Semantic Differences In Quranic Similarities

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Abstract:

The verbal similarity in the Holy Qur'an is a source of miracle, a focus of study, and a field of research that remains continuous across time and with the progress of science. It is the path to guidance, the path to the future, and the right approach for people of different nationalities, united by one religion and the True Book, and the Arabic language is the secret of all of this because it is linked to the miracle of the Qur'an. As for the semantic differences between similar Qur'anic words, this is a research problem, because the apparent meaning of the words is similar and their inner meaning is different. There must be subtle semantic differences between the word and its synonyms. There is no correspondence between them and no room for exchange or change. The miracle lies in the fact that every word conveys its full meaning in the appropriate place. The aim of this research is therefore to refute the suspicions and invalidate the arguments of those who doubt the inimitability of the Qur'anic similarity and this is what proves that the miracle is right

Keywords: inimitability of quran, semantic differences, meaning, quranic similarity, word.

1. Introduction

In the name of Allah and may blessings and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah and upon all his family and companions, and after:

The issue of verbal similarity in the Holy Qur'an is one of the issues that has preoccupied scholars, ancient and modern, because many researchers linked it to the issue of synonymy and differed in it just as they differed in synonymy. They were between absoluteness, denial and restriction. There were those who said absolute synonymy, and this is not appropriate, and there were those who mediated the case and were moderate. So the case was referred to mediation and moderation and it was a correct approach (Al-Zahir 2008).

In the Qur'an, synonymy is a proximity of meaning that facilitates explanation, so we explain some of them with each other, but there is no exchange of places just for closeness.

It is therefore necessary to examine words with similar meanings in order to arrive at the differences that prove that each word has a meaning that suits it in the appropriate place. So the secret of the inimitability of the Qur'an lies in the semantic differences between its similar words.

Science (Ilm) is not knowledge (maarifa), so we attribute science to Allah and do not attribute knowledge to Him, because knowledge is preceded by ignorance, and this is what characterizes the servant and from which the Lord is free. Reading is not recitation, for reading is joining letters and words to one another, and recitation is more specific than it, and so on.

The problem was therefore to find semantic differences to achieve inimitability and reach the desired meaning. As for moral closeness, it helps to explain and facilitate understanding.

The aims of the research include eliminating suspicions about the Qur'an, proving its inimitability and giving importance to semantic differences in order to arrive at Qur'anic meanings, thus eliminating the absolute in synonymy.

With regard to the methodology adopted in this respect, I have adopted an introduction that develops the research in which I mention the importance of the subject, its problems and its objectives. Then, I addressed the issue of semantic differences in the definition, tracking them in the past and in present, and mentioned their impact. I then discussed verbal similarity, its definition, origin and types.

The last point I addressed was the most important element of the research, represented by the semantic interpretation of the verbal similarity in the Holy Qur'an, which highlighted differences, proved inimitability, and denied absolute synonymy and identical meanings for the sole purpose of closeness. And I completed it with a conclusion in which I summarised the most important results and some recommendations.

2. Differences in language and terminology

1.2. Differences in language and the Holy Quran

Al-Fayrouz Abadi said about the difference in language: "Differentiate, decide and separate the two things... Al-Fayrouz Abadi, (Abadi, 2014, page 1184)

Al-Razi said in this regard: "It is to differentiate between the two things with a view to victory, to decide, to separate, became separated, and took its right by separating. The Criterion is the Qur'an, and everything that distinguishes between truth and falsehood is a Criterion." (Al-Razi, page 333)

2.2 Differences in terminology:

What is meant by this are the precise meanings that the linguist looks for between words with similar meanings and considers them synonymous because of the hidden meanings, except for the most native language speakers or the linguistic researcher.

This similarity of connotations and closeness in meanings was perceptible among the ancient Arabs. However, with time and the length of the era, and due to their frequent use, the meaning of these words developed and people began to use them in a single sense,

without paying attention to the subtle differences between them, and without taking into account their differences according to their origin in the language, through negligence or ignorance. Several words were synonymous with the same meaning because of changes in usage.

