

A Linguistic Study of Praise with Reference to Arabic Religious Texts

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Abstract— This study explores praise as one of the expressive acts in Arabic. The love of praise is part of human nature and a sincere praise is an important tool in giving people confidence and hence making them feel happy and satisfied. The problem may increase when the speaker expresses his praise by using words of blame which might create some sort of ambiguity to the reader because he might understand it as blame rather than praise. For the sake of presenting and discussing the act of praising in Arabic, the present study aims at proving the linguistic devices of praise focusing on three aspects: pragmatic, semantic and syntactic in some religious texts. The theoretical part deals with investigating the pragmatic, semantic and syntactic aspects of praise as well as its types. The practical part deals with analyzing some religious texts taken from different aayas from different suras in the Glorious Quran. It is concluded that praise can be applied to religious texts depending on three aspects of language and Arabic language is distinguished by its heavy use of explicit and implicit forms expressing praise.

Index Terms— Linguistics, Pragmatics, Praise, Semantics, Syntax.

I. PRAISE : A PRAGMATIC PERSPECTIVE

Al madh 'praise' in Arabic is defined by Abn Manthur (1955) as an expression of commendation and it is the opposite of blame.

Etymologically, the verb madh and its derivatives (madahaan and mudaha) come from the word tamadah which means either 'he praises himself' or 'people praise each other', from the word aimtadah meaning 'extend', and tamadah meaning 'the opposite of blame' (Al Manjad fi allugha, 1969).

The explicit performative verbs such as namaa 'to be good', and habtha 'lovely' as well as the implicit ones like fahum, karam, sabaq are considered by Arab rhetoricians as non-requestive performative verbs.

Pragmatically speaking, Hassan (n.d., p. 367) states that in Arabic there are certain performative verbs that can be used to denote praise, some of these are explicit like aimdah 'praise', athnaa 'commend', and aistahsan 'approve' as well as certain expressions of praise such as aljamil 'beauty', aleathim 'great', alfadil 'honest', almajid 'glorious', etc. :

1. "أَمْدِيحُ فِي الرَّجُلِ تَجَلُّدَةً، وَحُسْنٌ بِلَاتِهِ"

I praise the man for his patient and well-done.

2. "أَتْنَىٰ عَلَيْكَ بِمَا أَحْسَنْتَ"

I commend you for what you did.

On the other hand, there are some implicit performative verbs which are in need of certain devices to refer to the act of praising such as negative, interrogative, and exclamative. For instance, when people talk about a certain person for his characteristics and virtues, they may say:

3. a. "مَا هَذَا بِشَرًّا؟" What is this man ?

b. "أَنَّهُ مَلَكٌ" He is an angel.

In addition to the explicit verbs of praise mentioned earlier, there are two other verbs namaa 'to be good', and habtha 'lovely' (Al Aistirabadiu, n.d., p. 311):

4. "يَعْمُ الرَّجُلُ زَيْدًا"

What an excellent man Zaid is!

5. "يَا حَبَّبًا جَبَلُ الرَّيَّانِ مِنْ جَبَلٍ وَ حَبْدًا سَاكِنُ الرَّيَّانِ مِنْ كَانَا"

Praise, here can be directed to the external features of somebody or something which is praiseworthy. For Nahr (1978, p. 263) these explicit verbs of praise have their values in Arabic sentence since they have certain constructions which cannot be found in other languages. Al Firuzabadi (1970, p. 89) states that verbs of praise are different from other Arabic verbs for they normally occur in the construction that consists of three basic forms:

Verb of praise + Subject + (المخصوص بالمدح) 'What is praised':

6. "يَعْمُ الصَّدِيقُ حَسَنًا"

What an excellent friend Hassan is! (Bybrs and Sawid, 1984, p. 367)

The perfect verb namaa is explicit, intransitive, and it must have a subject (Al Eayniu, 1990, p. 22). Hence, Arab rhetoricians like albasriwn believe that verbs of praise should be perfect and stative that have neither imperfect (i.e., present) nor future tense and they have the same form in masculine and feminine (Al Sabuniu ,n.d., p. 277).

Thus, the verb namaa takes the masculine form in preference to the feminine, even when the subject is feminine by signification (Wright, 1967, p. 290):

7. "نِعْمَ الْمَرْأَةُ زَيْنَبُ"

Zeineb is an excellent woman! rather than نِعْمَتْ

Arab rhetoricians and grammarians like Bin Yaeish (n.d., p. 130), Al Mubarid (1979, p. 141) and Al Jurajani (1982, p. 363) agree that the subject of the verb namaa is of two types:

The first type consists of the explicit noun with either the definite article (أل), as in (8) or is added to another noun with the definite article (أل), as in (9):

8. "نِعْمَ الرَّجُلُ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ"

What a wonderful man Abdullah is!

