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# Mechanics of Sociolinguistic Variation and Pragma-stylistic Inclination in the Qur'anic Discourse

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**Abstract:** This paper explores the extent to which the Qur'anic discourse helps realize social variation from both a pragmatic and stylistic perspective. It theorizes that individuals coming from different functional and dysfunctional families often show a good degree of dissimilarities in their responses and behaviors. Thus, the paper aims to check whether these individual differences are reflected in the Noble Qur'an or not. It is also intended to examine mechanics of linguistic variability in the holy Script of Islam to mirror the various individual proclivities and tendencies. Data collection has been carried out through a concordance process in which certain key words in context (KWIC) related to kinship, such as brother, father, mother and clan, and family-resemblance categories, such as Jews, Christians, believers and Sabians, are listed in a corpus. The study applies a critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach to the data collected. Therefore, it builds on Van Dijk's (1998) model of critical analysis at the syntactic, semantic and schematic levels. It has been found that the Qur'anic discourse mirrors variation among individuals from a stylistic, pragmatic and socio-pragmatic perspectives. Mechanics of linguistic variation in performance has included mainly shifting language styles and functions, re-ordering the relevant arguments in harmony with the context under discussion, qualifying speech to tell the truth and (accordingly) to address norms of polite address, and selecting certain figures of speech that help ideas to flow easily and beautifully.

**Keywords:** Pragma-stylistics, Socio-linguistic Variation, Semantics, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Arabic Syntax, The Qur'anic Discourse

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Background to the Study

In modern denotational theories of meaning, scholars are more interested in what is said in one natural language. Central to the interface between lexical semantics and lexical syntax is, however, argument structure. Grimshaw (1990) claims that argument structure is quite structured [1]. This structure often conceals some eminence relations among arguments that reflect their thematic and aspectual characteristic features and properties. These prominence relations are in concord with a new theory of external arguments with far-reaching consequences for the syntactic behaviors of the predicate as well as the nature of cross-categorical variation and language change in argument structure.

Stylists are more interested in how one particular thing is

said. By its broadest sense, the word 'how' refers to stylistics which suggests an orderly, objective study of style, as distinct from impressionistic reaction to one particular text [2]. Therefore, the main principle in any stylistic study is the perception that there should be more than one way of saying or doing something, and that what is said or done is essentially different from how it is said or done. Stylistics has, however, divided itself into literary and non-literary in practice, though the method used in either case of study is largely based on the linguistic insight felt and the terminology used. It is important to note here that literary stylistics, though stressed and privileged, is but one inclusive type of stylistics.

Pragmatists often ask what is done. They are keen on purifying the meanings assigned and implicated by interlocutors. Thus, pragmatics is not directly interested in language, but in what language users do with language. In its broadest sense, pragmatics is "the study of language usage"

[3]. This definition helps perceive pragmatics as the study of the relationships between speech and the context through which the language is produced. Such a rapport often includes deixis, i.e. the operations or functions of deictic elements, such as personal, time and place references, aptness of the language used to manifest one specific context, the presupposition as distinct from what is explicated, and the implicatures intended by the speaker rather than the meaning conveyed verbally [4].

Central to pragmatic investigation is speech act theory (SAT), conversational patterns, presuppositions, truth values, meaning relations, and language politeness are among. More recently, pragmatic research has been examining the ways in which verbal and non-verbal messages are sent and received among interlocutors. For effective communication, pragmatists have explored how the interlocutors' background knowledge often facilitates the process of passing knowledge. They have also investigated how the *theme*, i.e. what is being talked about, usually precedes the *rheme*, i.e. what is being said about it [5].

Necessarily, pragmatics and stylistics coexist with one another [6]. Both concern the linguistic choices the interlocutors select and use from a wide range of grammatically acceptable or rather predictable language forms. Though pragmatic analyses are preoccupied with the language choice as a means to perform specific actions, such as request, inform, direct and socialize, stylistic analyses are more interested in the language choice at different levels including formality vs. informality, intimacy vs. non-intimacy, and tactfulness vs. lack of tactfulness, for instance.

In both trends (also known as pragmatic stylistics), the *context* is often felt differently. Hickey (2014) argues that analysts refers to style as "contextually determined language variation" whereas analysts in pragmatics examine the relationship between language selection and use and speech context. Stylistically, context is seen as the situation, such as a café shop, a hairdresser's or a police station, in which a specific way of speaking is made likely. Pragmatically, context is conceived as the utterances, knowledge, beliefs, and assumptions the interlocutors composed and uttered about one topic. Therefore, a stretch of language, such as 'Her aggressive dog chased my lazy cat' is used—from a pragma-stylistic perspective, to talk probably only about *the dog*, and 'My lazy cat was chased by her aggressive dog' is, however, used to talk about *the cat*. In both examples, the context fluctuates between animal aggression and laziness.

In dealing with a specific discourse, whether written or spoken, pragmatic stylistics concerns the linguistic features that the speaker as well as the writer selects and uses from a wide range of acceptable language forms that would be truth-conditionally or meaningfully equivalent, but might function differently, so that other potential objectives can precede or do so in different ways. In other words, the equivalent selections are perceived as determinants having specific language functions, such as informing, directing or socializing, certain communicative properties shooting at politeness, clarity, effectiveness... etc., and particular contexts.

In pragma-stylistic studies, scholars engage in studying all the linguistic and meta-linguistic elements and conditions that allow both the grammatical rules and functional words to affiliate with specific elements of the context to produce a particular discourse that can enable some change in the hearer's or reader's state of mind. Thus, pragma-stylistics differentiates between the semantic import or the theoretical abstract meaning of one stretch unit of language as a non-linguistic element and its usage in a specific situation or its impact on a group of hearers or readers to comprehend the context of that discourse properly. Hickey (2014) argues that certain pragmatic and stylistic factors can function together to determine internally the form of utterances people use. They include word-order, topicalization, informal relative clauses, indirectness and warnings.

