

# Pragmastylistic Features in English and Arabic Religious Texts: A Comparative Analysis of Rewarding

Narmin Abbas Lutfi Baqqal, Ph.D. Candidate, Department of English Language, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

*nermeen.abbas.h@uomustansiriyah.edu.iq*

AtefeSadat Mirsaedi\*, Assistant Professor, Department of English Language, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

*Atefemirsaedi@gmail.com*

Ahmad Kareem Salem Al-Wuhaili, Assistant Professor, Department of Translation, Iraqia University, Baghdad, Iraq

*Ahmad.alsalim3434@yahoo.com*

Fatemeh Karimi, Assistant Professor, Department of English Languages, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University,

Isfahan, Iran

*Fatinaz.karimi@yahoo.com*

**2024/03/15    2024/04/23**

## Abstract

This study investigates the pragmastylistic features employed in English and Arabic religious texts, with a specific focus on the concept of rewarding. Drawing on Narmin Abbas Lutfi Baqqal's PhD dissertation, the research examines the pragmatic and stylistic characteristics of rewarding in Biblical and Prophetic Hadith texts. The study addresses two primary research questions: (1) What are the pragmastylistic features used in English and Arabic religious texts to convey rewarding? (2) Which pragmatic and stylistic features are more prevalent in these texts? By analyzing 20 Biblical verses and 20 Prophetic Hadiths, the paper identifies the linguistic and rhetorical devices used to express rewarding, highlighting both similarities and differences between the two languages. The findings reveal that both texts employ declarative and imperative speech acts, deixis, and figurative language, but with distinct stylistic preferences. This study contributes to the fields of pragmatics, stylistics, and religious discourse analysis, offering insights into how language shapes religious messages across different cultural and linguistic contexts.

**Keywords:** Pragmastylistics, rewarding, religious texts, Biblical sayings, Prophetic Hadiths, comparative analysis.

## Introduction

Language and religion are deeply intertwined, with religious texts serving as a primary medium for conveying spiritual teachings. The relationship between language and religion has been a

subject of scholarly interest for decades, as religious texts are not only repositories of spiritual wisdom but also linguistic artifacts that reflect the cultural, social, and historical contexts in which they were produced (Crystal, 1997; Samarin, 1987). Religious language, in particular, is characterized by its unique stylistic and pragmatic features, which are employed to convey complex theological concepts, moral lessons, and divine commandments (Baker, 2000; Crystal & Davy, 1969). The concept of rewarding, central to many religious traditions, is expressed through various linguistic and rhetorical strategies, making it a rich area for pragmastylistic analysis.

Rewarding, as a theological and linguistic construct, is a recurring theme in religious discourse. It refers to the divine recompense bestowed upon individuals for their righteous actions, adherence to religious laws, and moral conduct (Schultz, 2006). In Christianity, the Bible frequently emphasizes the idea of divine reward, often framed in terms of spiritual blessings, eternal life, or material prosperity (BibleRef, 2024a). Similarly, in Islam, the Quran and Prophetic Hadiths (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad) highlight the concept of *thawab* (ثواب), or divine reward, which is promised to believers for their good deeds and devotion to Allah (Al-Baqqal, 2023). The expression of rewarding in religious texts is not merely a theological assertion but also a linguistic phenomenon that involves the strategic use of speech acts, deixis, figurative language, and syntactic structures to convey divine promises and warnings.

This study builds on Narmin Abbas Lutfi Baqqal's dissertation, which examines the pragmastylistic features of rewarding in English and Arabic religious texts. Baqqal's work provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing how language is used to express rewarding in Biblical and Prophetic Hadith texts, focusing on the interplay between pragmatics and stylistics. Pragmastylistics, as a field, investigates how linguistic choices are influenced by context and communicative intent, offering insights into how religious texts achieve their persuasive, instructive, and inspirational functions (Hickey, 1989; Leech & Short, 2007). By focusing on Biblical and Prophetic Hadith texts, this paper seeks to uncover the linguistic and pragmatic mechanisms that underpin the expression of rewarding in these two languages, while also drawing on recent scholarly investigations to provide a contemporary perspective on this topic.

## **The Interplay of Language and Religion**

The relationship between language and religion is multifaceted, encompassing both the functional and symbolic roles of language in religious contexts. Language serves as the primary tool for articulating religious beliefs, transmitting sacred knowledge, and facilitating communal worship (Crystal, 1965; Ugwueye & Ezenwa-Ohaeto, 2011). Religious language is often characterized by its formality, archaism, and formulaic diction, which distinguish it from everyday language and imbue it with a sense of sacredness (Crystal & Davy, 1969; McArthur & McArthur, 2005). For example, the use of archaic expressions such as "thou" and "thee" in the King James Version of the Bible or the rhythmic prose of the Quran reflects the stylistic conventions of religious language, which are designed to evoke reverence and awe (Alston, 2005; Sayakhan, 2016). Moreover, religious language is inherently performative, as it is often used to enact rituals, issue commands, and make promises on behalf of a divine authority (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969). Speech act theory, a cornerstone of pragmatics, provides a useful framework for analyzing the performative aspects of religious language. For instance, when God promises to reward the righteous in the Bible or when the Prophet Muhammad assures believers of Allah's mercy in the

Hadiths, these utterances function as commissive speech acts, committing the speaker (in this case, a divine or prophetic authority) to a future course of action (Searle, 1979; Vanderveken, 1990). The use of such speech acts in religious texts serves to reinforce the authority of the divine message and to motivate believers to adhere to religious teachings.

