ICONICITY IN THE BINOMIALS OF THE GLORIOUS QURAN: AL-BAQARAH SURA AS A CASE STUDY

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Abstract
This study investigates evidence for the existence of iconicity as a processing strategy in Quranic discourse. It is argued here that the Muslim's most glorious book, the Qur'an, is an excellent source of morphosyntactic iconicity in the Arabic language. The hypothesis was tested by analysing sixty-six binomials from Al-Baqarah Sura within a synthetic model based on an extension of Givón's 1984 model of iconicity. The main reason for investigating Binomials in this sura is that it is the first, longest and most basic since it provides the background to other suras of the Qur'an. The findings show that some of the sampled iconic binomials accord with these principles, while others are iconic with regard to the human perceptual system. This result challenges Saussurian arbitrariness and lends support for the view that some aspects of language are iconic. Furthermore, iconic binomials are richly manifested in Quranic lexicon and discourse. This is because they are part of the rhetoric of Quran. Allah has created everything in pairs: night and day, death and life, sun and moon, paradise and hell, etc. These pairs express such rhetorical functions as revealing situation, warning, promising, inhibition, specification, etc. They also express Allah's intention in motivating people to make a balance between benefits and problems of each pair. The role played by iconic binomials can be easily tested by removing some of them from the suras of Quran and asking what happens then. On such cases, the Quranic rhetoric is distorted rather than unites. Above all, such binomials are cross linguistics, they are universal since they are found in all languages. This conclusions challenges Sapir-Worf hypothesis and lends support to an assumption of a minimal universality of linguistic interactions.

Keywords: Binomials; Iconicity; Sequence Iconicity; Cognitive; Discourse

Abstrak

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Kata kunci: Binomial; Iconisitas; Iconisitas Urutan; kognitif; Ceramah

مستخلص

بحث هذه الدراسة في الأدلة على وجود الأيقونية كاستراتيجية معالية في الخطاب القرآني. وبناءً على القرآن الكريم، وهو كتاب للمسلمين وهو مصدر ممتاز للأيقونية الصرفية في اللغة العربية، تم اختيار فرضية من خلال تحليل سلسلة وست أيقونات من سورة البقرة ضمن نموذج تركيبي يعتمد على امتداد لنموذج الأيقونية الذي وضعه جيفسون عام 1984. تم اختيار سورة البقرة للدراسة بسبب أنها السورة الأطول وأواسس لامتداد أorre القرآن الأخرى. وتظهر النتائج بأن بعض من الأيقونات توافق مع هذه المبادئ، في حين أن البعض الآخر يعتبر أيقونياً فيما يتعلق بالجهاز الإدراكي البشري. تتحدث هذه النتائج التصور السوسيولوجي وتدعم وجهة النظر القائلة بأن بعض جوانب اللغة مبدعة. علامة على ذلك، فإن الثنائيةات المميزة تجلب بشكل غني في معجم القرآن وخطابه، وذلك لأنهم جزء من بلاغة القرآن. لقد خلق الله كل شيء أجزاء: الليل والنهار، الحضانة، الشمس والقمر، الحياة والنار، الخ. وهذه الأزواج تعبر عن وظائف بلاغية مثل الكشف عن الحال، والتحذير، والوعود، والنهي، والخصوص، الخ. كما أنها تعبر عن قدس الله في تحقيق الناس على تحقيق النور بين قوانين مشاكل كل زوج. ويمكن اختيار الدور الذي تلعبه ثنائيات الحديث بسهولة من خلال إزالة بعضها من سور القرآن الكريم، وفي الحالاتبعد ذلك. وفي مثل هذه الحالات، يتم تشويه الخطاب القرآني بدلاً من أن يتوجه قبل كل شيء، مثل هذه الثنائيةات هي لغويات متقاطة، فهي عالمية لأنها موجودة في جميع اللغات. تنتهي هذه الاستنتاجات مضاربة، وتدعم افتراض الحد الأدنى من عالمية التفاعلات اللغوية.