## 1.2. Literature Review

Dunn et al (2011) investigated word order. They hypothesized that languages vary considerably up to a certain limit. They argued that linguistic studies aimed to describe and explain diversity among human languages [7]. Building on both Chomsky's generative grammar which maintained that linguistic diversity had to be constrained by some innate parameters and Greenberg's claim which sustained some tendencies for some traits reflecting some universal system biases rather than absolute variation, the researchers found that the development of only a few word-order features of all human languages are strongly correlated. This result totally contradicted the generative claim of non-finite principles and parameters. In regard to the Greenbergian conclusions, the researchers found some purebred rather than universal functional dependencies between the traits investigated. They concluded that linguistic structure (with respect to word order at least) might be determined, shaped and constrained by *cultural* transformation.

In an attempt to devise a theory of topicalization and relativization that could explain the differences between them without endangering the syntactic constraints they adhere to, Ning (1993) contended that the unified theory of relativization and topicalization, suggested by Kuno and Chomsky in 1976, among others, often displayed relativization and topicalization as symmetrical processes involving similar word formation and construction, such as wh-questions, facilitated by some pure geographical factors [8]. In spite of this morphological and syntactic correspondence, the researcher found that there were significant differences between adjunct relatives and adjunct topic constructions. There were also some asymmetries between relatives of the primary adjuncts and relatives of secondary adjuncts.

Gelukens and Limberg (2012) also investigated direct speech acts and face threats. They claimed that only a small number of speech acts including requests and apologies had been notably examined by scholars [9]. They also asserted that the interactive dimension of face-threatening acts and their manner of conducting themselves in terms of function and organization, in particular, had been largely overlooked

and neglected. The researchers assumed that threats were essentially leading to a high degree of face lost if people would not attempt to fix the social conflict resulted from the threats themselves. The scholars aimed to check whether negative responses to threats were approved in quantity terms, whether specific types of negative actions affiliated with personal preferences, and if these responses were influenced by the gender variant. The researchers found that non-conformity with a threat was a social act, negative responses needed more remedial action, and that threat responses were subject to sex variation.

### 1.3. Statement of the Research Problem

In the general field of Applied linguistics as well as the area of sociolinguistics, language use draws on two perspectives: Pragma-linguistic and socio-linguistic. The former—according to Schmitt (2002), concerns the linguistic strategies, i.e. mental plans, employed by speakers and writers to satisfy a given pragmatic meaning [10]. Therefore, this view focuses on the social judgments associated with the interlocutor's age, gender and relationship and the social acceptability of dealing with one particular context. The latter, however, concerns the social beliefs underlying the interlocutor's choices of these strategies. Thus, it focuses on the selection and use of certain language forms processes, styles, and functions to operationalize the ongoing conversation, its messages and arguments.

In the domain sociology or rather epidemiology, researchers allege that members of one family, whether functional or dysfunctional, are so different from one another, and they often behave differently (Plomin & Daniels, 2011; Vince, 2018) [11, 12]. This claim suggests that the precise discourse, whether spoken or written, should reflect some socio-linguistic variation between family members. It should also employ some language styles that mirror this variation from a pragma-linguistic as well as a socio-pragmatic view. The Qur'anic Discourse (henceforth the QD), i.e. the holy Script of Islam (also known as the Noble Qur'an), has exemplified as well as argued for specific members coming from both functional families, such as believers, sons, wives, parents, and brothers, and dysfunctional families, such as criminals, thieves, and adulterers. Though characterized by frequency and linguistic variability, the QD, in general and these verses, in particular, have received less interest in pragma-stylistic studies.

### 1.4. Research Objectives and Questions

In its broadest sense, this paper explores the extent to which the QD helps manifest the behaviors of family members in various contexts. Therefore, it aims at quantifying as well as qualifying the linguistic processes, styles and functions the QD employs to construe social variation from a pragmatic and stylistic perspective. To achieve these objectives, the study addresses the following questions:

1. What processes does the QD use to show sociolinguistic

variation among what is referred to as family resemblance?

2. How does the QD deal with the potential individual differences at the syntactic, semantic and schematic level?
3. What are the forces and practices lying behind the selection and use of certain language styles in the QD?

### 1.5. Significance of the Study

The study counts for some good reasons. It is among the first studies attempting to exploit a religious discourse to reflect on both the pragmatic as well as the stylistic processes the holy Script of Islam employs to argue for specific members. The study is, therefore, expected to contribute to linguistics, in general, and both domains of pragmatics and stylistics, in particular. The study is also supposed to contribute to Arabic language because it deals with some Qur'anic verses sound semi identical at the syntactic level. This symmetry in form and structure (except for a few changes here and there) has encouraged some orient lists, scholars who study Asian languages and subjects, to suggest that the QD is probably featured by either redundancy or discrepancy. Thus, the study fits into cross-linguistic, but cognitive studies that benefit from recent denotational theories of language.

## 2. Materials and Methods

The present study utilizes corpus linguistics, i.e. the study of large bodies of text. It collects data from www.alislam.com, an online website for the Noble Qur'an and Sunnah, i.e. sayings and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PUH). Data collection has included certain key words in contexts (KWIC), such as *believers, Christians, Jews and Sabians*, for instance. In Islamic doctrine, each of which is often perceived as a group of people comprising a family-resemblance belonging to Abrahamic religions. Christianity, Islam, and Judaism are the *Abrahamic religions* with the greatest numbers of adherents who worship only one god, the almighty God. KWIC also includes the Arabic *for father, mother, husband, wife, sons, brothers, and clan or tribe*. They directly refer to members of nuclear or extended families.

