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Onomatopoeia in Omani Arabic

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Abstract

Onomatopoeia is believed to be of a widespread occurrence in all languages of the world though with different extents. Arabic language is attested to be rich in the use of onomatopoeia in speech, prose and poetry. Omani Arabic, a unique variety of vernacular Arabic spoken in the Sultanate of Oman in the eastsouthern part of Arabia, likewise has numerous usages of onomatopoeic words in everyday life interactions. Both lexical and non-lexical onomatopoeia exist in Omani Arabic falling into three main categories: human sounds, animal sounds, and sounds associated with nature and objects. Onomatopoeic sounds appear in different syllabic forms including full syllables and non-syllabic forms with one or more consonants. The use of voiceless sounds and fricatives is more prevalent compared to other types of sounds. Cases are attested of sounds captured in diverse manners exhibiting alternation among sounds close in place of articulation as well as between emphatic sounds and their non-emphatic counterparts. The use of fricatives is used to mark duration of sounds as opposed to the use of plosives employed to show abruptness and short duration of sounds. Morphologically, most of these words are used as verbs and derivative nouns. Reduplication is likewise used to mark intensity and duration of actions signified by these sounds.

Key words: Onomatopoeia, Omani Arabic, Dialect, Oman, Arabia

Introduction

It is widely acknowledged that words in human language are largely symbolic thanks to the arbitrary relationship between word forms and the meanings they signify. The indispensable human need to name notions, things and objects so that communication is well-established is the urge behind creating forms (i.e. words) and associating them with certain meanings. Since humans naturally do not agree on the same exact naming of notions, things and objects, different languages come into existence. Such intricate process of naming is thus largely dependent on how a certain group of humans name notions, things and objects around them, which makes the largest portion of naming (i.e. language) arbitrary. A small portion of naming (i.e. language), however, is non-arbitrary, for humans give up their role of naming to nature to take its own part in the creation of words. This type of exceptional naming to arbitrariness is called onomatopoeia, the creation of words based on sounds in nature. Due to their direct imitations of sounds in nature that creates a straightforward connection between forms and meanings, onomatopoeic words are said to have existed in all languages and to be the first words uttered by humans. The big influence nature imposes in the making of these words makes them susceptible to resemblance in several languages. Still the discrepancy we humans have in our perception of the world around us leaves space for onomatopoeic words to be language or culture specific. The phonological and morphological system of a given language may also place an effect on the type and amount of words in that language, leaving non-equivalent onomatopoeic words in some cases. Since onomatopoeia in Omani Arabic (OA) is an untrodden zone, this paper is an attempt to shed light on onomatopoeic words used in such unique variety of Arabic that exhibits certain features that tease it out from other varieties of Arabic spoken in Arabia and the Arab World (Shaaban, 1977; Glover, 1988; Holes, 1989). OA namely refers to the type of vernacular Arabic largely spoken in the Sultanate of Oman in the eastsouthern part of Arabia as well as in other scattered areas outside Oman.

Literature review

Language is chiefly a process of naming that includes two main elements: concepts (i.e. signified) and the sounds that represent these concepts (i.e. signifier). When these two elements combine, they make linguistic signs (i.e. meanings). The relationship between linguistic signs and their referents is based on unsystematicity (i.e. arbitrariness), lack of systematic connection between the acoustic representations of words and their referents



(Assaneo et al, 2011). Such unsystematicity stands behind the fact that the same exact concept may be signified by using different sounds in different languages. For instance the referent 'car' is signified as 'sajarah' in Arabic, 'voiture' in French, and 'carro' in Spanish. The relationship between 'car' as a referent and these several chunks of sounds (i.e. words) in these three languages, as well as in all other languages worldwide, is not based on a logical relationship. Each language randomly picks its own groupings of sounds (i.e. words) to refer to such referent.

There is, however, some exceptions to arbitrariness in human language; one small area of systematicity (e.g. unarbitrariness) in human language is manifested by onomatopoeia. Such exception stems from the fact that onomatopoeic words represent iconicity in human language since sounds and meanings are identical in such words. The mimeticity of these words makes them comprehensible and transferable to other hearers. Hence they are believed to be the first words uttered by humans as they are linked with several types of surrounding sounds such as animal sounds, human beings sounds, and sounds of nature and objects. In fact, it is argued that many words in human language begin as onomatopoeic and then get conventionalized in the course of time that they look arbitrary to speakers (Bredin, 1996).

