

The Impact of the Holy Quran on Enhancing Reading and Comprehension Skills

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Abstract

This research is concerned with highlighting the link that connects the Holy Quran with the Arabic language, and its effective impact in developing its skills leading to the generation of the ability to understand and produce.

Keywords: quran, language.

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Praise be to Allah, who has sent down the Book to His servant and made it unswerving, a [guide] to warn of severe punishment from Him, and to give good tidings to the believers who do righteous deeds that they have a fine reward. And prayers and peace, the most complete and perfect, upon the one whose chest Allah has expanded, whose burden He has removed, and whose mention He has raised, Muhammad, the son of Abdullah, and upon his family and all his companions. As for what follows:

Indeed, Allah, blessed and exalted, has bestowed favor upon His servants by sending down upon them the Great Quran, and He has made it easy for them to recite, memorize, and learn. It is from the grace of Allah Almighty that He sent down this Great Quran in the Arabic language, which is the most eloquent and clearest of languages, the easiest to acquire, and the most expressive of meanings that resonate with the soul. Allah Almighty said in Surah Ash-Shu'ara: {Indeed, it is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds, brought down by the Trustworthy Spirit upon your heart, that you may be of the warners,

in a clear Arabic tongue.} And Allah Almighty said in Surah Yusuf: {Indeed, We have sent it down as an Arabic Quran that you might understand.}

Indeed, the Holy Quran stands at the pinnacle of eloquent and effective speech; it is the ocean of eloquence and the fountain of rhetoric and exposition. Allah Almighty said in Surah Al-Isra: {Say, if mankind and the jinn were to come together to produce the like of this Quran, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they supported each other.}

It is the path for researching the Arabic language; to aid in its understanding and interpretation, and it is the method of argumentation that grammarians rely on to regulate and codify the language.

From here, scholars have highlighted the importance of memorizing the Holy Quran, reciting it, and delving into the enchantment of its exposition and the significance of its words in acquiring and developing linguistic skills.

Ibn Khaldun says: "From this section, and what is established in it, another secret appears, which is the reason why the speech of the Arabs among the Muslims is of the highest class in

rhetoric and its tastes compared to the speech of the pre-Islamic era, in their prose and poetry. Indeed, we find the poetry of Hassan ibn Thabit, Umar ibn Abi Rabia, Jarir, and Al-Farazdaq, then the speech of the predecessors among the Arabs in the Umayyad and early Abbasid states, in their sermons, dispatches, and dialogues, is of a much higher class in rhetoric than the poetry of Nabigha, Antara, Ibn Kulthum, and Zuhair, and the speech of the pre-Islamic era in their prose and dialogues. Sound nature and correct taste are witnesses to this for the critic who is insightful in rhetoric."

Therefore, Muslims have consistently focused on memorizing and reciting the Quran, both in ancient and modern times. In our current era, there is a trend in educational curricula and institutions to allocate parts of the Quran for memorization and recitation. A prime example of this commitment is our esteemed university's dedication to this matter by establishing a reading room named after Muhammad bin Zayed University, overseen by professors specialized in recitation and Tajweed. This is the strongest evidence of its belief that mastery of the Arabic language and its skills can only be achieved by returning to the Holy Quran.

As Ibn Khaldun says, "The Quran is the foundation of education upon which all subsequent acquired abilities are built."

Consequently, this research with this title aims to highlight the link between the Holy Quran and the Arabic language, and its effective impact in developing its skills leading to the generation of the ability to understand and produce.

Research Questions:

- What is the impact of the Holy Quran on developing reading and comprehension skills?
- What is the relationship of the Holy Quran to the development of these skills?
- How does the Holy Quran enhance these skills to the point where they become second nature to the learner?

- What are the methods and means that enable us to uncover the extent of this impact?

- Lastly, how do learners who study the Holy Quran differ from other learners who do not?

These questions will be addressed through the following sections and demands:

Section One: The Impact of the Holy Quran in Developing Listening, Reading, Contemplation, and Understanding Skills

- Demand One: Developing the Listening Skill

- Demand Two: Developing the Reading Skill

- Demand Three: Developing the Skills of Contemplation and Understanding

Section Two: The Realized Effects of Reciting and Memorizing the Holy Quran among Learners.