كلمات رئيسية: الثنائيةات; الأيقونة; الأيقونة التتابعيه; الإدراك; الخطاب

Vol. 23. No. 2, August 2023 |405
A. INTRODUCTION

Arabic This study focuses on analysing the coordinating opposites or near synonymous iconic binomials which appear in an irreversible linear word order. It is believed here that the fixed order of the binomial determines its meaning, and so reduplicative expressions and reversible binomials are excluded. The received view that language is arbitrary has been challenged by advocates of the iconicity theory\(^1\), functional typology\(^2\), theory of meaning and form\(^3\), grammar \(^4\) and with the principles of iconicity \(^5\), inter alia). Indeed, it is true that language follows no universal logic, i.e., language is essentially arbitrary. Ferdinand de Saussure stated in his *Course in General Linguistics* that “the linguistic sign is arbitrary”\(^6\). Since that time, each language has been studied according to its own logic, and each provides an intricate system of symbols that represents nature in its own way. Evidence for Saussurian arbitrariness can be seen in almost all languages. In Arabic, for example, it is necessary to distinguish between (عَم) ‘a paternal uncle’ and (خَال) ‘a maternal uncle’ with separate words, while English employs the single word ‘uncle’. This implies that languages are not based on logic in the same way as mathematical concepts\(^7\).

Although Saussurian arbitrariness as a line of argument was followed for generations by scholars, further research produced a different paradigm, that of iconic form-meaning mappings. In this regard, linguists have begun to study the iconic features of language in both spoken and written modalities and at all levels of language from sound to text\(^8\). Newmeyer considers *iconic mapping* as a general property of language structure and he discusses in detail the iconicity of onomatopoeia. This type of iconicity is well-acknowledged in linguistics\(^9\). The structure of language reflects the structure of experience. He gives examples of several iconic principles such as complexity, coherence, and quantity\(^10\). However, the main problem with the topic of iconicity is that it has largely been neglected in linguistic research.

in favour of arbitrariness. Another problem is that the existing research on the topic has narrowed down its scope to signed and spoken languages only. The solution to these problems lies in regarding iconicity as a principle of language organisation and broadening its scope to other modalities of language, as well as applying it to language teaching (outside the scope of this paper).

Our contribution to this new or opposite paradigm is to show that iconicity is a functional principle of language organisation and categorisation in the Glorious Quran. Iconic binomials (BIs) are one of the most frequent literary devices used in the Quran and, indeed, it is virtually impossible to find a Sura of the Glorious Quran which does not contain some iconic BIs because they are part of the Quran’s rhetoric. Iconic BIs may thus be regarded as part of the literary richness of the Noble Quran. All these considerations make iconic BIs deserve serious investigation. The aims of this study are threefold: to investigate the role played by iconic BIs in comprehending Quranic discourse; to identify whether iconic Quranic BIs are different from ordinary BIs in Arabic; to prove that iconicity is of no less significance than arbitrariness for a more comprehensive theory of language use. Preferring one over the other makes language use rigid. The following research questions are generated: How are iconic Quranic BIs processed using syntactic analysis? Which iconic principles determine the order of Quranic BIs? Which model of analysis can be used to analyse BIs in the Glorious Quran? Are Quranic BIs different from ordinary BIs in Arabic regarding their structure and meaning?

On the basis of these questions, we postulate the following hypotheses:
Iconicity is richly manifested in the Quranic lexicon and discourse. Iconicity is basically an interdisciplinary phenomenon which operates at all levels of discourse from sound to text and ideology; Iconic BIs in the Glorious Quran reflect the structure of the universe, based on word pairs; Iconic principles are natural tendencies in language and are part of our cognitive and biological make-up; and Iconic BIs reflect the literary richness of the Glorious Quran.

B. DISCUSSION

An early reference to iconicity is found in Plato’s Cratylus dialogue, in which Socrates is asked whether names belong to their objects naturally or conventionally. In reply, Socrates confesses that he prefers the view that “names should be as much like things as
possible”. Unfortunately, Socrates’ view was isolated and even ridiculed by Saussure and, since, the arbitrariness of the linguistic sign has become a design feature of language. Levelt et al. went further by denying the presence of any natural connection between form and meaning in favour of iconic and motivated form-meaning mapping in language.

