Affiliations of Verb Tense, Sentence Pattern and Language Style Shifts in the Noble Qur'an: Some Deep Linguistic Intuitiveness

Abstract: This small-scale study explores the extent to which the Qur'anic discourse shifts verb tense, sentence pattern, and language style. It aims to describe, interpret, and explain the linguistic factors lying behind these switches. The study benefits from corpus linguistics through which a concordance of specific key words in context (KWIC) is used to collect data. The study applies a critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach. Therefore, it builds on van Dijk's (1998) model of analysis. It has been found that the Qur'anic discourse tends to shift the tense to present time when arguing for certain themes including mainly martyrdom and prisoner taking. The Qur'anic discourse also applies three modes of sentence pattern: OVS, VSO, and VOS. On the rhetorical level of the Qur'anic discourse, the OVS pattern is exclusively used to organize sub-topics; the frequent VSO is referentially used to provide knowledge about sub-topics, and the VOS mode is essentially applied to meet norms of polite address. The Qur'anic discourse uses three types of language style: nominal, verbal, and mixed. The nominal style is selected to package meaning; the verbal to develop relations between arguments and the mixed to help connote specific feelings about certain predicates under discussion. Consequently, it has been concluded that the Qur'anic discourse shifts the tense to maintain life for war fighters from both sides, the clause pattern to meet both rhetorical and pragmatic criteria, and finally the style to load and implicate meaning.

Keywords: The Qur'anic Discourse, Language Styles, Sentence Patterns, Inflectional Morphology, Pragmatic-stylistics.

INTRODUCTION

In orthographic languages, tense is often marked for present and past. Amongst these, Arabic gives a great emphasis on the past tense in which a very frequent tri- and less frequent quad-literal roots of clustered consonants are tied in a melody to derive other parts of speech (Eisele, 1990, p. 173). Each root is marked for tense, number, gender, and case at the morphological level. The Semitic root is prefixed by [ya-] and [ta-] to mark present tense for both males and females regardless of the number and aspect. Both syntactic markers are, however, converted to [yu-] and [tu-] where there is a change in the voice. As Arabic uses prosodic morphology, it maintains the past verb form unmarked initially except for present time for both sexes. The number, aspect, and gender are marked finally by using different syntactic markers, such as [-a, -u, -na, -at, and -ta]. It is important to note here that where the situation is imaginary or no longer real, the past tense is often shifted to a present one.

Most human languages apply two language styles: verbal and nominal. In the former, the verb phrase (VP) is placed with some other noun phrases (NPs) functioning mainly as the subject and object for the VP assigned. From a semantic perspective, the VP is referred to as a predicate for some other arguments. From a syntactic view, the verbal style uses some complex grammar in which many rules are stored in our heads and used. In the latter, only a complement is nominated for the subject. Thus, the nominal style tends to reduce grammar to the bare minimum in order to package, i.e. load meaning. Compared to the verbal style which applies so many rules and parameters, the nominal style in Arabic uses the syntactic markers [-u or -un] to mark both the predicate, i.e. the subject and its argument, i.e. the complement (Bahloul, 2007, 174). Each marker is predictable as [-u] is often infixed with Arabic definite NPs whereas [-un] is suffixed to indefinite NPs at the phonological level of Standard Arabic.
Sentence patterning also varies from one language. Unlike English which frequently applies a subject-verb-object (SVO) pattern, Arabic more frequently uses a VSO pattern. It also allows for other patterns, including VOS and OVS, to proceed (Peled, 2008). Though less frequent, these patterns are not random; they can only be used under certain syntactic as well as semantic constraints and only for some pure rhetorical, metrical and musical factors. In Academic writing, shifting the sentence pattern helps ideas flow naturally. In literature, pattern shifting also enables poets to end their lines with the words that have the same rhyme. It is important to note here that Arabic traditional literary works are both rhythmic and linear.

Research Problem, objectives and questions

Throughout history, Arab linguists have argued that the holy Script of Islam (also known as the Noble Qur’an) is characterized by linguistic precision. Some modern linguists have also remarked that “classical Arabic is revered as the language of Konn” in the Arabic speaking countries (Holmes, 2013, P. 29). Thus, Standard Arabic is taught officially at school and used for very formal interactions, media and in Academic writing. Though the Noble Qur’an is concise, there are no scholarly studies that have already attempted to examine tense, style and pattern shifting in the Qur’anic discourse (QD) from more recent denotational as well as critical discourse analysis perspectives so as it check the impact of these shifts on the Arab learner.

The present study examines the extent to which the QD shifts the Arabic verb tense, sentence patterns and language styles. From a critical and analytical perspective, it aims to describe the potential shifts of the target linguistic processes, interpret the meanings conveyed by the linguistic shift, and explain the forces lying behind these shifts. Consequently, the paper addresses the following questions:
1. To what extent does the QD shift verb tense, sentence pattern, and language style?
2. What are the implicated meanings that are satisfied by the QD linguistic shift?
3. What are the linguistic and non-linguistic forces and factors lying the QD shift?

