

Gain-framed and Loss-framed Messages in Surah Ar-Ra'd : A Pragma-stylistic Study

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الوعد والوعيد في سورة الرعد : دراسة تداولية اسلوبية

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Abstract

Framing messages in terms of either gains or losses plays very instrumental role in persuading others . Since the holy Quran was revealed to preach people and teach them the principles of Islam, both types of appeals are effective in Islamic Da'wah . The present study aims at exploring gained-framed and loss-framed appeals in Surah Ar-Ra'd from pragmastylistic perspective. It adopts O'Keefe (2009) and Leech and Short (2007) as models for analysis. Data Analysis shows that loss-framed appeals are more prevalent as they occupy (25.58%) of the verses whereas the gain-framed appeals score (16.30%) and the percentage of the mixed appeals (verses that contain both types of appeals) is (13.93 %). Verses that do not belong to any of these three categories score (44.19%). From stylistic perspective, the most common figures of speech are antithesis, metaphor, rhetorical question and repetition.

Keywords: Gain-framed message, Loss-Framed message, Pragmatics, Pragmastics

المستخلص

ان صياغة الجملة بأسلوب الوعد والوعيد يلعب دورا مهما في اقناع الآخرين. وبما ان القرآن الكريم انزل ليوعظ الناس ويعلمهم مبادئ الاسلام فأن كلا الاسلوبين يعدان فعالين في الدعوة الاسلامية. تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى استكشاف اسلوب الوعد والوعيد في سورة الرعد من منظور تداولي اسلوبي وتبنى الدراسة الحالية نموذج اوكيف (٢٠٠٩) و ليتش و شورت (٢٠٠٧) كنماذج لتحليل البيانات. اظهرت نتائج التحليل ان اسلوب الوعد هو الأكثر شيوعا حيث شغل نسبة ٢٥.٥٨٪ من الآيات في حين أن اسلوب الوعد سجل ١٦.٣٠٪ ونسبة الاساليب المختلطة (الآيات التي تحتوي على اسلوب الوعد والوعيد) هي ١٣.٩٣٪. حصلت الآيات التي لا تنتمي إلى أي من هذه الفئات الثلاث على نسبة ٤٤.١٩٪. من وجهة نظر الاسلوبية فان الصيغ البلاغية الأكثر شيوعا هي الطباق، والاستعارة، والسؤال البلاغي، والتكرار. الكلمات المفتاحية: الوعد، الوعيد، التداولية، التداولية الاسلوبية

1. Introduction

Gain-framed messages are those that refer to both good things that will happen and the bad things that will not happen, whereas loss-framed messages are those that refer to bad things that will happen and good things that will not happen (Rothman et al, 2006: 203). All researches on gain and loss appeals explore their effectiveness on health behavior and giving medical advices exclusively. These researches always try to find which type works better or which is more effective on the behavior of their recipients. Unlike previous studies, the current study sets itself to analyze these two types of appeals in one of the Surahs of the Holy Quran. Accordingly, the current study looks for answers for the following questions:

1. Which type of appeal is more dominant in the Surah under investigation?
2. What are the most popular speech acts in the gained and the loss appeals?
3. What is the most prevalent figure of speech?
4. What are the stylistic devices that occur in Surah Ar-Ra'd ?

2.1 Literature Review: Related Studies

Grewal et al (1994) have conducted their study on price-perceived performance risk or the relationship between the price of the product that people want to buy and message framing. That's consumers' satisfaction with a certain product or brand depends on whether the advertisement for that product is a gain- framed or loss-framed one. This indicates that people weigh the risks and the gains obtained from purchasing a product before buying it. This study is different from other upcoming research because it is not designed to measure people behavior and response towards health messages as they do. In other words almost all studies that are conducted later on gain and loss appeals are centred around health messages and how people behavior is being affected by message framing.