9. "نِعْمَ غُلَامُ الرَّجُلِ عَمْرُو"

What a wonderful son of man Amro is!

The second one consists of the implicit noun which is explained by indefinite accusative:

10. "نِعْمَ رَجُلًا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ"

What a wonderful man Abdullah is!

The subject, here is implicit (i.e., alrajul) which can be explained by indefinite accusative (rajulan)'man'. Then, the original sentence becomes (نِعْمَ الرَّجُلُ رَجُلًا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ).

For Ibn Asfour (1986, p. 73) the verb namaa differs from other verbs in that it should have after it is subject a nominative noun which is called by Arab rhetoricians 'المخصوص بالمدح' 'what is praised'. It is a nominative noun that may occur either after the explicit performative verb and it is subject as in (11) or before it as in (12) and it may refer to somebody or something that deserves praise (Makram, 1975, p. 54):

11. "نِعْمَ الْخَلْقُ الصِّدْقُ"

What an excellent virtue truth is!

12. "الصدق نِعْمَ الْخَلْقُ"

Truth is an excellent virtue, indeed!

Also Hassan (n.d., p. 377) mentions that 'المخصوص بالمدح' should be either a definite or indefinite noun specialized of description, and it should be more specific than the subject, and agree with it in gender and number. Moreover, it must occur after the subject if it is an implicit noun:

13. "نِعْمَ خَلْقًا الصِّدْقُ"

What an excellent virtue truth is!

Arab rhetoricians and grammarians like Bin Al Hajib (1980, p. 376) and Al Jurjani (1982, p. 371) agree that 'المخصوص' may be deleted if there is some expression in front of it is sentence that refers to it:

14. "نِعْمَ الْعَبْدُ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ" (ص/44)

How excellent in Our service! Ever did he turn (to Us)!" (Ali, 2001, p. 1171)

In this aaya, 'المخصوص' is deleted since his story has been mentioned earlier, so the original aaya is (نِعْمَ الْعَبْدُ هُوَ) which means Jop. Bin Yaeish (n.d., p. 135).

Meanwhile, Wright (1967, p. 98) refers to another explicit performative verb of praise that is حَبَّ or حَبَّ 'to be pleasing or charming' (contracted from حَبَّيْتُ). This verb is frequently combined with the demonstrative ذَا and forms the indeclinable

حَبَّذَا, which is used to praise somebody for he is very close to the heart.

The verbs habtha and namaa similar to each other, but they differ in their forms in which habtha comprises of the verb and subject together. Originally, the perfect verb حَبَّ has two expressions which are حَبَّيْتُ and أَحَبَّيْتُ, but أَحَبَّيْتُ is more commonly used Bin Yaeish (n.d., p. 138). For instance: the Prophet Muhammad says:

15. "مَنْ أَحَبَّ لِقَاءَ اللَّهِ أَحَبَّ اللَّهُ لِقَاءَهُ"

The one who loves to meet Allah, Allah Loves his meeting.

According to Al Baghdadi (n.d., p. 122) حَبَّيْتُ is a transitive verb which can be exemplified by Al Nahshiliu:

16. "فَوَاللَّهِ لَوْلَا تَمَرُهُ مَا حَبَّيْتُهُ وَلَوْ كَانَ أَدْنَى مِنْ عُيَيْبٍ وَمُشْرِقٍ"

In addition, there are certain cases in which the verb حَبَّ must satisfy if it used as a verb of praise Al Raajihui (1985, pp.324-25):

First: it must have a subject, which is the demonstrative ذَا:

17. "حَبَّذَا الصِّدْقُ"

How lovely truth is!

Al Anbary (n.d., p. 109) and Bin Al Hajib (1980, p. 377) agree that the subject ذَا of the verb حَبَّ has one form in the dual, plural, and feminine:

18. a. "حَبَّذَا الزَّيْدَانُ"

How lovely the two Zaid are!

b. "حَبَّذَا الزَّيْدَاتُ"

How lovely the Zaid are!

Second: if it is subject is the explicit noun other than the demonstrative ذَا, it will not keep one form, but it will change according to context. It may come as singular, masculine or feminine and with "ba' zayida" (Hassan, n.d., p. 383):

19. a. "حَبَّ الْمَضِيءُ الْقَمَرُ"

How bright the moon is!

b. "حَبَّتِ الْمَضِيئَاتُ الْإِقْمَارُ"

How bright the moons are!