Significance of the study

The study counts for some good reasons. It differently applies a critical discourse analysis CDA approach to the discourse. It is the first (up to my best knowledge) to use a pure linguistic approach to the Quranic discourses that exclusively manipulates the issue of women. The study builds on more recent denotational and critical approaches to the holy Script. These approaches concern the deep meaning values, thoughts, tendencies and forces lying behind the syntactic features of the text. Unlike the library studies and reporting sciences which have been followed for hundreds of years so far in the Arab World, the CDA approach, a new thrust builds on more denotational theories of language, helps realize the senses depicted in the discourse in the processes of meaning production, consumption and realization. The study also perceives the data collected from a more structuralist’s perspective that stresses the notion of “there is nothing outside the text” (Marsen, 2012, p. 210). Thus, the study contributes the efforts paid traditionally in reinterpreting the Quranic discourse for more values of meaning in regard to linguistic studies in general, and pragmatic studies in particular.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Languages vary considerably in relevance to marking the tense. Lu (2019, pp. 377-397) investigated time, tense and viewpoint shift between English and Mandarin. The researcher attempted to discuss the role of tense and time in English which applies some tense markers and Chinese which does not use any formal tense markers. By using a multiple translation technique of one literary piece, the scholar found that English tends to mark tense at least two language specific stylistic means, inversion, and clause interpretation for a narrative purpose. Dissimilarly, Mandarin tends to use neither the temporal adverbials nor the perfective aspect. Though both English constructions are pivotal to invoke time, Chinese Mandarin sounds indifferent to time managing viewpoint in discourse.

Native speakers of different languages also tend to apply different language styles. In a study of the United Nations General Assembly (UNA) debate speeches, Ghanem and Speicher (2017, PP. 168-182) analyzed the persuasive styles, tactics and tools used by English and Arabic speaking leaders. They identified three persuasive styles: quasi-logical, analogical and presentational. In these speeches, the leaders of native Arabic tended significantly to use both analogical and presentational styles whereas other leaders gave their speeches in English clearly inclined to the quasi-logical style. They also found that Arabs used the quasi-logical style much more often than English speakers over thirty years. The researchers concluded that all the speakers in the UNA prefer to use these tactics as they were good for strengthening their speeches. By time passage, there was a shift in the tactics used.

In cross-linguistic studies, college students sometimes tend to shift some adverbials from one place to another when attempting to interpret one text in another code or when trying to negotiate one particular meaning in another variety. Laala (2010) minded shifts in translating lexical cohesion from Arabic to English. The researcher examined how frequently postgraduate Arab learners shifted Arabic lexical cohesive patterns in English. The researcher also checked the semantic and textual implications resulting from the shift in the target language. She found that the students shifted most of the lexical ties to English, but they were, however,
unable to establish the intended textual and discoursal equivalence because they simply failed in dealing with the text as a whole unit.

In the field of applied linguistics in general and translation studies in particular, the issue of style shifts is often attributed to textual incompatibility and explained in terms of both divergence at the formal level and rhetorical asymmetry. Al-Qinai (2009, pp. 23-41) distinguishes between two types of style shifts: Mandatory and optional. The former springs from the systematic dissimilarities between the target language and source language in terms of the underlying systems of rhetorical patterns, semantics and syntax. At the discourse level, these shifts are more frequent in cohesive relations which manifest themselves as conjunctions, punctuations, substitutions and endophoric references. The latter is optional, as the shift itself is performed under the impact of idiolect and level of proficiency according to the translator's personal preferences.

In the domain of second language acquisition (SLA), style shifting is also determined by discourse, whether spoken or written. Ellis (1987, pp.1-19) investigated interlanguage variability in one narrative text. He investigated the use of three past tense morphemes: regular past, irregular past and past copula. Data collection was conditioned by planning in both modes of writing and speech and by absence of planning in the speech mode. Ellis observed the occurrence of different patterns of style shifting in regard to the morphemes under study. The style shifting suggests that the nature of the linguistic feature under investigation is a determining factor. The regular past was most evident in planned writing and least evident in unplanned speech. Little style shifting took place in irregular past, whereas style shifting for past copula occurred only between planned speech and unplanned speech. The three conditions produced different accuracy orders for regular and irregular past.

**Materials and Methods**

The study benefits from the linguistic features of the Quranic discourse (QD) to describe, interpret and explain shifting of verb tense, sentence pattern and language style. It first utilizes corpus linguistics, i.e. the science of large bodies of text, to collect the Quranic verses, i.e. clauses that entail some shifts (McEnery, 2012). Concordance of the key words in context (KWIK), such as ‘taqatuluna’, ‘takthibu:na’ and ‘ta:isiru:na’, the Arabic for 'you fight', ‘you tell lies' and ‘you take as prisoners' respectively, for instance, would result in identifying the Quranic sequences and discourses in which the tense, pattern and style shifts are selected and used. This manipulation at the discourse level enables the researcher to have a general look at the components of the sequence collected. This preliminary outlook often helps the researcher collect data for analysis. In short, the ultimate goal of the corpus work is, however, to identify the semi-identical coordinated Scripts that clearly display shifts at the sentence, tense and style level.