Rothman et al (2006) have examined how message framing affects health practices throughout the cancer care continuum. They have proposed that people with cancer respond to health messages depending on their perception of the benefits of adopting a particular behavior or the costs of failing to adopt that behavior.

Wansink and Pope (2014) have found that the audience perception and response of gain and loss appeals depend on the characteristics of the individual himself/herself. For example, if the individual is highly involved and quite knowledgeable about a certain disease, he is more responsive to health messages than those who are less aware of the risk of that disease. Thus, the individual's perception of the message framing depend on his own characteristics, knowledge and educational background.

In his paper, O'Keefe's (2011) has investigated the persuasiveness of gain and loss appeals that affects various obesity-related behaviors. He found that gain-framed messages are more effective than loss-framed ones in one context and it is the way around in other contexts. Thus, this study has not proved that there is a significant difference between the persuasiveness of gain and loss appeals.

2.2 Pragmatics

Birner (2013, p.2) defines pragmatics as "the study of language use in context – as compared with semantics, which is the study of literal meaning independent of context". For example an utterance like "My day has been a nightmare" might have two different interpretations. From semantic perspective, it means that the speaker has a really "bad dream" whereas from the pragmatic point of view, it indicates that the speaker has had a hard day. Roughly speaking, semantics is a matter of competence whereas pragmatics is a matter of performance. While semantic is concerned with the literal meaning of utterance, pragmatics goes further as it is interested in the intended meaning of the utterance. The former is context- free whereas the latter is context-dependent. Thus, pragmatics goal is to know what the speaker does with his/her utterance. Pragmatics focuses on the slippery meaning of an utterance, the one that is not found in dictionaries which differs from one context to another. This meaning is non-literal, context-dependent, inferential and not truth conditional. Thus, an utterance might lend itself to different interpretations (p.4).

2.3 Stylistics

Style can be defined as is a matter of choice. As producers of texts, every writer or speaker expresses himself through making linguistic choices. These choices take place at all linguistic levels and language users make use of the linguistic repertoire of vocabulary, sound and syntax. For example, someone wants to inform his friends and relatives that his father has died. He might use a variety of expressions to achieve his communicative goal. He says to his aunt "*My beloved parent has joined the heavenly choir*". He also writes to one of his acquaintances "*my dear father has passed away*". And he told a friend "*my old man has kicked the bucket*". The same information has been conveyed but in different ways or styles (Bashiruddin, 2018P.119). Verschueren, (1999, p. 59) adds that language offers its users a wide range of options in communication and they makes negotiable choices flexibly.

Hickey (1993, p. 573) asserts that in spite of the fact that any language offers its users strict and obligatory rules that they have to follow but at the same time it leaves them some freedom of choice. Style emerges when, consciously or intuitively, writers choose specific linguistic items and rejects all the other options or choices available to them. Primarily, a stylistician is interested in those features of a written or a spoken text that do not follow the rules of grammar. The producer of the text, the writer or the speaker, varies his style according to his attitude towards the message the consumer of the text (the reader or the hearer), and the context of the utterance.

Writers may deviate from the norms of the standard language to achieve literary, rhetorical, persuasive or other effects. This deviation from the norm is referred to as foregrounding (Leech and Short, 2007, p. 39) For instance, E. E Cummings's deviant phrase « He danced his did » and Dylan Thomas's « A grief ago ».

Bally defines stylistics as the study of style and the basic tenets of stylistics is that there must be different ways of saying or doing something, what is said or done is different from how it is said or done. Thus, stylistics, with rhetoric as its direct predecessor, insists on that language expresses both intellectual and emotional phenomena. Practically, stylistics has been divided into literary and non-literary, although the methods used in each type rely heavily on linguistic insights and terminology. Although Leech and Short (1981), for example, give much importance to the concept of style as choice, they would consider supposedly any linguistic study of literature as stylistics. Crystal and Davy (1969) put criteria for the study of style and apply them to the study of various text types like the language of conversation, religion, newspaper reporting and legal documents and these criteria can be applied to literary texts and any text chosen for study. Therefore literary stylistics is but one privileged type of stylistics.

