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Typology of Speech and Thought Representation in the Quranic Stories

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Abstract

This paper explores the typology of speech and thought representation in selected Quranic stories, utilizing narrative discourse to establish a theoretical and practical framework. It primarily focuses on renowned models such as Toolan (2001) and McHale's (1978) models, among others. After a thorough examination of these theoretical models, this paper aims to apply them using examples extracted from the Quranic stories. A notable finding suggests that the representation of speech and thought in the Quran ranges from a directly diegetic mode to an indirectly mimetic mode. This range contributes to the Quranic discourse being a vibrant and dynamic form of communication. The primary purpose of these aspects is to establish a dynamic and engaging interaction between the Quranic discourse and its audience. In general, the typology of speech and thought representation is closely linked to the oral nature of the Quranic discourse.

Keywords: Narrative, Quran, Typology, Discourse Representation, Diegesis.

1. Introduction

The Qur'an is known for its use of short and long narrative verses and passages as part of its rhetorical stylistics. Over a quarter of the verses and passages in the Qur'an tell a story, collectively referred to as "Al-Qassa al-Qur'aniyya". These stories not only narrate events but also serve as pieces of rhetoric and eloquence. They can describe events happening to previous nations and prophets (called "the stories of the Prophets"), events in the life of the Prophet himself ("The Tradition of the Prophet"), or events that will happen in the future (the Apocalyptic stories). The stories can be expressed as a single verse or a sequence of verses in one or more chapters of

the Qur'an. While these narrative verses and passages have not been studied extensively from theoretical perspectives, scholars increasingly tend to examine them more closely. Narratology, the science of studying narrative, can be used to examine the principles and rules governing the Qur'anic tales. This paper aims to explore how discourse narratology can be employed to study the typology of speech and thought representation in the Qur'anic narratives.

2. Review of the Related Literature

For over a decade, the author of this paper has been involved in studying narratology in both literary works and Qur'anic stories, which has



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led to the realization of the unique characteristics of the latter. While there is a wealth of literature on the various linguistic and rhetorical aspects of the Qur'an, the literature on the narratological approach is relatively scarce. To the best of the author's knowledge, no specific paper has dealt with the typology of speech and thought representation in the Qur'anic stories, which is the focus of this paper.

3. Traditional Approaches to the Quranic Studies

Literary analysis of the Quran has a long history dating back to its interpretation and translation in the early centuries. However, this paper does not delve into the extensive literature on the subject. As [Mir \(1988\)](#) notes, most of these works have focused on theological issues rather than the literary and linguistic characteristics of the Quran, particularly its stories. Traditional approaches can be categorized into textual-oriented and contextual-oriented approaches, neither of which has adequately addressed the study of Quranic stories.

However, the discussion on new approaches to the Quran originated with the writing of several monographs at the University of Al-Azhar in Egypt during the early 20th century. Amin Al-Khuli (1895-1966) is considered the pioneer of this movement. He asserted that the only way to comprehend the linguistic miracle of the Quran, known as its inimitability or *I'jaz*, was through a literary approach. Al-Khuli argued that Arabs recognized the Quran's superiority by comparing it to human literature, and thus advocated for replacing religious, theological, philosophical, mystical, judicial, and other approaches with the literary approach ([Abu-Zayd, 2003, p. 8](#)).

[Muhammad Ahmad Khalaf-Allah](#) played a significant role in expanding the discussion on the literary approach through his Ph.D. dissertation titled "*Al-Fann al-Qasasi fi al-Qur'an al-Karim*" (The Technique of Narration in the Quran) in 1947, which was supervised by Al-Khuli himself. Although Cairo University's committee members rejected this dissertation, it generated various supporting and opposing ideas. Abu-Zayd summarizes the main arguments against the method and the thesis as follows:

(1) A literary text is a product of human imagination, while the Quran is regarded as the word of God and should not be compared to any human discourse.

(2) Treating the Quran as a work of literary art implies that it was written by Muhammad.

(3) Additionally, asserting that the stories in the Quran do not represent actual historical facts, as the literary approach suggests, is considered a grave blasphemy that amounts to apostasy. This perspective places the Quran beneath a mere historical book.

(4) From the standpoint of traditional dogma, it is even more offensive to claim that the language and structure of the Quran are influenced by historical circumstances and cultural influences. Such an interpretation could easily lead to the notion that the Quran is a human text ([Abu-Zayd, 2003, p. 9](#)).

The main concern raised in Khalaf-Allah's "*Al-Fann al-Qasasi*," as highlighted by Abu-Zayd, revolves around "the historical accuracy of the events mentioned in the Qur'an" ([Abu-Zayd, 2003, p. 10](#)), particularly focusing on the stories of the prophets known as *Qasas-al A'nbiya* in the field of Quranic studies. The second part of his dissertation, titled "*Al-Fann fi al-Qasas al-Qur'ani*" (The Art of Narration in the Qur'anic Stories), consists of seven chapters and is most relevant to the subject at hand. Although Khalaf-Allah addresses the elements of the Quranic narrative (such as characters, actions, and dialogue) in the fifth chapter of the second part ("*Al- 'Anasir al-Qasasiyya*," pp. 464-485), his approach leans more towards the traditional rather than the narratological perspective. Since Khalaf-Allah's monograph, an increasing amount of literature has emerged on various aspects of the Quranic narrative, extending beyond the scope of this paper to mention all of them.