Theoretically, the paper draws on a linguistic theory of language. The analysis consistently builds on "systemic functional language" (SFL) which is supposed to leak some knowledge about the grammatical functions as well as the syntactic features of the units of the Holy language under analysis (N. Schmitt, 2010, pp. 55-73). From a pragmatic view, the analysis also builds on "first order logic" to purify meaning (Kearns, 2000, pp. 25-35). Therefore, the "meaning relation" that each pair of words under investigation helps build will be analytically checked. The "meaning values" of the discourses under discussion will be also drawn (Kearns, 2000, pp. 35-41). More importantly, the "predicate" or the "predicators", i.e. what is said about the subject or what is used as subject complement, as well as their "arguments", will be systematically drawn and notified (Hurford, 2007, pp. 198-204).

The study also benefits from critical discourse analysis (CDA) as a research method. It builds on van Dijk's 1998 model of analysis which includes discourse as an indispensable component of an ideology. Van Dijk (1998) has identified a variety of discourse structures that can carry important functions of deep thoughts at the syntactic, semantic and schematic, i.e. discourse, levels. The study also meets Fairclough's 2013, 2010 model of analysis. Fairclough's (2013, 2010) three-dimensional analytical framework includes three types of analysis at the levels of producing, consuming and constructing, i.e. realizing, meaning (Mirzaei and Eslami, 2013, p106). The first analysis is descriptive; it aims at describing the meanings produced. The second is interpretive, as it aims to consume the meanings produced by the writer or speaker. The last analysis is explanatory, as it aims at realizing the meanings produced and consumed.

The data collected is felt differently. Analytically, the researcher integrates two levels of language to describe, interpret and explain the linguistic features of the QD that processes deep thoughts that accelerate some linguistic shifts. Thus, the researcher systematically uses a critical research method that clearly shows how meanings are conveyed at the syntactic level. The study, therefore, approaches the text from a more "recent denotational theory" in which the structural meaning of words is checked at the discourse level (Kearns, 2000, pp. 16-24. Consequently, the study goes beyond the notion of the sentence to contextualize the deep meanings, values, and doctrines the QD helps advance. These meanings are often satisfied in the processes of production, consumption and realization. Syntactically, the researcher also highlights the importance of language functions and styles, and patterns and tense in the process of word selection and use. Generally speaking, the data collected is perceived
or rather conceived under analysis from a ‘post-structuralism’ perspective validating the claim that “there is nothing outside the text” (Rivkin and Rayan, 2004).

**ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

In this section, shifts in verb tense, sentence patterns, and language style are referred to and discussed systematically. It has been argued that the Noble Qur’an (NQ) is a good book of reading and writing. Therefore, it is important to note here that quotes from the NQ sometimes entail one or more of the linguistic processes under discussion. Thus, the focus of the analysis will be given on one linguistic process and notified if referred to in another subsection.

**Shifting the Tense in the QD**

In Figure (1), the holy Script of Islam addresses Sons of Israel. It lists that the Almighty God gave to Moses the Book and caused after him Messengers to follow in his footsteps, and to Jesus, son of Mary, He gave manifest signs and strengthened him with Holy Spirits. Then the QD reveal that the Sons did not like or rather believe the Messengers sent to them, felt arrogant, treated some as liars and (have) slain another group (see the English interpretation shown in Figure 1). In the quote, the QD selects and uses nine verb phrases (VPs): “gave” Moses the Book, ‘followed’ him in with Messengers, ‘gave’ Jesus the signs, ‘strengthened’ him with the Holy Spirit, a messenger ‘came’, the Sons ‘did not like’ and ‘felt’ arrogant, ‘accused’ the messenger ‘of telling lies’ and ‘have slain’ him.

In Figure (1), all of the VPs selected and used are marked for past tense except the Arabic for did not desire and (have) slain. The Semitic VP [tahwa:] is perceived as a verb of perception that shows feelings and desires. It is unlikely to be a cognitive or a dynamic verb that has a start, an end or a duration point of action. Unlike the other dynamic verbs used in the quote, the VP expresses a case of state the Sons dwell through. The Arabic VP [taqtulu:] roughly glossed as “you are killing” in modern English” is not only coordinated with the Arabic for ‘accused of telling lies’ but also marked for present tense. This linguistic choice and manipulation reflect a morphological, i.e. inflectional, shift at both the discoursal level, i.e. the external grammar of the whole quote and the sentential level, i.e. the internal grammar of the clause in which the VP is coordinated with.