Theoretically, the study applies a critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach to the data collected from the Noble Qur'an. Generally speaking, a CDA approach to discourse analysis – according to Fairclough (2010), is meant to make the reciprocity between properties of the text and processes of power or ideology relations more *visible* [13]. This reciprocity is quite foggy or rather blurred to those who interpret the text. The effectiveness of the text, however, depends on this cloudiness. In its essence, CDA is multi-disciplinary (Bloor and Bloor, 2013; Van Dijk, 1998) [14] [15]. Thus, it should be 'trans-disciplinary' in analysis. This multiple approach can help the analyst attract the dialectical relations between the genre's discourse and other intricate discursive moments, elements, and objects in addition to the discourse internal relations (Fairclough, 2003) [16].

Therefore, CDA is applicable for any research geared towards checking any religious ideologies and self-concepts, as it clearly digs for and systematically delves into the links entrenched, whether intentionally or unintentionally, between language and social practice. From a CDA approach, data analysis should be perceived from an essential, post-structuralist's lens confirming the notion that reads: "There is nothing outside of the text" (Rivkin, 2017) [17].

Methodologically, the study builds on Van Dijk's (1998) theory of *discourse* and *ideology*. Van Dijk (1998) displays discourse as a fundamental component of particular ideologies. He refers to some discourse structures that can carry some important functions of our ideology. At the *syntactic* level of the discourse, the subject of one sentence, for instance, mirrors what interlocutors holding certain ideologies want to emphasize. Pronouns, such as 'we' and 'them', also echo some in-group and out of group ideologies. At the *semantic* level, ideological discourses are inclusive in nature. This means that people often express their opinions of certain historical or social events positively, negatively or even neutrally. At the discourse or *schematic* level, people often tend to reflect their ideologies clearly. For example, the selection of certain words in a newspaper title can show the ideology of the journalist who wrote it.

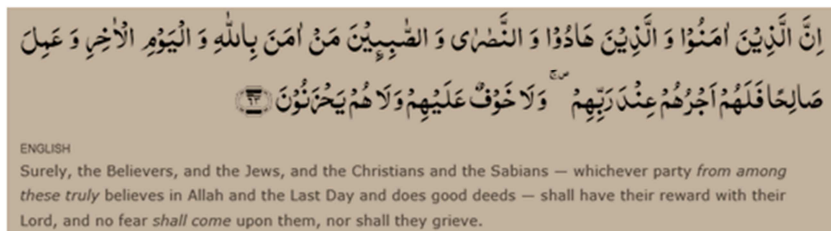
Van Dijk (1998) argues that *discourse* analysis should provide some important functions. He lists membership, action, value, belief, relationship with others and resources; our memberships suggest identifying who we are and how we define ourselves in terms of gender, race, socio-economic class, religion, age, language and culture; our actions highlight what we do in a specific group; our values stress what we like to do most; our beliefs sustain any thought or doctrine we believe in; our relation with others stresses where we have to stand on specific issues; and our realistic and symbolic symbols confirm whether we already possess or just miss them.

Van Dijk (1998) also points out that the *context* of discourse plays an important role in understanding the texts. Therefore, analysts should check first the *domain*, as the conservative ideology for instance, always manifests itself in certain topics, such as 'birth control', sex 'education and life', 'birth and death' but not 'organic food'. Analysts also need to examine *the settings*, including timing and location, as where and when the discourse is given adds to the context. They should also explore the social, ethnic and economic *backgrounds* of the discourse writers. Finally, they have to inspect the affiliations related to the discourse writers' potential *roles* and agendas.

### 3. Discussion and Analysis

#### 3.1. Mechanics of Sociolinguistic Variation Among Groups

##### Example 1A: Rewarding Believers for their Faith and Good Deeds

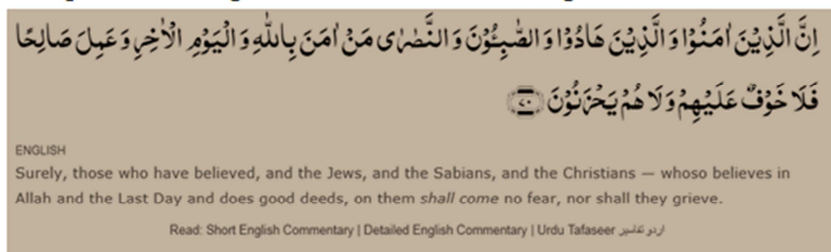


انَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَى وَالطَّيِّبِينَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

ENGLISH  
Surely, the Believers, and the Jews, and the Christians and the Sabians – whichever party from among these truly believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good deeds – shall have their reward with their Lord, and no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve.

Al-Baqarah 2:62

##### Example 1B: Creating Peacefulness of Mind Among Believers



انَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالطَّيِّبُونَ وَالنَّصَارَى مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

ENGLISH  
Surely, those who have believed, and the Jews, and the Sabians, and the Christians – whoso believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good deeds, on them shall come no fear, nor shall they grieve.

Read: Short English Commentary | Detailed English Commentary | Urdu Tafaseer اردو تفاسیر

Al-Ma'idah 5:69

Figure 1. Sociolinguistic Variation among Groups.

This section exemplifies for family-resemblance from a pragma-stylistic perspective. Both examples 1A and 1B reflect the behaviors of Abrahamic followers in regard to believing in almighty God and the Last Day, and doing good deeds. In both examples, the English interpretation is

provided for non-Muslims (see Example 1A and 1B) listed below. To address the research questions, the paper systematically and critically analyzes the quotes at the syntactic, semantic and schematic level.

**3.1.1. Opening Argumentation with Linguistic Endorsement**

Examples 1A and B open with an endorsement element. In Classic Arabic as well as Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), certain markers are used for linguistic endorsement. They include [inna], [anna], [lakinna], [layta] and [la'ala] roughly glossed in English as 'surely', 'certainly', 'but', 'wishfully', and 'hopefully'. Among these, [inna] is very frequent in the Noble Qur'an. In Arabic, these words are often inserted initially at the structural level of the sentence to certify what is said. At the syntactic level, the first part of the sentence, functions as an argument. It is often identified as an NP or a P, reflected for the accusative case, and marked by a final syntactic markers perceived as /-a/ or /-an/. The other part functioning as a predicate might be nominal or sentential, but always reflected for the nominative case marked by the syntactic markers /-u/ or /-un/.