- Demand One: Enriching the Learner's Linguistic Inventory

- Demand Two: Developing the Skill of Correct Pronunciation in the Learner

- Demand Three: Preserving the Tongue from Obscene and Vulgar Speech

The following will explain and clarify these topics.

Demand One:

The Impact of the Holy Quran on Developing Listening Skills.

The sense of hearing is one of the greatest blessings bestowed by the Almighty upon His servants, as it is the natural gateway to language learning and the correct path to acquiring it. Allah Almighty says in Surah An-Nahl: "And Allah brought you out from the wombs of your mothers knowing nothing, and made for you hearing, vision, and hearts that you might be grateful." And in Surah Al-Insan, He says: "Indeed, We created man from a sperm-drop mixture that We may try him; and We made him hearing, seeing."

Hearing, as Ibn Khaldun calls it, "the father of linguistic abilities," has been given significant attention by scholars due to their recognition of its importance in the transmission of knowledge

and sciences, which were initially conveyed orally.

The importance of this blessing is clearly evident through the recurrence of the term "hearing" and its derivatives more than 185 times in the Holy Quran, and that hearing is mentioned before sight in all verses discussing human creation, indicating its precedence.

Tahir Ibn Ashur states in his interpretation, *Al-Tahrir wa Al-Tanwir*: "Because hearing is a tool for receiving information and knowledge that perfects the intellect and is the primary means of receiving divine revelation and the guidance of prophets. It is a more complete way of delivering the call to the understanding of nations than sight if hearing were absent. This is because hearing receives sounds from all six directions without needing to turn, unlike sight, which requires looking and focusing. Hearing and sight are the greatest senses and the strongest means of perception, which is why they are mentioned before the heart. The heart is mentioned after them because it is the center of all perception, where the senses transmit their perceptions."

Scholars differentiate between "hearing" (السمع) and "listening" (الاستماع):

Listening, in their view, is a process that relies on both the ear and the mind, or it is a complex process that requires two mental operations: concentration and attention. Thus, it is not merely hearing; rather, it is a process in which the listener gives specific attention to the sounds received by the ear.

This distinction is echoed in the words of Allah in Surah Al-A'raf: {So when the Quran is recited, then listen to it and pay attention that you may receive mercy.}

From this, scholars have emphasized that good listening is crucial in enhancing the intellectual and linguistic levels of learners; it enables the reception of a vast amount of information, ideas, and knowledge, which are then stored in the brain, analyzed, synthesized, understood, critiqued, evaluated, and judged. Good listening results in attaining a high level of

knowledge and developing a rich linguistic capability.

Accordingly, the skill of listening has been linked since ancient times to the teaching of the Holy Quran (listening to it, contemplating its meanings) as stated by Allah: {So when the Quran is recited, then listen to it and pay attention that you may receive mercy.}

And Allah says in Surah Al-Isra: {Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart - about all those [one] will be questioned.}

And His saying: "And [mention, O Muhammad], when We directed to you a few of the jinn, listening to the Quran. And when they attended it, they said, 'Listen quietly.' And when it was concluded, they went back to their people as warners. They said, 'O our people, indeed we have heard a [recited] Book revealed after Moses confirming what was before it which guides to the truth and to a straight path.'"

The impact is clear on the learner through listening accurately to the pronounced letters, making their pronunciation of sounds from their proper points accurate and precise; thus, they acquire eloquence and strength of speech, as the Holy Quran is eloquent, effective, and upright. This effect of the Holy Quran becomes apparent when listening and paying attention to it, and all of this can only be achieved through listening to the Holy Quran, reciting it, and pondering its meanings.

Demand Two:

The Impact of the Holy Quran on Developing Reading Skills

Reading is a process composed of several mental operations, led by vision and insight.

It has been said that reading is the key to entering various fields of science and knowledge as it serves as a means of communication among people, regardless of their cultural and national differences. Through reading, humans have and continue to acquire knowledge previously unknown to them, ascending to the required level and enhancing their ability to think correctly and concentrate.

