



**Rhythmic Analysis of Selected Quranic  
Short Surahs a Phono-Pragmatic Study**

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تحليل ايقاعي لسور قرآنية مختارة دراسه تداولية-صوتية

ملخص

تبين هذه الدراسة دور الايقاع في مجال المعنى عندما تتلى هذه السور القرآنية، الايقاع في القرآن له دور صوتي والذي يضر من خلال تلاوة القرآن من قبل قراء مشهورين . لقد قام الباحث باختيار سور قرآنيه صغيرة وتحليلها صوتيا حتى يبين ظاهرة التداولية (البلاغية)

Abstract

This study shows the importance of rhythm in the aspect of meaning when the glorious Quran verses are recited. The problem of this paper is to examine whether the rhythm in Quran has a phonological role which can be revealed through the recitation of well-known reciters. The aim of the study is to show the linguistic and pragmatic (rhetoric) phenomenon of glorious Quran when they are recited and heard. The procedure of the study is that three short surahs of Quran have been chosen and transcribed phonetically. The study deals with the concept and theory of rhythm, the English and Arabic stress, the Arabic and Quranic rhythm, and finally the rhythmic analysis of the chosen short surahs. The result of the study shows that Allah Has chosen certain sounds which gives for instance meaning of solidarity and abundance depending on the meaning of the surah itself, and it shows that there is a relationship between the meaning (the pragmatics) of the surah and the sounds of the words which are used by Almighty Allah.

## 1- Rhythm

there are many definition for rhythm , one of these definitions is by Pellegrino (2014) includes sequential organization of speech and fallouts from a three crinkles multipart interaction among , the nature of the rhythmic atomic components ;the use of changes between more and less prominent constituents ; the pattern of regularity for the combination of the constituent into longer units .

Whereas Skandra &Burleigh (2005) define rhythm of language as the recurrence of prominent elements of speech to get regular intervals of time depending on a specific language, the prominent elements are usually either stresses or syllables with great pitches for instance the case of many “oriented languages”. So forth, the time which permits from one noticeable element to the other is always of alike duration.

## 2- Theory of rhythm

There are two types of rhythm Skandra & Burleigh (2005) point out that if the prominent rudiments that control the rhythm of language are assures that in case of English ,Arabic, Russian , modern Greek they all stress- timed rhythm languages, or they are isochronous rhythm, or isochrony or isochronism(from Greek isos, equal and khronos time; or isochronic. In these languages, the strong stresses have a tendency to occur at comparatively identical intervals of time, regardless of the minor stressed syllables or words between them. In other words, the total of time amongst strong stresses is unevenly the same, and the more superseding lesser- stressed syllables or words there are, the quicker they are distinct in order to fit them into the time span accessible. This expanse beginning with (and including) a robust stress and finish right before eliminating the following strong stress is called a foot which is a term used in study of poetry.

The equivalent interval in English can be exemplified by the following examples.

“What are the| plans for to-| morr-ow| John?

All of these are | old| phot-o-graphs.

The | con-se-quen-ces of his | ac-tion are| ob-vi-ous”. (Skandra & Burleigh, 2005:87)

On the other hand if the prominent elements that determine the rhythm of language are syllables (both –stressed and unstressed), as in the case of French, Spanish and Japanese, then it is “syllable – timed” rhythmic or of an iso syllabic rhythm or of isosyllabic rhythm or syllable –timing or iso syllabicity.

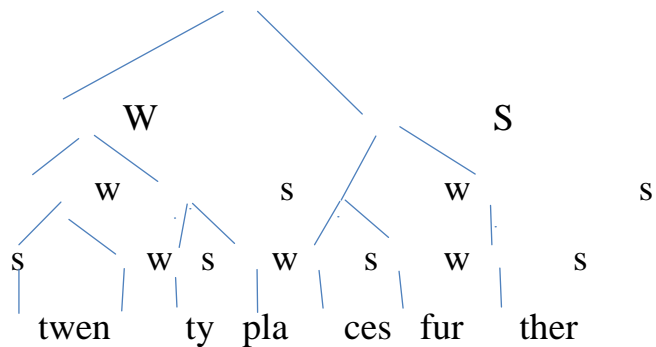
In other words stress-timed rhythm implies that stressed syllable will tend to occur at relatively regular intervals whether they are separated by unstressed syllables or not whereas syllable – timed rhythm as we have said previously in French, Spanish and Japanese, all syllables whether stressed or unstressed, tend to occur at regular time intervals and the time between stressed syllable will be shorter or longer in proportions to the number of unstressed. Roach (2010:108) gives an example as the sentence

Walk down the path to the end of the canal

'Walk| 'down the | 'path to the| 'end of the ca| 'nal

Theories of rhythm point out the fact that some feet are stronger than others, producing strong –weak patterns in larger pieces of speech above the level of the foot. As the following example:-

Twenty places further back



Cited from Roach (2010:108)

It is clear that the main segments are of two kinds strong and weak foot these segments are also split into smaller segments which are also strong and weak foot.