Tracing back the etymology of this word shows that it originally stems back from the Greek word "onomatopoiia"- 'names or words making" (Cuddon, 1999). Morphologically, it is made of two parts (poiein) and (onoma) that collectively signify the making of names or words from natural sounds since made up words are literally imitative of sounds in nature (Seyyedi and Alkhalghi, 2013). Drabble (2000) and Holman (2000) define it as word formation based on the imitations of sounds associated with things they name or alternatively the pronunciation of words that does suggest their meanings. Examples of English onomatopoeic words are: buzz, beep, bang, crack, crunch, drip, ding dong, flip, flop, hiss, honk, knock, mumble, munch, ouch, oink, purr, roar, slam, sniff, trickle, vroom, whoosh, yell, zoom, zig zag, to name but a few.

Iconicity as a concept, however, is not unambiguous, and its degree in onomatopoeic words is not always clear-cut. It could be argued that onomatopoeia is not fully systematic; it rather straddles the line between arbitrariness and mimeticity. It depends on our perception of the world reflected by our cognitive processing of the world rather than an objective fact (Fischer & Müller 2003). For instance, the word 'train' is 'qīṭar' in Arabic, 'treno' in Italian, and 'tren' in Spanish, whose sound is heard similarly by speakers of these languages for its iconicity. Speakers of these languages, among speakers of other languages, may perceive the sound of the train differently and thus may capture it otherwise, which reflects that full iconicity of words do not always exist. Anderson (1998) argues that onomatopoeic words are in fact conventional signs rather than imitative echoes of sounds in nature. Even if they are imitative, they are not fully non-arbitrary. Besides, they are marginal in language system and they do not accurately capture the sounds they represent. In addition to their unproductive aspect that creates lexical gaps in the lexical paradigms, they are seen as rootless lexemes that lack etymology.

Onomatopoeia is believed to be an effective functional device in human language due to its ability to carry different functions cross linguistically such as naming objects, expressing emotions and naming actions (Yule, 1996). Its use has emerged in both the prose and poetry of many languages, adding musicality and auditory features that elevate their significance and effect on readerships (Al Zubbaidi, 2014). It also appeared to be useful in teaching kids as mothers and caregivers tend to complement conventional words with onomatopoeic ones due to their poetic feature, namely in storytelling and teaching lexical items. This fact goes in line with the claim that onomatopoeic words are the first words said by humans due to their mimeticity of natural sounds and thus their susceptibility to be part of our lexicon.

Two main types of onomatopoeia are differentiated: lexical and non-lexical onomatopoeia. The former draws on words that are recognized as part of the language system. Words such as buzz, hiss, and crack as examples of lexical onomatopoeic words, for their pronunciation symbolizes their referents outside language. The latter, on the other hand, refers to words that do not exist in the language system. It includes the words that represent the sounds echoing the world around speakers without the intervention of linguistic structure (Simpson, 2004). The lack in lexical onomatopoeic words is the driving force behind reinventing non-lexical onomatopoeic words that capture sounds in our environment. Humans, including authors, poets, and translators, try to capture or approximate some natural sounds such as a big tree falling into the ground, a car moving too fast or a truck pulling out very slowly. Speakers try to capture or approximate a natural sound in the best way possible so that

it is well represented. Doing so is not an easy task especially for translators due to differences exhibited by different languages and cultures (Yaqobi et al, 2018). Cultural and linguistic differences among languages are to be identified first so that expressive functions are well transferred into the target language.

Onomatopoeic Omani Arabic

Onomatopoeia is attested to be prevalent cross-linguistically; its amount in a given language is yet subject to several factors (Bredin, 1996). The number of phonemes that exist in the phonemic inventory of a certain language along with phonotactics that govern the patterning of these phonemes play a key role in the number of its onomatopoeic words (Gasser 2006; Dofins, 2008). Likewise, the morphological system determines the nature and productivity of these words in a certain language (Dofs, 2008). Japanese, for instance, is believed to be richer than English having around 2000 to 4500 words widely used in daily conversations and literature (Takehi, et al 2011). While most of the onomatopoeic words in Japanese are mainly adverbs of manner, English onomatopoeic words fall into five categories: verbs, nouns, adjectives, gerundives and quotations. Verbs in English make the big bulk of onomatopoeic words followed by nouns, the majority of which can be used as verbs too (Takashi, 2010; Takehi, et al 2011).