When the difference between these words became confused and their meanings mixed, and they became synonymous in use, some Arabic scholars were confused. They considered this a form of linguistic corruption and reprehensible language, they prepared to oppose this trend, denouncing and correcting it, out of a concern to purify the language and preserve its authenticity and integrity, protesting against the connotations of ancient words and relying on what was mentioned by ancient linguists and what was reported by eloquent Arabs during the eras of protest (Al-Douri, page 14).

As a result, this general understanding was transferred from the language to the Qur'an, and each synonym became identical among the public and some of the elite. It was therefore necessary for scholars, especially linguists and specialists in Qur'anic similarities, to decide the issue by researching the precise meanings in order to explain the difference in a way that suits the Qur'anic meanings in order to dispel suspicions about it.

3. Semantic differences between ancient and modern :

3.1 Ancient linguistic research:
Semantic differences have emerged since the beginning of linguistic rooting and the preoccupation of researchers with collecting languages and creating dictionaries. Khalîl Ibn Ahmad Al Farâhîdî dictionary: "A powerful testimony to the clarity of the idea of the semantic differences between Arabic words in the mind of this remarkable scientist, who was able to subject the language, with all its enormous richness and diversity, to a strict mental mathematical approach. But at the same time, he did not neglect the distinctive semantic features of each Arabic word.

This is because Al-Khalil's approach to the Al-Ayn dictionary is based on the fact that there is a root axis for each group of words, and this root is the locus of central meaning. Other meanings are then derived from this semantic centre and include semantic features and nuances that distinguish each word from the others." (Daoud, page 7)

As for the level of linguistic structures, we find: 'In the book of Sibawayh, there are great linguistic ideas, evident in the arrangement of the chapters (of the book) and in the distinctions between the different linguistic structures included therein.' (Daoud, page 7).

Our ancient scholars made in-depth studies that demonstrated their intellectual efforts.

Abu Hilal Al-Askari addressed this issue in his book Linguistic Differences: 'I have never seen a type of science or literary art without writing books that combine its aspects and organise its categories, except to talk about the difference between meanings that were close to each other until I formed the difference between them, such as: science and knowledge, insight and intelligence, will and willpower, anger and indignation, error and fault, perfection and completeness, goodness and beauty, separation and difference, cause and reason, year and year, time and duration, and so on.

I have not seen a book on the difference between these and similar meanings that is sufficient for the student and convincing those who want it, despite its many advantages. This leads to knowledge of the aspects of speech, understanding the facts about its meanings and achieving its purpose. I have written this book by including what is sufficient, without lengthening or shortening. I have based my words on what is presented in the Book of Allah and what happens in the words of jurists, theologians and other people's dialogues, and I have left out the strange which circulates less widely. The aim of the book is therefore to distinguish between the two extremes, the high and the low, and to show that the middle way is the best one. I have detailed what I wanted to include in thirty chapters' (Daoud, page 8).

Abu Hilal Al-Askari studied the subtle linguistic differences between words with similar meanings and wrote a book in which he differentiated them to give each word a meaning that no other word had, and he concluded by identifying the semantic differences in several ways.

- "Differences in the use of the two words intended to be differentiated.
- Considering what the two meanings mean.
- Considering the letters used by verbs.
- Considering the opposite.
- Considering the derivation.
- Difference between the form of the word and what comes close to it.
- Considering the truth of the two words or one of them at the origin of the language" (Daoud, page 9).

3.2 Modern linguistic research:

In his dictionary of semantic differences, Mohammed Daoud mentions what modern linguistics has established in this regard, saying:" Modern linguistics determines that the appearance of synonymy in language does not mean complete equality between the meanings of two words, but rather closeness in meaning. There is no word in the language that replaces or takes its place if you want a precise expression. Instead, there is a group of words (similar in meaning), like: (big/huge/great), (small - insignificant – despicable), (compliment-praise- thank-eulogise) ...etc. "(Daoud, page 10).

To say that there are semantic differences between the Arabic language and the Qur'an is to deny absolute synonymy, but it is a question of closeness in meaning rather than identity.