As both quotes open with an element functioning as endorsement element at the syntactic level, it sounds the Noble Qur'an attempts to describe specific issues related to the group of people under argument. At the semantic level, this process of linguistic endorsement attempts to assign and interpret specific meanings related to each group's tendencies and practices. At the discourse level, this language processing is intended to help construe, i.e. realize, the forces lying behind the groups' identities.

**3.1.2. Maintaining Argument by Changing Language Style and Word-order**

In Examples 1A and B, the Qur'anic discourse selects the terms [alathi:na amanu:] meaning 'these who believed', [alathi:na ha:du:] meaning 'those who turned to be Jews', [an-Nasa:ra:], roughly glossed as 'Christians', and [as-Sa:bi'i:na] meaning 'Sabians' as external arguments for the final predicates HAVE REWARDS, NO FEAR and NO GRIEF. Among this category of people, only THESE who BELIEVED and THOSE who TURNED to BE JEWS are assigned as predicates to argue for the relative pronoun [alathi:na] meaning 'who'. In dealing with both categories of people, the Noble Qur'an selects to use a relative clause, verbal style to maintain them as external arguments for the endorsement marker [inna] as well as internal predicates for the relative pronoun [alathi:na], i.e. 'who'. Both categories are also coordinated with another including namely and respectively 'Christians' and 'Sabians'. Both categories of believers are only assigned as external arguments for the endorsement marker. They are unlikely to behave as predicates as they Noble Qur'an has shifted the style from a verbal to a nominal one. It is important to note here that the nominal style often reduces grammar to the bare minimum to enable certain meanings to load.

In Example 1A, the words, referring to the whole categories of people regardless of the language style and processing implemented, are assigned as sentential arguments on the semantic level. On the syntactic level, they are assigned as arguments for the endorsement marker; thus, they are all marked for the accusative case. This linguistic

manipulation and processing show an internal in-group look towards the people under argument as a relevant, but not equal family of believers (see Figure 2, Column A, items 1 to 4. It is important to note here reading in Arabic is oriented by a right-to-left writing system. That is to say, key words are often inserted initially to the right-hand, so they receive more attention by readers. In relevance, the Qur'anic discourse selects a word-order system that nominates the believers first, the Jews second, the Christian third and the Sabians last.

In Example 1B, the Qur'anic discourse applies a different word-order style in dealing with the classification of the believers under argument. It maintains an initial position for both categories of the people who *believed* and those who *became Jews* (see items 1 and 2 depicted in column B, Figure 2). However, the Qur'anic discourse selects to insert the Sabian before the Christian category. This linguistic choice of word reorder is accompanied by a linguistic change as well as split at the syntactic level. Both categories have marked for a nominative case. This means that any linguistic endorsement related to both categories is constrained. This linguistic manipulation has also accelerated the process of splitting both groups from their counterparts, the believers and the Jews (see items 3 and 4 presented in column B, Figure 2). It is important to note her that the Semitic polysynthetic coordinator [wa-] meaning 'and' shows only absolute addition. It does not show any sequence. Thus, the Jewish category can be inclusive within the following categories. In this study, it has been excluded, as it has the syntactic features, but not the semantic or schematic properties— of the believer's category opening the sacred discourse under discussion.

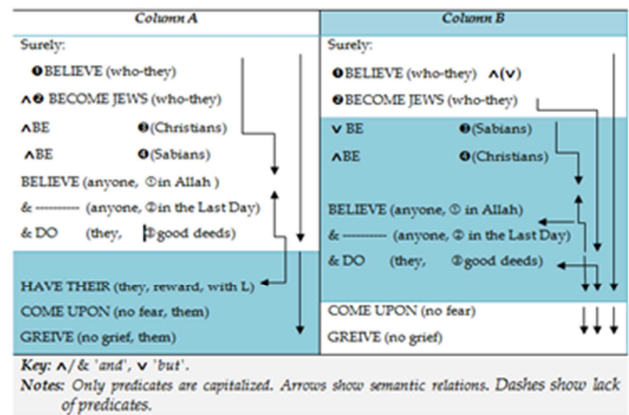


Figure 2. Representations of the Meanings Depicted in Example 1A and 1B.

**3.1.3. Re-defining Categories of People by Listing and Paraphrasing**

As it opens, the Qur'anic discourse in both examples continues to relate the categories of the believers to the divine messages sent to them. Among these, only the belief in the existence of almighty God and the Last Day and the commitment to doing good deeds are listed. In respect, the quotes open with [man] roughly glossed as 'anyone that'. Unlike its counterpart [alathi:] meaning 'who', this Arabic relative pronoun has only a non-existential neutral, singular

and animate reference. In other words, it is used to refer to every value of meaning having the features of a human being, whether male or female, whether young or adult, and whether exists or does not.

Example 1A as well as 1B assigns the predicate BELIEVE to argue for (anyone) who has a strong faith in both messages or rather doctrine of Lordship and Resurrection. At the syntactic level, these messages function as specifications for the VP 'believe'. They are unlikely to be optional, as these elements are pivotal to the VP itself. The quote also assigns the predicate DO GOOD to argue for (any believer). The word [sa:lihan] functions as an adverb of manner. It is also an obligatory element, as it specifies how 'work' should be done. It is important to note here that the Noble Qur'an has been very *selective* in the process of word choice and selection, as each Abrahamic religion is supposed to have other messages and instructions to satisfy and obey among its followers. These can be logical; the belief in the existence of one supreme Creator mandates a total belief in His messengers, for instance. They can also be deontological, as many instructions attempt to regulate the follower's internal rapports and external relations with others. For example, the Islamic doctrine stresses that a Muslim must believe not only in Allah as a Creator of the universe but also in His angels, His messages, and His prophets as part of Providence to people.