Syntactically and functionally, the VP [taqtulu:] roughly glossed as ‘you kill’ is used as main VP for the noun phrase NP [fari:q-an] referring the messengers sent by Allah to Sons of Israel, but they ‘killed’. Semantically, the predicate TAQTUL argues for both the bound, plural morphemes [-u:] meaning ‘you all’ referring to the Sons and [fari:qan] meaning ‘a group’ referring to the messengers sent and killed. In this sense, the verb is a two-place predicate respectively mirrors a group of people ‘welcoming’ the messengers sent by their God to warn them by a high degree of arrogance, skepticism, and violence. To connote the negative feelings of the total oppression and unfair social assassination of the Messengers who were killed suddenly or secretly and treacherously while defending a divine cause, the QD selects to shift the tense to present time in order to give life to the people killed for that cause.

In Islam, the notion of martyrdom, sacrificing one’s self for Allah’s cause, family, homeland and even science, is not in line with normal death in which a Muslim dies because of old age in particular. In Figure (2), the QD explicitly urges Muslims not to refer to those who have been fought and ‘killed’ for the sake of their Almighty God as ‘dead’ people. The QD continues to certify that those people are living in the presence of their Lord and receiving their own provisions. However, the denotations of the negative marker [wa-l:] glossed as ‘And do not’ used to head the cognitive predicate [tahsabana] meaning ‘you think’ and the use of the complementary but contemporary antonyms [amwa:tan] meaning ‘dead’ and [ahya’an] meaning ‘alive’, all connote the positive feeling of keeping life (see the English interpretation shown in Figure 2).
Maintaining Present Time to Keep Life for Prisoners in Islam

In the previous sub-section, it has been argued that the QD applies tense shift (in favor of present) to keep life for martyrs. In Islam, martyrdom stems from the concept of Jihad which legitimates fighting other attackers to defend faith, creed, homeland, family and personal properties. It has also been notified that the notion of martyrdom is in contrast with normal or common death which totally suggests absence of life. It is, however, in concord with dynamic ‘life’ that has the general features of continuation, time passage, duration, and even physical provision (see the English interpretation in Figure 2). According to the teachings of Islam, martyrdom is one of the good promises a fighter may have. The other is winning the battle itself which often ends in taking some enemies as prisoners. The question may arise here: Does the QD notionally urge Muslim fighters to keep life the prisoners?

In Figure (3), the QD argues that Allah had brought those of the People of the Book who supported the Profane Arabs down from their fortresses and cast terror into their hearts. Then Muslim fighters slew a group and (have) taken another group as prisoners (see the English interpretation in Figure 3). Here, the QD uses the present tense to maintain life for their enemies taken as prisoners. It is important to note here that the teachings of Prophet Muhammad and his companions to their leaders and fighters have clearly banned killing the captive, women, the old, and the young, cutting the trees, and burning the cities. These directives suggest not only maintaining life for a large groups of people but also sustaining the habitat and resources in people can survive.

Shifting Tense to Falsify What Others Used to Think

In a previous section, it has been argued that Arabic gives emphasis on past tense verb form to derive many other related words at the root, consonantal, inflectional and derivational tires and levels. In Figure (4), the QD argues for a group of Allah guided and another group got astray because they took the devil as friends instead of their Almighty God; still, they think they are rightly guided (see the English interpretations provided in Figure 4). Regardless of the English translation provided, the QD selects and uses the Arabic verb forms for ‘guided’, ‘got astray’, and ‘they took’. These forms are inflectionally marked for past tense. Then, the QD continues to comment on the ‘group which got astray’ that they think that they are rightly guided. In one reading the Noble Qur’an, the VP [yah-sa-buna], roughly glossed as ‘they think’ in modern English, denotes the process of forming or having a particular thought in one’s mind. In another reading, the VP [yah-si-buna], also roughly glossed as ‘they think’, denotes using one’s mind to understand or decide something. Both senses however, connote the negative feelings of ‘thinking wrongly’, ‘understanding poorly’, or ‘making the wrong decision’. To mirror that unreal cognitive state of mind that group stored in their head about their guidance, the QD switches to present tense.
Shifting Sentence Pattern in the QD for Rhetorical Purposes

It has been argued in a previous section that Noble Qur`an is a good book of writing. In Figure (4), the QD raises the rhetoric question: Are you harder to create or the heaven that He has built? In the question, the QD address all human beings. On the structural level, the QD uses a relative clause to provide a clue for the potential answer of the both pairs of the argumentative comparison related to the creation of man or the heaven. The Semitic relative pronoun [alati:] meaning ‘that’ is dropped, and replaced by a short pause at the phonological level. Though euphonious and miraculous, both the ellipsis and the short stop are meant to redirect our attention from the creation of human being to building the heaven which is under any measures is greater. It is important to note here that throughout the whole QD the processes of creating the heaven is referred to as a structure or building. Thus, the QD uses the Arabic VP [bana-ha:] meaning ‘He built it-the heaven’. In this clause, a VSO sentence pattern is selected and used.