3.3 Effect of semantic differences:

Semantic differences have a great impact and importance in determining meanings, whether in language or in the Qur'an, particularly in relation to jurisprudence and interpretation. There is no correspondence between words, even if their meanings are close, and each word has its own meaning that is not represented by any other word in any science.

Defining differences leads us to the accuracy of meanings, reaching the target, deepening understanding and conveying the idea, particularly in legal and linguistic matters, which,

if accuracy were lacking, would be the subject of disagreement and the door to conflict, and this is summed up in the words of Mohammed bin Abdul Rahman bin Saleh Al-Shaya :" This concern for differences stems from an appreciation of their importance in understanding texts, particularly those of the Sharia, the Qur'an and the Sunnah, so that accuracy in definition and understanding is not lost". (Al-Shaya, 1993, p. 307).

4. Verbal similarity:

4.1 Definition of 'similar' in language:
Ibn Manzur defines it by saying: "Both things were similar and ambiguous, each one looks like the other, suspicious things: problems, similar things: problems, and the similarities: the identical ones, and suspicious things: problems some of which are similar.' (Ibn Manzur, page 503) .What emerges from Ibn Manzur's definition is that 'similar' is used in language to mean 'identity', i.e. things that are similar and are similar to each other.
Terminologically: Al-Zarkashi defined it by saying, 'The presentation of a story in various forms and with different intervals.' (Al-Zarkashi, page 47)
Ibn al-Munadi has a definition that sums it up in his saying:"Similarity exists in things: some of them are similar in the analysis of the letters of the Qur'an, some of them are similar in the strangeness of the letters of the Qur'an and their meanings... among them are similar in the interpretation of the Qur'an... some of them are similar in the lines of the Qur'an... and some of them are similar to the letters of the Qur'an". (Al-Munadi, page 59)
Muhammad Talha Bilal Minyar defined it as: verses repeated in their pronunciation in their context or with substitution.
In (verses): a restriction that excludes what is repeated elsewhere than in the Qur'an.
And (repeated): in other words, they have equivalents, and this is a majority restriction. A similarity can occur even if there is no equivalent, which often happens in word movements.
Verbally: a restriction resulting from something similar in meaning.
In context: i.e. repetitions in the order of their letters and words.
Or by substitution: i.e. by changing the pronunciation or context.
Thus, the definitions were many and varied because of the importance of verbal similarity. (Al Haneen, page 8)

4.2 Emergence of the science of similarities:
The science of similarities is linked to the Qur'anic verses, as mentioned by Al-Iskafi: " The subject of this science is the Qur'anic verses, given their verbal similarity, and through it we learn about the strange phenomenon that characterises the Holy Qur'an in repeating some of its verses in several places with words that agree or differ. As a result, some of his words are similar and some are different in terms of brevity and redundancy, advance and delay, mention and deletion... and other types... What some careless people think is a repetition devoid of advantages and secrets... This verbal similarity in the Qur'anic verses in this way is one of the types of inimitability of the Qur'an. "(Al-Iskafi, 1418, page 56). The similarity is therefore linked to the inimitability of the Qur'an.

4.3 Types of similarities:

Mutashabih corresponding to Muhkam: This is not the subject of the research, but we will quote a few sayings on the subject.

* Muhkam is that whose meaning is clear and apparent and cannot be reproduced. Mutashabih, on the other hand, is the hidden meaning that cannot be understood by reason or transmission. Only God possesses the knowledge, like the Hour of resurrection and the disjointed letters at the beginning of the surahs.

* Muhkam is what we know about what we mean by appearance or interpretation, whereas Mutashabih is what God Almighty appropriates exclusively, such as the Hour of resurrection and the antichrist. And the saying attributed to the Sunnis is that he is the chosen one.

* Muhkam is independent and needs no explanation, whereas mutashabih is not independent and needs an explanation. Sometimes he explains this and that, and sometimes he explains that, because there is a difference in his interpretation, reported by Imam Ahmad.

* Muhkam can tolerate only one aspect of interpretation, while mutashabih tolerates several aspects. This view is attributed to Ibn Abbas and is shared by most fundamentalists'. (Daher, 2008, p. 185).