### 3.1.4. Rewarding the Believers Listed Differently and Defined Them Accordingly

It makes sense that 'after the fallow, the flower'. The QD advances to reward the believers for their responses. In Example 1A, the Noble Qur'an selects the coordinator [fa-] roughly glossed as 'then immediately' to head the prepositional phrase (Prep-P) predicator [la-hum] meaning TO THEM to argue for both [ajru] meaning (a reward) and the bound morpheme [-hum] referring to (any member) of the various groups listed and defined above. The holy Script of Islam also adds the predicator [a'lay-him] meaning ON THEM to argue for [khawfun] meaning (fear) and [-him] referring to (any believer). It is important to note here that 'tranquility' is achieved by the insertion of [la:] meaning 'there is no'. Finally, the Qur'anic discourse assigns the predicate FEEL GRIEVE to negate any sadness or sorrow among anyone belonging to the category of believers, Jews, Christians and Sabians (see Figure 2, column A for full details). Surprisingly, the Qur'anic discourse avoids any use of the term Muslims, as it fixes elsewhere that 'Religion, according to Allah, is only Islam, i.e. submission to God. This realization suggests that 'faith' and 'good deeds' should be among the main themes the holy Script of Islam addresses in Example 1A.

In Example 1B, the Qur'anic discourse dissimilarly selects to eliminate the immediate reward in. Similarly, it suffices with announcing only 'peacefulness of mind' and 'lack of fear' as immediate rewards to the whole groups. The deletion of any physical reward as well as the fixation of only the psychological reinforcement, however, suggests that there

must be some differences among the behaviors of the members re-categorized initially but differently at the syntactic level (see column B in Figure 2). This fresh classification should bring in differences on the semantic level. It is supposed to mirror some specific variations in the practices of each category's community in regard to the contexts under discussion.

Accordingly, the Noble Qur'an stylistically sorts out (from a pragmatic as well as a socio-pragmatic view) these members into three categories: those who believed, those who decided to be Jews, and (those who are) Sabians and Christians. The first category has met —based on textual, syntactic and semantic features, all the criteria realized in the context. Absent other groups, the whole script makes sense. Based on some syntactic properties similar to the first group, the second category, i.e. the Jewish one, has only met criteria number 1 and 2. It is very probable that this category has a problem —implicated by the deletion of physical rewarding, in meeting criterion number 3, i.e. doing good deeds. Each of the Sabian and Christian category has serious problems —based on linguistic processing and textual processing, in meeting or rather perceiving criterion number 1, i.e. the absolute Lordship. These differences can be contributed basically to the thematic concept of monotheism in Judaism and Islam in contrast with the notion of polytheism perceived in Christianity.

### 3.2. Mechanics of Sociolinguistic Variation Among Individuals

This section exemplifies for individual proclivities from a pragma-stylistic perspective. Examples 2A and 2B exemplify for personal behavior in two different contexts (see Example 2A and 2B). Example 2A shows how a criminal behaves in the Day of the Doom to pay for his faults. Example 2B, however, mirrors how each one acts in response to the disastrous impact of that Day. As contexts vary considerably, both examples should reflect some sociolinguistic variations in the behaviors of the people.

#### Example 2A: Offering Ransom to Escape Punishment

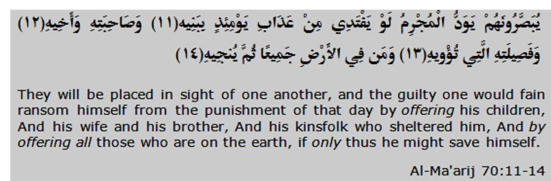


Figure 3. Sociolinguistic Variation among Individuals.

#### 3.2.1. Opening the Discourse with a Perceptive Verb to Show Criminal's Wants

In Example 2A, the Qur'anic discourse uses a verbal style. It opens with the VP [basura] meaning 'he saw'. The VP can also mean 'he had a full insight of'. Therefore, it can a perceptive verb denoting 'sight' or 'vision' or a cognitive one referring to 'insight' or 'mental vision'. Regardless of the interpretation provided, the verb BASURA is stressed and assigned as a predicate to argue for the infixed [-u:] referring

to probably (the angles) and the prefixed morpheme [-hum] referring to the (guilty people), involved in crimes. As the term 'angles' is assigned as an argument, it makes sense that the VP is intended to help visualize the crime as well as the truth lying behind it (see Example 2A and Figure 2, No. 1).

In Example 2A, the Qur'anic discourse also continues to assign the perceptive VP [yawadu] roughly glossed as 'HE WANTS VERY MUCH' to argue only for (the guilty). In this sense, the predicate is a one-place verb. Then, the Noble Qur'an selects the conditional marker [laow] roughly glossed as 'IF ONLY I COULD' (see Figure 4, No 1). This conditional marker helps create a counterfactual case in which what comes is unlikely to take place. The tense sounds as subjunctive as the whole situation is imaginary. It is important to note here that Arabic (contrary to English) tends to use the present tense once the situation is not real or unlikely to take place at present time. Then, the Qur'anic discourse assigns the predicate [yaftadi:] glossed as 'HE PAYS RANSOM' to argue for the unstated pronoun [huwa] referring to (the guilty). As the VP is intransitive, it is specified by the Pre-P [min atha:bi yawma'ithin] glossed as

(from the punishment of that day), and the Prep-P [bi-bani:hi] meaning (with his sons).