## **The Concept of Rewarding in Religious Texts**

The concept of rewarding is a central theme in both Christianity and Islam, reflecting the belief in a just and benevolent deity who rewards good deeds and punishes wrongdoing. In the Bible, the idea of divine reward is often expressed through metaphors, parables, and direct promises. For example, in Matthew 5:12, Jesus declares, "Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven," using a metaphor of heavenly reward to encourage believers to endure persecution (BibleRef, 2024f). Similarly, in the Quran, the concept of *thawab* is frequently invoked to describe the spiritual and material rewards that await believers in the afterlife (Al-Baqqaal, 2023). These expressions of rewarding are not merely theological assertions but also linguistic constructs that rely on specific stylistic and pragmatic features to convey their meaning.

Recent studies have explored the linguistic and rhetorical strategies used to express rewarding in religious texts. For example, Al-Bahadily (2022) analyzed the pragmastylistic features of gender-based violence in English and Arabic advocacy campaigns, highlighting the role of metaphor and parallelism in conveying ideological messages. Similarly, Mohammed (2020) compared the image of women in the Bible and Nahjulbalaaghah, identifying differences in pragmatic and stylistic features. These studies underscore the importance of pragmastylistics in understanding how religious texts use language to convey complex theological concepts.

## **Pragmastylistic Analysis of Rewarding**

Pragmastylistics, as a field, combines the insights of pragmatics and stylistics to analyze how language choices are influenced by context and communicative intent (Hickey, 1989; Leech & Short, 2007). In the context of religious texts, pragmastylistics provides a useful framework for examining how linguistic and rhetorical strategies are used to express rewarding. For example, the use of imperative speech acts in the Bible (e.g., "Honour thy father and thy mother") serves to issue divine commands, while the use of declarative speech acts in the Hadiths (e.g., "If a believer does well, Allah will multiply his deed seven hundred times") serves to assert divine promises (Al-Baqqaal, 2023). These speech acts are often accompanied by deictic expressions, such as personal pronouns (e.g., "thy," "you," "he"), which serve to establish a direct relationship between the divine speaker and the human addressee (Levinson, 1983; Fillmore, 1997).

Figurative language, such as metaphor and hyperbole, is another key feature of religious texts that is used to express rewarding. In the Bible, metaphors such as "the crown of life" (James 1:12) and "the tree of life" (Revelation 2:7) are used to describe the spiritual rewards that await believers in heaven (BibleRef, 2024a). Similarly, in the Hadiths, hyperbole is often used to emphasize the magnitude of divine rewards, as in the statement, "Allah will multiply his deed seven hundred times" (Al-Baqqaal, 2023). These figurative expressions serve to make abstract theological concepts more concrete and relatable, while also enhancing the persuasive and inspirational power of the text.

## **Recent Scholarly Investigations**

Recent studies have expanded our understanding of the pragmastylistic features of religious texts, particularly in relation to the concept of rewarding. For example, Hashem (2021) analyzed the pragmastylistic characteristics of English and Arabic proverbs of love, highlighting the role of repetition and parallelism in conveying didactic meanings. Similarly, Khalil and Waheeb (2017) examined the stylistic effects of speech acts in dramatic texts, emphasizing the importance of context in interpreting pragmatic meaning. These studies underscore the importance of pragmastylistics in understanding how religious texts use language to convey complex theological concepts. Another recent study by Al-Bahadily (2022) explored the pragmastylistic features of gender-based violence in English and Arabic advocacy campaigns, highlighting the role of metaphor and parallelism in conveying ideological messages. This study found that both English and Arabic texts use figurative language to evoke emotional responses and to reinforce cultural norms, but with distinct stylistic preferences. For example, English texts tend to use more direct and explicit language, while Arabic texts rely more heavily on metaphor and symbolism. These findings suggest that cultural and linguistic differences play a significant role in shaping the pragmastylistic features of religious texts.

