

On dealing with Shakespeare's wordplay in Enani's translations.

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Abstract. The ability of human language to signify and make sense is infinite. From a limited number of sounds and letters, large numbers of word are created. From a limited number of words, a huge number of meanings and senses can be created, for different purposes and effects. This ability, this productivity of human language, becomes even more infinite when language is used by a great master of words such as William Shakespeare. One way language can produce multiple meanings is wordplay. Wordplay is language-specific and therefore very hard to translate. This article examines some strategies used by Muhammad Enani in translating Shakespeare's wordplay into Arabic. The examination is done against a background of the strategies proposed by Delabastita for handling it.

Keywords: wordplay – pun (paronomasia) - Shakespeare's wordplay – Enani's translations – translating wordplay (Delabastita)

مستخلص

التلاعب اللفظي في تراجم عناني لشكسبير

تعتبر قدرة اللغة البشرية لا نهائية في تحديد المعنى ومغزاه. وكذلك في تكوين معاني مختلفة وجديدة. فمن عدد محدود من الأصوات والحروف يمكن تكوين عدد كبير من الكلمات، وبالمثل فمن عدد محدود من الكلمات نستطيع تكوين عدد كبير من الجمل، واستنباط وخلق عدد ضخم من المعاني المختلفة في أثرها والغرض منها. ومن ثم اضافته بعد جديد يزيد من ثراء العمل الادبي. تلك القدرة البشرية الهائلة في التكوين والابداع والخلق اللغوي تصبح لا نهائية في أثرها عندما يستخدمها مبدع عظيم وفنان متمكن مثل وليم شكسبير. أحد تلك الطرق هي التلاعب اللفظي والذي يعتبر صفة مميزة وخاصية لغوية فريدة يصعب ترجمتها. وتدرس هذه المقالة بعض من الاستراتيجيات التي استخدمها محمد عناني في ترجمته المتميزة والمتفردة للتلاعب اللفظي في أعمال شكسبير الى اللغة العربية. هذه الدراسة تمت في ضوء الاستراتيجيات المختلفة التي حددها ديلابستيتا (Delabastita) لتناول التلاعب اللفظي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تلاعب لفظي – تورية – جناس) – التلاعب اللفظي عند شكسبير – تراجم عناني –

ترجمة التلاعب اللفظي – ديلابستيتا (Delabastita)

1. Introduction

1.1. Wordplay (Paronomasia)

Wordplay, or play-on-words, technically called paronomasia (which is, more accurately, just one type of wordplay), means the different uses of a word or means using words similar in sound for achieving a particular effect as dual meaning or humor. A common term for it is punning. It may be used in creating antithetical constructions, or using the same word twice with two different meanings.

To elaborate, wordplay, synecdochally known as paronomasia, sometimes also called *agnomination*, is a play upon words which sound alike. It means the use of puns which is based on different meanings of a word. The origin of the word is the Greek *para*, morphologically transformed into *paro*, meaning "beside," and *onoma*, meaning "name." In other words, paronomasia exists "beside" another word and can be confused for it. (<https://study.com/learn/lesson/paronomasia-forms-examples.html>.) For example, "I gave a math test to the animals, but one of them was a notorious cheetah who is always spotted." The "cheetah" sounds like "cheater" and also fits the linguistic context surrounding it – the context of "a math test".

For Delabastita (1996), "Wordplay is the general name for the various textual phenomena in which structural features of the language(s) used are exploited to bring about a communicatively significant confrontation of two (or more) linguistic structures with more or less similar forms and more or less different meanings."

1.2. Functions of Wordplay

According to Leech (1969), the recurrent use of wordplay in literary works is very important to attribute to the writer of any literary work the benefit of the doubt. A more profound explanation of wordplay is found in Pope (2012) who argues that "it is also possible to regard a large part of all language use as a form of play". Uses of language are not mainly concerned with "the instrumental conveying of information at all", but mainly with "the social *interplay* embodied in the activity itself. In fact, in a narrowly instrumental, purely informational sense most language use is no use at all." (p. 246)

Wordplay can provide a comic relief at moments of tension. Writing specifically on Shakespeare's wordplay, Mahood (2003) indicates that wordplay is "a game the Elizabethans played seriously", and used

repeatedly. Shakespeare "was destined by his age and education to play with words." (p. 9) This habit of paying with words was not approved by later poets and critics, but today, "we acclaim it": "Where the Augustans disapproved of Shakespeare's wordplay", because of their "cult in correctness and *le mot juste*" and "the Victorians ignored it, we now acclaim it." (pp. 9, 11)

2. Translating Wordplay

Wordplay is language-specific – and to say it is language-specific is also to say it is culture-specific, and consequently untranslatable, at least, hard to translate. In *The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh*, Christopher Robin has just attached Eeyore's tail with a nail, so Eeyore says, "It's not much of a tail, but I'm sort of attached to it" (Scholtes, 2016, p. 54).

The challenge is to produce an equivalent where "attached to" could mean "physically tied to" مربوط بـ and "emotionally attached to" مرتبط عاطفياً بـ. "Happy winds-day" poses the challenge of keeping the meaning of "Wednesday" and "winds-day." The word play can be broken down into "Happy windy Wednesday" "يوم أربعاء عاصف سعيد".

Delabastita (1996) mentions eight strategies for dealing with wordplay.

- 1) **Wordplay to wordplay** (pun > pun) , 2) **Wordplay to non-wordplay** (pun > non-pun) , 3) **Wordplay to related rhetorical device** (pun > non-pun) , 4) **Wordplay to zero** (omission) , 5) **Wordplay in ST = wordplay in TT** (borrowing) , 6) **Non-wordplay to wordplay** , 7) **Zero to wordplay** (addition) , and 8) **Editorial techniques** (additional information).

Translation of wordplay has received considerable research attention. Lalić-Krstin (2018), in his analysis of strategies of word play translation in English dystopian novels into serban, concludes that the translation is ludic, but he stresses the humorous aspects of wordplay. In the literary analysis of the literary works of Lewis Carroll he states that the most repeated type of wordplay used is 'paronymy' and the translation technique used is wordplay to non-wordplay or pun > non pun (62%). Delzendehrooy and Karimnia (2013) focus on modulation from SL to TL in translating wordplay in poetry.