**3.2.2. Modeling the Context in a Logical Order from Various Perspectives**

Syntactically, the Semitic preposition [min] glossed as 'some' in modern English, is fairly frequently used as a free quantification element), whereas the preposition [bi-] meaning 'with' is often used as an assistance element to show the 'means'. On the semantic level, both elements are pivotal to the meaning the predicate should satisfy. While the quantifier 'some' is weighing punishment and relating to the most precious amounts to be paid as a ransom, the ancillary means element 'with' is responding by listing what is worth paying. As the Qur'anic discourse suggests the 'sons' first, it sounds that our children are the most precious to us. Then it comes the 'wife', the 'brother', the tribe, and finally the 'whole universe' (see Figure 4, No. 3a-d). This textual processing and manipulation does not only model the context from a socio-pragmatic point of view, but it also mirrors it from both a pragma-linguistic as well as a first order logic outlook.

Discourses	Syntactic level			Semantic level	
	Styles	Functions	Processes	Predicates	Argument
1 <i>They will be placed in sight of one another</i>	Verbal	Informative		BE PLACED in SIGHT OF	(the guilty, by angles)
2 <i>The guilty wishes</i>	Verbal	Expressive		WISH	(the guilty)
3a <i>If he could fain ransom (to avoid punishment of that day by (offering) his sons,</i>	Verbal	Informative	Condition	FAIN RANSOM	(the guilty, that punishment, sons,
b <i>And his wife and his brother</i>			Assistance Addition		wife, brother,
c <i>And his kinfolk who sheltered him</i>	Verbal	Informative	Addition Relation	SHELTER	kinfolk, (the guilty, kin)
d <i>And all people on earth could(not) save him.</i>	Nominal Verbal	Expressive	Addition Interrogate. Negation	≈SAVE	(everyone, the guilty)

Figure 4. Analysis of Example 2A on the Syntactic and Semantic Level.

**3.2.3. Meeting Linguistic Esthetic Factors and Euphonies**

Stylistically, euphony, i.e. a harmonious succession of words having a pleasing sound, is carried out by assonance, consonance, and rhyming. Assonance or vowel rhyme', i.e. the repetition of a pattern of similar sounds within a sentence, is perceived in the selection of the words 'yawadu', 'yaftadi:' and 'yawma'ithin'. Consonance, however, refers to repetitive sounds produced by consonants within a sentence or phrase. In the example, the repetition of the sound /m/ has taken place in quick succession, such as in 'al-mujrimu', 'min', and 'yawmaithin. A rhyme is the repetition of similar sounds, usually, the exact same sound in the final stressed syllables and any following syllables of two or more words. Most often, this kind of "perfect" rhyming is consciously used for effect in the final positions of the verses which end in 'bi-bani:h', 'akhi:h', 'tu'wi:h', and 'yunji:h'.

**3.2.4. Opening the Discourse with a Motion Verb to Introduce the Context**

Though Example 2B is headed by [yawma] glossed as 'on the day when' in modern English, and assigned as a deictic reference of time, it applies a verbal style to show some actions in progress. In the quote, the Qur'anic discourse selects the VP [yafiru] meaning 'he flees from' to argue for any (human being) in the Last Day (see Example 2B). Syntactically, the VP is a Motion phrase (Mot-P); therefore, it entails a motion from one place to another. This means that the VP must be specified by an adverbial showing that movement. The Noble Qur'an selects the prepositional element 'min' meaning 'from' to help mirror the start point of the fleeing place. It, however, identifies the neighboring brother to escape. This selection suggests that 'brotherhood' should be the furthest rapport or the least relevant

relationship among the circles of the person's interests on that day (see No. 1 in Figure 6).

*Example 2B: Fleeing from Others to Concern One's self*

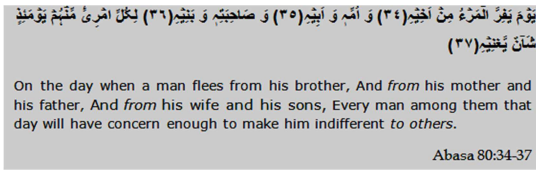


Figure 5. Opening with Motion Verb.

**3.2.5. Grading Human Relations from the Least to the Most Priority**

It has been found in the previous section that the Qur'anic discourse selects 'brotherhood' as a first instance to abandon by man on the Day of Resurrection. It also goes further to list 'parenthood' second. Unlike Example 2A, the Noble Qur'an suggests both parents as potential people to escape from. On the syntactic level, it coordinates a biological father and mother together. However, it places the female figure (and probably elsewhere) first and to the right-hand of the text.

This linguistic addition, selection and processing raises many questions about this tendency. As the context in Example 1A is related to *personal property*, it is unlikely for anyone, or at least a Muslim, to possess their own parents. This helps explain the exclusion of both parents in Example 2A (see the analysis of item No. 2 shown in Figure 4).

As the context in Example 2B concerns only *personal indifference* due to many individual difficulties, the Noble Qur'an suggests both parents as a potential group of people within the close circles of man on that terrible situation. From a stylistic as well as a pragma-linguistic perspective, the insertion of the female figure first and to the right hand of a written or spoken discourse mirrors a high degree of language politeness, tactfulness, kindness, and strong fondness. Besides, the manipulation and presentation of both parents as an entity of adjacent pairs on the syntactic level of the Qur'anic discourse also maintains a good degree of proximity and intimacy between parents as a couple, though their sons are leaving them behind soon.

Discourses	Syntactic level			Semantic level	
	Styles	Functions	Processes	Predicates	Argument
1. <i>One the day when man flees from his brother</i>	Verbal	Informative or performative	Assigning deictic references of time and place, and means	FLEE FROM HIS	(man, brother,
2. <i>And from his mother and his father</i>			Addition		man, mother & father
3. <i>And from his wife and sons</i>			Addition		man, wife & sons)
4. <i>For everyone among them on that day there is enough concern to make him indifferent (to others).</i>	Nominal	Informative	Possession Logic. quant. Quant.	FOR EVERYONE AMONG THEM	(concern)
	Nominal	Expressive		MAKE INDIFFERN.	(concern, man)

Figure 6. Analysis of Example 2B on the Syntactic and Semantic Level.