20. "حَبَّ بِالرَّوْرِ الَّذِي لَا يَرَى مِنْهُ إِلَّا صَفْحَةً أَوْ لِمَامًا"

Third: sometimes it is subject may come as an implicit noun which is explained by indefinite accusative Al Raajihui (1985, p. 326):

21. "حَبَّ صَادِقًا زَيْدٌ"

How truthful Zaid is!

Concerning 'المخصوص بالمدح' with the explicit verb habtha, it is said that it must not occur in front of neither its subject alone nor its verb and subject together, it is wrong to say (حَبَّ عَلَيَّ ذَا) or (حَبَّ عَلَيَّ حَبَّذَا) since its occurrence before its verb and subject is not allowed in Arabic so its occurrence after the verb of praise and its subject remains a fixed form (Al Ainsari 1996, p. 182). But it may occur before or after the indefinite accusative such as:

22. "حَبَبْنَا الغصاي رجلاً"

The self-made man is wonderful, indeed!

23. "حَبَبْنَا رجلاً الغصاي"

The self-made man is wonderful, indeed!

Moreover, the act of praising in Arabic can be expressed implicitly by certain verbs of the form faeal (فَعَّلَ). Al Ainsari (1996, p. 180) affirms that the implicit verbs of praise are formed only from trilateral verbs of the form fael expressing exclamations either originally like sharaf, tharf or transformation like fahum, darab. Then, it can be used just like verbs of praise with all their cases concerning the subject and المخصوص. Yet Arab rhetoricians differ concerning the use of such verbs. Al Farisi and many others consider them as verbs of praise, while others like Al Akhfish and Al Mubrid consider them as verbs of exclamation (Bin Hian, 1989, p. 27).

However, such implicit verbs of the form faeal are used as verbs of praise for two main reasons:

First: every Arabic verb of the form faeal can be considered as a verb of manners and may refer to adjectives of quality like beauty, great, good, etc. which are associated with the praisee (Al Aistirabadiu, 1975, p. 74).

Second: the trilateral verbs of this form are used to refer to praise in specific, while the explicit ones to praise in general (Anys, 1966, p. 39).

These implicit verbs of the form faeal differ from the explicit ones in three cases as follows (Hassan, n.d., p. 389):

1. They differ in their meanings, and this is reflected in two ways:

a. the implicit verb of the form faeal has an exclamatory meaning, (Al Mubarid, 1979, p. 147), e. g., if somebody says:

24. "فَهْمُ المعلم أحمد"

Ahmad is an understanding teacher, indeed!

he means: (!مأ أفهم أحمداً). What understanding teacher Ahmad is!

b. it can be used for praise in specific, while the explicit for praise in general (Bin Al Hajib, 1982, p. 96).

2. They differ in their explicit subjects in two ways (Al Ainsari, 1996, p. 180):

a. the subject of the implicit verb of the form faeal may not have the definite article (أل):

25. "فَهْمُ زيد"

How understanding Zaid is!

whereas the subject of the explicit verbs must be defined by the article (أل).

b. it is commonly used with "ba' zayida" (Hassan, n.d., p.388):

26. "حَمْدُ الجار معاشره"

What a praiseworthy companion-ship of a neighbour!

It means: حَمْدُ الجار معاشره

3. They differ also in their implicit subjects in two ways:

a. the subject of the implicit verb of the form faeal may refer to what precedes it, or

b. it may be associated with what follows it:

27. "محمد كرم رجلاً"

How a generous man Muhammad is!

Here, the implicit subject of the verb karam "كُرِمَ" may refer either to (man) or to (Muhammad) (Al Khdry, 1940, p. 45).

A. Praise by Blame

Arab rhetoricians speak about praise by blame and blame by praise together since both follow the same rhetorical style when someone says something and means another. Ibn Al-Mu'taz is the first Arab rhetorician that pays attention to this kind of speech and calls it praise by blame. Others call such art of speaking as Al Aistithna' 'exception' for it is beauty comes from certain exception devices (Ateeq, 1970, p. 156 and Matlub and Al Basir, 1999, p. 446).