What is strikingly important is that stylistics has been moving towards pragmatics in recent years, seeking explanations for aspects of language-use that it alone cannot adequately provide. This convergence of both fields of linguistic study is beneficial.

2.4 Pragmastylistics

Pragmastylistics is stylistics with a pragmatic component added to it.

Pragmastylistics is concerned with showing the features that a speaker has selected from a wide range of options that can well be fitted in the utterance semantically and truth-conditionally yet they might perform different goals and effects. Thus, what determine the choices made by the speaker are the desired effect (expressive, affective, attitudinal etc.), the communicative qualities aimed at (clarity, effectiveness etc.) and the context (old and new information, relationships between speaker and hearer, the physical distances etc.). In a nutshell, utterances that have the same meaning may differ in their linguistic form and situational appropriateness, and these differences may have either stylistic or pragmatic explanations. Hence, pragmastylistics is interested in studying all the linguistic and extralinguistic conditions, which allow the rules of a language to combine with the certain elements of the context to yield a text capable of influencing certain internal changes in the hearer's state of mind or knowledge (Hickey, 1993, p. 578).

Although stylisticians focus on written texts and pragmatists are interested in spoken discourse, a pragmastylistic analysis studies any piece of language in use, ranging from a phrase or clause to a complete discourse or text, written or spoken (ibid).

Pragmastylistics offers more comprehensive explanations for lots of unexplained phenomena than stylistics or pragmatics can do alone. There is no doubt that a speaker might find specific language features or properties desirable and others undesirable. For example, formal style and clarity of expression may work in one situation whereas informality and fuzziness may be more suitable in another. In addition to that

pragmatic and stylistic desires may combine harmoniously in some utterances while conflicting in others: "for instance, elegance of style may be more appropriate than inelegance but an inelegant form may achieve a particular objective more effectively or more quickly than an elegant alternative (Hickey, 1993,p.579)".

To conclude the section, stylistics and pragmatics have been working closer. The value of pragmastylistics lies in the fact that it can distinguish the stylistic effects (elegance, formality, aesthetics etc.) from the pragmatic effects (what is being done and whether it is done politely, clearly, effectively etc.) and they strengthen and enlighten each other. Thus, "if linguists are interested in asking « What do you say? », stylisticians ask « How do you say? » and pragmaticists ask « What do you do? », then pragmastylisticians ask « How do you do? »".

2.5 Message Framing

Kim et al (2022) define message framing as "a communication strategy that aims to motivate human behavior using a persuasive message that highlights either gain or loss". Message framing plays an invaluable role in argumentative discourse in which the arguer's main intention is to convince his interlocutor of his viewpoint. The arguer may resort to a number of strategies. An arguer might strategically maneuver in argumentation by means of gain-framed appeals and loss-framed appeals (O'Keefe,2009,p.287).

2.6 Gain-framed Messages , Loss-framed Messages and Mixed messages

Johnson et al (2005,p.640) hold that the persuasiveness of the argument depends on whether it is gain-framed or loss-framed one. The former emphasizes the benefits that will be obtained if an action is taken ("if you stop action X, you will live longer") whereas the latter typically emphasize the costs that will result if an action is not taken (e.g., "if you don't stop action X, you will die!"). Mixed messages are those that contain both gain-framed appeals and loss-framed appeals.

Jing-Schmidt (2007,p. 418) justifies the powerful effect of loss-framed messages in persuasion by referring to the psychological phenomenon known as "negativity bias". Negativity bias can be defined as a tendency to be drawn towards unpleasant and miserable information rather than pleasant ones. People are affected by bad memories rather than happy ones. They tend to focus on what is wrong rather than on what is right and it is well-acknowledged fact that criticism stings more than praise. Therefore, losses can be twice as powerful psychologically as gains. People might be convinced by a loss-framed messages because they averse losses. On the other hand, they are not very much persuaded by the gain-framed messages because they evaluate risks or costs more than gains. The negativity effect can be explained with the help of cognitive psychological research that showed negative utterances are stronger and more effective than positive ones (Liebrecht et al,2019,p. 172).