Finally, the Qur'anic discourse lists both the wife and sons as a potential group of people to abandon in the last moment. Within this close category, the Noble Qur'an (once again) inserts the female figure first. This propensity, perceived twice in Example 2B and once in Example 1A, suggests that the Qur'anic discourse strategically and initially tends to illustrate any argument related to the variable of gender, familial affairs, and woman issues before those of her counterpart, the male. The insertion of both the wife and sons on the syntactic level also suggests that the Noble Qur'an maintains family to the last moment. As this category is listed finally, it sounds that this group of people is the dearest to a human being (see item No. 3 depicted in Figure 6).

**3.2.6. Advocating Consequence of Personal Indifference to Self-significance**

Example 2B closes with an Arabic exceptional nominal style in which two sentences are embedded in one complex clause. In the first sentence, the Prep-P predicator TO

EVERYONE AMONG THEM has assigned to argue for the sentential argument (there is a concern to make him indifferent to others). The clausal argument also assigns the predicate MAKE INDIFFERENT to argue internally for the bound prefixed morpheme [-i:h] meaning (him) referring to 'anybody'. This linguistic manipulation is carried out by selecting the prepositional [li-] meaning 'to' or 'belong to' which is used as a possessive marker in Arabic. The agentive marker is also attached to the pronoun [-kul-i] meaning 'everyone'. The pronoun is categorized as a universal, non-existential quantifier, as it has a semantic, referential value that entails 'anyone'. At the logical level, the value is realized as 'X if (someone) x BE (HAVE (x, a concern – MAKE-INDIFERNT (concern, x))', and interpreted as 'For every value of X if X is someone among others, then there is or everyone has a concern that makes him / her indifferent to others'.

Stylistically, the Noble Qur'an applies a complicated structure pattern as well as a duplicated nominal so as to



convey semantic and esthetic factors. To open a meaningful clause with an indefinite argument or predicate is unlikely from a semantic perspective, as that element sounds unqualified. Arabic syntax often responds by reordering sentence functional components and propositions to specific manifestations in which the definite element always comes first. On the esthetic level, this linguistic choice has paved the way for rhyming to take place at the discursive level of the quote. Thus, the segmental parts of the quote tweet with the bound morpheme [-i:h] referring to 'anyone', as in 'akhi:h', 'abi:h' 'bani:h' and 'yughni:h' meaning 'his brother', 'his father', his sons', and 'make him indifferent from others', respectively. This melody helps us realize *who*, *how* and *why* we abandon people in one terrible event. Certain figures of speech, such as assonance, is also used in the selection of [yawuma] meaning 'on the day', [yafiru] meaning 'he flees' and [yughni:h] meaning 'he has enough concerns to be indifferent'. Consonance is also applied by the use of the glottal vowel /a/ as in ['akhi:h] and ['abi:h], for instance.

#### 4. Conclusions and Implications

The present study fits into *cognitive* linguistics, as it describes how language interacts with cognition and how language forms our thoughts (Robinson and Ellis, 2008) [18]. It theorizes that as long as mechanics of social variation is necessarily at work, then mechanics of language change should also be unavoidably at work in response. Building on a critical approach to discourse analysis, the paper attempts to collect and analyze some quotes from the Qur'anic discourse reflecting the sociolinguistic change from different perspectives. It has been found that the Qur'anic discourse processes the behaviors, practices and tendencies of people belonging to one family differently on both the pragmatic and stylistic levels. From a pragmatic perspective, the holy Script of Islam selects and uses specific language processes and functions, including mainly style fluctuation, predicate and argument contextualization and de-contextualization, word-order alternation and deletion, ostensive definition, and relevant conclusion as mechanics to help realize sociolinguistic variations among the target members and categories under discussion.

Among these mechanics, shifting the style allows for loading specific meanings related to the behaviors of people. There is a general tendency to switch from a verbal to a nominal style due to the fact that the verbal style helps relate the predicate with their arguments. Thus, this style facilitates contextualizing the various practices of one group or an individual as certain meanings or senses to be said and felt in specific predicates and related arguments. In the examples collected and analyzed, it has been found that the Qur'anic discourse tends to use both perceptive and motion VPs. The nominal style is often intended to reduce grammar in order to enable package meaning. As it occurs finally, it is probably intended to de-contextualize the values depicted in the arguments raised about the discourse community's behavior.

Besides, the alternation of the potential sequence by

reordering, deleting and adding words helps realize any variation in the practices and tendencies of these people. In the examples analyzed in this study, it has been found that there is a direct correlation between the context and the arguments. In one example, the arguments are defined, processed and reordered differently on both the internal syntactic, i.e. structural, and grammatical, i.e. functional, levels of two symmetrical discourses to help realize specific differences between the target categories of people. To keep one sequence of words referring to different arguments and contexts is simply to suggest their practices, whether verbal or social, are likely to be similar. However, tailoring the arguments to fit each context highlights dealing with individual differences of each argument.

In another example, it has also been found that some fresh arguments are either deleted or added to meet the logical criteria of the context under linguistic processing. The deletion of any parental references in a bargaining context for instance, is meant to meet a logical criterion—if not also an ethical concern, sustaining that bargainers must own to do their deals. Central to the Islamic principle of individual property is the prohibition of parents' ownership. To own your own parents is one of the worst forms of slavery. Thus, it is unlikely under any circumstances, though the personal properties, whether human or none, can be part of parental ownership. In social engineering, this system is referred to an extended family. Therefore, the addition of a parental and maternal reference to a context manipulating a reckless abandon to quit a well-established and conventionalized, familial system is quite crucial for one's decision and choice making.