In Figure (4), the QD continues to argue for the process of building the heaven. It affirms that Allah has already raised the height (of the heaven) thereof, and then He made it perfect; and He has made its night dark, and brought the morn thereof (see the English interpretation provided in Figure 4). In the arguments of raising the height of the heaven, making it perfect, making its night dark, and bringing light to its morning, the QD also selects a VSO sentence pattern. Maintaining the sentence pattern can be explained in terms of coherence and unity of the sub-topic under discussion. As there is no shift in the topic, and (probably the mode of the speech or writing), the QD advances to use the same sentence pattern.

In Figure (4), the QD advances to argue for the creation of the earth. It confirms that after building the heaven, Allah spread the earth forth. It is important to note here two points. The first is related to the Arabic morpheme [daha:] used in the quote. It is a root inflected for past tense, and is used as a polysemous word denoting a spherical shape similar to that of the ‘bird nest’. The second is the prepositional phrase (Prep-P), [ba`ada thali:ka] meaning ‘after that’. This Prep-P of time suggests that the process of creating both the heaven and the earth was synchronous. However, the process of giving a spherical shape as well as producing its water and vegetation has taken place later. On the syntactic level, the QD applies an OVS sentence pattern. This shift is accompanied with a shift in the topic of discussion. As the first topic on the ‘heaven’ has been inserted initially to head the previous argument, the QD switches the pattern to signal for the
topic change as well as not constrain streaming of the ideas to come.

In Figure (4), the QD goes on to affirm that Allah produced its water and its pasture. In relevance, the process of making the earth look spherical as well as producing its water and pasture are in accord with the scientific facts. The spherical shape enables the earth to rotate in the sky which has been built. Water and light (from the sun) is essential for vegetation produced on the earth. To help manifest these senses and scientific facts, the QD once again shifts the sentence pattern into a VSO one. This final patterning parallels both what is said about the heaven and what is said about the earth. It also goes beyond what is informed to explain why the earth is created, shaped, brought out its water and pastures. The QD certifies that it is created for the provision of us and our livestock.

Shifting Sentence Pattern in the QD for Logical Division

In Figure (5), the QD closes the argument on the fight took place between Muslim and a group of Jews who allied with Arabs against Prophet Muhammad and his companions. It comments ‘A group you are killing, and you are taking another group as prisoners’ (see the English interpretation provided in Figure 5). In the Arabic Script, the QD shifts the sentence pattern from an OVS to a VSO one. It is clear that the Arabic for ‘group’ in the first clause refers to ‘the fighters’ who allied with the enemy. Politically, those people are seen as a group of enemies or rather betrayals that deserve death punishment. In the fight, Muslims perceived them as a group and killed many of them. From a pragma-stylistic perspective, the meaning relation between the accusative NP [fāri:qan] glossed as ‘a group’ or ‘some’, and the VP [taqtulu: na] meaning ‘you are killing’ suggests an OVS pattern in which those people are received and killed as a group. However, caption in battles is reciprocal. That is to say, a war may end in taking some soldiers as captive. Thus, the people taken as prisoners will form a group to be treated differently.

From a first order logic view, the potential meaning relationship between the NP referring to ‘the prisoners fit into a new group’ and the VP [ta’siru: na] meaning ‘you are taking’ is not reciprocal. That is to say the features of the meaning relationship between the VP and NP is subsequent and is logically conditioned by the factor of time as well as consequence of war. This necessitates a shift to a VSO patterning. The shift in the pattern from an OVS to VSO, however, sounds audiovisual and neurological. It is so, as it affects the animate nerve organs of the warriors who experience a group of cheaters being killed and being taken as prisoners.

Shifting Sentence Pattern in the QD for Language Politeness

In the previous subsections, two examples from the QD have been referred to and discussed. In both examples, the shift is registered for the OVS mode and explained in terms of rhetorical writing and logical division. In this section, the VOS pattern is explored for some analysis. In Figure (6), the QD opens with a rhetoric question in which it asks if “you do not see that Allah sends down water from the sky and We bring forth therewith fruits of different colors; and among the mountains are streaks white and red, of diverse hues and others raven black”. Then, it adds “And of men and beasts and cattle, in like manner, there are various colors? In the question, the QD draws our attention upwards to sending water from the sky and down to creating fruits of different colors; and among the mountains are streaks white and red, of diverse hues and others raven black”. Then, it adds “And of men and beasts and cattle, in like manner, there are various colors? In the question, the QD draws our attention upwards to sending water from the sky and down to creating fruits of different colors. Then, it moves our eyes (probably clockwise or anti-clockwise to look the various colors of both the mountains and finally people. It, however, ends with “Only those of His servants who possess knowledge fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Mighty, Most Forgiving” (see the English interpretation provided in Figure 6).
In Figure (6), the closing shifts the style from a nominal and mixed one to a verbal style in which a VOS formula is used. The formula has already endorsed exceptionally that among other people only scientists fear Allah. In the exclusion, the QD opens with [inna-
ma:] roughly glossed as ‘certainly only’ in modern English. In Arabic, the morpheme [inna] meaning ‘definitely’ is an endorsement marker whereas [ma:] meaning ‘that’ is a relative pronoun. However, the combination of both morphemes helps manifest linguistic endorsement, phrase relation, and exclusion. As the QD uses the predicate FEAR which argues for both (Allah) and (scholars), it tends to insert the argument the ‘scholars who fear Allah’ last. This final insertion reflects a good degree of modesty that fits into the norms of polite address.