Díaz-Pérez (2013) revises the translation of Shakespeare's sexual puns into Spanish with reference to the relevance theory and concludes that translators opt to translate literally in the cases where there is a coincidence

in the relation between the levels of signifier and signified across source and target language. In other cases, "the translator will have to assess what is more relevant, either content or the effect produced by the pun."

Scholtes (2016), using Delabastita's translation techniques of wordplay, examines the translation of wordplay in animated Disney movies into Dutch, highlighting the loss of wordplay in many cases. The study by Setyaningsih and Kurniawan (2021) discusses the wordplay translation in literary works especially in dystopian fiction, again using Delabastita's model. The data is derived from *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood as the source text and its subsequent translation into Bahasa Indonesia as the target text. The results show that the most frequently applied technique in wordplay translation is wordplay to non-wordplay, or pun > non-pun.

3. Enani's Translation of Wordplay

3.1. Generally Speaking

Enani's theory, based on a lifelong experience in translation, says that if the translator cannot find an idiom in the target language which relatively corresponds to one in the source language (pun > pun), he or she may give the reader the primary sense that they believe is intended pun > non-pun). In a literary work, such a primary sense can never adequately or satisfactorily do duty for the idiom in the source language, but it is a last resort solution. Sometimes a translator is lucky enough to find an idiomatic expression (or image) in one language that corresponds in general impression to another in a different language. This is more likely to occur in the case of what Cecil-Day Lewis calls "consecrated images" (*The Poetic Image*, 1947) by which he means universally significant objects, such as light and darkness, food and drink, heavenly objects and the like. Day will always refer to clarity, night to obscurity, as the following example shows:

وليس يصحّ في الأذهان شيء إذا احتاج النهار إلى دليل

and Pope's

Nature and nature's God lay hid in night,
God said Let Newton be, and all was light.

The symbolism of the moon, the stars, the sea and the desert will not change much in any culture, but the symbolism of the sea to islanders may

correspond to that of the desert for Saudi Arabians as W.H. Auden says in his *The Enchafed Flood*, 1950 (p. 21). This explains why Enani's imitation of Cassius' speech in *Julius Caesar* where he illustrates the human weakness of Caesar by showing his helplessness in the river, is replaced by a similar helplessness of the Sultan in the desert in *A Spy in the Sultan's Palace* (1990). Such cultural adaptation notwithstanding, the use of either symbol in another culture will be effective. Arab readers are likely to feel the significance of the sea in *The Ancient Mariner* (Coleridge, 1798) as English readers will grasp the magnificence of the desert in Wordsworth's dream in *The Prelude*, 1805, book 5. Usually opposed to such general symbolism, private poetic symbols or images are those used by individual poets, old and new, to represent their individual visions. Readers are familiar with Blake's "tiger" and "poison tree", as they are with T.S. Eliot's "rock" and "hollow men." The elements of private symbolism may, of course, be universal objects, but it is their use by the poets that sets them apart and associates them with their poets. "The mirror cracked from side to side" will always remind one of Tennyson, just as the "shattered lamp" will belong to none but Shelley.

3.2. Encounter with Shakespeare's Wordplay

Not so wordplay. Enani tells the story of his first encounter with Shakespearean wordplay. In 1964, whilst enjoying the varieties of style in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, he came across one of the "blunders of Bottom", so indicated in the original stage directions. Playing the part of Pyramus in the ramshackle play which the Athenian "mechanicals" were rehearsing in the wood, Bottom says, "beautiful flowers have an odious smell", but the prompter instantly shouts, "Odorous, not odious!" Enani substituted the Arabic words (عطنة) and (عطرة) for the English words respectively.

The next time he came across a similar malapropism was in *King Lear*. When Gloster informs Kent in a roundabout way that Edmund was illegitimate, Kent says, "I cannot conceive you" (I.i.11) (meaning he cannot get his meaning) and Gloster says that Edmund's mother could conceive Edmund (that is, have him in her womb) (line 12). Enani renders the exchange thus:

جلوستر: لا أدري على أي محمل أحمل كلامك
كنت: على نحو ما حملت فيه أمه!

3.3. *Lie* in Shakespeare's Comedies and Tragedies

Shakespeare's comedies abound in one type of wordplay - *double entendre* (تورية/ مزدوج المعنى) - with usually the primary sense innocuous and the secondary sense bawdy. In his *Shakespeare's Bawdy*, 1955, Eric Partridge lists scores of such puns, some of which may not be easy to interpret as bawdy. It is possible to say that the easy way to deal with them is for the translator to offer the sense more likely to be immediately grasped by the audience, bawdy or not. In deciding which of the two senses should have priority, the translator is guided by the context. For Enani, based on his experience, the two senses rarely vie for supremacy.

A ready example is the use of the verb *lie* in two senses. The first is to tell an untruth (verbal); the second is to lie down (physical), with bawdy implications. In *All's Well That Ends Well*, Parolles advises Helena, a gentlewoman serving the Countess, not to keep her virginity. He describes virginity as a "commodity [which] will lose the gloss with lying: the longer kept, the less worth" (I. i. 154-5). The obvious sense is *lying unused* (Partridge). Consequently, Enani's Arabic rendering is:

[العذرية] سلعة تفقد بريق نضارتها إن كسدت، وكلما طال حبسها قلت قيمتها. (ص ١٠٢)

The translator could, or ought to have said (إن أهملت) instead of (كسدت) but he clearly wanted to maintain the mercantile image, for the next sentence says "off with it while it is vendible; answer the time of request" which in Enani's translation reads:

فانبذوها ما دام يوجد مشتر لها. بيعيها ما دامت لها سوق

(cf. Gordon Williams, *A Glossary of Shakespeare's Sexual Language*, 1997). The physical sense, he says, outweighs the moral.