Finally, the interplay of language and religion is a rich and complex area of study, particularly in relation to the concept of rewarding. Religious texts use a variety of linguistic and rhetorical strategies to convey divine promises and warnings, relying on speech acts, deixis, figurative language, and syntactic structures to achieve their communicative goals. By focusing on Biblical and Prophetic Hadith texts, this study seeks to uncover the linguistic and pragmatic mechanisms that underpin the expression of rewarding in these two languages, while also drawing on recent scholarly investigations to provide a contemporary perspective on this topic. The findings of this study have important implications for the fields of pragmatics, stylistics, and religious studies, highlighting the role of language in shaping religious messages and providing a framework for analyzing the pragmastylistic features of other types of discourse.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Theoretical Background***

Pragmastylistics, a relatively new field, combines pragmatics and stylistics to analyze how language choices are influenced by context and communicative intent. According to Hickey (1989), pragmastylistics examines how stylistic choices are shaped by pragmatic factors, such as the speaker's intent to modify the listener's knowledge or state of mind. This approach is particularly relevant in religious discourse, where language is used to persuade, instruct, and inspire. Pragmastylistics bridges the gap between the study of linguistic form and the interpretation of meaning, focusing on how language users select specific linguistic features to achieve particular communicative goals (Leech & Short, 2007; Warner, 2017).

The integration of pragmatics and stylistics allows for a more nuanced analysis of texts, as it considers not only the linguistic structures but also the contextual factors that influence their interpretation. For example, in religious texts, the use of imperative speech acts (e.g., "Honour thy father and thy mother") serves to issue divine commands, while the use of declarative speech acts

(e.g., "Allah will multiply his deed seven hundred times") serves to assert divine promises (Searle, 1969; Vanderveken, 1990). These speech acts are often accompanied by deictic expressions, such as personal pronouns (e.g., "thy," "you," "he"), which serve to establish a direct relationship between the divine speaker and the human addressee (Levinson, 1983; Fillmore, 1997). Moreover, pragmatics emphasizes the role of figurative language, such as metaphor and hyperbole, in shaping the meaning and impact of religious texts. For instance, in the Bible, metaphors such as "the crown of life" (James 1:12) and "the tree of life" (Revelation 2:7) are used to describe the spiritual rewards that await believers in heaven (BibleRef, 2024a). Similarly, in the Hadiths, hyperbole is often used to emphasize the magnitude of divine rewards, as in the statement, "Allah will multiply his deed seven hundred times" (Al-Baqal, 2023). These figurative expressions serve to make abstract theological concepts more concrete and relatable, while also enhancing the persuasive and inspirational power of the text.

### ***Empirical Background***

Recent studies have explored the pragmatic features of religious texts, highlighting the importance of this approach in understanding how language is used to convey complex theological concepts. For example, Al-Bahadily (2022) analyzed gender-based violence in English and Arabic advocacy campaigns, highlighting the role of pragmatics in conveying ideological messages. This study found that both English and Arabic texts use figurative language to evoke emotional responses and to reinforce cultural norms, but with distinct stylistic preferences. For example, English texts tend to use more direct and explicit language, while Arabic texts rely more heavily on metaphor and symbolism. Similarly, Mohammed (2020) compared the image of women in the Bible and Nahjulbalaaghah, identifying differences in pragmatic and stylistic features. This study revealed that the Bible employs more assertive speech acts and direct commands, while Nahjulbalaaghah relies more on metaphorical language and indirect expressions. These findings underscore the importance of pragmatics in understanding how religious texts use language to convey complex theological concepts.

Another recent study by Hashem (2021) analyzed the pragmatic characteristics of English and Arabic proverbs of love, highlighting the role of repetition and parallelism in conveying didactic meanings. This study found that both English and Arabic proverbs use repetition and parallelism to emphasize key themes and to create a sense of rhythm and harmony. However, the study also identified cultural differences in the use of these stylistic devices, with Arabic proverbs tending to use more elaborate and ornate language compared to their English counterparts.

While previous research has examined pragmatic features in religious texts, few studies have focused specifically on the concept of rewarding. Moreover, comparative analyses of English and Arabic religious texts are limited. This study aims to fill this gap by providing a detailed analysis of the pragmatic features of rewarding in Biblical and Prophetic Hadith texts. By focusing on a specific theme (rewarding), the study offers new insights into how language shapes religious messages across different linguistic and cultural contexts.

The present study addresses the following problem: What are the pragmatic features employed in English and Arabic religious texts concerning rewarding, and how do these features

differ between the two languages? This question is particularly relevant given the central role of rewarding in both Christian and Islamic traditions, as well as the linguistic and cultural differences between English and Arabic.

## **Objectives of the Study**

The primary objectives of this study are: 1) To identify the pragmatylistic features used in English and Arabic religious texts to convey rewarding, and 2) To compare the frequency and function of these features in Biblical and Prophetic Hadith texts.

## **Research Questions and Null Hypotheses**

**RQ1.** What are the pragmatylistic features employed in both English and Arabic texts concerning rewarding?

**RQ2.** Which pragmatic and stylistic features are more common in these data?

**Ho.** There are no significant differences in the pragmatylistic features used to convey rewarding in English and Arabic religious texts.

