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Persuasive Rhetorical Discourse: Argumentation in
Quranic English Translation A Contrastive Study in
Argumentative Discourse in Some Meccan and
Madinian Suras A Thesis submitted to the requirements
of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

Sara Samir A-M El-Daly

English Lecturer Assistant Lecturer
Under the Supervision of

Supervised By

Dr. Abd Elfattah A-H Moftah
Associate Professor of Linguistics and
chair of the English Dept., Suez Canal
Univ. Ismailia Branch

Dr. Abd-Elmoniem A-M Aly
Emeritus Professor, English Dept
Faculty of Arts - Menoufia University

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Introduction

This study tries to investigate the persuasive techniques that are used in the Qur'anic text. Persuasion is the process of changing the beliefs in the receivers' mind. To change one's beliefs toward something is not an easy task. Therefore, it deserves much effort. How the language in Qur'an achieves this task is one of the main aims in this study. Moreover, this thesis tries to uncover the similarities and/or differences across the Meccan and Madinian suras. The two suras' groups represent two different contexts (the Meccan and the Madinian) where the language that is used in addressing people might be different.

2.1 The Concepts of Discourse and Text

'Text' and 'discourse' might be used in any direction that is selected by their producers. They might be also used to refer to any fact or reality in our life. They may represent political speech, sports/scientific articles, literary works, sermons and religious discourse. This section sheds light on the numerous definitions of text and discourse with reference to text types, discourse analysis, and

context, as a factor that affects the production of language, and discourse analysis.

2.1.1 Historical Background of the Term 'Text'

De Beaugrande's (1984) is in line with Dijk concerning the meaning of the term 'discourse', but he defines 'text' in a different way. For Dijk, texts are abstract theoretical constructs; they are the actual instances of communication. While, De Beaugrande (1984) defined 'text' as a spontaneously occurring manifestation of language; it can thus be defined as a set of expressions or as a communicative language event in a context, whereas 'discourse' is a set of texts that are related to each other.

In order to understand and analyze a text, one should know all about the surrounding elements rather than focusing on the physical text and verbal expressions (Vu le Ho, 2011). The relationship between text and context is shown in the following diagram.

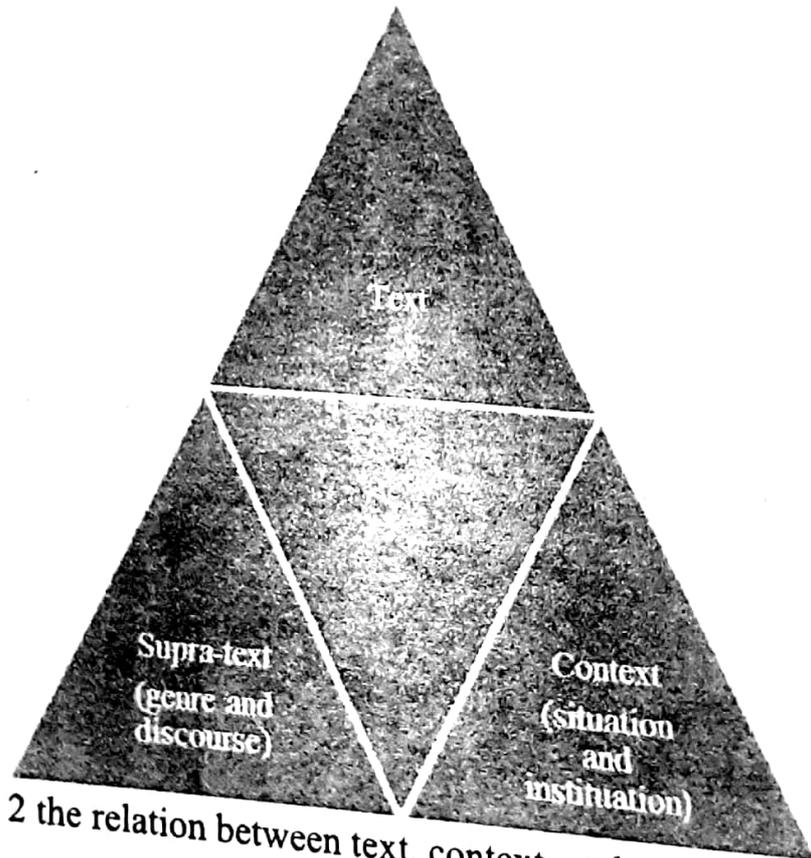


Figure 2 the relation between text, context, and genre

Texts can be simply defined as words used to communicate in a particular context (Safnil, 2000), but the relation between text and context is more complex. Therefore, the two concepts require a