In *Antony and Cleopatra*, we see the clown who has the venomous asp ready (hidden in a basketful of figs) for the Queen's painless exit from this world. Pointing at the Nile serpent, the clown gives us a paradox, as though being Egyptian, his sense of humor is always present: he says that anyone who *dies of its bite* seldom or never recovers. Cleopatra enquires whether he knew of anyone who did die "on it". The clown says that he knew a "very honest woman, but something given to lie, as a woman should not do, but in

the way of honesty – but died of the biting of it.” “To lie” must mean to have sexual intercourse (V.ii.248-254). This is how Enani renders this segment:

المهرج: الذين يموتون من اللدغة نادرًا ما يُشفون... أو لا يُشفون أبدًا.
كليوباترا: هل تذكر أحدًا مات من اللدغة؟
المهرج: فعلاً... امرأة بالغة الفضيلة، وإن كانت دائبة المضاجعة، وهو ما
لا ينبغي للمرأة إلا في الحلال... ماتت من لدغته.

A similar interpretation of the pun, determined by the context, occurs in a number of plays translated by Enani. In *Measure for Measure*, the Duke succeeds in the end in carrying out a trick capable of getting the errant Angelo back to the wife he had jilted. He says

Craft against vice I must apply
With Angelo tonight shall lie
His old betrothed but despised
So disguise shall by the disguised
Pay with falsehood false exacting,
And perform an old contracting.
(III. ii. 291-6)

Enani has

لذلك لا بد أن استعين بحيلة
لأقمع بالمكر مكر الرذيلة
وسوف يضاجع أنجي إذا الليل جاء
حليته بعد ما نالها من جفاء
وسوف يفوز تتكر من تتكر
ليقهر بالزيف زيفاً لمظهر (ص ٢٧١)

It may have been Enani's argument that the formalities of marriage at the time meant that "old betrothed" was equal to "old contracted", both meaning that a marriage contract did take place. Translating both in the Arabic (حليّة) (legally wedded wife) is quite acceptable, even commendable. Thus, the context fully suggests the meaning of *lie* as 'to have sexual intercourse.'

Some of the terms used in the study of puns (as given in the Appendix III of Enani's *Translator's Guide* (مرشد المترجم) are common in both English and Arabic. One may begin with **polysemy**, as it is the category of pun used in the above examples. In British English, they say "lie" to mean the two things referred to above, with "lay" as the verb in the past tense. It is also a noun

meaning an untruth, and a verb meaning to tell an untruth, with "lied" as the verb in the past tense. In the New World "lay" is sometimes used instead of "lie", while it can refer, colloquially, to a bed partner (especially a casual one). Enani has noted that the verb *belie* more often occurs in poetry than in prose. (يُكَذِّبُ) i.e. to give the lie to something or someone. It is used in Shakespeare for a special purpose. Other common kinds of wordplay in Arabic, such as homonyms (أنواع الجنس) including homographs (*minute*, n. and *minute*, adj. = دقيقة ودقيق) and homophones (*meet* and *meat*) are less common in Shakespeare, and perhaps in English verse as well.

3.4. A Problem of Interpretation

While assonance in contiguous words, as well as prose-rhyme, used to be elegant features of sublime Arabic styles, they have never been regarded as an embellishment to an English prose text. Apart from the other qualities of style (which Enani elaborates upon in his *On Translating Style*, 2020), Shakespeare is capable of turning "lie" into a problem of interpretation, by making a major character – Othello, in this case – use various prepositions in conjunction with the verb "to lie." Here is one sequence.

Talking with Iago, a staff officer (technically standard-bearer or 'ancient' in *Othello*), Othello demands to know what Cassio, a lieutenant, might have said about his, Cassio's, alleged relationship with Desdemona, Othello's wife:

Othello: Hath he said any thing?

Iago: He hath, my lord; but be you well assured, no more than he'll unswear.

Othello: What hath he said?

Iago: 'Faith, that he did – I know not what he did.

Othello: What? What?

Iago: Lie—

Othello: With her?

Iago: With her, on her; what you will.

Othello: Lie with her! Lie on her! We say lie on her, when they belie her. Lie with her! That's fulsome.

(Act IV, scene I, lines 29-39)

Editors and critics have painstakingly tried to establish a kind of twisted logic allowing "lie" to have the added implication of an *untruth*, or to *tell a lie*. The key to this unusual interpretation is the verb 'belie', insofar as the

changed preposition permits Othello, perhaps unconsciously, to regard Iago's report to be *a lie*, that is, false and not true. In his frenzied state of mind, a state which Iago's *hedging* ("what you will") has created, Othello considers the possible implication of the changed formula as exonerating Desdemona. Harold Bloom thinks that this is all the more likely because Othello could not imagine that anyone could enjoy her body, not in the least he himself. This view is based on Bloom's insistence that Othello and Desdemona's marriage is never consummated (*Shakespeare and the Invention of the Human*, 1998; Arabic version by Enani). Most readers do not accept Bloom's claim, but its relevance to one's examination of wordplay in Shakespeare is undeniable.

For the translator, the complexity of the wordplay is a veritable conundrum. Can such complexity be conveyed to the Arabic reader or listener? This is how Enani renders the sequence:

عطيل: هل قال إذن شيئاً؟
 ياجو: الحق أنه تكلم. لكنه سينكر الذي أفضى به إليّ... وثق بصدق ما أقول!
 عطيل: وماذا قال؟
 ياجو: والله قال إنه نجح. ولست أعرف الذي فعله!
 عطيل: لكن فيم نجح؟ فيم نجح؟
 ياجو: في أن يرقد—
 عطيل: معها؟
 ياجو: معها، أو عليها، أو ما شئت القول عنها!
 عطيل: أن يرقد معها أي ضاجعها؟ لكن إن قلت عليها ماذا تعني؟ نقول نقول عليها
 إن كذبها الناس، أما أن يرقد معها، فهو من العظائم!

Enani obviously endeavors to apply the principle of illocution, or intended meaning (ترجمة المقصود) rather than locution (ترجمة الألفاظ). In his attempt to convey the two meanings of "lie", he paves the way by using the opposite idea of truthfulness. He thus relies on key words, such as "faith" and "unswear", used ironically, so that one focuses on the degree of truthfulness invoked by "lie", before giving the reader the main meaning of "lie" as to copulate. Famous for his love of etymology, Enani contests the American claim that the US spelling of 'fulsome' (with a double 'l') is a variant of the British "fulsome" with one 'l'). Instead, he accepts the claim that "fulsome" is a corruption of "foulsome", while "fulsome" indicated being full. This apparently allows Enani to translate "fulsome" as (عظيمة) (pl. معظائم) which means a terrible disaster, noting its confusion with the word (معظم) which

means rights and sanctities. To explore this further, we may ask: Is to "lie" used elsewhere in the play with a different meaning?