Thanks to its rich phonemic inventory and morphological system, Arabic is said to be rich in onomatopoeic words used in daily conversation, prose and poetry. Alameer (2019) highlights that Arabic uses onomatopoeic words in different situations and settings such as those related to technology and poetry. Likewise, in a comparison between the use of onomatopoeic words in Arabic and English poetry using D.H Lawrence's and Bader Shakar al-Sayyab's poetry, Al-Zubbaidi (2014) found that Arabic language, unlike English, is richer in lexical onomatopoeic words making it unnecessary for Arab poets to reinvent words and expressions. While Lawrence used more non-lexical onomatopoeic words as he invented new words, al-Sayyab used more of lexical ones due to their existence in the language system. The abundance of onomatopoeic words in Arabic is best exemplified by the great Iraqi poet, Al Asmaei, in his well-known poem 'The Whistling of the Nightingale'. The use of several onomatopoeic words orchestrates beautiful auditory images exemplified in the following verses.

...and so she bewails and bewails *wali wali* (wailing sounds) woe to me

فولولت و ولولت ولي ولي يا ويل لي

*

and the oud makes beat outs of *dan dan dan* (oud sounds) and so the drum goes *tab tab tab* (drumming sounds)

و العود دندن دن لي و الطبل طبطب طب لي

tab tab tab tab tab tab tab tab tab tab (drumming sounds)

طب طبطب طب طبطب طب طبطب طبطب لي

and the roof goes *saq saq saq* (sound of the roof as hit by the wind) making me crave for dancing

و السقف سق سق سق لي و الرقص قد طاب إلي

and the wind goes *shawa shawa shahishun* (soud of wind) while tingling the pomelo leaves

شوى شوى و شاهش على ورق سفرجل

*

...and a horde of people flouncing *kaʔ kaʔ kaʔ kaʔ* (sounds of footsteps) all around me.

و الكل كعكع كعكع خلفي و من حويللي

Likewise, OA as one variety of vernacular Arabic appears to be vigorous in capturing the surrounding sounds (i.e. onomatopoeia) with some used as common words in everyday life conversation. Data collection of onomatopoeic words/sounds from speakers of Omani Arabic used both in context and out of context reveals that a thematic division places them into three main categories presented underneath.

Sounds of human beings

Usage of sound	Representation of sound	Representation of sound in Arabic
Laughing	haahaaa, xaaxaaa, karkar, qahqah, faqfaq	هااهاااا - خاااااا كركر - قه قه - فق فق
Sneezing	ʔatʃuh , hatʃuh, ʔatʃuh	عتشوه - هتشوه - أتشوه
Warning a child (not to eat something)	waaaʔ, kaxxx uʃʃʃ uʃʃʃ - xxxxx	واااا ع - كخخخ أششش أششش - خخخخخ
Sleeping		
Warning a child (of something dangerous)	waʔ, waʔih, iii, a'a	وح - وحيه - إيبيي - آآ
Chasing a fly/a cat	kiff / iff	كيشش - إيشش
Shivering because of cold weather	zzzz, tzzzzz, brrrrr	زززز - تزززز - بررر
Snoring	xaaaa, qaaaxx, xoxʃ,xʃʃ	خااااا - قااااخخ - خوخش - خشش
Hushing somebody	ʃʃʃ, isssss, wissss	شششش - إصصصص - وسسسس
Feeling of surprise	Ooow, ooohooh	أوووو - أوووووو
Feeling of disgust	ixxxx, iʔʔʔʔ, axxiieh- wiiiʔ	إبخخخخ - إبععع - آخبييه - ويبيع
Attracting a goat/sheep	hawhaw, ʔawʔaw	هو هو - حو حو
Attracting a cat	daqif daqif, bisssbissss	دقش دقش - بيسس بيسس
Eating delicious food	yumm, humm, ammm niym niym	ميمم - هممم - أممم نيغم نيغم
Yawning	aaah, haaah, xaaah	آآآآ - هااااا - خااااا
Warning somebody	aʔim aʔim	أحيم أحيم
Coughing	kakah, qaʔqaʔ, ahah, oʔ oʔ	كه كه - قق قق - أه أه - أوح أوح
Calming an angry animal	wajʃʃʃʃʃʃ	وششششش
Moaning (out of sickness)	aaaa, haaaa,	آآآآ - هااااا
Tsk-tsking	nka nka- nʔa nʔa - tuʔ tuʔ	نكا نكا - نطا نطا - توء توء
Feeling of boredom/ anger	uʃʃʃʃʃʃ	أوففففف
Crying infant	waaaʔ waaaʔ	وااااا وواااا
Eating something crispy	xaf xaf, qaf qaf, huxʃt huxʃt	خش خش - قش قش - هوخشت هوخشت
Eating something hard	qram qram	قرم قرم
Stammering	tatatat, bababab, fafafa	تاتاتاتا - بابابابا - فافافا
Humming	haamm, aaaamm	همممم - أمممم
Crying	ʔaaʔaa, ʔaaʔaa ʔaa ʔaa	ععععع - آآآآ - غااا غااا ياا ياا