Al Maraghi (n.d., p. 354) and Al Qazwaini (n.d., pp. 372-73) mentions three different types of praise by blame:

The first type, more rhetorical than others, is formed by excluding bad features from somebody/ something, then praising him/it by referring to good characteristics after using exception device (Al Hashmi, 1970, p. 382):

28. وَلَا غَيْبَ فِيهِ غَيْرَ أَنِّي قَصَدْتُهُ فَأَنْسَتَنِي الْإِيَامَ أَهْلًا وَمَوْلَانًا

The second type is used to emphasize praise for somebody/something. It consists of exception device which is preceded and followed by good characteristics (Al Qazwaini, 1904, p. 381):

29. هُوَ الْبَدْرُ أَلَّا أَنَّهُ الْبَحْرُ زَاخِرًا سِوَى أَنْبَالِضْرَعَامَ، لَكِنَّهُ الْوَبْلُ

(Matlub, 1964, p. 245)

In (29), the poet praises his praisee by describing him as a moon and after using exception devices, he completes his description by saying he is just like a rich river, and a brave lion (Ateeq, 1970, p. 159).

The third type, less common, is formed only by using the exception (Al Qazwaini, n.d., p. 374 and Al Maraghi, n.d., p.355):

30. (الاعراف/126) "وَمَا تَنْقِمُ مِنَّا إِلَّا أَنْ آمَنَّا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّنَا لَمَّا جَاءَنَا

"But thou dost wreak Thy vengeance on us. Simply because we believed

In the Signs of our Lord. When they reached us!" (Ali, 2001, p. 378)

Here, the exception أَلَّا is used in order to praise those who are true believers in His aayas after blaming (Al Suyuti, 1380, p. 228).

B. Blame by Praise

Blame by praise according to Ateeq (1970, p. 162) and Matlub (1980, p. 374) consists of the following two types:

The first type is used to exclude good features from somebody/something in order to blame him/it by referring to bad characteristics:

31. "لَا فَضْلَ لِلْقَوْمِ إِلَّا أَنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْرِفُونَ لِلْجَارِ حَقَّهُ"

The folk have no virtue but they devalue the neighbour.

In (31), the speaker wants to blame certain people by excluding good features from them and mentioning their bad feature after using the exception أَلَّا 'but'. In this type, the

speaker deceives the listeners for when they hear this kind of speech, they think that he praises them, but in fact he blames them by praising (Al Jazem and Amin, 1969, p. 155).

The second one is formed by using the exception device that is preceded and followed by bad characteristics (Matlub and Al Basir, 1999, p. 448):

32. فَلَانٌ فَاسِقٌ إِلَّا أَنَّهُ جَاهِلٌ

(Al Tifatazani, n.d., p. 181)

X is vicious but he is ignorant.

From the above discussion, one can say that the rhetoric of praise by blame and blame by praise is built on deceiving the listener since he understands something, but the speaker means another.

II. THE SEMANTIC IMPLICATION OF PRAISE

There are certain lexical items belonging to different classes (parts of speech) which are used to express praise. Semantically, praise can be realized by a number of expressions such as adjectives, verbs, and nouns. As for adjectives, the expressions used to refer to the act of praising are numerous such as:

'Umat, 'awaab, bar, hakim, halim, hanif, khashie, rashid, sabir, and sadiq. Some of these expressions can be clarified by reference to certain aayas from the Glorious Quran.

'Umat 'people' is one of these expressions that can be used as an adjective. It has certain meanings in the Glorious Quran that denote praise and commendation. One of these is its reference to a group of people who are described as the best believers:

33. رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمِينَ لَكَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةً مُسْلِمَةً لَكَ (البقرة/128)

"Our Lord! make of us. Muslims, bowing to Thy (Will),

And of our progeny a people. Muslim, bowing to Thy (Will)" (Ali, 2001, p. 53)

In this aaya, Allah praises such good people for their obedience to His orders and their belief in His fate which are considered good features that deserve praise (Bin Qutaiba, 1978, p. 108).

Another adjective of praise is 'awaab 'turnover'. It is used in certain aayas in the Glorious Quran to refer to special features of Prophets and good people (Abdul Baqi, 1959, p. 57):

34. "وَاذْكُرْ عَبْدَنَا دَاوُودَ ذَا الْأَيْدِ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ" (ص/17)

"Say, and remember Our Servant. David, the man of strength: For he ever turned (to Allah)." (Ali, 2001, p. 1164)

The expression 'bar 'beneficent' is also used semantically as an adjective to refer to commendation (Abdul Baqi, 1959, p. 117):

35. "إِنَّا كُنَّا مِنْ قَبْلُ نَدْعُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْبَرُّ الرَّحِيمُ" (الطور/28)

"Truly, we did call. Unto Him from of old: Truly it is He, The Beneficent, the Merciful!" (Ali, 2001, p. 1371)

'bar is used to refer to the special feature of Allah since He is the Greatest Recompense and He is indeed good-the Beneficent, the Merciful.