Therefore, the Holy Quran's attention to reading is evident, and no evidence is more indicative of this than the first revelation received by the Messenger of Allah, which was the command from Allah Almighty: "Read in the name of your Lord who created, created man from a clinging substance. Read, and your Lord is the most Generous, Who taught by the pen, taught man that which he knew not."

The impact of the Quran in developing reading skills among learners is through teaching them the correct pronunciation of the words of the Holy Quran and its verses, giving each letter its due right and merit. Thus, learners become acquainted with the articulation points and characteristics of letters (such as throat letters, hollow letters, and also learn the differences between light and emphatic letters, elongation and shortening, connected and disconnected pronunciation, solar and lunar letters). A reader of the Holy Quran thus accumulates a Quranic terminological wealth that refines and eloquently enriches his tongue; making him an appreciator and enjoyer of everything he reads or articulates, capable of debating, defeating his opponents with arguments, and possessing unmatched literary and linguistic courage. He becomes a creative author, an expressive speaker, an analyst, an interpreter, a critic, a judge, and an evaluator—all deriving from the miraculous source of the Almighty, "the Holy Quran," which elevates its reader from a lower status to a higher one.

Additionally, Al-Jahiz mentioned the benefits of the book in general—but in this context, his words apply to the Book of Allah Almighty, as it perfectly fits: Allah says: {This is a Book which We have sent down to you, full of blessings that they may ponder over its verses, and that men of understanding may remember.}

Al-Jahiz states: "The book that, when you look into it, prolongs your pleasure, sharpens your disposition, expands your tongue, enriches your expression, magnifies your words, fills your chest, grants you the friendship of kings, and is the teacher who, when you are in need, does not

belittle you, and if you cut off the material, does not cut off the benefit."

The Holy Quran holds a distinguished place as the argument of Muhammad, peace be upon him, who urged learning and teaching it. He said, "This Quran is the feast of Allah, so learn as much as you can from His feast... Recite it for Allah will reward you for its recitation."

Reading the Holy Quran enables the learner to become a skilled reader who understands and selects appropriate texts. It teaches correct pronunciation from the original articulation points, which enhances eloquence and rhetoric. The Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, said, "Beautify the Quran with your voices."

The reading of the Holy Quran is encouraged by Allah Almighty and then His Messenger, peace be upon him, for its great benefit to the learner, as the Prophet said, "The best among you are those who learn the Quran and teach it."

He also said, "The proficient reciter of the Quran is with the honorable, righteous scribes [angels], and the one who recites the Quran and stutters in it (struggling due to a speech difficulty) and finds it difficult, will have a double reward."

Demand Three:

The Impact of the Holy Quran on Developing the Skill of Contemplation (Reflection)

Contemplation can be defined as: thoughtful observation aimed at deriving insights, or it is logical thinking about the true meaning of the words and the meanings that can be derived from them.

Key Quranic approaches to encourage thinking and contemplation include:

First: Direct Encouragement to Contemplate

For example, Allah Almighty says in Surah An-Nisa: (Do they not then contemplate the Quran? Had it been from other than Allah, they would have found therein much discrepancy.) and in Surah Muhammad: (Do they not then contemplate the Quran, or are there locks upon [their] hearts?).

Second: Addressing Those of Understanding

As in Allah's statement in Surah Al-Imran: (Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding.) and His statement: (Eat and pasture your cattle; indeed, in that are signs for those of sound judgment.)

Ibn Jarir al-Tabari commented, "He specified that these are signs for those of sound judgment because they are the people of reflection and admonition, and the people of contemplation and learning."

Third: Parables for Reflection and Remembrance

As Allah says in Surah Ibrahim: (And Allah sets forth parables for mankind so that they may remember.) and in Surah Al-Hashr: (And such examples We present to the people that perhaps they will give thought.)

Section Two:

The Effects and Manifestations on the Reader and Memorizer of the Holy Quran

One of the most significant benefits and fruits that accrue to the learner includes:

First: Enriching the Learner's Linguistic Inventory

The reader and memorizer of the Quran acquire a rich linguistic repertoire, elevating their eloquence beyond others. Their speech, in both poetry and prose, is more beautifully crafted and clearer in expression than those who have not studied or memorized the Holy Quran. This is no surprise, as the Holy Quran provides its adherent with a tremendous linguistic wealth of words and constructions. The words of the Quran, numbering over 77,000, are among the most eloquent, expressive, and clear in the Arabic language, in addition to their ease of pronunciation and sweetness to the ear.