Having a hoarse sound	h̄h̄h̄h̄h̄	ححححح
Spitting	tufff	توففف
Screaming	ʔaaaj, ʕaaaj, waaaj	عآآآآآآآ - وآآآآآآآ
Expectoration	ʕaaaa, waaaaʕ	عآآآآآ - وآآآآآ
Gargling	ɣar ɣar	غر غر
Drinking	ɣam ɣam, gaʕ gaʕ, daʕ daʕ, ɣab ɣab, ɣar ɣar	غم غم - جع جع - دع دع - غب غب - غرغر
Whistling	ʃuuu, tʃuuuuu	شووووو - تشووووو
Walking steps	tik tik, tak tak	تيك تيك - تاك تاك
Eating something abruptly	xam xam xam	خم خم خم
Walking with a flip flop	tʃit tʃit, txift txift	تشيبببب - تخيببببب
Walking with a high heel shoes	traq traq- traq traq	ترق ترق - طرق طرق
Eating something hot/spicy	ssss, llllllll	سسسسس - ليشششش
Munching	tʃxab tʃxab	تشخاب تشخاب
Sipping	siiip	سييببب
Drinking soup	ʃiiip	شيببببب
Talking secretly	Bsssbssss, siwsiwsiw, ʒax ʒax ʒax	بيس بيس بيس - سوسو سو - صخ صخ
Blowing a candle	ffffffffffff	صخ صخ
(Gum) chewing	mtamat, mʔamʔa, mtaqmtaq	فففففففف
Weeping	nha nha, nfa nfa	منا منا - مطا مطا - متق متق نها نها - نفا نفا

Table 1. Onomatopoeic words/sounds representing human beings' sounds**Sounds of animals**

Usage of sound	Representation of sound	Representation of sound in Arabic
Dog parking	wahwah, waḥwaḥ, hawhaw	وه وه - وح وح - هوو هوو
Bee buzzing	zzzzz, dzzzzz, ezzzz, tnnnnnn	ززززز - دزززز - إيززززز - طننننن
Chick chirping	Swuswuswu, ʒiw ʒiw ʒiw	سوسوسوسو- صيوصيوصيو
Hen cackling	qaqaqa, bakbakkak, baqbaqbaq	قاقا قا - بك بك بك - بق بق بق
Fox/wolf howling	ʕaww ʕaww, ʔawww ʔawww	عووو عووو- أووو أووو
Horse neighing/whinnying	aaahahaha, eeehihih	آآآهاهاهاه- إيببي هيهيهي
Rooster crowing	kuku, kukuʔ, ququʔ	كوكو - كوكوع - قوقوع
Donkey braying	aaa aaa, haaa haaa	آآآ آآآ - هاا هاا
Frog croaking	naaaq naaaq	نااق نااق
Snake hissing	Sssss, essss	سسسسس - إيسسسس
Duck quacking	kwak kwak, wak wak, waq waq	كواك كواك - واك واك - واق واق

Sheep bleating	baa, mbaa, mbaaʔ, baʔʔʔ	بإاء - مبالاء - مبالاء - مبالاء
Bird chirping	tsi tsi tsi, suw suw suw, twit twit twit, wis wis wis, siw siw siw, ʒaw ʒaw ʒaw, zaq zaq zaq	تسي تسي تسي - سوو سوو سوو - تويت تويت تويت تويت - ويس ويس ويس - سيو سيو سيو - صو صو صو - زق زق زق
Cat meowing	miauw, niaw, waawuh	مياو - نياو - واوووه
Cow lowing	Muu, ngoo, mbuuu	مووو - نجووو - مبوووو