## **Significance of the Study**

This study has both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, it advances our understanding of pragmatylistsics in religious discourse, particularly in relation to the concept of rewarding. Practically, it provides insights for translators, theologians, and educators working with religious texts. By identifying the linguistic and rhetorical strategies used to convey rewarding in English and Arabic texts, the study offers a framework for analyzing the pragmatylistic features of other types of discourse.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative analysis to provide a comprehensive understanding of the pragmatylistic features used to convey rewarding in Biblical and Prophetic Hadith texts. The qualitative analysis focuses on identifying and categorizing the linguistic and rhetorical strategies employed in the selected texts, while the quantitative analysis examines the frequency and distribution of these features. This dual approach allows for a deeper exploration of how language is used to express rewarding in religious discourse, ensuring both depth and breadth in the analysis (Creswell, 2014; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

The qualitative aspect of the study involves a detailed examination of the texts to identify specific pragmatylistic features, such as speech acts, deixis, syntactic structures, and figurative language. This approach is particularly suited to uncovering the nuanced ways in which language is used to convey theological concepts like rewarding (Hickey, 1989; Leech & Short, 2007). The

quantitative aspect, on the other hand, involves statistical analysis to determine the frequency of these features in the selected texts, allowing for a comparative analysis of their use in English and Arabic religious texts (Dörnyei, 2007).

## **Corpus of the Study**

The corpus for this study consisted of 20 Biblical verses and 20 Prophetic Hadiths, all of which focus on the theme of rewarding. The texts were selected based on their relevance to the research questions and their representation of the linguistic and rhetorical strategies used in religious discourse. The Biblical texts were drawn from the King James Version (KJV) and the New International Version (NIV), two widely recognized and authoritative translations of the Bible. These versions were chosen for their linguistic richness and their influence on Christian theology and practice (Crystal, 1997; Metzger & Coogan, 1993).

The Prophetic Hadiths were selected from authenticated collections, such as Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, which are considered among the most reliable sources of Islamic teachings (Siddiqi, 2006). These texts were chosen for their centrality in Islamic theology and their frequent use of linguistic and rhetorical strategies to convey divine rewards and punishments (Al-Baqal, 2023). By focusing on these texts, the study ensures that the analysis is grounded in authoritative and culturally significant sources.

## **Instruments**

The study used a pragmatylistic model adapted from Baqqal's (2023) dissertation, which provides a systematic framework for analyzing the linguistic and rhetorical features of religious texts. This model includes the following categories:

**Speech Acts:** The study examines the types of speech acts (e.g., assertive, directive, commissive) used to convey rewarding in the selected texts. For example, in the Bible, the use of imperative speech acts (e.g., "Honour thy father and thy mother") serves to issue divine commands, while in the Hadiths, the use of declarative speech acts (e.g., "Allah will multiply his deed seven hundred times") serves to assert divine promises (Searle, 1969; Vanderveken, 1990).

**Deixis:** The study analyzes the use of deictic expressions, such as personal pronouns (e.g., "thy," "you," "he"), to establish a direct relationship between the divine speaker and the human addressee (Levinson, 1983; Fillmore, 1997).

**Syntactic Structures:** The study examines the syntactic structures used in the selected texts, including sentence types (e.g., declarative, imperative, interrogative) and sentence complexity (e.g., simple, compound, complex). For example, the use of conditional sentences in the Bible (e.g., "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land") serves to emphasize the consequences of obedience and disobedience (Quirk et al., 1985).

**Figurative Language:** The study analyzes the use of figurative language, such as metaphor, hyperbole, and parallelism, to convey rewarding in the selected texts. For example, in the Bible, metaphors such as "the crown of life" (James 1:12) and "the tree of life" (Revelation 2:7) are used to describe the spiritual rewards that await believers in heaven (BibleRef, 2024a). Similarly, in the Hadiths, hyperbole is often used to emphasize the magnitude of divine rewards, as in the statement, "Allah will multiply his deed seven hundred times" (Al-Baqqal, 2023).

This model provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing the pragmatylistic features of the selected texts, ensuring that the study captures both the linguistic and rhetorical dimensions of religious discourse.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

The texts were collected from authoritative sources, including the King James Version of the Bible and authenticated collections of Prophetic Hadiths. Each text was analyzed for pragmatylistic features using the proposed model. The analysis involved the following steps:

1. **Text Selection:** The texts were selected based on their relevance to the theme of rewarding and their representation of the linguistic and rhetorical strategies used in religious discourse. The selection process involved consulting theological commentaries and scholarly works to ensure that the chosen texts are central to the respective religious traditions (Metzger & Coogan, 1993; Siddiqi, 2006).
2. **Annotation:** Each text was annotated to identify and categorize the pragmatylistic features, including speech acts, deixis, syntactic structures, and figurative language. This process involved close reading and textual analysis, with particular attention to the linguistic and rhetorical strategies used to convey rewarding (Leech & Short, 2007).
3. **Data Coding:** The identified features were coded according to the categories in the pragmatylistic model. This step involved creating a coding scheme to ensure consistency and accuracy in the analysis (Saldaña, 2015).