As for verbs, the expression 'aman and its derivatives yaman and amanaa are used in the Glorious Quran as intransitive in (36) and transitive verbs in order to praise the believers of Allah and His Messengers in (37) (Al Jawhari, 1979, p. 150):

36. (البقرة/126) " رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا بَلَدًا آمِنًا "

"My Lord, make this a City. Of Peace," (Ali, 2001, p. 53)

37. (الحديد/19) "وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ وَالشَّهَادَةُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ "لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ وَتُورُهُمْ"

"And those who believe. In Allah and His messengers-They are the Sincere (Lovers of Truth , and The witnesses (who testify), In the eyes of their Lord:

They shall have their Reward.And their Light." (Ali, 2001, p. 1425)

The verb sabah and its derivative yusabih are used in many forms in the Glorious Quran to praise Allah's name (38) and to praise Him by His angels (39):

38. "سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى" (الاعلى/1)

"Glorify the name. Of thy Guardian-Lord. Most High," (Ali, 2001, p. 1636)

39. (الانباء/20) "يُسَبِّحُونَ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ لَا يَفْتُرُونَ"

"They celebrate His praises. Night and day, nor do they.Ever flag or intermit" (Ali, 2001, p. 798)

Here, Allah describes His angels as excellent praisers who praise Him day by night without stopping (Al Asefahani, n.d., p. 221).

Faz 'attained' is another verb used to praise those who obey Allah and His Messenger because they attained real spiritual desire i.e., nearness to Allah.

40. (الاحزاب/71) "وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا"

"He that obeys Allah. And His Messenger, has already. Attained the highest Achievement" (Ali, 2001, pp. 1079-80).

In addition to adjectives and verbs, nouns can also give the meaning of praise and commendation. The expression 'awaah 'compassion' is used when someone feels pain and grief, but it can be used in the following aaya to give another meaning (Bin Zakaria, 1979, p. 163):

41. (هود/75) "إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَحَلِيمٌ أَوَّاهٌ مُنِيبٌ"

"For Abraham was,Without doubt, forbearing (Of faults), compassionate,

And given to look to Allah." (Ali, 2001, p. 531)

Allah praises His Prophet Abraham since he, like Muhammad, had three qualities in a pre-eminent degree, which are: he was long-suffering with other people's faults; his sympathies and compassion were very wide; and for every difficulty or trouble he turned to Allah and sought Him in prayer (Ali, 2001).

Huda 'guidance' is another noun used to praise those who receive guidance and whose spiritual advancement is progressive (Al Mubarid, 1937, p. 194) :

42. (محمد/17) "وَالَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا زَادَهُمْ هُدًى وَآتَاهُمْ تَقْوَاهُمْ"

"But to those receive. Guidance, He increases. The (light of) Guidance,
And bestows on them. Their Piety and Restraint (From evil)." (Ali, 2001, p. 1319)

Nouns are also used in similes to denote the implicit praise through a particle (كانَ):

43. "كَأَنَّكَ شَمْسٌ وَالْمَلُوكُ كَوَاكِبٌ إِذَا طَلَعَتْ لَمْ يَتَّذِرْ مِنْهُنَّ كَوَكِبٌ"

(Matlub and Al Basir, 1999, p. 119)

III. THE SYNTACTIC STRUCTURE OF PRAISE

Syntactically, praise can be realized by two basic sentence types: declarative and interrogative.

A. Declarative

Declarative sentences can be used to express many illocutionary forces such as praise, blame, warning, wish, prohibition, promise and threat (Matlub and Al Basir, 1999, p. 118):

44. "يَعْمُ الْمَسْتَشَارُ الْعِلْمُ، وَيَعْمُ الْوَزِيرُ الْعَقْلُ"

What an excellent counselor knowledge is, and what an excellent minister mind is!

45. "يَعْمُ خُلُقُ الطَّالِبِ الْإِخْلَاصُ"

What an excellent virtue of student sincerity is!