3.5. An Exercise of Wit

Wordplay belongs to the types of verbal humor mentioned above, and like all types of humor, requires the exercise of wit by both speaker and listener, writer and reader, or sender and receiver. This means that both of them must have a common language and preferably the same culture. Wit is primarily a function of the intellect, and the sharper the intellect, the easier it will be for the wordplay to produce its effect. Many cases of wordplay are either culture-specific or language-specific, but many are universally used and understood. So, while an idiom like "breadwinner" is universal, the idiom to "save one's bacon" is not. In Arabic, one describes a distinguished person as being "high-heeled", while "heel" by itself, used figuratively, means a bad or selfish person both in Arabic and English. The Arabic form is (كعب) and (عالي الكعب), while all the other idioms involving "heel" in English correspond to the Arabic (عقب) and (أعقاب). One says he went "at her heels" (سار في أعقابها). There are so many idioms in English involving "heel" as (عقب). One common idiom is to be "head over heels" in love with someone, often translated as (غرقان لشوشته) or the classical (من ناصية رأسه إلى أخمص قدمه). The other idiom that one can easily encounter is "He took to his heels" which gives the Egyptian (أخذ ديله في سنانة وطار) or the classical (نكص على عقبيه) or (ولى مدبراً) or (يولي الأدبار). Wordplay can generate catchphrases, common idioms, metaphor-based, or homophones. A Shakespearean example is "a man married is a man marred", apart from rhyming combinations, such as "helter-skelter", "happy-go-lucky", and the varieties of rhyming slang. As these occur more frequently in everyday speech than in writing or in formal styles, they are always problematic to the translator seeking correspondences. Is every "Tom, Dick and Harry" equal to (فلان وعلان) or to (ز عيط ومعيط ونطاط الحيط)?

Shakespeare's use of wordplay may produce catchphrases or idioms with confusing significance. Idioms with "dog" are numerous and may or may not have Arabic corresponding uses. Strangely, the statement in *Hamlet* that "every dog has his day" has come to mean that every person will have a moment of success in life, while the comparison of men to different kinds of dogs in *Macbeth* has no function in the play but to cause the translators to throw up their hands in despair. In Moliere, however, the question of canine breeds is discussed and Scapin takes the opportunity to poke fun at Argante

(more later). The typical Fool, sometimes called Clown, in Shakespearean tragedy is supposed to be wise enough to convey a biting home truth to those in power, with impunity. The idea is that he is a professional jester and therefore not to be taken seriously. In this, he employs his capacity for wordplay in cracking jokes which may be relevant to the action of the play, as in *King Lear*, and the porter in *Macbeth* who foretells the way which the murderers will take to hell. However, the wordplay of the clown in *Othello* allows him to give several puns on the word *to lie*:

Desdemona: Do you know, sirrah, where Lieutenant Cassio lies?
 Clown: I dare not say he lies any where.
 Desdemona: Why, man?
 Clown: He's a soldier, and for one to say a soldier lies, is stabbing.
 Desdemona: Go to: where lodges he?
 Clown: To tell you where he lodges, is to tell you where I lie.
 Desdemona: Can any thing be made of this?
 Clown: I know not where he lodges, and for me to devise a lodging and say he lies here or he lies there, were to lie in mine own throat.
 Desdemona: Can you inquire him out, and be edified by report?
 Clown: I will catechize the world for him; that is, make questions, and by them answer. (III.ii.1-16)

Repeated 7 times in the space of 16 lines, the meaning of 'to lie' seems to take center stage. Quibbling over the meaning of the verb is the clown's job, but he gives the reader or listener only two choices, not including copulation. The first is to lie down, i.e. to sleep, and as where you sleep at night is your home, home (منزل) or hotel (نزل) the idea of getting down to rest, to lie quietly (يسكن) is suggested. The roundabout way of bringing in the ideas of (يسكن) and (ينزل) in Arabic leads the clown to a different wordplay. This means that the translator can within limits **substitute target language wordplay for that in the source language**. If the translator is more concerned with so-called perlocution, that is, the effect of the wordplay on the audience, than either locution or illocution as previously defined, he or she may as a surrogate author use a more effective wordplay. A ready example is the Arabic translation of *Les Fourberies de Scapin* by Moliere, translated into English as *Scapin the Schemer* (1676), *The Cheats of Scapin* (1974), and as *Scapin* as recently as 1996. The French Fourbe (a deceitful person) relies on wordplay in carrying out his fraudulent schemes. The Arabic version was anonymously translated as (مقالب سكابان) and when Hamdi

Ghayth wanted to present it on the Egyptian stage, the translation in Modern Standard Arabic did not do justice to *Scapin's* wordplay. Enani and Samir Sarhan helped to change some of the witticisms into Egyptian Arabic. That did the trick, Enani says, especially in the conversation where the rich old man wants to punish Scapin for calling him a dog.

أرجانت: انت قلت إني كلب ابن كلب
سكابان: يعني كلب أصبل أبوك كلب وأمك كلبة
أرجانت: وقلت إني معوج
سكابان: لأ ده ديل الكلب! لكن بيتعدل يعني بيقف ساعات
أرجانت: انت لسانك طويل
سكابان: مش أطول من ديل الكلب
أرجانت: ده كثير! (للخدم) احبسوه!