### 3- Stress

Trask (1996) defines stress as particular emphasis or importance, to a specific syllable or a specific word in speech and with a combination of greater loudness and higher pitch, as well as longer duration. Tonic syllable is usually used above a specific syllable. The stress degree can be influenced by features like loudness, pitch, duration, and quality.

Carr (2013) explains that speakers of English as a native speaker is able to guess where the syllable occurs in a word which can be stressed in the absence of what the stress is. While native speaker may not know what stress is, it is clear that when stress is salient it would be clear in the words e.g. in the word 'photography' the native speaker will agree that it is the antepenultimate (third last)

Gussenhoven & Jacobs (2012) ask the question which is how stress is realized? This question depends on another query which is how a

language selects to use the structural position characterized by the foot. English is a language that marks a distinction between stressed and unstressed syllables. For one aim is that only a subdivision of the vowels is allowed in the weak position of the foot: /□, I, u/ as in the final syllables of villa ,folly, and fellow. Feeble syllables are shorter than strong syllables, mainly in non-word final position.

Roach (2010) points out that one may investigate stress from two facts, from production and perception facts. From production point of view that speaker uses more muscular energy than is used for unstressed syllable whereas from the perception point of view all stressed syllables have no characteristic in common and that is prominence. Stressed syllables are recognized as stress because they are more prominent than unstressed syllable.

One may ask what syllable prominent. There are four main factors which are important

A- Loudness:-most people feel that stressed syllable are louder than unstressed syllable; in other words, loudness is a component of prominence,

B- Length:- the distance of a syllable requires an vital role in importance

C- Pitch:- each voiced syllable has pitch; pitch in language is associated with occurrence of vibration of the vocal folds, and of the melodic concept of low and high pitched notes. It is fundamentally a characteristic of speech,

D- Quality:- a syllable will tend to be prominent if it contains a vowel that is different in quality from neighboring vowels” (Roach, 2010:74).

The researcher deduces from aforementioned that prominence is produced by the combination of these four factors.

Shitwi (2020) argues that the position of stress may influence and identify the specific meaning of the word or the sentence. Stressed

syllable is often produced with greater energy than the unstressed syllable, which is uttered with little energy and loudness. In English the stressed syllable can be at the point of an intonational pitch change and therefore, a tonic accent is seen, which makes the stressed syllable to be more stressed.

### 3.1 Level of stress

according to Roach (2010) there are three levels of analysis of stress the prominent which consequences from pitch movement, or tone, gives the sturdiest type of stress which is named as main stress. “Often one may find a sort of stress that is feebler than main stress as in the word photographic /ˈfɒtəˌgræfɪk/ the stress in this word is called secondary stress” (Roach,2010:74).

There is another level of stress which is unstressed and it is regarded as being the absence of any recognizable amount of prominence unstressed syllable containing /ə, I,u/ or asyllabic consonant would seem as less prominent than unstressed syllable having other e.g. the word ‘poetic’ /pəʊˈetɪk/ the first syllable is clearly more protuberant than the first syllable of ‘pathetic’ /pəˈetɪk/ this might be recycled as a foundation for an extra separation of stressed levels resulting in a new tertiary level.

### 4-Arabic stress

Nasr (1979:47) defines stress as “the force used in pronouncing sounds. This force is relative; that is, the strength or weakness of the force is determined in relation to other forces of breath in the utterance or utterances of a person”.