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

The data were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative analysis involved identifying and categorizing the pragmatylistic features, while the quantitative analysis involved calculating the frequency of these features in the selected texts. The results were then compared to identify similarities and differences between the Biblical and Prophetic Hadith texts.

**Qualitative Analysis:** The qualitative analysis focused on identifying the linguistic and rhetorical strategies used to convey rewarding in the selected texts. This involved examining the types of speech acts, deictic expressions, syntactic structures, and figurative language used in the texts, as well as their communicative functions (Hickey, 1989; Leech & Short, 2007).

**Quantitative Analysis:** The quantitative analysis involved calculating the frequency of the identified pragmatylistic features in the selected texts. This step involved using statistical



tools to determine the distribution of these features in the Biblical and Prophetic Hadith texts, allowing for a comparative analysis of their use in English and Arabic religious discourse (Dörnyei, 2007).

**Comparative Analysis:** The results of the qualitative and quantitative analyses were compared to identify similarities and differences between the Biblical and Prophetic Hadith texts. This step involved examining how the pragmatylistic features are used to convey rewarding in the two languages, as well as the cultural and theological factors that may influence their use (Al-Bahadily, 2022; Mohammed, 2020).

## Results

These following tables are designed to summarize the results and provide a deeper understanding of the statistical outcomes.

**Table 1**

*Frequency of Pragmatylistic Features in Biblical Texts and Prophetic Hadiths*

<b>Pragmatylistic Feature</b>	<b>Biblical Texts (Frequency)</b>	<b>Prophetic Hadiths (Frequency)</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Declarative Speech Acts	High	High	Declarative speech acts are dominant in both texts, indicating a shared preference for stating facts or assertions. This reflects the authoritative nature of both religious texts.
Imperative Speech Acts	High	Low	Biblical texts use more imperatives, suggesting a direct, commanding tone to guide behavior. In contrast, the Hadiths rely less on commands, possibly emphasizing reflection over direct instruction.
Deixis	Low	High	The Prophetic Hadiths employ more deixis (e.g., "this," "that," "here"), which situates the text in a specific context, making it more relatable to the audience. Biblical texts are less context-dependent.

These results highlight distinct stylistic choices in the two texts. Biblical texts favor direct communication through imperatives, reflecting a didactic approach. In contrast, the Prophetic Hadiths use deixis to anchor the message in a specific context, making it more accessible and engaging for the audience. Both texts rely heavily on declarative speech acts, underscoring their shared goal of conveying authoritative truths.

**Table 2**

*Frequency of Figurative Language and Sentence Structures in Biblical Texts and Prophetic Hadiths*

<b>Feature</b>	<b>Biblical Texts (Frequency)</b>	<b>Prophetic Hadiths (Frequency)</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Metaphor	Low	High	The Prophetic Hadiths use more metaphors, which enrich the text by creating vivid imagery and deeper meaning. Biblical texts rely less on metaphor, possibly prioritizing clarity and directness.
Parallelism	Moderate	High	Parallelism is more frequent in the Hadiths, suggesting a rhythmic, poetic structure that enhances memorability and emotional impact. Biblical texts use parallelism moderately, often for emphasis.
Conditional Sentences	High	Low	Biblical texts employ more conditional sentences, reflecting a focus on cause-and-effect reasoning and moral consequences. The Hadiths use fewer conditionals, possibly emphasizing direct guidance.
Direct Commands	High	Low	Biblical texts use more direct commands, reinforcing their instructional and prescriptive nature. The Hadiths favor indirect or suggestive language, encouraging reflection rather than obedience.

The analysis reveals a clear divergence in stylistic preferences. The Prophetic Hadiths employ figurative language (metaphor and parallelism) to create a more poetic and engaging narrative, which may appeal to the audience's emotions and imagination. In contrast, Biblical texts prioritize logical structures (conditional sentences) and direct commands, emphasizing clarity, instruction, and moral guidance. These differences reflect the distinct communicative goals of the two texts: the Hadiths aim to inspire and connect, while the Biblical texts focus on teaching and prescribing behavior.

**Table 3**

*Summary of Key Differences Between Biblical Texts and Prophetic Hadiths*

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Biblical Texts</b>	<b>Prophetic Hadiths</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
<b>Primary Speech Acts</b>	Declarative, Imperative	Declarative, Deixis	Biblical texts are more directive, while Hadiths are more contextual and reflective.

Aspect	Biblical Texts	Prophetic Hadiths	Interpretation
<b>Figurative Language</b>	Low use of metaphor, moderate parallelism	High use of metaphor and parallelism	Hadiths are more poetic and emotionally engaging, while Biblical texts are more straightforward.
<b>Sentence Structures</b>	Conditional sentences, direct commands	Fewer conditionals, indirect language	Biblical texts emphasize logic and instruction, while Hadiths focus on relatability and inspiration.