As Al-Raghib Al-Isfahani says in his book "Gharib Alfaaz Al-Quran Al-Kareem" (The Uncommon Words of the Holy Quran), "The words of the Quran are the core and cream of Arabic speech, its medium and its nobility, upon which jurists and wise men rely in their rulings and wisdom, and to which the skilled poets and orators turn in their composition and prose. All

other words, derivatives from these, or derived from them, are, by comparison, like husks and pits next to the choicest fruits, or like chaff and straw next to the kernels of wheat."

And truly, as Allah the Almighty says, (Say, if the sea were ink for [writing] the words of my Lord, the sea would be exhausted before the words of my Lord were exhausted, even if We brought the like of it as a supplement.)

Second Benefit:

Developing the Skill of Correct Pronunciation in the Learner.

The significance of correct pronunciation in terms of sound, morphology, and syntax in conveying clear and understandable speech is well acknowledged. This is achieved by pronouncing letters from their correct articulation points. Incorrect articulation can change or corrupt the meaning. Therefore, the best method to achieve sound and grammatical accuracy is to receive the recitation of the Holy Quran - as specialists have indicated - in a recited and beautified manner directly from knowledgeable scholars and reciters.

Third Benefit:

Preserving the Tongue from Obscene and Vulgar Speech.

Through the refined and dignified style of the Quranic language, which is free from all obscenity and ugliness, the Holy Quran serves as a model for learners to emulate in elevating their character and expression.

Its words are noble and dignified, characterized by modesty and loftiness that achieve the intended purpose without inciting vulgarity. The Quran employs various methods for such expression, including metaphor, simile, implication, insinuation, allusion, and more.

A miraculous example is the verse (They both used to eat food) , an indirect way of referring to events,

and the verse (And some of you have come to others and taken a solemn covenant) , referring to the relationship between spouses.

These benefits from studying and reciting the Quran not only enhance linguistic abilities but

also guide behavior, promoting a more respectful and elevated form of expression and interaction.

In summary, no meaning in the Noble Quran is expressed explicitly when it involves indecent or vulgar content; instead, it is conveyed through euphemisms because stating such meanings in their direct terms would taint the speech due to the vulgarity of the content. Therefore, those who memorize the Holy Quran adopt high moral standards and exemplary ethics, evident in how they protect their tongues from obscene and offensive speech, and how they express themselves through respectable words and impactful phrases.

This was a brief summary of the impact of the Holy Quran in enhancing language skills and understanding.

We praise Allah Almighty for the Book of Allah... and we are thankful to Allah that He revealed it to the heart of our Prophet Muhammad... and we continue to praise and thank Allah for bequeathing this Book to us.

May Allah protect the United Arab Emirates, its leadership, its people, its elderly, its youth, its children, its women, its sheikhs, its rulers, and its leaders. O Allah, the Giver of beauty to the heavens, by the truth of Your power, preserve the Emirates and continue to bestow upon it Your apparent and hidden blessings.

And finally, may Allah make me and you among those whom He has chosen for His Book... and may Allah grant us the ability to memorize the Quran, and to act upon it... until we meet Allah, the Exalted, and He is pleased with us.

And our last prayer is that all praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.

Results and Recommendations:

1. The Holy Quran has continuously had a significant impact on developing the linguistic skills of learners. It is evident from the clear differences between a learner who has memorized the Holy Quran and one who has not. The one who has memorized it possesses superior linguistic skills, being proficient in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, mastering the Arabic language, and knowing how to communicate effectively. In contrast, a learner who has not memorized the Quran does not achieve the same level.

2. Expand the curricula and courses that focus on memorizing parts of the Holy Quran.

3. Link the reading curriculum to the sciences of the Quran, including its recitation, memorization, focusing on early educational stages as they are suitable for memorization and language acquisition.

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