Table 2. Onomatopoeic words/sounds representing animals' sounds**Sounds of nature and objects**

Usage of sound	Representation of sound	Representation of sound in Arabic
Bomb exploding	boom, bom, buuuu	بووووم - بوم - بووو
Car moving very fast	aaan, naan, ʒaaan, mmmmm	آآآن - نااااان - عاااان - ممممم
Train	ʒu ʒu ʒu, ʒuk ʒuk ʒuk, tʒuk tʒuk tʒuk, fik ʒak ʒu, tuut tuut	شو شو شو - شوك شوك شوك - تشوك تشوك تشوك - شيك شاك شو - تووت تووت
Gun shot	ʒaax , qaaʔ	طالاء - قاء
Clock	tik tik, tʒik tʒik	تيك تيك - تشيك تشيك
Brushing teeth	tʒu tʒu tʒu	تشو تشو تشو
Running water	xar xar xar, tik tik tik	خر خر خر - تيك تيك تيك
Truck in a temporary stop while engine running	prrrrrr, frrrrrr	پررررر - فررررر
Door knocking	tik tik tik, dik dik dik, ʒaq ʒaq ʒaq	تيك تيك تيك - ديك ديك ديك - طق طق طق
Scanning a card on the card machine	vuuuut, ʒuuut, tuuft	فووووت - شووووت توووفت
Keyboard typing	tʒik tʒik tʒik, tik tik tik, teb teb	تشيك تشيك تشيك - تيك تيك تيك - تيب تيب
Wind	ʒuuuuuh, huuuuh, ʒuuuuuh	صوووووه - هووووووه - شووووووه
Spraying perfume	fizzzz, tiʒʒʒʒ, fiʒʒʒʒ	فزززز - تيشششششش - فيشششششش
Hand slap	ʒrax, trax, ʒraq , tʒax ʒannnn- kraax	طرخ - ترخ - طرخ - تشخ صننن - كراخ
Starting a motorbike	fru fru fru, vru vru vru, fnn fnn	فرو فرو فرو - فرو فرو فرو - فنن فنن
Ringing a bell	rin rin, tin tin, ʒin ʒin, ding ding	رن رن - تن تن - طن طن دنج دنج
Ringing phone	trin trin, ʒrin ʒrin	ترن ترن - طرن طرن
Something juicy hitting a hard surface	baq, bak , braq, tsu, tef	بق - بك - برق - تسو - تيش
Drumming	dum dum, bam bam	دم دم - يم يم
Motorbike	vruuum, vuun vuun	فرووووم - فووووون - فوووووم

Fire catching dry leaves	tʃikul tʃikul, teratʃu teratʃu	تشیکول تشیکول - تیراتشو تیراتشو
Coins hitting the ground	Kruln kruln , krin krin	کرولن کرولن - کرین کرین
Dangling keys	tʃrutʃrutʃru	تشروتشروتشرو
Fishing boat	gggggggggg	جججججججججج
Heavy rain	ʃiʃiʃiʃi, tatatatata	شیشیشیشی - تاتاتاتاتا
Pouring water into a cup	tʃutʃutʃu, tʃuuuuu	تشتوتشوتشو - تشوووووو
Glass breaking	truuʃn truʃn - krulng krulng brun brun, kring kring, ding ding	تروووشن تروووشن - کرولنج کرولنج برون برون - کرینج کرینج - دینج دینج
Bicycle bell		