**Shifting Language Style in the QD**

In most modern languages, the style can be verbal or nominal. The **verbal style** (as the title suggests) tends to employ a main verb (also referred to syntactically as a VP) to show action. The VP can be intransitive that does not require a NP to function as object or transitive that requires one or more NPs to function as object. From a semantic perspective, the VP is referred to as a predicate, i.e. what is said about the subject, which has one or more arguments to argue for. In most languages, the number of the arguments is determined by the VP itself. In English, the VP can be a one-to-four place predicate. The four place predicates are, however, rare in English because the VP can only be transitive. In Arabic, some VPs are tri-transitive, so they are satisfied only by using three NPs functioning as object. By including the NP used as subject, the Arabic tri-transitive VP is a four-place predicate. In short, the verbal style applies many complex grammatical rules on both the structural and functional levels of the sentence.

Unlike the verbal style, the **nominal style** reduces grammar to the bare minimum. Reducing the grammatical rules is often carried out by using some linking words that trigger only a subject complement. Like English which uses a list of linking verbs including ‘verbs of to be’, ‘become’, ‘look’ and ‘seem’ for instance, Arabic also employs some family-resemblance words, such as [ka:ana, sa:ra, asbaha, amsa] roughly glossed in English as ‘was’ and ‘became’ to link the subject and its complement. It also uses a group of endorsement markers including [inna, anna, lakinna, la’ala] roughly glossed as ‘certainly’, ‘surely’, ‘but’ and ‘hopefully’ to link both the subject and its complement. Once the Arabic clause is neither endorsed nor marked for past tense, the nominal style is conveyed by using the syntactic markers [-u] or [-un] which are predicted and placed finally on both the subject and its complement. As this style reduces grammar to the bare minimum, it allows for meaning to package.

Unlike Indo-European languages, the Semitic languages, such as Standard Arabic and Hebrew, tend max styles. This exclusive but mixed style has the general syntactic and functional features of both the nominal and verbal styles. For example, the infinitive phrase [athimun qal bu-hu] meaning ‘be sinful his heart’ in the verse “And conceal not testimony; and whoever conceals it, his heart is certainly sinful” (Al-Baqarah 2:83), can also perceived as an infinitive clause, and glossed as ‘His heart is sinful’. On the functional level, the phrase [athimun] is used as a complement for the subject. On the semantic level, the phrase BE SINFUL is used as a predicate for the argument (he). Whether felt as a predicate or a complement, this word needs another complement or an argument to proceed. Arabic syntax allows for another complement to be proceed as well as to be marked for the additive, nominative or accusative case. In this sense, the infinitive phrase (Inf-
P) and its complement is perceived as VP if the complement is marked for the accusative or nominative case.
In Figure (7), the QD opens with “(It is) the most Gracious; He has taught the Qur’an; He has created man. He has taught him plain speech”. In the opening, the QD applies a nominal style. However, Arab linguists disagree about the grammatical functions of the verses. Some refer to (Ar-Rahman) meaning “the most Gracious” as an argument for the sentential predicate HE HAS TAUGHT QUR’AN. This realization is signaled by the superscript marker [la:] which urges the reader not to stop here. Other linguists contend that the verse constitutes a full clause in which THE MOST GRACIOUS is felt as a predicate arguing for the unstated deictic personal reference (He). This understanding of the function of the first verse as a full clause is evidenced in both factors of organization and topicalization. That is to say, the NP “The Gracious” is both isolated as a full verse and given as a title for the whole chapter. The nominal style selected and used mandates that the NP “the most Gracious”, work at the discoursal level, and that it package meanings to be said about Him in the following verses and on the whole chapter.

Among the meanings loaded about the most Gracious are that “He has taught Qur’an”, “He has created man”, and that “He taught man the plain speech”. In these declarative statements, the QD applies a verbal style. Form a semantic perspective, the predicate HAS TAUGHT argues for the unstated pronoun (He) referring to the ‘most Gracious’ and the Noble (Qur’an). Similarly, the predicate HAS CREATED argues for both (He) and (man). These Qur’anic VPs are two-place predicates. The predicate HAS TAUGHT argues for (He), (him) referring to man, and the (plain speech). Thus, this final VP is a three-place predicate. What is said about ‘the most Gracious’ is probably that He is a great teacher as he has already taught the Noble Qur’an (necessarily some time earlier to the Angels –based on the number of arguments assigned for the predicate as well as initial place of the predicate insertion). He is also a great creator and tutor as He has created Adam and taught him plain speech – based on the verse confirming that “And He taught Adam all the names (Al-Baqarah 2:31).