The thunderingly appreciative reception of the play on the stage by the audience made the critics willingly ignore the outrageous liberties taken with Moliere's text. Has Enani done so in translating the clown's scene in *Othello*? Here is his rendering:

- | | | |
|----|---|----------|
| ١ | هل تعرف يا غلام أين يسكن الملازم كاسيو؟ | دزدمونة: |
| ٢ | لا أجرؤ على القول بأنه يسكن. | المهرج: |
| ٣ | لماذا يا رجل؟ | دزدمونة: |
| ٤ | لأنه جندي، وأذا وصفت جندياً بالسكون كنت أظعنه. | المهرج: |
| ٥ | إذن أين ينزل هنا؟ | دزدمونة: |
| ٦ | إذا قلت إنه ينزل كذبت عليك فهو لا ينزل أبداً عن شيء. | المهرج: |
| ٧ | هل يمكن أن يفهم شيء من هذا؟ | دزدمونة: |
| ٨ | أنا لا أعرف أين ينزل. وإذا اخترعت له ما ينزل عنه هنا أوينزل عنه هناك كنت كذاباً وحسب. | المهرج: |
| ٩ | هل تستطيع أن تستفسر عن ذلك حتى تعرف أين ينزل؟ | دزدمونة: |
| ١٠ | سأطرح الأسئلة على الخلق حوله فأحظى بالإجابة المنشودة. | المهرج: |
- (Enani's published translation, 2005, p. 200)

The textual analysis of the clown's wordplay which provides pejorative senses of the central verb "to lie" shows that he first ignores the normal sense in the initial question (where يسكن means يعيش/يقيم), providing a far-fetched sense of the normal first sense, allowing (السكون) to mean quietness or acquiescence. Therefore, he says that if he imputes this to a soldier, he would be *lying*, which is another normal sense of "to lie", i.e. to tell an untruth. The wordplay in Arabic thus deviates from that in English, although

both originate in possible interpretations of "lie". So, as Enani mentions in his Notes, Line 4 can thus be expanded with an added explanation (editorial technique in Delabastita's model) to read:

لأنه جندي، وإذا وصفت جنديًا بالسكون الذي يعني الخمود، كنت أطعن فيه.

Again, line 6 can be given another interpretation based on the sense of "lodge", thus:

إذا قلت إن له منزلًا كذبت عليك... فهو لا ينزل في منزل قط.

Line 8 would equally be changed into:

أنا لا أعرف أين ينزل. وإذا اخترعت له منزلًا في مكان ما كنت كذابًا أشر.

While Enani mentions these alternatives in his Notes, he says he preferred a pithy conversation. The longer version might have been better. One reason for the translator's option, suggested by the Arden edition, 3rd series 1996, is that the clown is trying to raise interest in the character of Cassio by insinuating that he is an active lover, to be found with his mistress Bianca. The editor, E.A.J. Honigmann, is certainly right in showing that "lie" is the crux of the conversation, and that "lodge" is made to do duty for "lie". Consequently, he might have added, the Clown's shorter version was a better choice.

Enani's longer alternative is arguably more apt. The reason is that these puns, however amusing in themselves as a linguistic exercise, deal with the central issue of the play, namely *to lie* in both senses. The fact is that this exchange occurs almost in the middle of the play, namely what Aristotle calls the complication, at Act III, scene iv, 1-16. It has often been noted that the plot of *Othello* develops speedily up till the end of Act III, regarded as the classical climax. It ends with Cassio losing his position, symbolically his home, "Where he *lies*," and with the accusation that he wanted to *lie* or did *lie* with Desdemona hanging over his head. The change of 'lie' to 'lodge' does not affect Cassio's loss of place, as we see in the wordplay in the cited lines. Closely linked with this sense of *lie* is the fact that Iago *lies* throughout, and the audience sees how his *lies* work.

This particular wordplay is interesting because of the centrality of "to lie" to the action both as copulation and untruth. Harold Bloom's suggestion that Othello never consummated his marriage is strongly denied by Enani in a

footnote to his Arabic rendering of Bloom's book. Bloom's analysis of the so-called Bridal Night at Cyprus possibly ignores the earlier action in the play when Desdemona eloped to *lie* with her sweetheart in the opening scene. At I. i. 87-88, Iago reveals to Brabantio, Desdemona's father, the secret of her elopement:

Even now, now, very now, an old black ram
Is tupping your white ewe.

Iago continues his racist speech, saying that because Brabantio's daughter is "covered with a Barbary horse" (110) his "nephews will neigh to [him] and [he will] have coursers for cousins and gennets for germans." [جناس ناقص semihomonyms]

As Iago is elaborating the animal image, of a white human copulating with an Arabian pedigree horse (the Moroccan Othello), the grandsons of Brabantio will include many breeds of horses. Roderigo, Iago's associate, tells the girl's father how under the cover of darkness, a gondolier "transported" her "to the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor—" (124) Brabantio is struck dumb when Iago introduces himself a few lines later as

...one, sir, that comes to tell you that your daughter and
the Moor are now making the beast with two backs.
(114-115)

The editor of the Arden Shakespeare, E.A.J. Honigmann (1994-2003) clearly supports the translator's interpretation of the wordplay discussed. The director of *Othello* for the Egyptian National Theatre in 1965, Nabil al-Alfi, worked from a translation by the Arab poet Khalil Mutran who, relying on a French translation, thoroughly bowdlerized the text. All obscene innuendos and puns are expunged. All wordplay was cut, so that the rhetorical language of the play, pompously delivered by Muhammad al-Toukhi (Iago) and Hamdi Ghaith (Othello) drove Rashad Rushdi and his then disciple, Enani, to write two critical articles, published in *al-Ahram* and *al-Masrah* respectively. Being dramatists and Shakespearean scholars, both lamented the ultra-somber atmosphere of Othello's deception. Iago's words were delivered with varying intonations ranging from the macabre to the apocalyptic. Sorely missed by the great dramatist and his acolyte were the light touches verging on comedy, whether by being ironic, such as Iago's

protestation of love for Othello, his irreverent remarks, or the ease with which Roderigo is robbed, smilingly.

It is useful to remember Honigmann's reference to the role of sex in *Othello*:

One of Shakespeare's most original achievements in *Othello* is his exploration of the psychology of sex. We can trace a progression from *Julius Caesar* (1598) where an interest in sex is minimal, to *Hamlet* (c. 1600) where it becomes important, to *Othello*, his most wide-ranging and deeply probing study of various kinds of sexuality. (p. 49)

Honigmann shows that *Othello*, if compared with earlier Shakespearean work in which sex plays a significant part, such as *Romeo and Juliet*, will certainly reveal "an extraordinary advance towards realism" (p. 49). At the opening of Act IV, scene 1, we see Othello and Iago in the middle of a conversation:

IAGO: Will you think so?
 OTHELLO: Think so, Iago!
 Iago: What,
 To kiss in private?
 Othello: An unauthorized kiss.
 Iago: Or to be naked with her friend in bed
 An hour or more, not meaning any harm?
 Othello: Naked in bed, Iago, and not mean harm!
 It is hypocrisy against the devil:
 They that mean virtuously, and yet do so,
 The devil their virtue tempts, and they tempt heaven.
 (IV. i. 1-7)