In the realm of Persian-language literature, numerous articles and academic theses have been written on Quranic sciences, particularly Quranic stories, which are extensively documented in various references. [Khorasani \(1992\)](#) refers to 55 books on Quranic stories in his article, while [Hashemzadeh \(1993\)](#) expands the references to 405 articles and books. [Sadeghpour \(1997\)](#) further mentions 465 articles, books, and theses on Quranic stories. However, none of these publications have delved into narratological approaches to

Quranic stories. Only in recent years have some theses attempted to explore Quranic stories from a relatively narratological perspective, yet few have considered the typology of speech and thought representation based on the theory of discourse-narratology, which is presented here for the first time in the context of Quranic stories.

Regarding literature in Western countries, numerous literary and linguistic approaches to the Quran have emerged in the past three decades. The University of Birmingham's "Journal of Quranic Studies" stands out as the most significant platform for Quranic publications, showcasing the application of literary and linguistic approaches to the Quran. Since 2000, several theses have been written on the issue of narrative and narrativity in the Quran, although few have dedicated much attention to the typology of speech and thought representation in Quranic stories.

3.1) Narrative Discourse as Model

Narratology, or the theory of narrative, makes a crucial distinction between two essential components of any narrative: the story (the content), which encompasses the chain of events, and the discourse (the expression),

which focuses on how the story is communicated. As succinctly stated by Chatman, "story" is the succession of events; "discourse" is how those events are narrated." (Chatman, 1989, p. 19). This differentiation is referred to by Russian formalists as *fabula* (basic story material) and *sjuzet* (plot), respectively. Building upon this distinction, any narrative text can be analyzed as comprising two parts: story and discourse or text. With this differentiation in mind, many narratologists, including Jhan (2020), divide narratology into two main branches: story-narratology and discourse-narratology. The former examines the content and semantic characteristics of the narrative, functioning at the micro-level. It focuses on the action units that shape and organize a sequence of events into a trajectory of themes, motifs, and plot lines (Jahn, 2020, p. 18). The latter branch explores how the elements of the story operate at the macro level, analyzing the stylistic choices that determine the form or realization of a narrative text (or performance, in the case of films and plays) (Jahn, 2020, p. 18). The following diagram is self-evident:

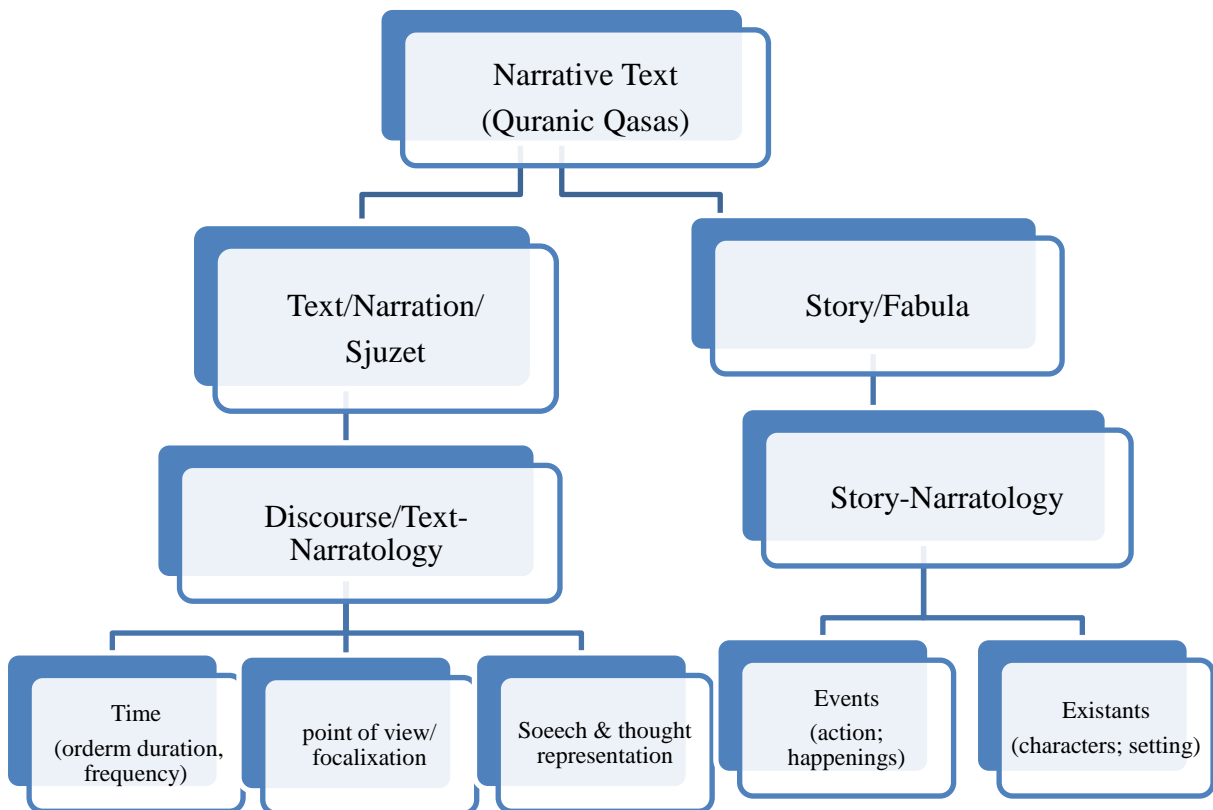


Diagram 1. Story/Discourse narratology.