There are three word stress levels in Arabic; primary, secondary, and weak stress. will occur in The incidence of these three levels of stress is expectable. The expectedness of stress level is formed as the following



#### 4.1 Short syllables

A- A word which consist of a minor syllable, receipts the main stress,

For instance /min/ ‘from’

B-A term which contains of two or three minor syllables, the first one receipts the main stress and the other have the weak stresses.  
/?n / ‘I’

Three syllables example / ? b d n/ ‘not at all’”( Nasr,1979:47)

#### 4.2 Long syllables

A- When a term has an extended syllable, it takes a main stress.  
Example /Ta'aR/ ‘he flew’

B- When a word has two or three extended syllables, the final syllable takings a main stress and the rest take secondary stresses.  
An example is /Ta\_a wu'uS/ ‘peacock’

#### 4.3 Arrangement of long and short syllables

When an expression consist of two or three syllables, the final extended syllable proceeds a main stress. Any other long syllable receipts a subordinate stress and all short syllables taking the weak stresses. Example /k' tib/ ‘writer’ /h' w l/ ‘he tried. When an expression has four syllables, the primary stress occurs on the second syllable, example /m^dr 's tun/ ‘school’ , /?k l u'uh/ ‘they ate it’ (Nasr,1979:48)

#### 5-Arabic rhythm

Abdulla (2013:360) explains that “the verb drop the root of its noun (lqaa) dropped : to drop , dropped , dropping the rhythm has taken the meaning of percussion achieved by rhythm”. Ibn Manzur stresses, as Abdulla (2013) continues that rhythm has taken the meaning of cadence which is achieved by rhythm, it is formed from melody and singing also creates music,

Az-Zamakhshary (1960:476) as cited in Abdullah(2013) says that “we hear neither cadence nor whisper, both are soothing sounds. I heard the birds’ cadence which is the sound of their pecking”.

As-Salami (1980:216) as cited in Abdullah(2013) mentions that “the cadence is not an absolute sound. Sounds has cadence and this cadence is its echo. Rhythm is the cadence within the cadent thing.... Sound has its own cadence and cadence has its own rhythm”.

Abdulla (2013:361) says that rhythm means making sounds as explained previously, cadence is the echo for the sound and is a fine cadence. It is concluded that “rhythm is a sound cadence and melody in speech sequence are the echo of the sound that knocks the ear and find the sound nice or repellent”

## **5- The Qura’nic Rhythm**

“The rhythm of the Qura’nic text is the result of the interrelatedness of all language levels. The importance of rhythm is based on the linguistic relationship between the utterance and its meaning. This leads to the relation between the language and thoughts as reflected by necessary causes and effect”. (Mubarak:1993,28) as cited in Abdullah(2013)

“The beauty of rhythm in Qura’nic texts consensus with the melody and scene that verses show in various frames of internal musicality. Wherever rhythm occurs it enters directly in combining functional significance in the course. Rhythm takes part in the process of illuminating the meaning and verification”. Al-Qulaibi(1984:494) as cited in Abdullah(2013)

Abdulla(2013:362) points out that “the vital role of rhythm is not restrained to producing significant and arranged phonological units, clarifying them and detecting the meaning only ,but it enters in the process of fining a text to sublime it to the peak of artistic beauty. Rhythm has the basics and elements that make the Qura’nic text entirely a unique text unfamiliar to the Arab one at the time of its revelations”

## 5- Rhythmic analysis of short Qura'nic surahs

The researcher has chosen 3 short surahs (Al Ikhlas, An-Nas, Al Kawthar) for two reasons, first of all for being full surahs from Qura'n and each has many meanings to convey, for instance, Surat Al Ikhlas which shows purity of faith , and the meaning of fears from others' bad souls as in surat-An Nas, while Al Kwthar, which is about good in abundance.

Second the short surah are very easy to be memorized for young children and for those who cannot memories easily, These short surahs can be recited easily in the prayers, and they are used in everyday life full surahs more than the long ones as Al Baqarah, Al-Maida and other long surahs.

“In Surat Al Ikhlas Allah explains His nature in a few words , the qualities of Allah are described in numerous places elsewhere, but here we are specially taught to avoid the pitfalls into which men and nations have fallen at various times in trying to understand Allah ”.(The holy Quran,commentary, 1405 ,2028)

The second Surah is An-Nas in this surah Allah shows the necessity for guard from inner factors, for this reason the threefold relation in which man stands to Allah . (The holy Quran, commentary,1405)

The third Surah AL-Kawthar in this surah “Allah shows his promise to his prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) it is abundant bounty which bestowed him, this includes a river (or fountain) in heaven of this name as Allah promised his prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) as we have said previously (which is about good in abundance).” (The holy Quran commentary,1405: 2033)

Surat Al –Ikhlas or purity (of Faith) Quran online .com

Bismi Allāhi Ar-Raḥmāni Ar-

Raḥīmi

1 Qul Huwa Allāhu 'Aḥad

Say, "He is Allah , [who is] One,

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ

## 2 Allāhu Aṣ-Ṣamad

Allah , the Eternal Refuge.

اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ

## 3 Lam Yalid Wa Lam Yūlad

He neither begets nor is born,

لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ

## 4 Walam Yakun Lahu Kufūan 'Aḥad

Nor is there to Him any equivalent."

وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ

In this Surah we find its rhythm is the sound /d / it is very strong sound to show His strength by using this sound as a rhythm for this Surah which is used to show His nature and quality. Al Qseer (2006:62) describes this sound

"صوت الدال اصم اعمى مغلق على نفسه كالهرم لا يوحى الا بالاحاسيس اللمسية وبخاصة ما يدل على الصلابة والقسوة وكانه من حجر الصوان ليكون بذلك اصلح الحروف للتعبير عن معاني الشدة والفعالية"

"The sound Daal is blind deaf closed to himself like a pyramid does not suggest only tactile sensations, especially what indicates hardness and cruelty as if it were flint stone to be the most suitable letters to express the meanings of intensity and effectiveness".

Bismi Allāhi Ar-Rahmāni Ar-Rahīmi

## 1 Qul 'A`ūdhu Birabbi An-Nās

Say, "I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind,

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ

## 2 Maliki An-Nās

The Sovereign of mankind.

مَلِكِ النَّاسِ

## 3 'Ilahi An-Nās

The God of mankind,

إِلَهِ النَّاسِ

## 4 Min Sharri Al-Waswāsi Al-Khannās

From the evil of the retreating whisperer -

مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ

## 5 Al-Ladhī Yuwaswisu Fī Şudūri An-Nās

Who whispers [evil] into the breasts of mankind -

الَّذِي يُوسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ

## 6 Mina Al-Jinnati Wa An-Nās

From among the jinn and mankind."

مِنْ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ

In this surah Allah has Chosen this sound which is the sound /s/to be the rhythm of this surah to show man's continuous need for protection. It shows the case of attention (warning) and intensity as the meaning of the sound /s/ in Arabic language as (Al-Qseer,2006:71) mentions. It gives the meaning of continuity from the present to the future

" يشترك صوت السين مع الاصوات الاحتكاكية المجهورة في الدلالة على التنبيه والشدة والحركة بسبب صفيته ويصف احد المحدثين بانه يعبر بحسب صدوره عن معنى الحركة او الطلب وهو يحدد المضارع نحو المستقبل "

“the sound of the seine shares with the sounds of friction Almjhr in the indication of alert and intensity and movement because of whistling and describes one of the modernists that it expresses

according to its issuance the meaning of movement or request and it determines the present tense towards the future ."

### Bismi Allāhi Ar-Raḥmāni Ar-Raḥīmi

#### 1 'Innā 'A`ṭaynāka Al-Kawthar

Indeed, We have granted you, [O Muhammad], al-Kawthar.

إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ

#### 2 Faṣalli Lirabbika Wa Anḥar

So pray to your Lord and sacrifice [to Him alone].

فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَأَنْحِرْ

#### 3 'Inna Shāni'aka Huwa Al-'Abtar

Indeed, your enemy is the one cut off.

إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ

In surat Al-Kawthar Allah has Chosen the sound /r/ as the rhythm of this surah and it gives the meaning of good in abundance that Allah gave his Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him). Al Qseer(2006:57) gives this meaning of this sound as the following

"تدل الراء على الكثرة والوفره والتكرار يقول سيبويه عن الراء اذا تكلمت بها خرجت مضاعفة والوقوف يزيدها ايضاحا ....وفي سورة الكوثر تدل على الملكة وشيوع الوصف اي الاستمرار"

"The raa indicates the abundance and repetition Sibawayh says about the raa if you speak it came out doubly and standing increases it clarification .... In Surat Al-Kawthar indicates the solidarity and power and the prevalence of description i.e. continuity."

## 6-The result of the study

From what have been mentioned previously the researcher has reached the following result:-Allah Has chosen certain sounds which gives meaning of solidarity as surat Al –Ikhlas or purity (of Faith) and abundance, bounty as surat Al-Kawthar and meaning of continuity (the continuous need for Allah) surat Al Nas depending on the meaning of the surah itself, and it shows that there is a relationship between the meaning (the pragmatics) of the surah and the sounds of the words which are used by Almighty Allah.

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