Enani's version says

ياجو: هل هذا ظنك؟
 عطيل: ظني يا ياجو؟
 ياجو: تقصد أنه قبلها في خلوة؟
 عطيل: قبلة غير مشروعة!
 ياجو: أم تختلي بصاحب لها وفي الفراش بعد أن تجردت من الملابس
 ودون قصدٍ أنتم لساعة أو أكثر؟
 عطيل: العري في الفراش يا ياجو بغير مقصد أثيم؟

بل إنه التحدي للغواية التي يسوقها الشيطان!
 إن كان قصدهما شريفاً ثم أقدما على ذلك
 فسوف يبتلي الشيطان ما لديهما من الفضيلة
 ويبلوان رحمة السماء! (ص ٢١٦)

Honigmann may call this "realism", albeit carried to an extreme. Producers, even as early as the 17th century, had to present a cut text on the stage. Marvin Rosenberg's *The Masks of Othello* (1961, reprinted 1994) tells us a good deal about the cuts made in the play, primarily, of course, the clown's scenes and the bawdy wordplay. In his Cambridge edition of *Othello*, 1984, Norman Sanders tells us that a performance in Dublin in the late 17th century changed the image of Othello as a military commander and the woman associated with him in the play. "It is beneath his dignity to set Emilia to spy on Desdemona... Gone too is the obsessive visual textuality of his lines at the beginning of 4.1, and he goes on to his death without his tears like Arabian gum." (p. 39)

In the case of Iago, Arab producers find it easier to cast him as a stereotypical villain, so that, except for the scenes in which he leads Othello by the nose to destruction, his lines are pared down to the bone. His verbal dexterity enables him to paint a different picture of Desdemona's marriage to Othello which is not primarily coital. On the stage, the following sequence goes by the board:

Othello: ...I will but spend a word here in the house,
 And go with you. (Exit)
 Cassio: Ancient, what makes he here?
 Iago: 'Faith, he to-night hath boarded a land carrack:
 If it prove lawful prize, he's made for ever.
 Cassio: I do not understand.
 Iago: He's married.
 Cassio: To whom? (I. i. 47-53)

عطيل: اسمح لي أن أدخل هذا المنزل لأقول كلمة
 ثم أسير بصحبتيكم للدوق (يخرج)
 كاسيو: وما الذي أتى به إلى هنا يا حامل اللواء؟
 ياجو: قد اعتلى في هذه الليلة سفينة عامرة بكل غالٍ ونفيس! فإن تحققنا من
 أنها غنيمة مشروعة
 فقد أصاب النجح في دنياه للأبد!
 كاسيو: لا أدرك مرمائك.

ياجو: تزوج.
كاسيو: من؟

This sequence is rich in implications; that is, in the multiple ways of interpreting the elements of the image, that is, the **vehicle**, while the **tenor** is never made clear. Iago describes the ship as a land carrack, that is, a huge Spanish ship carrying gold or dredging the river bed for it (cf. the Arabic *Karraka* كَرَآكَة). Surely Iago is not thinking of the material wealth Othello could be expected to gain by marrying Desdemona as though he were an impoverished foreigner who had found a niche of a job and could just about survive on his salary. If we add to the fact that this is unlikely the proviso that the captured ship must be a legitimate prize, we may wonder whether Iago is being coherent. Why should he now show any interest in Othello's fortunes when he has been so far declaring his intention to destroy him? Is he being ironic, meaning that if the marriage succeeds, he (not Othello) will be made forever? This is one of the many inconsistencies in Iago's mind which are progressively revealed to us as the action of the play develops.

In the case of such uncertain tones, that is when the translator cannot be sure if the tone is serious, ironic, frivolous, allusive or otherwise witty; he or she must unravel the complex elements, as though to simplify the structure. So, "prize" means a ship captured by another. "Prize" here is related to *prehension* (seizing) from Latin *prehendere* (and *prehensio*) not with the synonym "award" or 'reward' (Enani, 2000).

3.6. Bawdy Wordplay

The obvious instances are, of course, Sonnets 135 and 136, which are seldom referred to in Shakespearean scholarship, and rarely, if ever, alluded to in literary, creative or critical works. Most Shakespearean translators steer clear of them, mainly because of their bawdiness, but also, it is suspected, because of their linguistic complexity. Arabic Shakespearean translators, including stars of the first magnitude – Jabra I. Jabra, Kamal Abu Deeb, Soheir Qalamawi, Muhammad Awad Muhammad – have all chosen to keep quiet about them. Only a young poet – Badr Tawfiq – never known to have translated anything, took the risk.

It was Enani's turn to beard the lion in his den, as it were, but truly the challenge was immense. For the best part of a year he studied the sonnets, armed with his knowledge acquired from translating 24 Shakespearean plays and making use of most books on the sonnets and all their available editions.

In this analysis of wordplay the article relies on Enani's notes and the books referred to above or Shakespeare's Bawdy and glossaries. I am annexing Badr Tawfiq's translations of the 'offending' sonnets for the sake of comparison. Here are the English texts first.

Sonnet 135

Whoever hath her wish, thou hast thy Will,
 And Will to boot, and Will in over-plus;
 More than enough am I that vexed thee still,
 To thy sweet will making addition thus.
 Wilt thou, whose will is large and spacious,
 Not once vouchsafe to hide my will in thine?
 Shall will in others seem right gracious,
 And in my will no fair acceptance shine?
 The sea, all water, yet receives rain still,
 And in abundance addeth to his store;
 So thou, being rich in Will, add to thy Will
 One will of mine, to make thy large will more.
 Let no unkind, no fair beseechers kill;
 Think all but one, and me in that one Will.

Sonnet 136

If thy soul check thee that I come so near,
 Swear to thy blind soul that I was thy Will,
 And will, thy soul knows, is admitted there;
 Thus far for love, my love-suit, sweet, fulfil.
 Will, will fulfil the treasure of thy love,
 Ay, fill it full with wills, and my will one.
 In things of great receipt with ease we prove
 Among a number one is reckoned none:
 Then in the number let me pass untold,
 Though in thy store's account I one must be;
 For nothing hold me, so it please thee hold
 That nothing me, a something sweet to thee:
 Make but my name thy love, and love that still,
 And then thou lovest me for my name is 'Will'.