detailed discussion. There have been many definitions of context suggested in order to discuss its inter-relationship with text. Kathpalia (1992, in Safnil, 2000), for example, suggests that contexts refer to both texts appearing before and after a particular text, to what goes beyond the text, and to the environment in which the text occurs. In other words, Kathpalia perceives context as the linguistic and non-linguistic factors that affect the understanding of a text.

Phelan and Reynolds (1995) are in line with Johns (1997) when they define context as "the setting in which discourse takes place suggests what might be going on" (P: 27). Understanding context helps the readers to follow the proceeding events. Context also is related to the description of the factors around the action. Johns did explain that context referred to the surrounding elements that contributed to the situations. These factors may have linguistic/textual or non-linguistic/non-textual characteristics that helped in producing and understanding the text. According to Johns, when someone speaks to a person, the spoken text produced and the surrounding events that are going on around him/her may affect the processes of speaking and/or listening; these are considered as context. However, Johns reminds us that these events can be enormous in number and various in type and some of them might not be relevant for text interpretation or production. Therefore, for Johns, context only refers to the linguistic and non-linguistic elements that are necessary for both interactants to accomplish their communicative purpose through language.

Also, convention is another factor that helps in understanding and interpreting a text (Phelan and Reynolds, 1995). Convention sets the protocol of how language affects people. Since convention and context are important in understanding the text, they are also important in seeing how arguments (as a form of interaction between group/s of people) affect people. Conventions include the cultural norms and habits inherited through families, groups, and ancestors. One may say that the cultural conventions belong to groups of people of different places because it is hard to follow everyday discourse and detect the conventions. Therefore, conventions help in understanding the people's verbal behaviour and discourse.

As a consequence, the conventions that are followed in any place to accomplish the communicative purpose should be adopted. In this study, the Meccan and the Madinian suras of the Qur'an belong to

different periods of time that render different situations and refer to different cultures and therefore different conventions. Consequently, one may say that such suras have different contexts. After referring to the meaning of context, the non/linguistic factors around the Meccan and Madinian people may affect their backgrounds and behaviours. These factors are said to be necessary for accomplishing the communicative process. Section 2.1.2 discusses the context of the situation and culture.

2.1.2 The Meaning of Context of Situation and Context of Culture

As mentioned previously, there are linguistic and non-linguistic factors that help in interpreting a 'text'. Malinowski (1949) (cited in Abdul Hamid, 2010) suggested a type of non-linguistic environment for a text called 'Context of Situation' referring to the direct environment of a particular text and 'Context of Culture' referring to the cultural history behind the participants and the kind of practices that the speakers are engaging in. Also, he states that it is difficult to interpret the "produced" language of any given situation even if he knew all about the language, grammar, and vocabulary. He continues that the language is used during everyday situations is full of technical terms, short references to surroundings, rapid indications of change based on usual types of behaviour, well known to the participants from personal experience. Each utterance is essentially related to the context of situation. To sum up, what Malinowski intends to convey is the recorded text of any given situation is seen as only one part of the whole action of the surrounding events.

The study of the relationship between text and context is the main concern of different linguists who have developed a number of theories that aim to develop the concept of context of situation that belonged to Malinowski. Halliday and Hasan (1985) suggest three different features of context that are: 1) The field of discourse that refers to the nature of the social action that is taking place (cultural, religious); 2) The tenor of discourse that refers to the nature of the relationship between the participants (patient/doctor and teacher/student); and 3) The mode of discourse that refers to what part the language is playing and what is being achieved by the text in terms of such categories as persuasive, expository, didactic, and narrative (Halliday and Hasan, 1985: 12).