Therefore, a good starting point from which to develop a theory of iconicity is to return to Peirce. His theory of semiotics divides signs into icons whose forms resemble their meanings; they are indices whose forms share an existential link with their objects or meanings, and symbols which are conventional or arbitrary. Peirce further differentiated three kinds of icons: images, diagrams, and metaphors. This system of signs was used later by Jakobson, who broadened the scope of iconicity from the level of sound to the morphosyntactic level of analysis, and thereby paved the way for a linguistic study of iconicity. Furthermore, the works of cognitive linguists such as Givón have made iconicity a key term in several fields such as semantics, poetry, novels, and advertising; however, it is scarcely used as a categorisation strategy for BIs in the Glorious Quran.

1.1 Definitions and Origins of Iconicity
1.1.1 Definitions
As early as 1932, Peirce broadly defined iconicity as the relation between linguistic form and its object or meaning. Others have defined it in the light of linguistic structure and concept. Shen for example, argues that the linguistic structure reflects the conceptual structure. Like Peirce, Haiman regards iconicity as the relation of resemblance between a set of signs and their forms. For Fromkin, iconicity is a non-arbitrary relation between form and meaning. What all these definitions have in common is that they focus on the similarity or resemblance of words.

In this study, iconicity is defined as the similarity between the form of a sign and its meaning. It is basically an interdisciplinary phenomenon that plays a key role in the organisation and categorisation of Arabic, particularly in the discourse of the Muslim’s most glorious book, the Quran. Iconicity is one of the most important distinguishing features of Quranic discourse. Iconic binomials in the Glorious Quran contribute information over and above the propositional content of the verses (Kanaan, forthcoming). This is why the topic is worthy of study.

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1.1.2 Origins

All linguists agree that language and thought are closely related, but whether language determines thought or vice versa remains controversial. It is over fifty years since Chomsky made the argument that the human brain contains a limited set of constraints (i.e., rules known as universal grammar) for organising language. The main problem with this argument is that the mental mechanisms that shape language are still implicit. Hence, it is important to know which principles determine the system we use for organising and categorising information.

In a recent work on the topic, cognitive linguists like Marcus and Calude claimed that, although mental mechanisms are not visible or explicit, the distinguishing features of human language, such as discreteness and sequentiality that are imposed by a genuine link with the ‘left-hemisphere of the brain’, make language a potentially universal phenomenon. They added that the universality of language is due to the universality of the left-hemisphere as part of the human brain. As such, they believe that the direct link between biology and language is a clear manifestation of universal iconicity. This implies that iconicity comes from the direct link between biology and language. They conclude their discussion on the topic by stating that, “looking through the lens of the syntactic microscope allows us to see the mechanisms which shape language, iconicity being one of them”.

An important question which arises here concerns whether we can test Marcus and Caludes’ claim regarding the way in which the left-right axis of human brains is iconically mirrored. The answer is yes. It is quite obvious in linguistic expressions of spatial orientation. However, in syntax, English speakers, for example, imitate egocentric serialisation of ‘up’ before ‘down’, ‘front’ before ‘back’, and ‘right’ before ‘left’. Because of our visual and spatial experiences, we want to see things clearly even if they are too abstract. Accordingly, when we see something higher than other things we consider it more important because what is more important is higher up in our conceptual hierarchy. Similarly, what is positive is more important than what is negative. In this way, iconicity reduces the gap between linguistic form and conceptual representation to allow language to link to our motor and perceptual experience (Kanaan, forthcoming).

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1.2 Binomials in Arabic

The phenomenon of BIs was not explicitly identified by the old Arab grammarians and linguists. Accordingly, BIs in Arabic have been studied under such nomenclatures as:

١٧ ﺍﻟﺘﻘﺎﺑﻞ، ﺍﻟﻨﻬﺎﺭ ﻭﺍﻟﻠﻴﻞ، ﺍﻟﺤﻴﺎﺓ ﻭﺍﻟﻤﻮﺕ
١٨ ﺍﻹﺗﺒﺎﻉ، ﺍﻟﺘﻘﺎﺑﻞ، ﺍﻟﺠﻨﺎﺱ
١٩ ، ﻭﺍﻟﻄﺒﺎﻕ

Early Arab scholars regard BIs as a sub-category of polysemous words, i.e., one word with two different meanings. The word ‘ﺟﻮﺍﻥ’, for example, is used for both black and white in Arabic. The nearest equivalent to BIs in Arabic is probably the term ‘التقابل’, which may be rendered as oppositions in pairs such as ﺍﻟﻨﻬﺎﺭ ﻭﺍﻟﻠﻴﻞ (day and night), ﺍﻣﺎﻡ ﻭﺨﻠﻒ (forward and backward), and ﺍﻟﺤﻴﺎﺓ ﻭﺍﻟﻤﻮﺕ (life and death). In this study, BIs are defined as cognitive preference organisation strategies that speakers of language use in discourse processing. They are semantically non-compositional since their total meaning cannot be derived from the meaning of their parts. They are syntactically frozen in that they cannot be affected by transformational rules. When the order of the BIs is fixed, it is said to be irreversible, as in pairs such as ﻫﻨﺎ ﻭﻫﻨﺎﻙ (here and there) and ﺍﺳﻮﺩ ﻭﺍﺑﻴﺾ (black and white). The order of irreversible BIs is, to a considerable degree, an iconic reflection of the conceptual structure. Since BIs are very frequent in Al-Baqara Sura, only those word pairs connected with a conjunction such as ﺍﻟﻨﻬﺎﺭ ﻭﺍﻟﻠﻴﻞ (day and night) are included in the corpus. Thus, although most of the analysed BIs are opposites, some are at least near-synonyms.

1.3 Rationale for the Selection of Al-Baqarah Sura (Sura 2)

The main reason for investigating BIs in this sura is that it is the first, longest and most basic since it provides the background to other suras of the Quran. Another reason is that the BIs mentioned in this sura are repeated in other suras’ verses in the Quran. BIs such as ﻷﷲ ﻭﺍﻟﻴﻮﻡ ﺍﻻﺧﺮ (Allah and the last day), ﺍﻟﺴﻤﺎﺀ ﻭﺍﻻﺭﺽ (heaven and Earth), and ﺍﻟﻨﻬﺎﺭ ﻭﺍﻟﻠﻴﻞ (day and night) are repeated many times. Repetition by itself is a facet of iconicity. Furthermore, most of the Quranic stories, laws, and theses mentioned in this sura are elaborated further in subsequent suras of the Quran.

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1.4 Previous Works

Much has been written on BIs in the Arabic language. These studies have focused primarily on the constraints determining the order of BIs and their grammatical and semantic categories. To the best of our knowledge, no study has yet appeared on syntactic iconicity in the BIs of the Glorious Quran. This is the primary purpose behind investigating this controversial and interesting topic. Another inspiration is to prove that iconicity constraint is the most important ordering principle accounting for BI ordering.

Kanaan analysed 130 BIs in Arabic with reference to English to identify whether BIs contribute to a theory of language which is pragmatically rather than grammatically motivated. Data analysis was performed within the framework of pragmatics as a general functional perspective on language. The analysis yielded positive results concerning the hypothesis since it was found that the ordering of BIs was largely based on the experientially and socially produced patterns of expectation held by most members of the speech community. Another striking conclusion is that iconicity was found to override other constraints. It is this conclusion which motivated the researchers of the current paper to investigate iconicity in Quranic BIs to show that the iconicity constraint is the most important neglected ordering principle.

Mahdi investigated binomial expressions in ‘The Morning Invocation’ by Imam Ali bin Abi Talib (A S). This is the first paper that deals with religious BIs, focusing primarily on the formal features of BIs and the constraints determining their order. The results showed that most BIs are noun + noun combinations. This conclusion gives support to other studies. Mahdi also found that the phonological constraint is the most important factor in determining the order of BIs. With regard to the semantic categories, the analysis shows that most BIs are opposites. Both conclusions were previously drawn by other researchers.

A more recent work on iconicity in religious texts is that of Sultan and Lafta. In their paper entitled ‘Imagic Iconicity in Saad Sura’ (Sura 38), the researchers carried out a morphophonemic study of imagic iconicity. The aim of this paper was to evidence the existence of iconicity as a phono symbolic process in the discourse of the Glorious Quran.