To begin with, this is what Enani says in his notes (354 ff.)

Sonnet 135: Commentators say that the poet presents in this and the next sonnet his view of a kind of women who are insatiable for the pleasures of love, in the way he imagines his dark lady to be. Insofar as he believes her to be in possession of a powerful and extensive passion, he sees her in his mind's eye as a vast sea, receiving water from any amount of rain, however excessive. This is figuratively her capacity to respond to the passions of any number of lovers. Therefore, the poet tells her that he can do duty for all her lovers, providing *enough* passions to satisfy her. (354-355)

Having presented what may be regarded as the substance of the two sonnets, Enani then explains the poet's technique, which he identifies as *antanaclasis*, as explained above. The word in question is *will*. In Sonnet 135, this word is used 13 times in its recorded sentences which are mainly three, with slight variations. The first and perhaps primary sense is carnal desire. Apart from critical opinions on the sonnets and the statistics digitally made, Enani relies on his own experience in translating the word in Shakespearean plays. As is well known, Enani's Shakespearean translations are supported by substantial evidence, counting as proof, both textual and critical. The first instance is from Shakespeare's *All's Well That Ends Well*, where Helen says to the widow that Bertram wears a ring which he holds

In most rich choice, yet in his idle fire
To buy his will, it would not seem too dear,
However repented after.
III. vii. 26-29

وهو يقدر هذا الخاتم كلّ التقدير
لكن إن أخذته حمية عاطفته
واندفع إلى أن يشتري الشهوة
لن يبدو الخاتم أغلى من أن يدفعه ثمناً
مهما يندم فيما بعد .

In *Measure for Measure*, Angelo tells Isabella:

Redeem thy brother
By yielding up your body to my will

II. iv. 163

ولتسلمي لشهيتي جسديك
كي تفتدي روح الشقيق

It is interesting that Enani, stickler for accuracy, observes that شهية in Arabic is an adjective which means "appetizing" but is commonly used as the noun شهوة. Perhaps the metre required it, and he must have hoped that it would pass unnoticed.

More famous is the attempt by Iago to convince Othello that as an alien, this commander may be unaware of the nature of Venetian women and therefore may be taken in by Desdemona's wiles. After all, didn't she have an affair with you, then claimed she was secretly married? Did you trust Cassio as a go-between, facilitating your trysts, asks Iago, not to have had a bite of the cake? In claiming that Othello has "a free and noble nature/Out of self-bounty" (III.iii.200), Iago concludes that the Moor cannot smell in such a woman

a will most rank,
Foul disproportion, thoughts unnatural.
(III.iii. 233-4)

As though to confirm the idea of carnal desire, Iago again says that Desdemona's "will" (237) should drive her to more "natural" bed partners.

أفلا يشتم المرء هنا شهوات فاسدة منحطة
وميولاً متناقضة وخواطر شوهاء.

The second sense of "will", though encountered first, is short for the name of the poet William. While names are usually transcribed in Arabic translation, Enani substitutes الشاعر or the personal pronoun for وُلّ or وليم. This is found to be more easily absorbed into the Arabic metre, without presenting any phonological problems. The name in its curtailed form occurs seven times in the sonnet, and the translator has to establish their places guided by the fact of being printed in italics or with an initial capital letter in the Quarto edition of 1609, and commonly reproduced. This helps a little in disentangling the senses in which the other six "wills" are used

The structure of the opening line is not as simple as it looks. It is a reminder of the old Arabic formula إن أنسى لا أنسى, recently equated with the

English "Always memorable to me is..." Paraphrased, the line says: Having won your lover's heart means that you are the proverbial woman who always has her way.

The second line contains the obviously obscene reference of (1) the virile procreating fluid, and then (2) carnal passion in abundance. The former sense is transmitted in the Quranic idiom carrying that sense الماء الدافق and the latter into العشق الغامر. Both belong to Arabic paronomasia and so are faithful enough to the source text (pun > pun); but aren't they too harsh for Arab ears? As though Enani has had enough of bawdiness, he turns the last Will in Line 4 into "beauty" الحسن.

Stanza 2 confronts the translator with this hard choice: the first is to retain the indecency but couch the Arabic expression of it in equally cryptic terms, such as asking for his blushes to be hidden in her hair; we remember Salah Jaheen's lines

خبيني في شعورك يا بت
أحسن عروقي اتخشبت
شعرك خشن زى الحرام الصوف يا بت
خبيني فيه من الزمهرير

Hide me in your hair, my girl,
My veins are still stiffened,
Your hair is rough, a woolen mantle,
Therein shelter me, take me in from the cold.

Either that, though such an alternative is not always available, or to substitute something abstract and quite decent for the pudenda implied. Enani opts wisely for the latter. Metaphoric "heart" or "chest" (pun > another rhetorical device), in the sense of love can be described as large and spacious. The last two "Wills" in lines 7 and 8 may easily refer to desire.

Stanza 3 is the easiest to handle, as it contains a single coherent image, with varied ways of reading "Will": in Line 11, "rich in will" (carnal desire) is to add to her lover (thy Will) more power, though in Line 12 the reference to male and female pudenda is repeated.

As Sonnet 136 is literally a continuation of 135, nothing may be said about 136 that can be different; Enani's translation of both sonnets, with no textual comments, is given, followed, in an Appendix, by Badr Tawfiq's translations. The reader will have no difficulty establishing the translation strategy in each case.

4. Concluding Remarks

Because of the double, sometimes triple-tiered meanings of wordplay, stylistic devices such as puns and other types of wordplay are not readily easy to translate. Some would say they are untranslatable. The challenge is even greater given the language-specific nature of wordplay, being tied to the sounds, morphemes and structures of each language, and how deep-rooted in culture it is. A special case of wordplay is the bulk of work produced by William Shakespeare. Many of his plays are pun-addled witfests.