Halliday and Hasan state that one of the most important things that should be realized by participants is the contextual features. That is to say, when someone is about to engage in a conversation, s/he has to predicate about the conversation in terms of field (i.e. recognizing what is going on), tenor (i.e. recognizing the personal relationships involved in the conversation), and mode (i.e. recognizing what is being achieved by means of language in the conversation). This, as a consequence, will lead in its turn to a successful communicative process.

Contextual features (field, tenor, and mode) may vary from one type of communicative event to another (Halliday and Hasan, 1985). This would be clear when one compares two different situations in different contexts; one is talking in a restaurant, and another one is addressing people in a mosque or a church. Obviously, the contextual features of a casual conversation in a restaurant will be different from those of a formal speech such as a sermon.

2.1.3 Historical overview of the term "Discourse"

Discourse is the reference to the social process by which meaning is clarified. It is the social process by which people interchange and express themselves in such a way that they clearly understand one another. This social process is connected to the world around us (i.e. context).

For Werth (1984) discourse refers to either a subject area or a function. It should be noted that "subject area" means the linguistic level, while "function" refers to the meaning of a group of semantically connected sentences. Moreover, Kress (in Van Dijk, 1985) argues the term 'discourse' is preferred when working on the basis of sociological approaches, while the term 'text' indicated more linguistic analytical approaches that are adopted in the discussions of language structure.

Longacre (1986) states the relationship between text and discourse is shown in Figure1. This figure shows the relation between text and discourse as that of a hierarchical organization. Longacre proposes that 'text' and 'discourse' are to be regarded as two successive levels in this hierarchy organization which exhibit both semantic and syntactic properties. This figure is adopted from (El Shiyab, 1990):

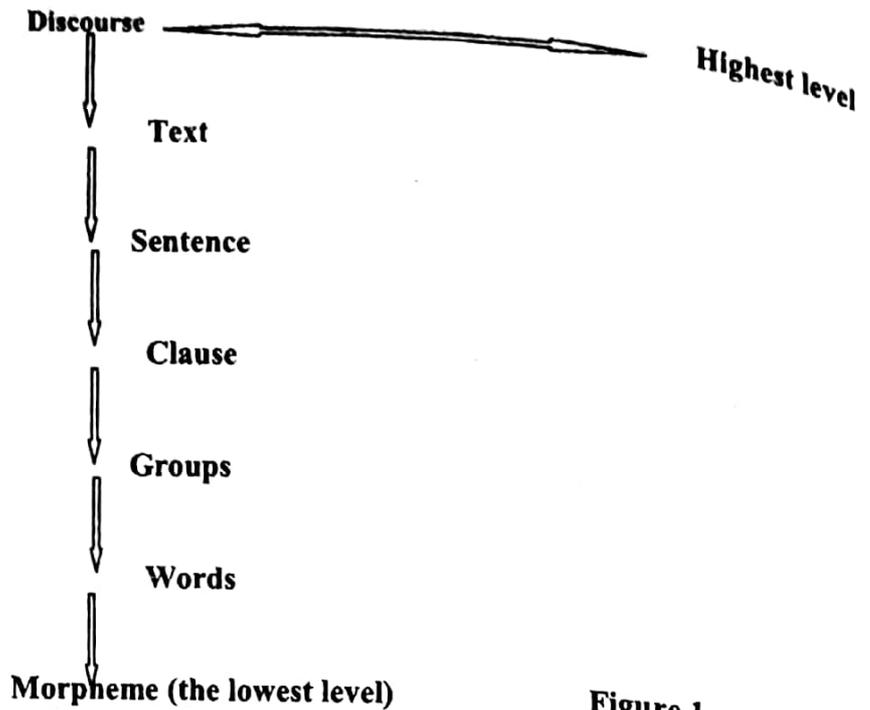


Figure 1

Hierarchical organization in language

To discuss discourse beyond the sentence level means that one shall see some processes that happening beyond a single sentence (McCarthy 1994), for example the use of “this” and “that”. ‘This’ can be used at the start of a discussion to foreground the topic under discussion and identify it as important to the speaker, whereas the word ‘that’ can be used to background or marginalize a topic and place it in a subordinate position, from the speaker’s point of view. The examination of the sentence level is the study of the structure of a sentence (Paltridge, 2006) focuses more on the parts of speech. Therefore, discourse is known to be a continuous ‘process’ while text is a ‘product’. However, discourse is not limited to linguistic structure (Ghasemi and Jahromi, 2014). Discourse represents more than grammar and structure. What is beyond the sentence and what it indicates through culture and society should be regarded.