Discourse narratology serves as a systematic and methodological tool for analyzing the Quranic tales. It focuses on the stylistic and rhetorical choices that shape the form and structure of the Quranic narrative at the macro level. On the other hand, story narratology delves into the action units that organize and interweave a series of events into thematic threads, narratives, and plot lines at the micro-level of the Quranic stories. Therefore, in the Quranic Qasas, the discourse encompasses the entire Quran, which we, as readers, open and read as a text. This "text" includes God as the true author of the Quran, with its narration being revealed and transmitted to the Prophet (PBUH) as its primary recipient/reader. A significant portion of this divine message is presented in the form of what is known as the Quranic Qasas. The Quranic Qasas, as narratives, can be examined through both story and discourse narratology.

Within discourse narratology, one crucial element is speech and thought representation (STR), which explores how the narrator portrays the speech and thoughts of the characters in the text. This representation falls on a continuum ranging from the most diegetic to the most mimetic types, progressing from diegetic summary to summary, less purely diegetic, indirect discourse, free indirect discourse, direct discourse, and finally, free direct discourse, as we will soon observe. In this paper, we adopt discourse narratology as an interdisciplinary paradigm to investigate the typology of speech and thought representation in the Quranic narrative.

4. Methodology

The narrative discourse employed in this study serves as a framework for analyzing the typology of the Quranic stories. The theoretical foundation of this framework draws upon narrative approaches, including Gerard Genette's (1980) narrative model. The methodology employed within this theoretical framework is primarily conceptual, seeking to reinterpret key concepts within the framework. This conceptual methodology will involve the qualitative description and analysis of Quranic verses and propositions. To facilitate this qualitative approach, specific tools and concepts proposed by [McHale \(1978\)](#) and [Toolan's \(2001\)](#) typologies are employed.

4.1. Typology of Speech and Thought Representation

[McHale \(1978\)](#) presents a comprehensive typology of speech and thought representation that proves suitable for application to the Quranic Qasas. Initially, McHale provides a brief background on speech and thought representation, comparing Plato's distinction between diegesis and mimesis with James' distinction between showing and telling, as well as Lubbock's distinction between summary and scene. Additionally, McHale mentions Hernadi's third category, known as substitutionary, which lies between diegesis (authorial presentation) and mimesis (narrator's representation). Drawing upon this background, McHale categorizes the representation of speech and thought into seven types along a continuum, ranging from pure diegesis (telling/summary/histoire) to pure mimesis (showing/seeing/discourse). Pure diegesis closely aligns with the narrator's report of a character's speech and thought, while pure mimesis reflects the character's words and thoughts as conveyed by the narrator within the story. McHale's typology is as follows:

Diegetic summary; Summary, less purely diegetic; Indirect content paraphrase (indirect discourse); Indirect discourse, mimetic to some degree; Free indirect discourse; Direct discourse; Free direct discourse (pp. 258-259)

McHale's typology provides the advantage of distinguishing between the voice of the character and that of the narrator, forming the basis of Leech and Short's approach. Leech and Short (1981, pp. 318-51) refer to examples of direct/indirect discourse to demonstrate the absence of a semantic criterion indicating that indirect discourse is a modified form of direct discourse. They conclude that direct/indirect discourse and other aspects of representation, termed "stylistic variant," convey the same proposition (*ibid*, p. 321). Another aspect highlighted by Leech and Short is that the dialectal characteristics of speakers, such as accent, geographical, and cultural differences, disappear when converting direct discourse into indirect discourse. Following McHale's classification, Leech and Short categorize their division from "Narrator apparently in total control of the report" to "narrator not in control of the report at all" (*Ibid*, p. 234). Leech and Short depict this division in the following diagram:

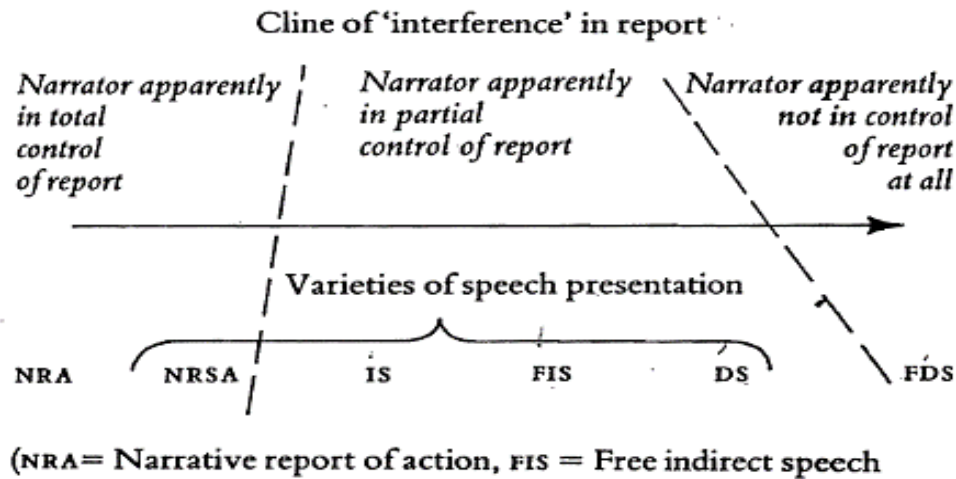


Diagram 2. Leech & Short's Typology

Therefore, in Leech and Short's continuum, the presence of the narrator becomes progressively less apparent as we move from NRA to FDS. Their continuum consists of five components compared to McHale's typology: 1) narrative report of discourse action and narrative report of speech action (NRA and NRSA) - more indirect than indirect discourse (similar to McHale's diegetic summary but less diegetic), 2) indirect speech (IS), 3) free indirect speech (FIS), 4) direct speech (DS), and 5) free direct speech (FDS). Interestingly, Leech and Short propose the same division for representational aspects of thought, using direct discourse and thought (DS and IT) as criteria. Other aspects of representation measured by these criteria include:

NRSA IS FIS DS FDS
 FIT IT NRTA DT FDT

Following McHale and Leech and Short, Toolan (2001, p. 139) presents a continuum that adds pure narrative (PN) to Leech and Short's diagram. PN comprises "narrative report of speech action" (NRSA) and "narrative report of thought action" (NRTA).

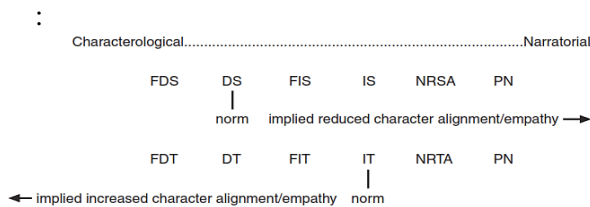


Diagram 3. Toolan's Typology

In this continuum, PN represents the high presence of the narrator, while direct speech (DS) serves as the norm with the least presence of the narrator. This diagram has the advantage

of incorporating aspects of thought representation but does not encompass other aspects of representation. Additionally, PN and the representation of narrative report of speech and thought (NRSA and NRTA) align with the first and second categories in McHale's typology.

4.2. Typology of Aspects of Thought and Discourse in Quranic Tales

It appears that there is no direct correspondence between these typologies and the Quranic verses and propositions. However, by modifying these typologies, it is possible to create a diagram representing the aspects of discourse and thought in the Quranic tales, ranging from mere narration where God, as the omniscient narrator, engages in storytelling, to pure narrative where the speech, discourse, and thoughts of the individuals in the Quran are included. The diagram illustrating this relationship is self-evident:

PN	= Pure Narrative
NRA	= Narrator's Report of Action
NRSA	= Narrator's Report of Speech/Thought Acts
IS	= Indirect Speech {conducted by the narrator}
IT	= Indirect Thought {conducted by the narrator}
FIS	= Free Indirect Speech
FIT	= Free Indirect Thought
DS	= Direct Speech {including dialogue}
FDS	=Free Direct Speech
FIT	=Free Direct Thought
FID	=Free Indirect Discourse {speech & thought}

Table 1. STR Typology

4.2.1. Quranic Pure Narrative (QPN)

In the Quranic verses, Pure narrative (PN) is

prominently present in the form of analeptic narration when examining the past. If this analepsis occurs within the structure of the main story, it is referred to as 'internal analepsis,' while if it occurs outside the main story, it is known as 'external analepsis.' When both forms are combined, it is termed a 'mixed analepsis.' In the Quranic tales, the extent of analeptic narration varies depending on the context and position of the Surah. These stories are not narrated in their entirety from beginning to end. At times, it seems as if God is recounting a specific part of the prophets' stories, with the narrative time shifting back to a past event in the life of that prophet (external analepsis). In other instances, the narrative regresses to a point within the main story, which serves as an internal analepsis. There are also occurrences where an external analeptic period emerges from the middle of the main narrative or intertwines with it (mixed analepsis).

For instance, the life story of Moses is depicted in various Quranic Surahs, each narrating a part of his life story based on the context and content of the Surah. In some cases, such as in Sura Al-Qasas, the story progresses in chronological order, starting from Moses' birth and childhood and continuing until the destruction of Pharaoh's followers. In another case, like Sura Taha, Moses' story begins in the middle, where a lost and frightened Moses sees a fire in the desert, follows it, and subsequently saves his family. The story then reaches a point where Moses is asked to go to Pharaoh. At this point, the narrative pauses, and the narrator takes the story back to Moses' childhood (external analepsis), before returning to the beginning. As is common in fictional narratives, the sequence of events and analepsis in the Qur'an follow a rational structure. In Sura Taha, the chronology of events is interrupted when Moses prays to God, and God responds to his prayer:

Said He, 'Thou art granted, Moses, thy petition (36). (Arberry's translation)¹

It is worth noting that this type of analepsis serves to reassure the Prophet of Islam and his followers that victory belongs to them. Another example of a story that starts in the

middle and then goes back to the beginning is the story of the People of the Cave, which demonstrates an internal analepsis.