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23 Lafta, Maha, and Abbas HJ Sultan. "IMAGIC ICONICITY IN SAAD SURAH: A MORPHOPHONEMIC STUDY." Journals Eduction for Girls 1, no. 27 (2020).
The paper was based on the hypothesis that the Glorious Quran presents a wonderful start for a linguistic study of the appearance, form and representation of phonological iconicity in Arabic. To verify the hypothesis, the researchers adopted Fischer and Nännys’ model of imagic iconicity to facilitate the assessment of phonological iconicity. The analysis revealed that the iconicity principle starts with phonemes and morphemes, and finally moves to visual, tactile, and rhythmical features. Thus, the existence of imagic iconicity in this sura resists the narrowing of the scope of iconicity to mere onomatopoeia. This conclusion further motivated us to investigate iconicity in larger structures.

The most recent study on religious BIs was by Al-Otaibi, who defines binomials as a collection of two combined words belonging to the same word class. He claimed that binomials are very frequent in every language. In his study, he reviewed literature on religious BIs in Hebrew and Arabic and argued that, in both languages, the focus has been on constraints determining the order of binomials, their semantics and grammatical categories, and their functions. He concluded by arguing for further research on BIs in the Holy Quran and Hadith.

It is hoped that the present study will be of value to teachers and students learning English as a foreign language since it will draw their attention to the fact that iconicity can be implemented as a learning strategy. It may also be of help to translators. In general, translators aim to find expressions which are as equivalent as possible to the original text. This implies that translators want to achieve the greatest or highest degree of iconicity between the translated and original texts. The study may also be of significance to readers and interpreters of the Glorious Quran since it may motivate them to interpret the Quran at its most abstract and deepest level to understand its propositional and intended meanings. Furthermore, scholars from different fields such as discourse analysis, cognitive linguistics, semantics and linguistics may benefit from it. Pragmatists may also benefit from the findings of this study since it provides valid proofs that iconicity is a crucial aspect of language use.


2 Methods

2.1 Model of Analysis

In this study, a synthetic model which is an extension of Givón’s model of iconicity principles is used to study Quranic BIs. In our model, some of the principles of iconicity mentioned by Givon are conflated, some have been omitted and new ones have been added. As such, the researchers have drawn heavily up on scholars working within the theory of iconicity in particular Peirce and Marcus and Calude. This implies that our model is basically eclectic. We have made use of a number of notes, comments and proposals appearing here and there in order to come up with generalisations where possible. In our revised model, we added new BI categories specific to the Quran which differ from other BIs in Arabic. In addition, we found that more than one principle of iconicity determines the order of BIs (see Givon model below).

2.2 Givón’s model 1984

Givón’s model of iconicity manifests itself in the following principles:

1. The quantity principle. In its simple form, this principle means the more form, the more meaning, or to say more and more by less and less.

2. The proximity principle. This principle means nearness or closeness. Givón stated that ‘entities that are closer together functionally, conceptually or cognitively will be placed close together at the code level’.

3. The distant principle. This principle implies bringing together at the code level two entities that are opposed in their meaning. This type of iconicity is similar to Nöth’s model of the iconicity of symmetry. Nöth recognises three types of symmetry, mirror, translative, and antisymmetry; the latter is the focus of our study. This type of iconicity is best illustrated by pairs of universal opposites such as heaven and hell, sun and moon, and day and night. Most of the analysed BIs are in accordance with this principle.

4. Sequence Iconicity. This type of iconicity is either temporal or spatial. stated that ‘The order of syntactic elements reflects the order in which they are expressed in a series of events’. For example, life and death as a BI iconises temporal sequence for the simple reason that one has to live before dying. There is no death before living. The second dimension of the sequence is the spatial position in nature. These include dimensions like upper and lower, front and back, and left and right. Spatial sequence

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iconicity is influenced by our cognition which is based on our physical experience, namely our visual perception.

5. **Word order iconicity.** In our synthetic model, we subsumed all principles of iconicity mentioned by Givón under word order iconicity. This type of iconicity indicates preference, hierarchy or chronology, implying that iconic BIs reflect the syntax of preference. Thus, positive concepts precede negative ones (e.g., good and bad, high and low, great and small, and light and dark. The BI of Allah and the last day iconises chronology, while the BI of Adam and Eve iconises hierarchy, and that of eat and drink iconises preference. Our point of departure of Givon is that we have found that some binomials in the Glorious Quran are iconic by a bundle of principles.