The verbal similarities go by several names, including: "Ibn al-Jawzi's chapters on similarity, Al-Zarkashi's science of similarities, The miracle of similarities in its verses and similarities according to Al-Suyuti. Its many names are intended to increase explanation and clarification." (Al-Iskafi, 1418, page 52)

The verbal similarity therefore remains the focus of my research.

Semantic extraction of verbal similarity based on the semantic differences between words that seem similar but differ, proving the difference in meaning and denying a complete correspondence and absolute synonymy.

Explosion and gushing:

Al-Ansari has a conclusion on this, including his statement about the similarity between the two verses: 'Exploded' in Surat Al-Baqarah, replaced in Surat Al-Araf by saying (gushed out). The first is more eloquent because it refers to the explosion of water in abundance, and gushing: the appearance of water. It is worth mentioning here the explosion by combining eating and drinking, which is more eloquent than just eating'. (Al-Ansari, 1983, p. 28).

Ibn Jamaa concluded by saying:

"It is said that the gush is less than the explosion and that the explosion was caused by a large quantity of water. Therefore, the context of mentioning his blessing necessitated mentioning the explosion, and it was appropriate between them." (Jamaa, 1990, p. 98)

The explosion contains a force worthy of many blessings.

Ali Fahmy Al-Nazhi said: "Gushing" in language is the cracking of the earth and the release of water, indicating that the water outlet is narrow and that little water is flowing.

"Explosion" in language: a broad crack in something, indicating capacity, strength and abundance. (Al-Nazhi, 2015, p. 203)

Adawiya Abdul-Jabbar Al-Shara' mentioned this issue in detail in his statement:

"The meaning of (explosion and gushing) in the language is the same, i.e. the release of water, but it differs in the way this water flows in the two previous expressions. Some say: (The water that comes out is first a gush and then it becomes an explosion). In the gush, the water doesn't come out much, because 'a gush' means a narrow crack that explodes afterwards, and an explosion means a large crack. (Al-Shara, 2007, p. 99)

This means that the difference was in quality and quantity.

Al-Sharawi has something in agreement with this in his interpretation of Surat Al-Araf, when he says:

There is the expression (exploded), and the expression (gushed out), and we know that the gushing out comes first, then the explosion follows in second. The gush is when the water comes in drop by drop, then an explosion occurs and a lot of water flows out. The first time Moses, peace be upon him, struck, the water rose a little and then exploded.

Thus, Allah the True has mentioned the stages that followed the striking in several scenes from a single appearance, and there is a first and a last. (Al-Sharawi, page 439)

Al-Sharawi linked the meaning to the stages of water release, beginning with a drop and ending with an explosion, so that Allah's greatness would be revealed in order.

Should we consider that the explosion was also linked to the number of blessings and their abundance, so that the children of Israel would have no argument against Allah if torments befell them? On the contrary, it inevitably follows them.

4.2 Sanabel & sunbulat(ears):

Adawiya Abd al-Jabbar al-Shara' mentions an appropriate conclusion cited by scholars specializing in the sciences of the Qur'an, stating:

"The difference between the two previous forms of the plural can be explained in several ways: The verse Al-Baqarah was mentioned to explain the present and the ten letters (one or more added to the Root of the verb to derive different meanings), so it is suitable for the plural form of the generous plural.

In Yusuf's verse, it has been noted that (four) is a restricted number, so the plural of paucity has been used to confirm the meaning of the word. It was said four, because they counted the dry ears as seven. The proof of this is that the discourse is based on the emphasis placed on this number concerning the fat and lean cows and the green ears, so the significance of the other (the seven) had to be addressed.

And his saying 'And the last dry ears mean seven more. The combination of his word - and the last dry ears of green ears- must be included in its decision, to distinguish it from the seven mentioned above.

As for Surat Al-Baqarah, it represents the one who spends for his own account in the cause of God as the example of the one who sows a seed, and the path of God is his religion, and it has been said: jihad, gathering of the doors of goodness, and the one who sows is God,

but as the grain was a cause, germination was attributed to it just as it is attributed to earth and water.