From pragmatic perspective, gain-appeals can be realized by speech act of promising . On the other hand, loss-framed messages are realized by speech act of threatening. An account is given on each one of these speech acts.

2.7 Speech acts in the gain-framed appeals

The most common speech act in the gained-framed messages are the speech acts of promising. Promising is a commissive speech act which commits the speaker to some future action (Levinson, 1983,p.240). Wierzbicka (1987,p. 207) describes promising as an act in which the speaker offers his own ability as a kind of guarantee that he will really perform the action in question. Salgueiro (2010,p.216) adds that promises are made when the promiser offers the promisee a reward for an action that the latter has already performed to the liking, benefit or satisfaction of the promiser. Promises indicate the expression of generosity towards the addressee as a loved-one.

2.7.1 Felicity conditions of Promises

Searle (1969,p.57) provides the felicity conditions for the performance of the speech act of promising:

1. Propositional content conditions: the utterance should express a proposition which must have a content and represents a fact. This proposition predicates a future action of the speaker.

2.The preparatory conditions: the speaker assumes that the hearer wants him to perform this action and that this action is of interests to the hearer. It is not obvious to both S and H that the S will perform the action anyway.

3. **The sincerity condition:** the speaker intends to perform the act of promising. This requires a sincere promiser that must have the intention to perform the speech act of promising. This condition is really a general ethical requirement on communication to the effect that it should not be deceptive.

4. **The essential condition:** by performing the speech act of promising, the speaker puts himself under an ethical obligation that he should keep his promise and performs the speech act in question. Thus, we can say that promising tends to establish a moral obligation which cannot be retracted (Smith, 1990,p.29-61).

2.8 Speech acts in the Loss-framed appeals

The most recurrent speech act in the loss-framed appeals is the speech acts of threatening . Searle (1969,p. 142) and Hornby (2000,p.1408) define threat as the expression of a hostile intention toward someone to do something that will cause harm, trouble, or inconvenience to him unless that person does what the speaker asks him to do (Mullany, 2007,p. 82). The person who issues threats might do that just to show off or display his power, without the immediate receiver having done or shown signs of doing anything to warrant such a threat (Salgueiro, 2010,p.216).

In threats, the agent is the speaker and the action is not in the interests of the hearer. In other words, in threat, the utterance is beneficial for the speaker (Haverkate, 1979,p. 31-32). Sadock (1974,p. 144) adds that threat is the negative functional form of promise, as in:

- "Keep the dog calm or you'll be punished". (Threat)

On the bases of what has been mentioned, it is clear that gain- framed appeals are dominated by promises and loss-framed messages are occupied by threats. There is a need to show the points of similarities and differences between these two speech acts since they govern the two poles of message framing. As far as the similarity is concerned, both promises and threats are commissives as the speaker commits himself to the performance of a future act. On the other hand, the main difference between promises and threats lies in the corresponding sincerity (and perhaps preparatory) conditions. "A promised future action is beneficial for the receiver and/or is at least believed to be so by the promiser, the receiver, or both; whereas a threatened future action is detrimental to the receiver and/or is at least believed to be so by the threatener, the receiver, or both". Typically, both promises and threats can occur in the conditional structure . For example, a sentence like : "If you don't give me the money, I'll shoot you" is a threat performed by a bank-robber whereas : "If you do your homework, I'll take you to the pictures" is promise (Salgueiro, 2010,p.217). (Grant, 1949,p. 363-364) adds both promises and threats can occur in the conditional and the unconditional but the latter also contain a tacit condition. Thus, both gain or loss framed messages contain two premises. The first sets the condition whereas the second provides the promise or the threat which depends basically on the first. In other words, if the action in the first part is in the interest of the speaker, the second one will be a promise. If not, it will be a threat.