Praise is carried out heavily by certain patterns of declarative sentence to express the speaker's commendation of someone or something. These patterns can be illustrated as follows:

First: The Verb of Praise + Subject with Definite Article (أَل)

فعل المدح + الفاعل المعرف بـ (أَل)

This pattern consists of the verb of praise which is either explicit

or implicit and a subject that must be defined by the article (أَل). Al Zajaji (1988, p. 108)

states that the association of the verb with its subject is like that of an adjective with its noun. So this syntactic pattern is used to give approval and commendation to the praisee:

46. "حَيَاةٌ عَلَى الضَّمِيمِ بَسُّ الْحَيَاةِ وَيَعْمُ الْمَأْتُ إِذَا لَمْ تَعْرِ"

(Hassan, n.d., p. 370)

In addition, this pattern can also be used to express implicit praise by using the trilateral verb of the form faeal (فَعَّلَ):

47. "سَبَقَ الْفَيْلِسُوفُ وَفَهُمْ" (Hassan, n.d., p. 172)

What a precedent in understanding the philosopher is!

Second: The Verb of Praise + Subject + Noun with Definite Article (أَل)

فعل المدح + الفاعل المضاف الى ما فيه (أَل)

Al Mubarid (1979, p. 43) and Ibn Al Siraj (1987, p. 122) agree that the subject which must be added to another noun with definite article (أَل) is just like the subject that must be defined by such an article. Thus, the subject of this pattern looks like

that of the first one since both of them refer to the praisee in general:

48. "نَعْمَ عُثْمَى الْكَرَمَاً" (Ibn Aqil, 1965, p. 161)

How good the final attainment of the generosity is!

49. "عَدَلَ حَكْمَ الْحَاكِمِ"

The judge did justice, indeed!

In (49), one can see that the implicit verb of the form faeal is used to praise the judge with exclamatory meaning for his justice (Hassan, n.d., p. 386).

Third: The Verb of Praise namaa+Subject+ an Indefinite Noun + Definite Noun with الفاعل المضاف الى (أَل): فعل المدح نَعْمَ + الفاعل المضاف الى ما فيه (أَل)

This pattern, less common than others, is used only with the explicit verb namaa (يَعْمُ) followed by subject that must be added to an indefinite noun followed by another definite noun with (أَل) (Hassan, n.d.):

50. "يَعْمُ قَارِئُ كُتُبِ الْأَدَبِ"

What an excellent reader of literature is!

Fourth: The Verb of Praise namaa+ Subject with Definite Article (أَل) + Adjective:

فعل المدح نَعْمَ + الفاعل المعرف بـ (أَل) + الصفة

This pattern is formed by the explicit verb namaa and subject with definite article (أَل) in addition to adjective:

51. "يَعْمُ الْفَتَى الْمُرَى أَنْتَ إِذَا هُمْ حَضَرُوا لَدَى الْحُجُرَاتِ نَارَ الْمُؤَقِدِ"

(Al Baghdadi, n.d., p. 112)

Fifth: The Verb of Praise of the Form faeal+Definite Subject+an Indefinite Accusative :

فعل المدح على وزن (فَعَّلَ) + فاعل معرفة محضة + تمييز

This pattern, rarely used, consists of the implicit verb of the form faeal and definite subject which is followed by an indefinite accusative:

52. "وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا" (النساء/69)

"All who obey Allah. And the Messenger. Are in the Company. Of those on whom

Is the Grace of Allah-Of the Prophets (who teach), The Sincere (lovers of Truth),

The Witnesses (who testify), And the Righteous (who do good): Ah! what a beautiful Fellowship! (Ali, 2001, pp. 205-06)

According to most Arab grammarians, the demonstrative word awliik (أُولَئِكَ) is the definite subject of the implicit verb hasan (حَسُنَ) instead of the noun since its verb implies an exclamatory meaning, i.e., (مَا أَحْسَنَ أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا)

(Ibn Asfour, 1980, p. 68 and Al Salili, 1986, p. 593).

As for the indefinite accusative rafiqan (رَفِيقًا). However, the purpose behind using such pattern is to praise the group of people and those mentioned in this aaya, i.e., (وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ) "Of those on whom is the Grace of Allah of the Prophets, the Sincere, the Witnesses,

and the Righteous". That is why the implicit verb of praise is used with the demonstrative (Al Qaisi, 1975, p. 201).

Sixth: The Verb of Praise + Implicit Subject + an Indefinite Accusative:

فعل المدح + فاعل مضمَر + تمييز

This pattern consists of the explicit verb of praise namaa and the implicit subject that must be explained by an indefinite accusative (Hassan, n.d., p. 370):

53. "يَعْمُ قَوْمًا الْعَرَبُ"

What good people Arabs are!