Furthermore, in Sura Al-Hijr, the story of Lot begins with an external reference, starting from the middle of Abraham's story. If we consider the story of Abraham as the base, then the story of Lot becomes the external analepsis. Conversely, if we take the story of Hud as the base, then the story of Abraham becomes the external analepsis. However, the crucial point of these analepses is to establish an intertextual relationship between the lives of past prophets and nations, as well as with the life and tradition of the Prophet of Islam (PBUH). This intertextual relationship is likely one of the most significant functions of Quranic pure narrative (QPN). As Toolan suggests, PN appears to be more narratorial than characterological (see diagram above), indicating that PN is narrated by the narrator rather than the character. Leech and Short argue that when a narrator "reports the occurrence of some act or speech act, we are seeing the event entirely from his perspective" (p. 324). In contrast to Leech and Short, who consider PN as "unimportant," the Quran extensively employs it in condensed reporting of the most narratable events of the stories it seeks.

In general, the punishment stories in the Quran, which revolve around the lives of previous prophets and nations, depict events that occurred before the Quran was revealed to the Prophet of Islam, considering the Quran's revelation as the foundational storyline. This is evident through the rhetorical repetition of the past tense verb "Kazzabat" (they denied) at the beginning of these stories, as well as the prevalent use of past tenses. From this perspective, if we consider the interaction between God as the Sender and the Prophet of Islam as the Receiver as the central timeline of the Quranic narrative, all the events preceding this narrative time can be viewed as analeptic.

Furthermore, when we take into account the primary audience of these stories, which were the contemporaries of the Prophet, along with the context and reasons for the revelation of the Surahs, a complex analepsis arises. The Quranic narrative shifts between referring to the past and addressing the Prophet's contemporary audience. However, due to time constraints, this paper does not delve into the

¹ قَالَ قَدْ أُوتِيتَ سُؤْلَكَ يَا مُوسَى (٣٦)

specific narrative methods employed in this analeptic narrative, such as explicit and implicit ellipsis, descriptive pause, summary, scene, and dialogue. Dialogue, being the purest form of narrative, is briefly mentioned below as a representation of direct discourse.

In conclusion, Pure narrative in the Quran takes the form of analeptic narrative, accompanied by various narrative methods. It can be broadly categorized into two main types: 'pure narrative of action' (PNA) and 'pure narrative of speech and thought' (PNS/T).

4.2.3. Quranic Pure Narrative of Actions

In this type of narrative, the actions are set to initiate or introduce the story. For example, the beginning of some of the Quranic stories is as follows: The stories begin with a universal statement about the Book of Al-Mubin (Perspicuous Book), and then God, as the narrator, describes the overview of the story in the first few verses. The first verses of the chapter Al-Qasas are as follows:

Ta Sin Mim (1) Those are the signs of the Manifest Book. (2) We will recite to thee something of the tiding of Moses and Pharaoh truthfully, for a people who believe. (3) Now Pharaoh had exalted himself in the land and had divided its inhabitants into sects, abasing one party of them, slaughtering their sons, and sparing their women; for he was of the workers of corruption. (4) Yet We desired to be gracious to those that were abased in the land, and to make them leaders, and to make them the inheritors, (5) and to establish them in the land, and to show Pharaoh and Ha man, and their hosts, what they were dreading from them. (6) (Arberry's translation)²

In these few verses, God describes the whole story of Pharaoh (before the coming of Moses) in the form of a pure narrative and predicts the future of his nation. Indeed, in these descriptions, there is no trace of the speech and thought of Pharaoh, but it can be imagined that someone who has disobeyed,

weakened people, beheaded boys, and captured women, certainly would not have had speeches and thoughts. These verses are called 'pure narrative' for that God has 'recited' them to Muhammad. However, the point is that these actions are expressed in the form of narration. Thus, it seems that the mere narrative of actions and the act of narration have been combined with a performance/anecdote.

The second example is the first three verses of the Sura Yusuf:

Alif Lam Ra. Those are the signs of the Manifest Book. (1) We have sent it down as an Arabic Koran; haply, you will understand. (2) We will relate to thee the fairest of stories in that We have revealed to thee this Koran, though before it thou wast one of the heedless. (3) (Arberry's translation)³

The third example is verses 1 to 30 of the Sura Ra'd, in which God briefly describes the world's creation.

4.2.4. Quranic Pure Narrative of Speech and Thoughts

This narrative is a kind of fictional summary. In this narrative, God describes the main speeches and thoughts of the infidels in general and does not go into details. Verses 1 to 27 of the Sura Al-Hijr act as so, and we will cite some basic verses as examples:

Alif Lam Ra. Those are the signs of the Book and of a manifest Koran. (1) Perchance the unbelievers will wish that they had surrendered: (2) leave them to eat, and to take their joy, and to be bemused by hope; certainly, they will soon know! (3) Never a city have We destroyed, but it had a known decree, (4) and no nation outstrips its term, nor do they put it back. (5) They say: 'Thou, upon whom the Remembrance is sent down, thou art assuredly possessed! (6) Why dost thou not bring the angels unto us, if thou speakest truly?' (7) We send not down the angels, save with truth; (8) then they would not be respited. It is We who have sent down the Remembrance, and We watch over it. (9) Indeed, We sent Messengers before thee,