2.8.1 Felicity Conditions of Threats

1. **Propositional conditions** indicate that the content of the proposition is about future and that the speaker is committed to perform this future act .

2. **Preparatory conditions** describe the suitable setting for the act, including the intention and the characteristics of the speaker. That's the one who issues a speech act of threatening must have authority over the hearer, and the act must be both possible and has not already been carried out. If the preparatory conditions are not satisfied, the speech act has not been felicitously performed.

3. **Sincerity conditions** require the speaker to be sincere: someone who threatens to do something must genuinely intend to do it otherwise the act is condemned to be misfired or abused.

4. **Essential conditions** indicate the essential nature of the speech act. For example, if someone issues a threat, he has been put under the obligation of carrying out that threat (Fraser, 1998,p. 163).

2.9 Stylistic Devices

The current study explores a number of stylistic devices. They are surveyed briefly below.

2.9.1 Antithesis

Antithesis refers to the juxtaposition of two contrasting concepts in one context(MacQuarrie and Mick,1996,p.430).

2.9.2 Epanaphora

According to Lawrence et al (2017,p.296) , epanaphora is a rhetorical device in which the same word (or group of words) is repeated at the beginning of successive phrases.

2.9.3 Metaphor

Metaphor is a figure of speech in which two things are compared without using *as* or *like* (Corbett, 1965,p.439).

2.9.4 Rhetorical question

Wang (2014,p.42) states that rhetorical question is a question which is asked with no intention to obtain an answer. It is left open and it is used to make a point or answered by the speaker himself .Quirk et al (1985,p.825) add that a rhetorical question has the structure of question but the function of statement. They maintain that a positive rhetorical question is equivalent to a negative statement and a negative rhetorical question equals a positive one.

3. Methodology

This section is devoted to explain the methodological framework of the current study. It introduces the model adopted in the analysis and data analysis.

3. 1 Model of Analysis

The current study adopts O' Keefe (2009) and Leech and Short (2007) as models for analysis. Figure (1) below shows the diagram of the eclectic model of the present study.

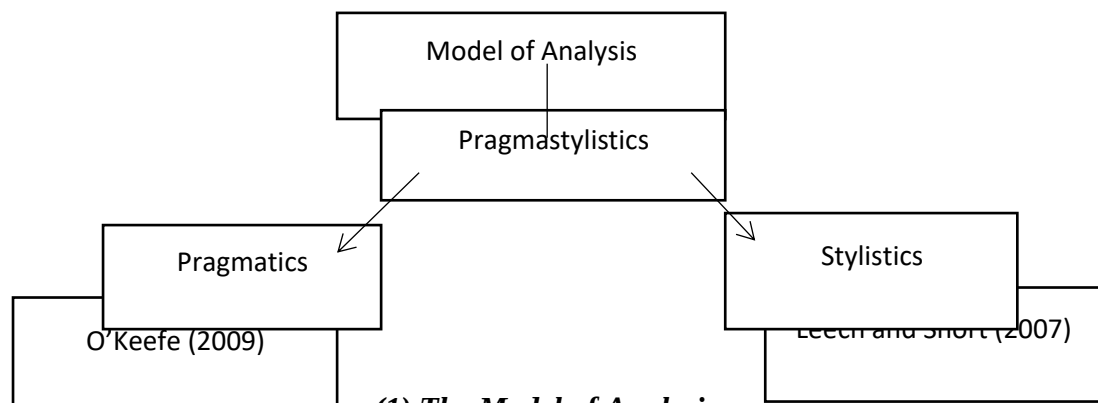


Figure (1) The Model of Analysis

3.2 The Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis in the present study is the Quranic verse. Verses are statistically analyzed according to the way they are framed into. They are counted and their percentages are obtained.