### 2.3 Data Collection and Study Procedure

In this study, 66 iconic BIs were analysed via the synthetic model mentioned earlier. Since BIs are very frequent in Al-Baqarah Sura, only those word pairs linked by the conjunction *wa* (and) were included. The analysed BIs are more commonly found in the religious texts of Semitic languages, and some of them are universal (e.g., heaven and earth, sun and moon, day and night). Quranic translations are based on Al-Hilali and Khans’ study entitled *Interpretation of the Meanings of the Noble Quran*[^27]. The procedure followed in collecting BIs was to translate them literally first and then to transcribe them phonemically.

### 3. Data Analysis, Results and Discussion

For the purpose of analysis, we divided the BIs into three groups: opposites which show iconicity of antisymmetry; triplets (three element BIs and ‘quadruplets’ (four element BIs[^28])); and, near-synonym BIs.

#### 3.1 Group one

The first group is in accordance with Givón’s distance principle, such as:

1. ﷲ ﻭﺍﻟﻴﻮﻡ ﺍﻻﺧﺮ
   - ‘Allah and the last day’
2. ﻣﺎﺋﺯ ﻭﺍﻟﺤﺠﺎﺭﺓ
   - ‘Men and stones’


ICONICITY IN THE BINOMIALS OF THE GLORIOUS QURAN: AL-BAQARAH
SURA AS A CASE STUDY

(3) السماوة والأرض / ‘Heaven and the Earth’

(4) الحق والباطل / ‘Truth and fact’

(5) كلوا واشربو / ‘Eat and drink’

(6) المرء وزوجه / ‘Man and his wife’

(7) الجنة والنار / ‘Heaven and hell’

(8) الشرق والمغرب / ‘East and west’

(9) الدنيا والآخرة / ‘This life and hereafter’

(10) الرجل والمرأة / ‘Man and two women’

(11) يحيا ويميت / ‘Gives life and death’

(12) يسروان ويعلنون / ‘Conceal and reveal’

(13) الجن والإنس / ‘Jinn and human’

(14) الشمال والجنوب / ‘North and south’

(15) ليلى ونهار / ‘Night and day’

Some of these BIs occur both in the common Arabic language and the Quranic discourse but their meanings are different from their ordinary usual meanings. All are clear manifestations of Allah’s existence as the One Creator who should be worshipped. They are iconic by virtue of the fact that they express Allah’s intention to be worshipped. Another iconic source of such BIs is due to their intuitive common base with the respective BIs in everyday Arabic language.

Semantically, they are opposites. As far as the grammatical categories are concerned, all except the BIs five, and 11–12 are combinations of noun + noun, while BIs five, and 11–12 are verb + verb combinations. The order of the first group of BIs is irreversible because of the iconicity of the Quranic language. For example, the BI \( 	ext{الدنيا والاخرة} \) (this world and hereafter), is irreversible, i.e. the reverse order is impossible because ‘this world’ precedes the ‘other world’. The BI iconises chronology. A question which can be raised now is why the reverse order is impossible. In the available literature, scholars have mentioned many ordering constraints such as phonological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic. 16 for example, mentioned approximately twenty ordering constraints which they subsumed under the umbrella term ‘ME First’. Iconicity is regarded as a peripheral phenomenon which does not deserve serious study.

In this study, we regard iconicity both as a conceptual phenomenon and cognitive process which contributes to meaning construction in discourse in general and in the Glorious
In cognitive semantics (for example²⁹ and³⁰), it is believed that meaning not only resides in linguistic terms but also in language users’ conceptualisation of situations and events. To reiterate, although the mental mechanisms which determine language are implicit, our conceptual structure is embodied, i.e., it is related to our sensory perception. As such, we think first of all of what is iconic.

