards the implications of elision for constructing well-formed metrical lines, it again confirms that as long as English cannot rid itself of consonant clusters, no harmonious rhythmic system can be arrived at because metre exposes consonant clusters since it(i.e. metre) is the alternate combination of vowels and consonants without the slightest hindrance. Evidence in favour of this argument can be derived from Arabic poetry or Arabic rhythm where a metre can be "mastered and intenalised" paving the way for a "Theory of Metre Acquisition".(al-Hilfy,1988,12-39),*passim*.

So, we can safely say that elision in English has no resemblance to Arabic "elision" which has rhetorical and linguistic dimensions especially as far as the inimitability of the Quran is concerned.

Now we move to ellipsis which may not be different from elision in its relation to what is used in Arabic.

Again according to the World Book Dictionary, ellipsis is " 1.mark(...or***) used to show an omission as in writing or printing.2.The omission of a word or words needed to complete the grammatical construction but NOT the meaning of a sentence. Example: "She is as tall as her brother " instead " She is as tall as her brother is tall"(Emphasis is mine).

We can safely now dismiss ellipsis as a rhetorical device whether when compared with Arabic "ellipsis" or when traced in English literature since it has nothing to do with meaning. The researcher may refer to it as "playfulness", if the definition above is scrutinised .

Nothing" intercedes" for this definition to be classified as part of eloquence or rhetoric even though Halliday and Hassan included ellipsis within their *Cohesion in English*.

Halliday and Hassan defines ellipsis on the basis of its being a" substitution by zero" and refer to it as something understood and when they try to explain the term "understood" , they restrict it to the special sense of "it goes without saying". According to them an item is ellipted "when its structure expresses all the features that have gone into its make-up." (Halliday and Hassan,1976,142-144)

Therefore, any comparison of *Cohesion in English* with Al-Jurjani's *Dala'il Al'jazz* is totally irrelevant though some modern Arab and non-Arab linguists try earnestly to establish such a comparison, especially for such scholars who consider al-Jurjānī to be the "father" of Arabic rhetoric.

But as a matter of fact, the difference between al-Jurjānī's approach to ellipsis and that of Halliday and Hassan is so huge to such an extent that it renders any comparison unviable due to the fact that " al-Jurjānī attaches more importance to the rhetorical purposes of ellipsis while Halliday and Hassan do not mention this at all. This is because al-Jurjānī's studies are concerned with the question of eloquence " (al-Liheibi, 1999,282)

Conclusion

This research has discussed elision and ellipsis in Arabic and its function in the rhetoric of the Quran to confirm its inimitability. Elision has been restricted to leaving out a letter or a particle whereas ellipsis has been applied to leaving out or dropping a word or more words including complete clauses and construction.

All verses cited under elision or ellipsis have proved that these two terms are used intentionally to enhance the imitability of the Quranic style especially in the case of ellipsis where various types have been discussed .

When examining elision in English, the researcher has argued that it has nothing to do with eloquence; it is a clash of consonants reflected in deleting one of the consonants because speech organs cannot produce two consonants or sounds from the same point of articulation.

For ellipsis, the term has been shun as irrelevant to rhetoric since its definition in English shows that it has no bearing on meaning which is the corner-stone of rhetoric or eloquence.

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الوظيفة البلاغية والصوتية للحذف في القرآن الكريم مع بعض الإشارات للغة الانكليزية

مدرس كاطع نعمة رسن الحلفي
كلية التربية / جامعة المثنى

ملخص

يناقش هذا البحث موضوع الحذف في القرآن الكريم مع بعض الإشارات للغة الانكليزية التي يحاج الباحث ضد وجود الحذف فيها كموضوع ذي وخلص consonant clusters علاقة بالبلاغة بل وحتى النحو الانكليزي لأسباب تعود بالدرجة الأولى إلى وجود ما يسمى بالصوامت العنقودية يقابل تعسفا الحذف العربي حيث أنه لا الأول ولا الثاني له تأثير elision و ellipsis إلى أن الحذف الانكليزي المعبر عنه بمصطلحين هما على معنى الجملة الانكليزية بنص تعاريف المراجع المعتبرة في تلك اللغة. وبالتالي فإن ما يسمى "حذفا" في اللغة الانكليزية ليس إلا حالة اتحاد ساكنين أو أكثر وهو ما لا تسمح به اللغة العربية اتساقا مع طبيعة النطق البشري حيث لا يمكن انتاج صوتين من مخرج واحد وفي أن واحد. أما فقد رده الباحث كذلك واعتبره نزعة لا بابا نحويا ورجح أن elision التي تعتبرها اللغة الانكليزية حذفا وتطلق عليه vowels حذف حروف العلة تكون هذه النزعة بقايا من تأثير الغزو النورماندي الذي يستحوذ على كثير من أبواب اللغة الانكليزية لحد الآن. والحذف لدى النحاة العرب مقسم هو الآخر إلى قطف وقطع وإسقاط غير أن هذه المصطلحات الثلاثة تستخدم بصورة تبادلية أو مترادفية وظل المصطلح الغالب على تغطيتها جميعا هو مصطلح الحذف الذي يمثل اسلوبا متقدما وأصيلا على طريق الإعجاز القرآني بلاغيا ولغويا. وغطي البحث جميع ألوان الحذف مدعومة بالآيات القرآنية الكريمة مع كتابة كل آية صوتيا بالحروف الرومانية ووضع ثلاث ترجمات مشهورة لكل آية كي يتم الحكم على دقة الترجمة من عدمها في النقاط مواضع الحذف في القرآن الكريم. وظهر بين الفينة والأخرى أن بعض المترجمين نجحوا في نقل المحذوف للقارئ الانكليزي بوضعه بين قوسين في حين لم ينجح البعض الآخر وإن ظلت الآية المترجمة مفهومة للقارئ الأجنبي.

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