Since the Qur’an is revealed in “Arabic tongue” “i.e. spoken language” and this study examines the written form of Qur’anic argumentative dialogues. The differences between written and spoken discourse shall be clarified. Paltridge (2006) provides a general survey of discourse analysis which ranged from more textually oriented views to more socially related ones, i.e. from focusing on language

features of texts to what the texts do in social and cultural situations. Then, Paltridge examines the differences between speech and writing by the use of some examples and relying on Biber (1988) classified them into eight differences such as grammatical intricacy, lexical density, nominalization, explicitness, contextualization, spontaneity, repetition- hesitation and redundancy.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Design

The study employs both quantitative and qualitative methods. Firstly, this study deals with written texts. The argumentative dialogic exchanges are extracted from Qur'anic English translation (Ali's translation and for the criteria selecting this translation see section 3.3.1). The frequencies of occurrence of the argumentative patterns and the linguistic devices are counted, compared, and interpreted. Qualitative methods are used to spot the emerging patterns in the uses of linguistic devices. The thesis is also a piece of contrastive analysis which attempts to highlight the differences and/or similarities between Meccan and Madinian suras in the argumentative dialogic activity structure.

3.2. Analytical framework

The approach that is adopted in the analysis of the argumentative dialogues in the Qur'anic discourse is a multi-functional approach that tends to deal with: (1) the argumentative structures (i.e. macro-structure of argumentation here refers to the four stages that are followed and adopted by the interlocutors to get a resolution in their critical discussion) and (2) The linguistic features that mark the argumentative dialogues such as (Biber, 1988) (from Abbadi, n.d). This is a way to uncover the similarities and/or differences of micro-structure of the argumentative dialogues along the whole book across some Meccan and Madinian extracts. And when the argumentative dialogue is repeated as a consequence to the repetition of the Qur'anic stories, there will be an interpretation and cross-reference to this feature and finally, (3) comparison between the findings of the analysis of the selected samples.

3.2.1. Argumentation Analysis

3.2.1.1. Pragma-dialectical Theory

The pragma-dialectical theory is applied as a model for explaining and understanding the arguments employed in Qur'anic extracted texts. In

this analysis, the researcher focuses on the argumentative reasonableness. The analysis presents the four dialectical stages through which any argument must pass and then explain the ten rules that belong to any critical discussion. As defined before, critical discussions refer to the participants wish to resolve the argument and reach conclusions.

It is important to clarify the definition of argumentation in the pragma-dialectical approach. Van Emeren et al., (1996:5) define argumentation as the verbal and social activity of reason that aims to in/de creasing the acceptability of a controversial standpoint for the listener or reader. This acceptability is achieved by setting a group of propositions that are intended to justify or refuse the standpoint before a rational judge. To construct arguments, the participants try to exchange the views between each other with only one aim that is to settle a difference of opinion. For example:

Speaker: English cricket is the best in the world

Listener: (may be unconvinced with the speaker's claim. Therefore, s/he may ask to justify this claim.

Speaker: uses another claim that is (England's glorious victories over the West India in recent year). This claim supports our view. Therefore, the process of convincing anyone with a certain point of view depends mainly on the claims. The speaker uses to justify and support his/her view. Accordingly, the listener will accept these claims. As a result, the listener will try to defend his point of view. This is the way to construct argumentation.

What makes the argumentation analysis different in the pragma-dialectical approach is the 'process' by which claims are justified or refuted. Some of the main points and elements in the pragma-dialectical theory are explained below in some detail. Firstly, the four stages through which pragma-dialectics set for the development of argumentation; secondly, the ten rules that should be followed by the parties of any conversation to resolve the difference of opinion.