4. Results and Discussion

The present section introduces the results of the analysis of Surah Ar-Ra'd and discusses them quantitatively and qualitatively.

4. 1 Quantitative Analysis

From a quantitative point of view, data analysis shows that loss-framed messages are more dominant in Surah Ar-Ra'd than gained- framed ones as they score 25.58 %. Gained-framed messages on the other hand occupy the next position as their percentage is 16.30%. Findings also indicate the occurrence of verses that contain both types of appeals (mixed ones). The percentage of this type of appeals is 13.93%. It is noteworthy that there are some verses that are assigned the label "none" since they do not represent gained-framed appeals nor loss framed appeals nor mixed appeals and score 44.19%. Figure (2) below shows the percentages of the loss –framed, the gained-framed messages and the mixed messages.

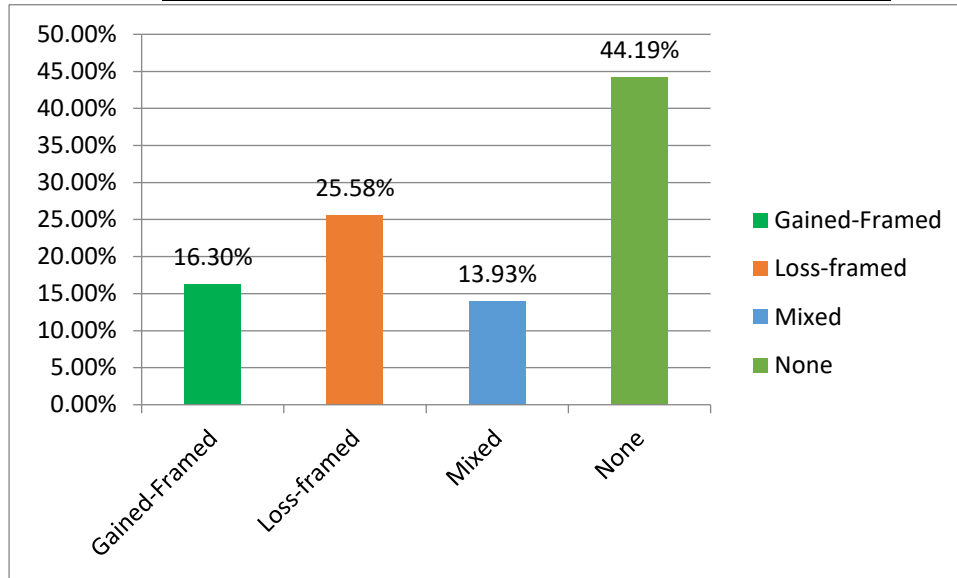


Figure (2) Percentages of Loss-Framed, gained-Framed and Mixed Messages

4.2 Qualitative Analysis

This section is devoted to qualitative analysis. It is subdivided into three sections : gained-framed , loss-framed and mixed messages. The present study analyzes the Quranic verses in Arabic and the equivalent English translation is provided for the sake of clarity. The current study depends on Yusuf Ali (1937) English translation. The analysis takes place on two levels: pragmatic and stylistic . The former stands for the “what” of the argument whereas the latter represents the “ how” of the argument. The study uses plural verbs with Al-Mighty Allah for His greatness and as a glorification and respect for Him. For each case (gain or loss or mixed) examples are taken from the Surah under study followed by their qualitative analysis.

4.2. 1 Gain-framed Messages

1. Verse: 22

“Those who patiently persevere, Seeking the countenance their Lord ; Establish regular prayers ; spend, Out of (the gifts) We have bestowed For their sustenance, secretly And openly ; and turn off Evil With good : for such there is The final attainment Of the (Eternal) Home.”

ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً وَيَذَرُونَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةَ أُولَئِكَ وَالَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا لَهُمْ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ

On the pragmatic level, this holy verse is a gain framed appeal. If you do so, you will get that. It contains two parts. The first introduces the conditional premise and the second provides the consequence in the form of a promise. The conditional premise contains four further conditions within it: people who patiently persevere, establish their prayer , spend out and turn off evil with good. Thus, the people must meet all these four conditions in order to be rewarded. Those are the real winners and paradise is their home.

From stylistic perspective, Almighty Allah uses the rhetorical figure, antithesis, where two contrasting concepts are juxtaposed in one context. They are

"الحسنة والسيئة" and "سرا وعلانية". Their use is to make emphasis and thus, the argument will be powerful and more effective. The prepositional phrase "بالحسنة" has been preposed for rhetorical and stylistic purposes . "السيئة" is an object and it should have been placed after the subject but it is postposed to the end of the sentence and the prepositional phrase " بالحسنة " has been given priority because of its religious value. The

occurrence of antithesis and the phenomenon of preposing and postposing give a double stylistic effect. It creates a picture that the receiver can visualize by focusing on the role that the virtue "الحسنة" does.

2. Verse: 23

"Gardens of perpetual bliss : They shall enter there, As well as the righteous Among their fathers, their spouses, And their offspring : And angels shall enter unto them From every gate (with the salutation) ."

جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا وَمَنْ صَلَحَ مِنْ آبَائِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيَّاتِهِمْ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَدْخُلُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ بَابٍ " "

Allah go on promising the believers with the paradise as a reward for their good deeds. On the stylistic level, preposing is used. For example, "جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ" is an object that has been moved to the beginning of the sentence to draw the attention of the receivers of the great value of perlocutionary act of promise which has come true. The believers have entered paradise as He promise them. Another instance of preposing is the object, the angels "الملائكة", which is moved to the beginning of the sentence.

4.2.2 Loss-Framed Messages

1. Verse: 5

" If thou dost marvel (At their want of faith), Strange is their saying : " When we are (actually) dust, Shall we indeed then be In a creation renewed ? " They are Those who deny their Lord ! They Are those round whose necks Will be yokes (of servitude) : They will be Companions Of the Fire, to dwell therein (For aye) !"

وَإِنْ تَعْجَبْ فَعَجَبٌ قَوْلُهُمْ أَإِذَا كُنَّا تُرَابًا أَإِنَّا لَفِي خَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَأُولَئِكَ الْأَغْلَالُ فِي أَعْنَاقِهِمْ وَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ "

Allah addresses his prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) that if he wants to wonder, then he has to wonder at the polytheist rejection the existence of Allah. Although they witness signs of Allah creation. This is a loss-framed appeal. The conditional premise is "أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ" and in the second premise Allah threatens them with sending them to hell to stay there forever.

“وَأُولَئِكَ الْأَغْلَالُ فِي أَعْنَاقِهِمْ وَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ”

Concerning stylistic devices, epanaphora is used. The repetition of "وَأُولَئِكَ" at the beginning of successive phrases to intensify the degree of torture that the unbelievers will have.

2. Verse: 25

" But those who break The Covenant of God, after Having plighted their word thereto, And cut asunder those things Which God has commanded To be joined, and work mischief In the land ;—on them Is the Curse ; for them Is the terrible Home !"

وَالَّذِينَ يَنْقُضُونَ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مِيثَاقِهِ وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ اللَّعْنَةُ وَلَهُمْ سُوءُ الدَّارِ "

This is a loss-framed appeal. In the conditional premise, Allah list three vices that the unbelievers commit: "break the covenant of Allah, sever which Allah has commanded to be joined, and work mischief in the land", therefore Allah threatens them that they will be cursed and hell is their end. From stylistic point of view, this verse is the opposite of verse (22) where Allah list the conditions or the good deeds that make Allah promise them with paradise. In the verse (25), Almighty Allah follow the same but He list several vices that make Him threaten them with hell. Allah use "عقبي الدار" in the gain framed appeal whereas He manipulate the opposite "سوء الدار" in the loss framed message. There is also metaphorical use of these two ends of man. The "عقبي الدار" refers to paradise whereas "سوء الدار" indicates hell. Thus, from stylistic viewpoint, there are two rhetorical figures in each one of these holy verses, antithesis and metaphor.