^٢ طسم (١) تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ (٢) تَتْلُوهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ نَبَأِ مُوسَى وَفِرْعَوْنَ بِالْحَقِّ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ (٣) إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيَعًا يَسْتَضَعِفُ طَائِفَةً مِنْهُمْ يُذَبِّحُ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيِي نِسَاءَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ (٤) وَنُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتَضَعَفُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أُمَّةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ (٥) وَنُمَكِّنَ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنُرِي فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا مِنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَحْذَرُونَ (٦)

^٣ أَلَمْ تَلِكْ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ (١) إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ (٢) نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ أَحْسَنَ الْقَصَصِ بِمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ وَإِنْ كُنْتَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ لَمِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ (٣)

among the factions of the ancients. (10) (Arberry's translation)⁴

In these verses, God briefly describes the states of the disbelievers and especially their thoughts and speeches. In the second verse, the idea of infidels who would like to be Muslims is expressed. In verses 6 and 7, the speeches of the infidels are quoted directly.

4.2.5. Quranic Less Diegetic Summary along with the Thought in the form of Revelation

Sometimes, the pure narrative is expressed in the form of revelation. For example, look at verses 7 and 8 of the Sura al-Qasas:

So We revealed to Moses' mother, 'Suckle him, then, when thou fearest for him, cast him into the sea, and do not fear, neither sorrow, for We shall return him to thee, and shall appoint him one of the Envoys.' (7) So then the folk of Pharaoh picked him out to be an enemy and a sorrow to them; certainly, Pharaoh and Haman, and their hosts, were of the sinners. (8) (Arberry's translation)⁵.

In these verses, God uses the plural pronoun to send thoughts in the form of revelation to Moses' mother. Verse 7 has less of a purely narrative and descriptive aspect. It is in verse 8 that the idea of revelation is formed into speeches.

4.2.6. Quranic Indirect Iteration of the Content

One of the manifestations of a pure narrative of speech and thought is the indirect iteration of the content of the stories, which has been indirectly referred to in most Suras or the Quranic tales.

الر تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ وَقُرْآنٍ مُبِينٍ (١) رَبُّمَا يَوْمَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ كَانُوا مُسْلِمِينَ (٢) ذَرُهُمْ يَأْكُلُوا وَيَتَمَتَّعُوا وَيُلْهِمُهُمُ الْأَمَلُ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ (٣) وَلَا مَا أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَرِيْبَةٍ إِلَّا وَلَهَا كِتَابٌ مَعْلُومٌ (٤) مَا تَسْبِقُ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ أَجْلَهَا وَمَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ (٥) وَقَالُوا يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِي نَزَّلَ عَلَيْهِ الذِّكْرُ إِنَّكَ لَمَجْنُونٌ (٦) لَوْ مَا تَأْتِينَا بِالْمَلَايِكَةِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ (٧) مَا نُنزِّلُ الْمَلَايِكَةَ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَمَا كَانُوا إِذَا مُنْظَرِينَ (٨) إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ (٩) وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فِي شَيْعِ الْأَوَّلِينَ (١٠)

٥ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ فَإِذَا خَفْتِ عَلَيْهِ فَأَلْقِيهِ فِي الْيَمِّ وَلَا تَخَافِي وَلَا تَحْزَنِي إِنَّا رَادُّوهُ إِلَيْكَ وَجَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ (٧) فَالْتَقِطْهُ آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ لِيَكُونَ لَهُمْ عَدُوًّا وَحَزَنًا إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا كَانُوا خَاطِئِينَ (٨)

4.2.7. Quranic Indirect Speech, Mimetic to Some Degree

The narrative of the gardeners' speech in a few verses of the Sura al-Qalam is considered an example of indirect speech, mimetic to some degree. In these verses, the narrative begins with the speech of God as the narrator and with the plural pronoun. After that, some of the gardeners' speeches are quoted directly, and because they are somewhat close to direct quotations, they also can be taken as mimetic speeches.

4.2.8. Quranic Free Indirect Discourse

According to the scholars of narratology, the concept of 'indirect free speech' does not appear to be present in the Qur'an in its exact intended meaning. One reason for this is the difference in grammatical structures between Arabic and non-Arabic languages. Arabic, along with Persian, lacks the formal and linguistic features that typically characterize 'free indirect speech' in languages like English. As a result, the distinguishing features of free indirect speech, such as reporting verbs, quotation marks, pronouns, and punctuation, may not be observed in Arabic and Persian as they are in English, due to the variations in their grammatical frameworks.

Another reason relates to the function of free indirect speech. Following Toolan (2001), free indirect speech can be seen as a strategy that aligns the narrator's words, values, and perspectives with those of the character. Its effects and functions can be examined from two interconnected aspects: its impact on the reader and its internal textual influences. Through the use of free indirect speech, the reader gains direct and immediate access to the inner speech and thoughts of fictional characters, leading to a sense of closeness, sympathy, and empathy towards them. Additionally, the blend of the narrator's voice and the character's voice in free indirect speech creates a certain level of ambiguity in the narrative, as it becomes challenging to determine whose voice the reader is hearing. Texts employing this ambiguity resulting from free indirect speech delay the reader's judgment of the characters, imparting a metaphorical effect.