Table 3. Onomatopoeic words/sounds representing sounds of nature and objects

Discussion

A scrutinizing look at the data reveals that onomatopoeic words make a total number of more than two hundred and fifty words used to represent more than one hundred functions. The use of multiple words in certain items clearly reflects the fact that sounds might be captured differently by different speakers of OA. Generally speaking, onomatopoeic words in OA are mostly made of both vocalic and consonantal phonemes. Few cases are made of consonants only such as those used to signify shivering because of cold weather (zzzz/ tzzzz), steam coming out of a frying pan (tssstss), and sleeping (xxxxx). Likewise, cases of words made of mere vocalic phonemes are even fewer such as those that indicate moaning because of sickness (aaa) or donkey braying (aaa aaa). The use of voiceless sounds is more prevalent than that of voiced sounds in capturing surrounding sounds such as those associated with hot oil (tssss), blowing a candle (ffffff) and heavy rain (ʃiʃiʃi-tatata). Voiced sounds are used to capture loud actions such as those of a truck on the road (rrrrrrrrrr), a vacuum cleaner (vvvvv) or a fishing boat (gggggggggg). Alternation between adjacent sounds in terms of place of articulation is attested in several sounds captured by two or more words. One example is the alternation between the voiced pharyngeal fricative (ʕ), the voiceless glottal fricative (h), and the voiceless glottal plosive (ʔ) in words used to capture sneezing (ʕatʃuh/ hatʃuh/ ʔatʃuh). Another instance is the alternation between the voiceless velar plosive (k) and the voiceless uvular plosive (q), and likewise between the voiceless glottal fricative (h) and the voiceless pharyngeal fricative (ħ) in the words used to represent coughing (kakah/qaħqaħ). Alternation to emphatic sounds is also found in cases like tearing something violently (tarr/ ʔarr) or hand slap (ʔrax/ trax).

Fricative sounds are more in use as opposed to other types of sounds especially in representing actions that require longer duration to be captured such as those linked with running saw (zzzz), grilling something (ssss) or hushing somebody (ʃʃʃʃ). By the same token, plosives are more used in capturing aggressive actions such as bomb exploding (buum, bom, buuu), drumming (dum, bam) or something falling from a higher place (buumm, duuff, duubb). These generalizations, however, are not without exceptions reflecting the fact that although sounds are perceived similarly, they might be captured differently by different speakers of OA so that an acoustic element is best envisaged.

Syllabically, capturing sounds comes in different forms including non-syllabic forms as well as full syllables that may contain lengthened vowels and/or consonants employed to mark duration of action. Various forms are found as follows: C (ʔʔʔʔ -bulldozer), CC (tsssss-hot oil,), CV (ʃu ʃu- train), CCV (fru fru - starting a motorbike), VC (uʃʃʃ - sleeping), CVC (taq taq - dripping water), CCVC (mbaʕ - sheep bleating), CVCC (niym niym -eating something delicious), CCVCC (kling kling - swords hitting one another), CVCCC (huxʃt huxʃt - eating something crispy). The following tables lists these forms along with more examples.

Syllabic form	Examples
C	zzzzz (buzzing), ħħħħħ (having a hoarse sound)
CC	tsssss (putting out fire), dzzzz (running saw),

CV	juuuu (whistling), muu (cow lowing)
CCV	Swu swu (chick chirping), nha nha (weeping)
VC	ijfff (chasing a cat/fly away), issu (hushing somebody)
CVC	Bum (bomb exploding), biib, tiit (car horn)
CCVC	Kwak (duck quaking), trin trin (ringing phone)
CVCC	fjxt (tearing cloth), tuft (scanning a card on the card machine)
CCVCC	Kruln (coins hitting the ground), kring kring (bicycle bell)
CVCCC	wixft (Scissors cutting a piece of cloth), waxft (cutting wood)

Table 4. Syllabic structure of onomatopoeic words in OA

Morphologically, the majority of onomatopoeic words in OA are used as verbs that could appear in different moods usually the imperative one. Nouns make the second bulk of these words being mostly derivatives of these verbs. Other lexical categories such as adjectives are hardly found in the use of these words. The following example sentences show the use of these words in context.

Words associated with human beings

- 1) galis **'jafaqfaq'** tul alwaqt (Verb)
He sits he laughs all the time
'He is laughing all the time.'
- 2) bas tismaŋ **'tʔafiif'** lama tkalmhum (Noun)
only you hear feeling of boredom when you talk to them.
'You only hear their complaining when you talk to them.'
- 3) ma qadart afhmaah. kan **'jtannah'** (Verb)
Not I was able I understand him. He was weeping
'I could not understand him (because) he was weeping.'
- 4) kint **'aqahqah'** laʔini kint bardan. (Verb)
I was I cough because I was (feeling) cold.
'I was coughing because I was feeling cold.'
- 5) **'Almfafaah'** ma zinah (Noun)
Stammering not good.
'Stammering is not good.'