The pragma-dialectical model divides argumentation into four stages. In the first stage the confrontation stage, the establishment of grounds for resolution is set and determined who will defend the protagonist and who will attack the antagonist. The second stage is called the opening stage in which the differences of opinions exist. The

argumentation stage is the third stage in which we assess and offer arguments for and against the standpoints about which opinion differs. Finally, the concluding stage which shows who won the argument. In other words, if the difference of opinion is resolved in the protagonist's favor, then the antagonist must withdraw their doubts; and it is resolved in the antagonist's favor; then the protagonists must withdraw their claim. The second important element in the pragma-dialectical approach is the ten-rules that are used by any conversation parties to achieve what is known as strategic maneuvering (1996). The rules will be listed below:

- 1) The freedom rule: the conversation parties should help each other to advance standpoint and never prevent discussion.
- 2) The obligation-to-defend rule: the speaker/interlocutor who advances a standpoint may not refuse to defend this standpoint when asked to do.
- 3) The standpoint rule: attacks on standpoints may not bear on standpoints other than the actual standpoint advanced.
- 4) The relevance Rule: standpoints may not defended by non-argumentation or irrelevant argumentation.
- 5) The unexpressed-premise rule: parties may not falsely attribute unexpressed premises to the other party, nor disown responsibility for their own unexpressed premises.
- 6) The starting-point rule: parties may not falsely present something as an accepted starting point or falsely deny that something is an accepted starting point.
- 7) The validity rule: any reasoning in argumentation presented as formally conclusive may not be in valid in a logical sense.
- 8) The argument-scheme rule: standpoints may not be regarded as conclusively defended by argumentation that is not presented as based formally conclusive reasoning if the defense does not take place by means of appropriate argument schemes that are applied correctly.
- 9) The concluding rule: conclusive defenses may not lead to maintaining expressions of doubt concerning the standpoints.
- 10) The language Rule: parties may not use any formulations that are insufficiently clear or confusingly ambiguous and they may not deliberately misinterpret the other party's formulation. (Emeren and Grootendorst, 2003)

3.2.2 The Model

Based on the related literature that is presented in the previous sections of chapter two and three, an integrated model of analysis is designed for the data analysis. It is based on the pragma-dialectical approach (Van Emeren and Grootendorst (2003) and Biber (1988) linguistic features of the argumentative discourse. The Pragma-Dialectical theory is preferred for two reasons. Firstly, the theory offers a descriptive method of analysis which integrates important concepts from the modern theory of argumentation with those from pragmatics (speech acts, conversational moves) and secondly, it seems appropriate for managing the macrostructure of the whole communicative event and its component elements at the level of single and mixed exchanges (Swales, 1990).

4.1.1. Introductory Features of the Nature of Argumentation in Qur'an

Subh (1998), Hanafy (1995), Shokah (2009), Salem (2008) were in line when stating the rules that characterize the argumentation in Qur'an. Qur'an argues its opponents (e.g. disbelievers and Ahl AlKitab (The People of the Book)). There are so many argumentative dialogues in Qur'an between the prophets and their people under the topic of the belief of the oneness of Allah (Abbad, 2005). The argumentation in Qur'an has one main aim that is the agreement on worshipping none but Allah. Generally speaking, argumentation in Qur'an shows that there are differences between people either they are supporters or opponents. Difference between people is regarded as one of Allah's decrees (Subh, 1998). Below are some of these rules:

- 1) In general, to convince people (disbelievers or not) do not to rely mainly on imitation. They have to think, contemplate, and then search for reasons to get final conclusions.
- 2) The main aim of Qur'anic argumentation is not to overcome the opponents rather than persuading them depending on the truth.
- 3) Doubt is a matter of thinking. Qur'an accepts doubt and thinking in order to reach conclusions depending on a set of logical premises.
- 4) Evidence is another aspect that Qur'an supports.

As a result to the repetition of some Qur'anic narratives, the researcher tries as much as she can to cover some of the extracted argumentative

dialogues. Taking into consideration that there are a considerable repetition in the Prophets' narratives across Meccan suras; Ash-shu'ara, Hud, and Al-A'raf. One function of repetition in the Prophets' narratives is to break these narratives into parts that introduce new details in each time. As a consequence, the overall meaning has become stronger particularly with the use of new words, expressions, and stylistic devices.