The implicit subject, here the pronoun هُمْ 'they', refers to the praisees and must be explained by the indefinite accusative قَوْمًا 'people'. The original sentence is:

يَعْمُ الْقَوْمُ قَوْمًا الْعَرَبُ

Seventh: The Verb of Praise namaa + Implicit Subject + (ما) 'What' or (من) 'Who' + Verbal Sentence :

فعل المدح يَعْمُ + فاعل مضمَر+ما او من+جملة فعلية

In this pattern, the implicit subject of the verb of praise namaa is expressed by (ما) 'what' or (من) 'who' that is followed by verbal sentence instead of (المخصوص) Al Salili, 1986, p. 591):

54. "يَعْمُ مَا يَقُولُ الْحَكِيمُ الْمَجْرَبُ"

What a perfect talk of a wise man is!

55. "يَعْمُ مَنْ تَصَحَّبَهُ عَزِيزًا"

Who a wonderful companion is the dear!(Hassan, n.d., p. 372)

B. Interrogative

Syntactically, praise can be carried out by interrogative sentences since interrogation is used to perform certain illocutionary forces like the speech act of praising explicitly as well as implicitly. For instance: Al Ansari , Jarir, and Al Bahtari say in the following lines respectively:

56. أَلَسْتَ بِنِعْمِ الْجَارِ يُؤَلِّفُ بَيْنَهُ أَحَا قَلْبًا أَوْ مُعْدِمِ الْمَالِ مُصْرِمًا

(Al-Anbari, n.d., p. 97)

57. أَلَسْتَ خَيْرٌ مِنْ رَكِبِ الْمَطَايَا وَانْدَى الْعَالَمِينَ بَطُونِ رَاخٍ

(Arafa, 1984, p. 114)

58. أَلَسْتَ أَعْمَهُمْ جُودًا وَأَزْكَأَ هُمْ غُودًا وَأَمْضَاهُمْ حُسَامًا

(Wahba, 1974, p. 478)

IV. ANALYSIS

This section is devoted to the analysis of praising at three aspects: pragmatic, semantic and syntactic with reference to different aayas from different suras in the Glorious Quran.

Text 1

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ
 (ال عمران/110)"

"We are the best. Of Peoples, evolved. For mankind, Enjoining what is right,

Forbidding what is wrong, And believing in Allah." (Ali, 2001, p. 155)

The pragmatic aspect of this aaya shows that Allah implicitly praises the People of the Book especially Muslims since they have the strongest faith in Him; doing right, being an example to others to do right, and having the power to see that the right prevails; and eschewing wrong, being an example to others to eschew wrong, and having the power to see that wrong and injustice are defeated (Al Tabatabai, 1962, p. 415).

Semantically speaking, this aaya uses one of the expressions of praise أُمَّةً as an adjective to praise such kind of people who believe in Allah as one true God and are described by the Prophet Muhammad as:

(أتم زينتم سبعين أمة أنتم خيرها وأكرمها على الله)

Text 2

الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ

إِيمَانًا وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ" (ال عمران/173)

"Men said to them: Against you, so fear them":

"A great army is gathering But it (only) increased, Their Faith; they said:

"For us Allah sufficeth, And He is the best. Disposer of affairs." (Ali, 2001, p. 173)

In this aaya, Allah is praised by the followers of His Messenger Muhammad when the leader of the unbelievers says that he would fight His Messenger at Badar Battle. Later, he sends one of his guards to threat Muslims and advise them to return to al Madinah but they reject his advice and decide to fight with their Prophet and depend on Allah since He is the best God to rely on (Al Razi, 2000, p. 81).

Pragmatically, this aaya expresses the illocutionary force of praising through using the explicit performative verb namaa. At the syntactic structure, this aaya makes use of a declarative sentence which consists of the explicit verb of praise and a subject that is defined by the article (ال), that is (نِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ) "He is the best disposer of affairs".

Text 3

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ هَلْ تَنْقَمُونَ مِنَّا إِلَّا أَنْ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ" (المائدة/59)

"Say: "O People of the Book! Do ye disapprove of us

For no other reason than. That we believe in Allah," (Ali, 2001, p. 267)

It is suggested according to People of the Book that the persecutors will richly deserve to be punished in the fire of Hell for their faith in the one true God. And because of their ignorant they consider their belief in Allah as a horrible sin that threatens their position, therefore, they want to take revenge upon them and blame them.

Pragmatically, this aaya reveals praise by blame which is expressed by using the exception device إِلَّا as in (إِلَّا أَنْ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ) "For no other reason than that we believe in Allah" in order to praise those true believers in Allah who are praiseworthy by

blaming them. At the syntactic structure, the interrogative sentence is used here to convey the illocutionary force of praising through the question device هَلْ.