As the opening of the quote conveys certain meanings about both creation and teaching, it is expected that QD continues to exemplify for both motifs. The QD continues to argue that “The sun and the moon run their courses in a fixed reckoning”. In the verse, the QD applies a nominal style in which the prepositional (Prep-P) IN A FIXED RECKONING is used as a predicator to argue for the coordinated NPs (the sun and the moon). The Prep-P used as a predicator denotes all time, place and exactness, but it also connotes the positive feeling of perfect creation. The speech function of the verse sounds informative and didactic. The QD also advances to inform that “The stemless plants and trees humbly submit to His will”. In the verse, the QD applies a nominal style in which the sentential predicate THEY SUBMIT TO HIS WILL is used to argue for the coordinated NPs (the stemless...
ions, such as jihad, he...versus arguing for building the earth for His creatures. In this sense, the speech function explicitly looks informative, but it implicitly sounds didactic and expressive. In short, the nominal style selected and used is intended to package about necessity of man’s submission to the will of His Creator.

The implicated meaning about submission to the Creator’s will suggests exemplifies for the will itself. In relevance, the QD continues to argue that “He has raised the heaven high and set up a measure”. In both verses, the QD shifts the style into a verbal one. In the first verse, it selects an OVS pattern in which the NP ‘the earth’ is placed initially. This selection helps other ideas to stream at the discourse level of the arguments to come. In the verse, the QD assigns the predicates RAISE HIGH and SET UP to argue for the unstated pronoun (He) referring to Allah as a creator, (the heaven) and (the measure) respectively. Both predicates connote the positive feelings of highness as well as absoluteness of justice. In the second argument, the QD, however, shifts the pattern into a VSO. This instant shift from an OVS to a VSO manifests itself as a mirror image which reads: The absolute justice resides high in the heaven. The QD warns “That you may not transgress the measure, so weigh all things in justice and don’t fall short of the measure”. In these verse, the QD uses a verbal style in which the predicates NOT TRANSGRESS to argue for (you) referring to ‘humans’ and the (measure), WEIGH to argue for (you) and (justice), and NOT FALL SHORT to argue for (you) and (the measure). These predicates connote the negative feelings of injustice and cheating. In these verses, the speech function sounds very directive.

The QD closes the quote with “Allah has set the earth for His creatures”. In the verse, the QD argues for setting the earth for His creatures. It, however, applies a verbal style in which an OVS pattern of sentences is used. Both the style and the pattern selected in this verse is in line with the linguistic processes used in the previous verses arguing for building the heaven. Similarities between both argumentations can be contributed to the rhetorical factor that help stream ideas easily and naturally. The verse assigns the Arabic predicate for SET FOR to argue for (the earth), the unstated pronoun (He) referring to Allah, and (His creatures). In this sense, the VP used is a three-place predicate (for more information, see the English interpretation provided in Figure 7).

Finally, the QD switches the style into a nominal one. It advances to inform that “Therein are all kinds of fruits, and palm-trees with sheaths, and grain with husk and fragment plants”. In both verses, the QD assigns the Prep-P THEREIN as a predicate to argue for (fruit), (palm), (grain) and (plants). Thus, the predicate is a four-place phrase. The linguistic features of the arguments used help convey certain meanings. As the Arabic for fruit is both indefinite and general, it sounds that the QD refers to fruit of all kinds. The Arabic for palm trees is, however, definite, specific, and qualified with [tha: al-akma:n] meaning ‘having the features of being enveloped or packed well’. By the same token, the Arabic for grain is definite, specific, and qualified with [thu: al-asif] meaning ‘having the capacity to be protected by chaffs which can be blown away’. The Arabic for plants is also definite and aromatic. The semantic features of the vegetation exemplified reflect a high degree of diversification, perfection, protection, and gratification. They also connote the positive feelings.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In a considerable number of verses, the QD sometimes shifts the tense of the Arabic VP from past to present. The shift in the verb form are fairly frequently affiliated with the context in which the switches took place. In a number of the verses that compare and contrast or rather argue for specific groups of people, the QD tends to switch the tense to develop a full understand of certain notions, such jihad, martyrdom, prisoner taking. To raise the spirits of the Muslims who may lose their lives while fighting for the sake of Allah, their families, and homeland as well as to maintain the continuation of life and its resources for both Muslims and their opponents who were taken as prisoners, the QD often shifts tense to present.

Besides, the QD shifts the tense to present time once there is a wrong thought formed in the mind of a group of people who took the devil as a companion, but they think that are rightly guided. This subjunctive verb form is probably used to express uncertainty among groups of people who got astray. Though cognitive, the VP connotes the negative feelings of lack of both knowledge and guidance. In relevance, throughout the QD the various forms of [hada:] meaning ‘He guided’ to connote the positive feelings of moving in the right way or using the right methodology.