The question then arises whether the functions of free indirect speech have also been employed in the Quranic stories. Does the

authority of God, as the narrator, allow the reader to empathize with the characters? To explore aspects of speech and thought representation in the Quranic tales, we would have to assume that these stories possess the characteristics of literary and narrative texts, which can be analyzed from this perspective. However, it is important to acknowledge that these features are relevant to human texts, while Divine words hold a higher status. Moreover, the primary purpose of the Qur'an, including the Quranic stories, is to clarify rather than create ambiguities and impact the reader. Therefore, the presence of 'free indirect speech' may be unlikely in the Quranic tales. Nevertheless, it is possible to categorize certain propositions quoted by God from specific characters, such as Joseph's words about his brothers at the end of the Surah, as examples of the Quranic representation of indirect speech.

4.2.9. Quranic Direct Speech and Thought

Direct speech (DS) and direct thought (DT) are perhaps the most frequent types of speech and thought in the Qur'an, expressed by the words "qala" and "qaloo". In Sura al-Qalam, the story of the owners of the garden is an example of turning the 'pure narrative' into 'direct speech' of the characters. In this allegorical story, gardeners wake up early in the morning before others, and go to their gardens, constantly thinking that the poor do not come today and they do not have to give them fruit. The idea that they go to the garden slowly in the early morning and talk to themselves seems to be a bit ironic. They are busy with these thoughts when they reach the garden:

Now We have tried them, even as We tried the owners of the garden when they swore they would pluck in the morning (17) and they added not the saving words. (18) Then a visitation from thy Lord visited it, while they were sleeping, (19) and in the morning it was as if it were a garden plucked. (20) In the morning they called to one another, (21) 'Come forth betimes upon your tillage, if you would pluck!' (22) So, they departed, whispering together, (23) 'No needy man shall enter it today against your will.' (24) And they went forth early, determined upon their purpose. (25) But when they saw it, they said, 'Surely, we are gone astray; (26) nay, rather we have been robbed!' (27) Said the most moderate of

them, 'Did I not say to you, "Why do you not give glory?"' (28) They said, 'Glory be to God, our Lord; truly, we were evildoers.' (29) And they advanced one upon another, blaming each other. (30) They said, 'Woe, alas for us! Truly, we were insolent. (31) It may be that our Lord will give us in exchange a better than it; to our Lord, we humbly turn.' (32) Such is the chastisement, and the chastisement of the world to come is assuredly greater, did they but know. (33) Surely for the Godfearing shall be Gardens of Bliss with their Lord. (34) (Arberry's translation)⁶

When gardeners say "Surely, we are gone astray; (26)", it is more effective than when they describe it. The gardeners' direct speech, while accurately expressing their phrase as a personal confession, also expresses their disbelief through their tone. We know that they did not go astray but wanted to sin by depriving the poor. However, in the end, they repent and are given the Gardens of Bliss instead.

Another aspect of 'direct speech' is dialogue, as one of the purest manifestations of narrative and one of the types of direct representation of speech and thought. The author intends to discuss the function and role of dialogue in another paper.

4.2.10. Quranic Interior Monologue

It is a kind of 'free direct speech/thought' that if God expresses it by quoting the language and thoughts of certain characters, it will be 'free direct speech' (FDS), and if the characters themselves speak or think about it, it will be 'free direct thought' (FDT). In verse 62 of the Sura al-Yusuf, Yusuf expresses an

أَنَا بَلُونَاهُمْ كَمَا بَلُونَا أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ إِذْ أَقْسَمُوا لَيَصْرِمُنَّهَا مُصْبِحِينَ (١٧)
 وَ لَا يَسْتَنْتُونَ (١٨) فَطَافَ عَلَيْهَا طَائِفٌ مِّن رَّبِّكَ وَ هُمْ نَائِمُونَ (١٩)
 فَأَصْبَحَتْ كَالصَّرِيمِ (٢٠) فَتَنَادُوا مُصْبِحِينَ (٢١) أَنْ اغْدُوا عَلَيَّ حُرْنِكُمْ إِن
 كُنْتُمْ صَارِمِينَ (٢٢) فَانطَلَقُوا وَ هُمْ يَتَخَفَتُونَ (٢٣) أَنْ لَا يَدْخُلْنَهَا الْيَوْمَ
 عَلَيْكُمْ مَسْكِينٌ (٢٤) وَ غَدُوا عَلَيَّ حَرْدٍ قَادِرِينَ (٢٥) فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهَا قَالُوا إِنَّا
 لَضَالُونَ (٢٦) بَلْ نَحْنُ مَحْرُومُونَ (٢٧) قَالَ أَوْسَطُهُمْ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ لَوْ لَا
 تُسَبِّحُونَ (٢٨) قَالُوا سُبْحَانَ رَبِّنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ (٢٩) فَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَيَّ
 بَعْضٌ يَتَلَوْمُونَ (٣٠) قَالُوا يَا وَيْلَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا طَاغِينَ (٣١) عَسَى رَبَّنَا أَنْ
 يُدْخِلَنَا خَيْرًا مِّنْهَا إِنَّا إِلَى رَبِّنَا رَاغِبُونَ (٣٢) كَذَلِكَ الْعَذَابُ وَ لَعَذَابُ الْآخِرَةِ
 أَكْبَرُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ (٣٣) إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتٍ النَّعِيمِ (٣٤)

idea in the form of an interior monologue and/or soliloquy:

He said to his pages, 'Put their merchandise in their saddlebags; haply they will recognize it when they have turned to their people; haply they will return. (62) (Arberry's translation)⁷

In this verse, Yusuf is addressing his servants, telling them to return the goods to his bothers, but the second part of this proposition, 'haply they will return', can be considered as an inner thought or soliloquy, "for they are certainly not directed to the servants and are a moving expression of Joseph's yearning to be reunited both with his older brothers and his younger brother Benjamin" (Jones, 1993, p. 57). Jones believes that the soliloquy that takes place in the emotional part of the story plays a key role in advancing the story". He concludes that the soliloquy is naturally addressed to those audiences who are outside the framework of the narrative.

The second example is verse 77 of the same Sura. Joseph does not say anything in response to his brothers but thinks to himself:

They said, 'If he is a thief, a brother of his was a thief before.' But Joseph secreted it in his soul and disclosed it not to them, saying, 'You are in a worse case; God knows very well what you are describing.' (77) (Arberry's translation)⁸

The phrase "فَأَسْرَهَا يُوسُفُ فِي نَفْسِهِ وَلَمْ يُبْدِهَا" (Joseph secreted it in his soul and disclosed it not to them) indicates Joseph's inner soliloquy with himself. The final phrase "قَالَ أَنْتُمْ شَرُّ مَكَانًا وَ" "اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَصِفُونَ" ('You are in a worse case; God knows very well what you are describing) is also an interior monologue. Joseph did not explicitly state this. Jones writes: Joseph's answer to "You are in a worse case" is not pronounced aloud, and we know very well that the word 'qala' is also used to mean 'thought'.

5. Conclusion

In the Qur'an, various aspects of speech and thought, particularly different forms of dialogue, are represented in diverse ways. It

can even be argued that the strategic approach in most Suras and tales of the Qur'an is to extensively utilize different aspects of speech and thought, ranging from indirect/mimetic modes to dialogue, to the most direct/diegetic mode, which is "pure narrative of actions, speech, and thought." But what is the primary function of this typology?

The Qur'an has been revealed in an active and dynamic discourse, established through a profound interaction between God and the Prophet of Islam. Every dynamic discourse requires the use of communication and interactive methods. From a narratological perspective, the interpretation and evaluation of the narrative heavily depend on the interaction between the narrator's and characters' speech and thoughts. Hence, we observe that in the Qur'an, which fully embodies this dynamic discourse between God, the Prophet, and the audience, these aspects of speech and thought have been employed functionally, aligning with the educational and divine goals of the Qur'an.

Considering that the Qur'an is always in touch with its audience, we find that these aspects of speech and thought, as integral elements of the Qur'anic rhetorical style, serve as the means through which God communicates with His audience in all eras. Moreover, the Qur'an serves as a guidebook for life, and such a book cannot overlook the interactive methods prevalent among human beings, with the highest manifestation found in action, speech, and thought. Finally, the typology of speech and thought representation, exemplified in some Qur'anic stories, directly relates to the oral nature of the Qur'anic discourse and warrants further discussion at another time.

In conclusion, this paper aimed to establish a theoretical framework by employing narrative discourse as a practical and functional paradigm. It utilized tools derived from [McHale's \(1978\)](#) and [Toolan's \(2001\)](#) typologies, qualitatively examining the conceptual methodology of this framework. Ultimately, the paper arrived at a mixed model of the Qur'anic verses and propositions. However, it is important to acknowledge that the formal, linguistic, and functional features of these aspects differ between English and Arabic, particularly in the context of the Qur'anic language. Addressing these

⁷ وَ قَالَ لِغُلَامَيْهِ اجْعَلُوا بَضَاعَتَهُمْ فِي رِحَالِهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَعْرِفُونَهَا إِذَا انْقَلَبُوا إِلَيَّ أَهْلِهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ (٦٢)

⁸ قَالُوا إِنَّ يَسْرِقَ فَقَدْ سَرَقَ أَخٌ لهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَأَسْرَهَا يُوسُفُ فِي نَفْسِهِ وَلَمْ يُبْدِهَا لَهُمْ قَالَ أَنْتُمْ شَرُّ مَكَانًا وَ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَصِفُونَ (٧٧)

differences necessitates a separate paper for thorough exploration.

6. Further Research

For future research, a comparison can be made between the aspects of speech and thought in the Qur'an and other literary texts of Arabic prose and poetry. Additionally, these aspects can be compared with their counterparts in other Holy Scriptures, shedding light on how beauty and subtlety are represented in these Sacred Books. As regular recipients of Divine revelation, the impact of these aspects on the Qur'an's audience can also be examined, including both the textual and formal aspects, as well as the psychological aspects of this influence. Furthermore, to study the role of the audience, an analysis can be conducted on how these aspects are translated into Persian and English translations, considering the formal and substantive differences in these aspects during the translation process into other languages.

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