The significance of the fact that it grows seven ears is that it produces a stalk from which seven branches grow, each of which is an ear, and this representation is an illustration of weakening, whether or not there is an ear with this characteristic in this world, although it can be found in a grain and in other things of this kind. (Al-Shara, 2007, p. 102)

With this word, 'sanabel' corresponds to abundance, blessing and germination, while 'sunbulat' corresponds to scarcity, as it is associated with the lean years, which are inevitably short-lived. So after the storm comes sunshine.

4.3 Praise and gratitude:

The word praise, as mentioned by Al-Shayea in his book Linguistic Differences, is :"A word with which God Almighty praised Himself, opened His Book and purified Himself with... It is the word of every grateful person... That is why praise is the beginning of gratitude" (Al-Shayea, 1993, p. . 224)

Al-Raghib Al-Isfahani says: "Praise is the praise of virtue and gratitude is the response to a blessing in word and deed. And since a blessing does not go beyond a virtue, praise becomes encompassed in the sense of gratitude, so that all gratitude is praise, and all praise is not gratitude.

Makki ibn Abi Talib says: Praise is more general than thanks, and the truth is that praise is more general from the point of view of what is related, and more specific from the point of view of the resource. It's not just about receiving a blessing, it's more general than that. We praise someone for their qualities and good deeds, and we thank them only for their good deeds and not for their qualities. So we say: I have praised a man if I have praised him for his generosity, his kindness, his courage, and so on. Unlike gratitude, it is more general in terms of types and resources, and more specific in terms of its implications.

Gratitude is a form of submission from the heart, expressed verbally in the form of praise and recognition, and expressed with the limbs of the body in form of obedience and submission, blessings without essential attributes. So we don't say: I thanked him for his courage, between praise and thanks there is the appearance of generality and specificity. All gratitude is praise, but not all praise is gratitude... In this way, gratitude is expressed with the limbs of the body and praise is expressed verbally. (Al-Shayea, 1993, p. 223)

There is therefore a necessary difference between praise and thanks in order to use each word in the context it requires and the meaning it satisfies, so that there is no exchange between them or change in their place. Every word has its own meaning.

Conclusion:

Praise be to God, peace and blessings be upon the master of the whole creation Muhammad,

All human action is doomed to decrease, this is why we must concentrate on scientific diligence and research into the depths of the meanings of the Qur'an in order to reach the truth and the pinnacle of faith.

The greatest thing a servant can achieve is the satisfaction of God, otherwise his existence would be worthless. It is therefore necessary to research the meanings in order to reach the subtle differences that deny the absolute synonymy between words, whether in the Arabic language or in the Holy Qur'an. We therefore respond to those who doubt and invalidate the inimitability of the Qur'an.

Because of the mere closeness in meaning between verbally similar words, they have accused it of repetition and mere synonymy, calling for similar words to be interchanged in places, which is a distortion designed to undermine religion and overturn values.

This research led to a set of results and recommendations, the most important of which are as follows:

❖ Pay attention to linguistic and semantic differences between similar words, without ignoring them, to ensure accuracy of expression, convey understanding and place words in their correct place to avoid errors.
❖ Tafsir scholars are concerned with the issue of semantic differences because they study the meanings of the Qur'an.
❖ The Qur'anic inimitability concerns details in terms of secrets and meaning.
❖ Similar Qur'anic words, such as closeness in meaning, are the greatest proof of the inimitability of the Qur'an. There is no exchange between them at all, but rather their closeness in order to facilitate explanation, convey the idea and deepen understanding.
❖ The Qur'anic words are not synonymous at all, but the issue was referred to mediation and moderation.

Some recommendations

❖ It is necessary to trace the impact of scholars on Qur'anic verbal similarities as long as research continues until the Day of Resurrection.
❖ Those who study the meanings of the Qur'an must seek accuracy by examining the precise meanings; otherwise they will fall into error. Only the Qur'an is free from errors.
❖ The researcher should not rely on the closeness in meanings, as this requires explanation rather than a detailed examination.

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