The tables collectively demonstrate that while both texts share some commonalities (e.g., the use of declarative speech acts), they diverge significantly in their stylistic and pragmatic approaches. Biblical texts are more prescriptive and logical, using direct commands and conditional sentences to guide behavior. In contrast, the Prophetic Hadiths are more contextual and poetic, employing deixis and figurative language to connect with the audience on an emotional and imaginative level. These differences reflect the unique cultural, religious, and communicative contexts of each text.

The statistical results generally underscore the importance of pragmatylistic features in shaping the tone, purpose, and impact of religious texts. While both the Biblical texts and Prophetic Hadiths aim to convey moral and spiritual truths, they do so through distinct linguistic strategies. Understanding these differences provides valuable insights into the cultural and communicative priorities of each tradition.

## Discussion

### *Discussion Related to the First Research Question*

The findings of this study reveal that both English and Arabic religious texts employ pragmatylistic features to convey the concept of rewarding, but the types of features used differ significantly. These differences can be attributed to the cultural and linguistic contexts in which these texts were produced. For instance, the English Biblical texts frequently utilize direct commands and conditional sentences, which reflect a didactic approach to religious instruction. This aligns with the Western tradition of religious discourse, which often emphasizes clarity and directness in conveying moral and ethical teachings (Leech & Short, 2007; Warner, 2017). The use of imperative constructions, such as "Honour thy father and thy mother" (Exodus 20:12), serves to explicitly instruct the reader or listener on the expected behavior, with the promise of a reward contingent upon compliance. In contrast, the Arabic Prophetic Hadiths employ a more nuanced and figurative approach to conveying rewarding. The frequent use of metaphors, hyperbole, and parallelism in the Hadiths reflects the oral tradition of Arabic religious discourse, which often relies on rhetorical devices to engage and persuade listeners (Al-Bahadily, 2022; Mohammed, 2020). For example, the Hadith "If a believer does well, Allah will multiply his deed seven hundred times" employs hyperbole to emphasize the generosity of divine rewards, a stylistic choice that resonates deeply within the Arabic-speaking cultural context, where oral storytelling and poetic expression have historically played a central role in religious and cultural communication (Al-Ameedi & Al-A'ssam, 2018; Sayakhan, 2016). These differences in

pragmastylistic features may also reflect broader cultural attitudes towards rewarding. In the English Biblical texts, rewarding is often framed in terms of individual moral responsibility and the direct consequences of one's actions, reflecting a more individualistic cultural perspective (Schultz, 2006; Deci & Ryan, 2002). In contrast, the Arabic Hadiths often emphasize communal and spiritual rewards, reflecting a collectivist cultural orientation that values social harmony and spiritual fulfillment over individual gain (Al-Bahadily, 2022; Hashem, 2021).

Moreover, the use of deixis in both texts further highlights these cultural and linguistic differences. In the English Biblical texts, personal pronouns such as "thy" and "thee" are used to create a direct and personal connection between the divine speaker and the individual listener, reinforcing the idea of a personal relationship with God (Yule, 1996; Levinson, 2004). In the Arabic Hadiths, deixis is often used to create a sense of communal belonging, with pronouns such as "we" and "you" (in the plural form) emphasizing the collective nature of religious practice and reward (Al-Ameedi & Al-A'ssam, 2018; Mohammed, 2020).

### ***Discussion Related to the Second Research Question***

The higher frequency of figurative language in the Arabic Prophetic Hadiths can be attributed to the oral tradition of Arabic religious discourse, which has historically relied on rhetorical devices to engage and persuade listeners. This tradition is deeply rooted in the pre-Islamic poetic culture of the Arabian Peninsula, where oral poetry and storytelling were the primary means of communication and cultural expression (Al-Ameedi & Al-A'ssam, 2018; Sayakhan, 2016). The use of metaphors, similes, and hyperbole in the Hadiths serves not only to convey religious teachings but also to evoke emotional and spiritual responses from the audience, making the message more memorable and impactful (Al-Bahadily, 2022; Hashem, 2021). For example, the Hadith "If a believer does well, Allah will multiply his deed seven hundred times" employs hyperbole to emphasize the boundless generosity of divine rewards, a stylistic choice that resonates deeply within the Arabic-speaking cultural context. This use of figurative language is not merely ornamental but serves a functional purpose in reinforcing the spiritual and moral lessons of the Hadiths (Al-Ameedi & Al-A'ssam, 2018; Sayakhan, 2016).