The narratives that are repeated belong to Prophets: Salih, Hud, Noah, and Shau'aib. For each prophet, one finds a related part to the prophet's narrative in all these suras. Each one of the mentioned prophets has three parts of his narrative in Ash-shu'ara, Hud, and Al-A'raf. Consequently, the researcher decides to extract only one or two parts from those prophets' narratives in a way that helps to cover different argumentative dialogic extracts. Additionally, one may avoid the repetition of the interpretation across the Qur'anic stories.

4.1.1.2 Some of the Linguistic Features across Meccan Dialogues

Generally, Qur'an has been revealed in two distinct covenants; Meccan and Madinian eras. Meccan era refers to Prophet's call to Allah in Mecca before his migration while Madinian era refers to Prophet's call to Allah in Madina after his migration. The Prophet's migration affects the two covenants' style of addressing people across the Qur'anic verses. Although the overall Qur'anic style is marked with its rhetorical uniqueness, each Qur'anic group of suras (i.e. Meccan or Madinian) has its own distinctive linguistic style. This style suits the whole context; the addressees, the nature of the environment, and the initiated topic. Examining the differences in the style of the two suras' groups shows the characteristics of the preferred expressions, reveals its great objectives, and rhetorical secrets of its style.

Generally speaking, Meccan suras' linguistic style is characterized with its great force in rhetoric and addressing others. The addressees in these suras are the Meccan people who own the origin of eloquence and rhetoric. Consequently, in order to address those people effectively, the used language must be eloquent as well as theirs in a way to suit and predominant them. There are main topics initiated in Meccan suras. These topics are: the call for worshipping Allah; the hell and paradise; calling for the righteous good path; calling for the

good deeds (Marouf) and avoiding bad deeds (Munkar), Prophets' stories while arguing disbelievers (Mushrikeen). Concerning the language use in Meccan suras, the language in Meccan dialogues has some features:

- 1- Short sentences
- 2- Great use of oaths by Allah, the Last Day, and Qur'an
- 3- The great use of (O People) instead of (O who believe)

After giving this brief examination of the nature of argumentation in Qur'an and the linguistic features in Meccan suras, the analytical investigation of the Meccan argumentative dialogic exchanges in different samples is the coming step. These samples are taken from the prophets' stories. The first dialectical stage that will be investigated is the confrontation stage where different opinions are expressed. In each sample, the dialogue participants are the prophet and his people. It is assumed that there will be an explicit refusal from the disbelievers. However, how this refusal is expressed and how the prophets' in each sample react to such refusals. The following sub-sections present the four dialectical stages following (Van Emmeren and Houtlosser, 2004).

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بلاغة الإقناع في الخطاب: المحاجه في الترجمة الانجليزية للقرآن الكريم
دراسة مقارنة في بعض السور المكية والمدنية
رسالة لنيل درجة الدكتوراة في الآداب

الملخص

تبحث هذه الدراسة الفروق بين الحوار الجدلي في كلا من السور المكية والمدنية. ويستخدم الجدل لتحقيق غاية الإقناع. ويستفاد من الدراسة أن عملية الإقناع عملية صعبة . ولهذا السبب فإنها تحتاج إلى أشخاص علي درجة عالية من الكفاءة. وهذه النماذج الحوارية مستأقاه من سور القرآن الكريم. وكان المشاركين في هذه الحوارات هم الله عز وجل والملائكة، الله عز وجل وإبليس، وأخيرا الرسل وأقوامهم.

وقد تم تحليل عينة الدراسة باستخدام منهج البراجما دياليكتيك (Van Emeren and Houtlosser) 2004) وكي يتم تحليل الظواهر البرجماتية في الحوار الجدلي يتم إتباع أربعة مراحل وهي: المرحلة الافتتاحية، مرحلة المواجهة، مرحلة الجدل ، وأخيرا مرحلة الخاتمة. وتعد مرحلة المواجهة من أهم المراحل حيث الاستخدام المعقد والكثير لفعل القول. وتقوم الدراسة أيضا بتحليل الظواهر اللغوية التي تتكرر من خلال هذه العينات وذلك بإتباع منهج. (Biber, 1997))