Ostensive definition is one technique of conveying meaning. According to Kearns (2000, pp. 1-24) kinds of meaning vary considerably. They can be denotational, lexical, structural, and categorematic. Among these, denotational meaning is often satisfied by either definition or paraphrasing. Structural sense is also conveyed by either composition or addition. Lexical meaning is always met by providing synonyms, antonyms, hyponyms, meronyms, and polysemous words. In the examples referred to in this study, it has been found that the sense of some predicates is assigned by definition at the schematic, i.e. discourse, level. Therefore, the definition provided for the arguments is meant to set up an apparent, but comprehensive reference among arguments in regard to faith and good deed doing, in particular. Structurally, relating the arguments with a definition for all by selecting a neutral relative pronoun is geared towards category (and probably gender) inclusion. This means that the process of composition attempts to avoid excluding any potential textual component. Lexically, meaning is also implicated by selecting specific meronyms or hyponyms, i.e. parts or kinds, of faith. Syntactically, the meanings produced, consumed and construed at various textual levels are accompanied by a change in the sequence of the arguments to help conclude about the inclinations of the discourse community under argumentation. Consequently, the change spotted at the discourse level

definitely highlights socio-linguistic variation, and is necessarily regulated by individual differences.

Stylistically, the Qur'anic discourse selects certain figures and modes of speech to maintain language esthetic and euphonic factors at the schematic, i.e. discourse, level of the context under discussion. Figurative language, in which assonance, in particular, is used (on the internal level of grammar) to link the initial sounds of the predicates with those of the settings, is probably intended to draw the ear's attention to the linkage between the context and time of speech. Similarly, consonance is used internally to head some familial terms, ['abi:h] and ['akhi:h], for instance. Though rhyming is selected to function but finally on the phonemic components of the same words denoting familial categories, this figure of speech is, however, sustained for the direct impact of interpersonal communication and meta-language.

Nonverbally, this figurative, linguistic processing is affiliated with proxemics, i.e. the study of the space use and effects that population density has on behavior, communication, and social interaction. *Proxemics* is one among several subcategories in the study of the influence of nonverbal communication, including *haptics*, i.e. touches, *kinesics*, i.e. body movements, *vocalic*, i.e. paralanguage, and *chronemics*, i.e. structures of time, on the flow of speech. From a pragma-stylistic view, figurative processing goes beyond the instant impact of the esthetic factors of language and its euphonies to change the mode of speech from a frozen to a dynamic one. Besides, the integration between figurative manipulation of speech and linguistic processing

of certain textual elements through endorsement, coordination, tabulation, i.e. listing, clausal relativization and negation, is crucial to the scope of speech mode which often keeps fluctuating between language subjectivity, i.e. text functionality and objectivity, i.e. text aspiration.

In relevance, the examples referred to in this study shows a high degree of harmony between figurative choice and linguistic selection and use. Another example to interpret in depth is the selection and use of the Arabic potential infinitives [husn-an]) roughly glossed as 'being kind' and [ihsa:n-an]) glossed as 'being good' when dealing, but respectively, with 'non-Muslim' and 'Muslim' parents (see Examples 3A and 3B). This concord in language processing and manipulation is, however, necessarily schemed at the various levels of text production, consumption and realization. On the syntactic, semantic and schematic levels of language, the linguistic as well as meta-linguistic accord reflects both an out-group view of a category of people struggling socially but differently to keep a close rapport among them, and in-group outlook of another category interacting (with the text) to perceive some potential knowledge about the proclivities of others (and probably themselves). The use of some universal quantifiers in the quotes referred to and analyzed suggests that the Qur'anic *epistemologies*, i.e. theories of knowledge depicted in logical discourse, of social life, in general, and daily routines, particular, should be universal (Kennedy, 2006) [19]. It should also be socially responsive to physical space and time (Holmes, 2017) [20].

**Example 3A: Using the Arabic term 'husnan' to urge sons to be kind with their non-Muslim parents**

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حُسْنًا وَإِنْ جَاهَدَكَ لِتُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا إِنِّي  
مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأَتَبِعُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

ENGLISH

And We have enjoined on man kindness to his parents; but if they strive to make thee associate that with Me of which thou hast no knowledge, then obey them not. Unto Me is your return, and I shall inform you of what you did.

*Al-'Ankabut* 29:8

**Example 3B: Using the Arabic term 'ihसान' to urge sons be good with their parents**

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهًا وَحَمْلُهُ وَفِطْرَتُهُ ثَلَاثُونَ  
شَهْرًا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ  
عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ  
الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

ENGLISH

And We have enjoined on man to be good to his parents. His mother bears him with pain, and brings him forth with pain. And the bearing of him and his weaning takes thirty months, till, when he attains his full maturity and reaches the age of forty years, he says, 'My Lord, grant me the power that I may be grateful for Thy favour which Thou hast bestowed upon me and upon my parents, and that I may do such good works as may please Thee. And make my seed righteous for me. I do turn to Thee; and, truly, I am of those who submit to Thee.'

*Al-Kahf* 46:15

**Figure 7. Using Technical Terms to Meet Family Needs.**

Researchers of pragmatic and stylistic studies should examine the impact of context on the Qur'anic word-order. There is some evidence that the Noble Qur'an manipulates the gender variant differently. Generally speaking, it inserts

the verbal arguments referring to woman to the right-hand of the text once the context looks quite emotional or social. Elsewhere, it inserts the male figures to the right-hand of the text. Otherwise, it uses a neutral, i.e. plural masculine,

linguistic formula to refer to both sexes. Generally speaking, this textual inclination is not free of the sacred on the psycho- and socio-linguistic level of the verbal and non-verbal manipulation of the text. For double check, scholars can investigate the impact of the selection of certain language functions, such as socializing with, informing, redirecting, expressing feelings to others, on processing and re-ordering the denotations and connotations of the words negotiating both sexes within a specific context, such as sexual harassment, illegal adultery, personal witness, and theft.

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