The QD often shifts sentence pattern for rhetorical, logical reasons, non-linguistic reasons. In one quote, it has been found that the QD raises up a rhetoric question about the creation of both the human being and the heave. To address the question, the QD implicates that the creation of man is unlikely to be greater than building the heaven. It, however, argues for two topics: building the heaven and setting up the earth for man to dwell. In both arguments, there is a shift from an OVS to VSO. The OVS pattern is used to introduce the topic whereas the VSO pattern is employed to provide some information about each topic. It has been concluded that the shift sounds rhetorical, and is meant to help flow of ideas. In another, but exclusive example, it has been found that the QD sometimes shifts the sentence pattern for a pure logical reason to fit the semantic features of the NP into those of the VP. In the example being referred to and analyzed, the shift sounds sensory.
Moreover, the shift from a VSO into VOS mode is carried for language politeness. In one example, it has been found that the QD excludes scholars often fear Allah the most. To help mirror modesty among scientists, the QD inserts the NP referring to the ‘scientists’ and functioning as subject at the final level of the structure. This linguistic manipulation and processing does not only fit into norms of polite address and pragma-linguistic tendencies, but it also meets the pragma-linguistic as well as the sociolinguistic outlooks.

The QD uses verbal, nominal, and mixed language styles. Throughout the QD, there is a general inclination to apply the nominal style at the opening of the various chapters. This tendency is probably oriented by the semantic factor. The style itself helps load deep meaning relations and values about the topic and the arguments under discussion. It also helps connote positive and negative feelings about the nominal predicates being said about the other arguments. In one quote referred to and analyzed, it has been found that QD applies the nominal style initially to open and develop a full discourse about the Creator. Surprisingly, the chapter begins with the isolated term ‘The most Gracious’ glossed as ‘He is the most Gracious’ which is also given a topic for the chapter. Whether clausal, phrasal, topical or discoursal, this word in isolation selects one semantic property, here mercifulness, of the Creator to develop properly.

There is also a general tendency to switch from the nominal style to the verbal style for some pure rhetorical purposes. As the verbal style in Arabic benefits from three different sentence patterns, it makes sense that the QD utilizes the frequent VSO mode to exemplify for the topic under discussion. It also makes use of the less frequent OVS for some pure sub-topical or organizational rhetorical purposes. Finally, it exploits the least frequent VOS for a pragmatic factor concerning modesty and politeness among arguments of the VP. Neither the selection nor the application of one pattern rather than another is random. Patmning sentences in the QD is not only a rhetoric-based process but also a language-oriented one. In the quotes referred to and analyzed, there a general tendency to switch from a verbal style once again to a nominal one at the final level of the discourse. This style but final shift sounds pragmatically commentary. As the nominal style is superior in packaging meaning as well as elevating any grammatical complexity, the QD tends to apply it finally at the schematic level of the discourse to provide an instance conclusion or comment pivotal to the meanings assigned and implicated.

Consequently, style, pattern and time selection and distribution in the QD is unlikely to be random. Switches and shifts among styles, patterns and time is predictable. They also shed some light on the pragma-linguistic as well as pragma-stylistic perspectives the QD attempts to meet. Researchers of linguistics in general, and stylistics in particular, should examine in depth the impact of these Qur’anic shifts and switches in the style, pattern, and tense on the final rhetorical products of the native speakers of Arabic. A solid research may result in revealing the extent to which Arab writers of native Arabic would transfer any of the linguistic tactics the QD tends to apply and use. The findings of these studies will definitely contribute to knowledge, as they will shed some light on the problems EFL encounter when they do some courses in Academic writing, for instance.

One area linguists may approach and examine is the mixed style. In this exclusive style, Arabic often constraints the NP to function as the VP on the internal level of grammar. Sometimes, it, however, facilitates that function. Once the function of the NPs facilitated, the Arabic syntax allows for a new style having the general features of the nominal style and verbal style to proceed. This hybrid style does simplify grammar, but still it allow for deep meaning to load. For example, the QD remarks that “Verily, it is Allah Who causes the grain and the date-stones to sprout. He brings forth the living from the dead, and He is the Bringer forth of the dead from the living (Al-An’am 6:95). In the quote, the QD opens with the present participle NP [fa:laqu allha wa anawa:] roughly glossed as ‘Who causes the grain and stones to sprout’. Then, it certifies that He brings the living out of the dead, He is the bringer of the dead of the living. In the verse there is not only a shift from the nominal to the verbal style but also a switch to the mix style. In the mixed style, the present participle NP ‘Bringer’ is selected for the Creator. This linguistic choice has changed the sentential Doer, Who can create the living, to an Agent, Who can also recreate the dead. It helps realize a shift from a dynamic, in-progress action to an agentive but stable case featured by absolute and exclusive capability to create.

REFERENCES