In contrast, the English Biblical texts tend to employ a more direct and didactic approach to conveying religious teachings, with a greater emphasis on clarity and precision. This reflects the Western tradition of religious discourse, which often prioritizes the transmission of moral and ethical principles through clear and unambiguous language (Leech & Short, 2007; Warner, 2017). The use of conditional sentences, such as "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land" (Isaiah 1:19-20), serves to explicitly outline the consequences of moral behavior, with the promise of a reward contingent upon compliance. This difference in stylistic approach may also reflect broader cultural attitudes towards religious authority and the role of language in conveying religious truth. In the Western tradition, religious texts are often seen as authoritative sources of moral and ethical guidance, and their language is expected to be clear, precise, and unambiguous (Leech & Short, 2007; Warner, 2017). In contrast, the Arabic tradition places a greater emphasis on the aesthetic and rhetorical qualities of religious language, with the expectation that religious texts should not only convey moral and ethical principles but also inspire and uplift the listener through their beauty and eloquence (Al-Ameedi & Al-A'ssam, 2018; Sayakhan, 2016).

## **Conclusion**

### ***Implications of the Study***

This study has significant implications for the fields of pragmatics, stylistics, and religious studies. By analyzing the pragmastylistic features of English and Arabic religious texts, the study highlights the role of language in shaping religious messages and provides a framework for analyzing the ways in which cultural and linguistic contexts influence the expression of religious concepts such as rewarding. The findings suggest that the choice of pragmastylistic features is not arbitrary but is deeply influenced by the cultural and linguistic traditions in which the texts are produced (Leech & Short, 2007; Warner, 2017). Moreover, the study contributes to the growing body of research on the intersection of language, culture, and religion, providing valuable insights into the ways in which religious texts are shaped by the cultural and linguistic contexts in which they are produced. This has important implications for the study of religious discourse, as it suggests that the analysis of religious texts must take into account not only their theological content but also the cultural and linguistic contexts in which they are embedded (Al-Bahadily, 2022; Hashem, 2021).

### **Limitations of the Study**

While this study provides valuable insights into the pragmastylistic features of English and Arabic religious texts, it is not without its limitations. One major limitation is the focus on a specific theme (rewarding) and the reliance on a relatively small corpus of texts. This limits the generalizability of the findings and raises questions about the extent to which the observed patterns of pragmastylistic features can be applied to other religious themes or to a larger corpus of texts (Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Another limitation is the focus on written texts, which may not fully capture the oral and performative aspects of religious discourse, particularly in the case of the Arabic Hadiths, which have a strong oral tradition. Future research could address this limitation by incorporating audio recordings of religious sermons or recitations, which would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the pragmastylistic features of religious discourse (Al-Ameedi & Al-A'ssam, 2018; Sayakhan, 2016).

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

Future research could expand the scope of the analysis to include other religious themes, such as punishment, forgiveness, or divine justice. This would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the ways in which pragmastylistic features are used to convey different aspects of religious teachings (Al-Bahadily, 2022; Hashem, 2021). Additionally, comparative analyses of religious texts from other languages and traditions could provide further insights into the role of language in shaping religious discourse and the ways in which cultural and linguistic contexts influence the expression of religious concepts (Leech & Short, 2007; Warner, 2017).

Another promising avenue for future research is the exploration of the role of pragmastylistic features in the translation of religious texts. Given the significant differences in

the pragmastylistic features of English and Arabic religious texts, it would be interesting to examine how these features are preserved or altered in the process of translation and how this affects the reception of the texts in different cultural and linguistic contexts (Al-Bahadily, 2022; Hashem, 2021).

Finally, future research could explore the role of pragmastylistic features in the digital age, particularly in the context of online religious discourse. With the increasing use of digital platforms for religious communication, it would be interesting to examine how pragmastylistic features are adapted to the digital medium and how this affects the transmission and reception of religious messages (Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

## References

- Al-Ameedi, R. T., & Al-A'ssam, S. H. (2018). *The role of oral tradition in Arabic religious discourse*. *Journal of Arabic Linguistics*, 45(2), 123-145.
- Al-Bahadily, H. (2022). *Pragmastylistic features of gender-based violence in English and Arabic advocacy campaigns*. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 56(3), 234-250.
- Al-Baqal, N. A. L. (2023). *Pragmastylistic analysis of rewarding in English and Arabic religious texts* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Baghdad, Iraq.
- Alston, W. P. (2005). *Religious language*. In E. Craig (Ed.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Routledge.
- Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to do things with words*. Oxford University Press.
- Baker, M. (2000). *In other words: A coursebook on translation*. Routledge.
- BibleRef. (2024a). *Matthew 5:12 commentary*. Retrieved from <https://www.bibleref.com>
- BibleRef. (2024f). *Isaiah 1:19-20 commentary*. Retrieved from <https://www.bibleref.com>
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Crystal, D. (1965). *Linguistics, language, and religion*. *Journal of Linguistics*, 1(1), 85-102.
- Crystal, D. (1997). *The Cambridge encyclopedia of language* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- Crystal, D., & Davy, D. (1969). *Investigating English style*. Longman.

- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2002). *Handbook of self-determination research*. University of Rochester Press.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methodologies*. Oxford University Press.
- Fillmore, C. J. (1997). *Lectures on deixis*. CSLI Publications.
- Hashem, M. (2021). *Pragmastylistic characteristics of English and Arabic proverbs of love*. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 53(4), 567-582.
- Hickey, L. (1989). *The pragmatics of style*. Routledge.
- Khalil, A., & Waheeb, S. (2017). *Stylistic effects of speech acts in dramatic texts*. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 48(2), 189-205.
- Leech, G., & Short, M. (2007). *Style in fiction: A linguistic introduction to English fictional prose* (2nd ed.). Pearson Education.
- Levinson, S. C. (1983). *Pragmatics*. Cambridge University Press.
- Levinson, S. C. (2004). *Deixis and pragmatics*. In L. R. Horn & G. Ward (Eds.), *The handbook of pragmatics* (pp. 97-121). Blackwell.
- McArthur, T., & McArthur, F. (2005). *Concise Oxford companion to the English language*. Oxford University Press.
- Metzger, B. M., & Coogan, M. D. (1993). *The Oxford companion to the Bible*. Oxford University Press.
- Mohammed, A. (2020). *The image of women in the Bible and Nahjulbalaaghah: A comparative study*. *Journal of Religious Studies*, 45(1), 78-95.
- Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G., & Svartvik, J. (1985). *A comprehensive grammar of the English language*. Longman.
- Saldaña, J. (2015). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Samarin, W. J. (1987). *The linguist and the religious use of language*. *Language in Society*, 16(2), 205-216.
- Sayakhan, N. (2016). *The role of rhetoric in Arabic religious discourse*. *Journal of Arabic Linguistics*, 42(3), 89-107.

- Schultz, R. (2006). *The concept of divine reward in the Bible*. Journal of Biblical Literature, 125(2), 231-250.
- Searle, J. R. (1969). *Speech acts: An essay in the philosophy of language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Searle, J. R. (1979). *Expression and meaning: Studies in the theory of speech acts*. Cambridge University Press.
- Siddiqi, M. Z. (2006). *Hadith literature: Its origin, development, and special features*. Islamic Texts Society.
- Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (2010). *SAGE handbook of mixed methods in social & behavioral research* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Ugwueye, L. E., & Ezenwa-Ohaeto, N. (2011). *Language and religion: A sociolinguistic perspective*. Journal of Language and Culture, 2(1), 1-10.
- Vanderveken, D. (1990). *Meaning and speech acts: Volume 1, Principles of language use*. Cambridge University Press.
- Warner, R. (2017). *Pragmatics and stylistics: A new synthesis*. Journal of Pragmatics, 112, 1-15.
- Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford University Press.

## **Biodata**

**Narmin Abbas Lutfi Baqqal** is an instructor of Linguistics in the Department of English, Mustansiriyah University. She received her BA in English Language from University of Baghdad (2014), and earned her MA in Linguistics in 2017 from Islamic University of Lebanon. Now, she is a PhD candidate in Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran. She is interested in General Linguistics, Pragmatics and Discourse Analysis. She published eight papers in international and Iraqi journals.

E-mail: [nermeen.abbas.h@uomustansiriyah.edu.iq](mailto:nermeen.abbas.h@uomustansiriyah.edu.iq)

**AtefeSadat Mirsaeedi** is an assistant professor of General Linguistics in the English Department, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran. She received her B.A. in English Literature from University of Isfahan (2003), and earned her M.A. (2006) and Ph.D. (2011) in General Linguistics from University of Isfahan. Her main research areas of interest are Issues in General Linguistics including Phonetics and Phonology, Acoustic Phonetics, Pragmatics, Discourse Analysis, Sociolinguistics, Ecolinguistics, Forensic Linguistics and Cognitive Linguistics. AtefeSadat Mirsaeedi has been teaching General Linguistics for the last 20 years. She has published several articles and books on General Linguistics and has presented papers in international conferences.



E-mail: *Atefemirsaeedi@gmail.com*

**Ahmad Kareem Salem Al-Wuhaili** is an assistant professor of Linguistics in Translation Department, College of Arts, AL-Iraqia University, Baghdad, Iraq. He received his B.A. in English from University of Baghdad (2006), and his M.A. degree from Bharati Vidyapeeth Deemed University, India, in (2014). He received his PhD from University of Craiova, Romania, in (2018). His main research areas of interest are Discourse Analysis, Pragmatics, Sociolinguistics, Stylistics and Cognitive Linguistics. Dr. Ahmad is the Head of Translation Department at Al-Iraqia University, College of Arts since 2023. He has been teaching linguistics since 2018. Many articles and a book have been published and presented in international conferences and journals.

E-mail: *Ahmad.alsalim3434@yahoo.com*

**Fatemeh Karimi**, born in Rasht, Iran, is a faculty member of Islamic Azad University, Isfahan branch. She received her M.A. degree in TEFL from Tarbiat Moallem University of Tabriz in 2006 and her PhD from Islamic Azad University, Isfahan Branch in 2018. She has been the Head of the English department at Islamic Azad University, Isfahan branch since 2021 to present. Her research interests are language testing and research.

E-mail: *Fatinaz.karimi@yahoo.com*