Text 4

وَقِيلَ لِلَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا مَاذَا أَنْزَلَ رَبُّكُمْ قَالُوا خَيْرًا لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا فِي هَذِهِ
"الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَلَنِعْمَ دَارُ الْمُتَّقِينَ"

"To the righteous(When) it is said, "What Is it that your Lord Has revealed?"

They say, "All that is good." To tho. Who do good, there is good In this world, and the Home. Of the Hereafter is even better And excellent indeed is the Home . Of the righteous –" (Ali, 2001, p. 644)

This aaya presents a contrast between the godly and ungodly people where the ungodly in their levity and their deliberate rejection of guidance find no profit from Allah's revelation. Unlike them, the godly people find good everywhere in this world and in the Hereafter, because they understand Allah brings down the Glorious Quran to save them and they are in accord with the truths around them (Al Tabarsi, 1958, p. 175).

The pragmatic aspect of this aaya reveals that Allah explicitly praises the Home of the godly people through using the explicit verb namaa to emphasize that it is a suitable and better place for them. At the semantic implication, this aaya makes use of the expression حَسَنَةٌ "good" to praise such good people as a reward for what they have done in their life.

The syntactic structure of this declarative sentence comprises of the explicit verb and a subject which must be added to another noun that has the definite article (أل) as in (نِعْمَ دَارُ الْمُتَّقِينَ) "excellent indeed is the Home of the righteous". In addition, "what is praised" here is deleted which is either دَارُ الْمُخْصُوصِ بِالْمَدْحِ or وَلِنِعْمَ دَارُ الْمُتَّقِينَ دَارُ الْآخِرَةِ or جَنَّتْ عَدْنُ الْآخِرَةِ or جَنَّتْ عَدْنُ نِعْمَ دَارُ الْمُتَّقِينَ.

Text 5

وَوَهَبْنَا لِدَاوُدَ سُلَيْمَانَ نِعْمَ الْعَبْدُ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ" (ص/30)

"To David We gave Solomon (for a son)- How excellent in Our service!

Ever did he turn (to Us)!" (Ali, 2001, p. 1168)

This aaya is used to bless the Prophet Solomon as a righteous king, not as an idolator, doing "evil in the sight of the Lord" (1 Kings, 11: 6). Like his father David, Solomon was also most meticulous in not allowing the least motive of self to be mixed up with his spiritual virtues. Further, he was fond of horses, he had great armies and wealth, but he used them all in Allah's service (Ali, 2001).

This aaya, from a pragmatic perspective, conveys the illocutionary force of praising through the verb namaa to praise Solomon who was a great King. Semantically, the lexical item awab is used here as an adjective to commend the Prophet Solomon since he always turned to Allah in all conditions.

Syntactically speaking, Allah explicitly praises His Prophet Solomon by using this pattern of a declarative sentence which

consists of the verb of praise namaa and a definite subject with the article الْعَبْدُ (أل) as well as المخصوص بالمدح (i.e., هُو), but it is omitted. The source نِعْمَ الْعَبْدُ هُو.

Text 6

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَحْكَمِ الْحَاكِمِينَ" (النين/8)

"Is not Allah. The wisest of Judges? (Ali, 2001, p. 1670)

This aaya promises the unbelievers that Allah will judge them according to their sins since He is wise and just. Therefore, the righteous have nothing to fear, but the evil ones cannot escape from His punishment (Al Zamakhshari, n.d, p. 765).

Semantically, the lexical item أَحْكَمِ of the form (أفعل) is used here as an adjective to extol Allah for His justice and wisdom. The form of this aaya, at the syntactic structure, is carried out by interrogative sentence through the particle أَلَيْسَ for interrogation can be used to express the illocutionary force of praising.

CONCLUSION

Throughout the study, the researcher arrives at the following conclusions:

- 1- The analysis clarifies that praise in Arabic can be applied to religious texts by analyzing the pragmatic, semantic and syntactic aspects. This means that such religious texts give suitable samples of the expressive acts of praising.
- 2- Throughout the analysis, it is concluded that praise is expressed in more than one form in the Arabic language and the explicit and implicit forms are often used in the Glorious Quran.
- 3- With regard to the tense of the performative verbs that are used to express praise in Arabic the study concludes that Arabic performative verbs of praise can be expressed only by using the past tense.
- 4- It is also concluded that praise in Arabic can be determined not only by declarative sentence but also by other type such as interrogative.

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