Armed with a long experience with Arabic language, heritage and culture, past and present, being quite familiar with the Holy Qur'an, classical Arabic poetry and immersed in the colloquial language of his own culture, Enani has plenty of resources and options in dealing with Shakespeare's witty and colorful wordplay – a very challenging aspect of any language – whether in his plays or sonnets. A linguistic-cultural equivalent is often Enani's first choice. In case this is not readily available, he would go for an explication or addition.

In case of bawdy wordplay, Enani finds a way-out in abstraction, e.g., using abstract nouns to replace concrete ones. In some cases a Qur'anic expression comes in handy to match a pun in the original. In all cases, Enani is able to "dance in chains", so to speak; that is, to produce equivalent wordplay and stick to his belief in translating verse into verse. More research work may be done on other aspects of wordplay, in Shakespeare as well as elsewhere and in media language. The number of instances of wordplay in Shakespeare's drama is infinite; so, this article is in a sense an invitation to more work on the issue. It is also an invitation to revisit and give credit to the huge achievement of the late great Enani.

End-Notes

I am very grateful to professor Enani for the many hours he gave to me in face to face as well as telephone conversations for giving me access to his valuable drafts of the translation of Hamlet and other texts & his valuable comments he made on my research.

- 1- Dr Enani is known as the doyen of Arab translators and one of the leading figures in translation and creative writing in the Arab world, he has more than 170 books to his name. Enani is a multitalented encyclopedic figure whose works cover a wide range of literary genres, including novels, plays, poems, and short stories. In his literary works, he usually employs middle Arabic to appeal to as many readers as possible. This article attempts to monitor Enani's unique employment of 'domestication' that has attracted the attention of readers and critics alike.

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Appendix 1: Sonnet 135, translated by Badr Tawfiq

من الذي يقضي وَطَرَهَا، لقد كانت لديك الرغبة،
كما كانت لديه العزيمة، والشهوة الوافرة،
إني أملك ما يفيض عن حاجتها، أنا الذي أطيل النقاش دائماً معك،
حين أضيف ما لدي إلى رغبتك العذبة.

فهل تراك يا صاحب الإرادة الكبيرة الشاملة،
تتعطف مرة فتخبئ ما أهواه فيما تهواه؟
هل تبدو لك رغبة الآخرين جميلة حقاً،
وفي رغبتني لا يبرز شعاع القبول الجميل؟

البحر رغم امتلائه بالماء، دائماً يستقبل المطر،
يجمع المزيد من الماء إلى مياهه الوافرة.
هكذا أنت أيضاً تضيف إلى مشيئتك، وأنت الغني بالمشيئة
تضيف بغيتي الوحيدة إليك، لتصبح مشيئتك العظمى شاملة.

لا تدع للقسوة مكاناً، ولا تقتل محبيك الذين يطلبون الوداد،
أمعن النظر تراهم شخصاً واحداً، وتراني أنا ذلك الشخص المراد.

Appendix 2: Sonnet 136, translated by Badr Tawfiq

إذا أنبتك روحك على أنني صرت أقرب ما يكون إليك؟
فلتقسمي لروحك العمياء بأني وقتئذ حملت رغبتك،
وروحك تعرف أن الرغبة شئ مسلم به هناك؛
حتى يتلاءم حبي تماماً مع حبك لي أيتها الحبيبة الغالية.

هل تستطيع الرغبة أن تملأ كنز حبك،
فلتملأه إذن بالرغبات، ولتكن رغبتني إحداها.
ففي الأشياء التي تستوعب الكثير، يسهل أن نبرهن
على أن الشئ الواحد بين العدد الكبير لا يساوي شيئاً:

دعيني أذهب إذن، دون احتساب في العدد،
رغم أنني في حسابك المختزن، لا بد أن أكون واحداً؛
فلتعتبريني لا شئ لديك، ما دام يسعدك الإبقاء
على هذا اللاشئ، كشئ حبيب إليك:

اتخذيني لك حبا، وحبيباً إلى الأبد،
عندئذ، سوف تحبينني، فأنا مطلب الجسد.

Appendix 3: Enani's Translation of the Two Sonnets

١٣٥

إن فازت أنثى بأمانيتها فلقد فزت بمحبوبك.. هذا الشاعر
ولقد نلت إلى جانب الماء الدافق والعشق الغامر
فأنا أكثر من كافٍ لك أغنيك عن الخطاب باز عاجهم السافر
وأضيف إلى حسنك خيراً وافر
أفلن ترضى يا ذات الصدر الرحب الواسع
أن أخفي في صدرك قلبي الطامع؟
هل تبدو الرغبة عند سواي زلاً وجميلة
لكن لا تصبح أشواقي عندك ساطعة مقبولة؟
البحر كيان من ماء لكن يتقبل دوماً أمطار الخير
فيضيف إلى مخزون الماء لديه صفة الوفر
وكذلك ما دامت أشواقك وافرة في الصدر
فأضيفي الشوق الزاخر عندي فتزيد رحابته بالغمر
لا تدعي أي قساة أو أجمل فتیان تقتل أي مشاعر
بل فاعتبريهم شخصاً أوحده هو ذاتي .. أنا صاحبك الشاعر.

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إذا سمعت لوم النفس لاقترابي منك قرب العاشق
فأقسمي لنفسك العمياء أنني صفو الحبيب الوامق
إذ تعلم النفس التي لديك أن من حقّي الوجود في حماك
فهكذا أفوز في دعوى الغرام قاصداً مرمى هواك.
فإنني لشاعر بوسعي الارتقاء عاليًا بكثرة حبك
فأغدق الأشواق حتى أفعمه... من بينها شوقي لقلبك
إذ نستطيع في سهولة إثبات أن كل شيء واسع فماً
يؤكد الذي يقال في قواعد الحساب قدماً
بأنه إذا تكاثرت لنا الأعداد لا نعد الواحد الصحيح عدداً
إذن دعيني من هذه الأعداد أمضي غير محسوب الوجود
حتى وإن أكن بالحق قائماً بين الذخائر في جمالك والرصيد
إن شئت فلا أكن صفراً بعينك! لكنما عند العناق
تجدين الصفر أصبح واحداً حلو المذاق
يكفيك عشق اسمي أنا بل واعشقيه دائماً
فسوف تعشقينني ما دام حبي قائماً
(الترجمة الكاملة للسونيتات ٢٠١٦ ص ٢٣٩ - ٢٣٨)