3. Verse: 33

"Is then He Who standeth Over every soul (and knoweth) All that it doth, (Like any others) ? And yet They ascribe partners to God. Say : " But name them ! Is it that ye will Inform Him of something He knoweth not on earth, Or is it (just) a show Of words ? " Nay ! to those Who believe not, their pretence Seems pleasing, but they are Kept back (thereby) from the Path. And those whom God leaves To stray, no one can guide."

أَفَمَنْ هُوَ قَانِمٌ عَلَى كُلِّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ قُلْ سَمُّوهُمْ أَمْ تُنَبِّئُونَهُ بِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ بظَاهِرٍ مِّنَ الْقَوْلِ لَئِنْ رَزَيْنَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مَكْرَهُمْ وَصَدُّوا عَنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَن يَضِلِّ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ هَادٍ ○

This verse is a loss-framed appeal . Allah use a rhetorical question which seeks no answer yet it is used to challenge the unbelievers and protest against their ignorance. As a result for their disobedience, Allah threaten them that they will be astray and Allah will never guide them.

4. 2.3 Mixed Messages

1.Verse: 18

"For those who answered their Lord's call, are all (good) things. But those who respond not to him, even if they had all that is in the heavens and on earth, and as much more,(in vain), they would offer it for ransom. For them will reckoning be terrible: their abode will be Hell, what a bed of misery and worst indeed is that place for rest."

"لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمُ الْحُسْنَىٰ وَالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَهُ لَوْ أَنَّ لَهُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مِّثْلَهُ مَعَهُ لَافْتَدَوْا بِهِ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ سُوءُ الْحِسَابِ وَمَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ"

This is a mixed message with two parts. The first is a gain-framed appeal and the second is a loss-appeal. In the former, "لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمُ الْحُسْنَىٰ" represents the condition upon which the second part depends. If people answer the call of their God, they will be rewarded. "الحسنَىٰ" is postposed at the end of the sentence to create a harmony through the repetition of the relative clause "الذين" which occurs in the gain-framed and the loss-framed appeals. One refers to the believers and the other refers to the unbelievers.

As far as the second part is concerned, it is a loss-appeal in which the condition is that people who do not answer the call of Allah will suffer and taste the agony and the torture in hell. Even if they possess what is on the earth, this will not save them from this bad end.

2. 27: Verse

The Unbelievers say : " Why Is not a Sign sent down To him from his Lord ? " Say : " Truly God leaveth, To stray, whom He will ; But He guideth to Himself Those who turn to Him In penitence,—

"وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَضِلُّ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ أُنَابَ"

This is also a mixed message that contain two appeals within it. A loss framed appeal followed by a gain-framed one. Al mighty God threaten to stray and guide whom he want and hence He issues a threat.

5. Conclusion

The study has come up with a number of conclusions. First, loss-framed appeals are more prevalent in Surah Ar-Ra'd as they occupy 25.58% . Second, the gained-framed messages are less frequent in the Surah under study as their percentage is 16.30% . Third, the mixed messages, which contain both types of appeals, score 13.93 % . Fourth, verses that do not belong to any of these three categories score 44.19%. Fifth, the most recurrent speech act in the gained-framed messages is promises. Sixth, the speech act of threatening is the most common one in the loss-framed appeal. Seventh, the most recurrent stylistic device is antithesis and other figures of speech that occur in the Surah under investigation are epanaphora, rhetorical question and metaphor. Preposing and postposing also occur much in Surah Ar-Ra'd for stylistic and rhetorical purposes.

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