Words associated with animal sounds

- 1) baŋden smaŋna **'twahwih'** (Noun)
then we heard barking
'We then heard (the dogs) barking.'
- 2) Adibjah kanit **'tantan'** fuqna (Verb)
The bee was buzzing above us

'The bee was buzzing above us.'

- 3) kilhan kannan **'jbaʃbafan'** (Verb)
all were bleating

'All (the sheep) were bleating.'

- 4) asmaʃ **'tsawsiw'** atijor fi alʃij (Noun)
I hear chirping birds in the nest

'I (can) hear the birds' chirping in the nest.'

- 5) **'ʃawʃiw'** athib kan qarib min alhadhira (Noun)
howling wolf was nearby from the enclosure

'The wolf's howling (can be heard) nearby the (sheep) enclosure.'

Words associated with nature and objects

- 1) kan **'jxaxar'** min athuqb ili qidam (Verb)
It was dripping from the whole which is in the front side

'It was dripping from the front side hole.'

- 2) ma tiʃgbni **'tnahnihat'** alatfal (Noun)
Not I like the weeping (of) kids

'I do not like kid's weeping.'

- 3) la tiglis **'titmataq'** kthak (Verb)
Do not be chewing like this.

'Do not chew (your food) in such manner.'

- 4) kanit **'tbasbis'** albasal (Verb)
She was grilling the onion

'She was grilling the onion.'

- 5) ma arid asmaʃ **'tranrin'** (Noun)
Not I want I hear phone ringing

'I do not want to hear phone ringing.'

Verbal reduplication in OA is shown to be employed in marking repetition of actions or giving a negative connotation to verbs (Al Jahdhami, 219). Likewise, reduplication in OA onomatopoeic words, somewhat like lengthening, is employed to show duration and intensity of actions so that actual sounds are well captured as they appear in our real world. Examples are thunder sound (krax krax, kaax kaax), pouring water into a cup (ʃut ʃutʃ), gargling (ʃar ʃar), munching (ʃxab ʃxab), ambulance/ police car (wiii wiii), keyboard typing (ʃik ʃik ʃik), and boiling water (baq baq baq), to name a few. Those actions that take a short while, on the other hand, are captured by non-reduplicated sounds such as those associated with bomb exploding (bum), zipping a bag/dress (ziit), hand slap (ʃrax-sannn), spitting (ʃuff), gunshot (ʃaax, qaaʃ), and sneezing (ʃatʃuh). Noun derivatives are created from onomatopoeic verbs based on a fixed syllabic structure change that replaces that initial 'j' with 't' and alternates the last vowel 'a' with 'i' [j(t)CVCCaC → tCVCCiC]. The following table shows model examples of noun derivatives resulting from verbs.

Onomatopoeic usage/ sound	Verb	Derived noun
Laughing 'kar kar', 'faq faq'	ykarkar - yfaqfaq	tkarkir - tfaqfiq

Sneezing 'ʕatʕuh'	ytʕattaʕ	tʕattij
Attracting an animal 'ħawħaw'	jħawħaw	tħawħiw
Coughing 'kaħ kaħ'	jkaħkaħ	tkaħkiħ
Drinking 'ɣaryar'	jɣaryar	tɣaryir
Feeling of boredom/ anger 'uff'	jtʔafʔaf	tʔafʔif
Talking whiling having cold 'xan xan'	jtxanxan	txanxin
Fox / wolf howling 'ʕawʕaw'	jʕawʕaw	tʕawʕiw
Dripping water 'xar xar'	jxarxar	txarxir
Perfume spraying 'fij'	jfaʕfaʕ	tfaʕfiʕ
Ringling phone 'rin'	jranran	tranrin
Eating something abruptly 'xam'	jxamxam	txamxim

Table 5. Noun derivatives from onomatopoeic verbs

Conclusion

The paper explored onomatopoeic words used in daily speech of OA. OA appears to be robust in the use of onomatopoeic words in everyday life conversation. Words fall into three main categories: human sounds, animal sounds, and those associated with nature and objects. Voiceless sounds and fricatives are more in use than voiced ones and those of other manners of articulation. Onomatopoeic words come in different syllabic forms, and mainly as verbs and their noun derivatives. Different speakers may use different words to represent the same sound, which gives an insight that speakers, even of the same language or variety, may perceive the same sounds differently and thus may capture them otherwise.

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