The BI /ﷲ ﻭﺍﻟﻴﻮﻡ ﺍﻵﺧﺮ (Allah and the last day) is a combination of two nouns: Allah Who is the Creator of the whole universe and ‘the last day’, i.e., life after death. It also iconises chronology; when we reverse the order, confusion occurs regarding the interpretation of the verse in which the BI occurs. This BI occurs five times in the analysed sura in different contexts. In /V. 8, Sura 2/, the BI addresses hypocrites who claim that they believe in ‘Allah and the last day’, but /V.9, Sura 2/ shows that they are pagans who worship idols. In /V. 126, Sura 2/, the BI is metaphorically iconic since it stands for (أمان ‘security’; أمان ‘protection’; رحمہ ‘mercy’ and الامل ‘hope’) of winning in the hereafter. In /V. 62/, the BI is also metaphorically iconic since it is a symbol of the ‘heaven’ for the pious, i.e., believers who believe in ‘Allah and the last day’, will be rewarded by Almighty Allah after they die. In all these instances, the BI also iconises Allah’s intention to warn hypocrites and make a promise to the pious. The underlying semantic structure of these BIs is that they all describe ‘the last day’, sometimes in terms of heaven for the pious, but sometimes all five occurrences of the BI ‘Allah and the last day’ are used as cognitive tools in the Quran to understand the abstract world.

The other frequent BI is in example three, which is also a combination of two nouns. It occurs three times in Sura 2. Being visually iconic, this type of iconicity is used in the Quran to increase the effect of meanings and messages. The ‘Heaven’ and the ‘Earth’ and the objects they contain are visible and clear manifestations of Allah’s existence. This refutes the claim of disbelievers who deny the existence of Allah. The BI also iconises preference, in that what is higher is more salient than what is lower. This is how our conceptual structure is used to perceive the world. The BI is interpreted according to a sensory perception grounded in conceptual structure. It also ensures maximal ease of accessing the intended meaning of Allah. Thus, it is in accordance with Grice’s maxim of manner³¹, which requires the speaker to avoid obscurity. Moreover, the BI also iconises

metonymy: Methodological, theoretical, and descriptive issues, 121-160.
relevance and thus it is in accordance with Sperber and Wilson’s principle of relevance. The BI ‘heaven and Earth’ is also iconic with regard to the sequence since it deals with spatial reference. It is closely related to our bodily movement. Again, here we have several iconic principles due to the inimitable nature of the Glorious Quran. In the light of this discussion, we can suggest that the more iconic principles apply, the greater the iconic motivation of the BI.

The BIs examples 2, 6, 8, 10, and 14 iconise semantic preference. BI five also iconises semantic preference but is a combination of verb + verb. BI two is quite striking. In this BI, both ‘men and stones’ are regarded as fuels for the fire (i.e., hell). We know from experience that the fuels of fire are straw and wood. Thus, this BI is also metaphorically iconic because both ‘men and stones’ are described as fuels.

Before we proceed further, we would like to make two general remarks about the analysis of the opposite BIs. The first remark deals with the synthetic model being applied in this study. The main reason for extending Givón’s model of iconicity is to make it applicable to the Quranic discoursers. The analysis of this group of BIs shows that some Quranic BIs are iconic via principles. The BIs ‘man and wife’ and ‘man and two women’, for example, not only iconise semantic preference but also iconise power. According to our conceptual structure, the first element of the BI has a higher rank than the second and, accordingly, takes precedence. The same is true of the BIs ‘Allah and the last day’ and ‘Allah and His messengers’, as well as the BI ‘men and stones’. The second remark deals with the order of BIs in the Quran. The analysis of group one shows that the order of BIs in the Quranic discourse has considerable iconic motivation in that iconic principles seem to govern the choice of linguistic resources. Quranic verses combine BIs in the order which is socially preferable and cognitively more salient in accordance with our embodied conceptual structure. As such, Quranic BIs are an iconic reflection of our conceptual structure. Accordingly, we normally think of what is iconic first because it is easier to understand than which is not iconic.

### 3.2 Group Two

The second group of iconic BIs in the Glorious Quran is here called multinomials. These include what Duke calls ‘triplets’ (three words with complementary meanings), ‘quadruplets’ (four words with complementary meanings), and ‘literary lists’

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(combinations of five words and more). Watson calls literary lists ‘tours’. Examples of multinomials are given below:

(16) ختم الله على قلوبهم وعلى سمعهم وعلى بصائرهم
‘Set a seal on their hearts/ their hearing/ their eyes’ (Verse: 7)

(17) ‘darkness, thunder, lighting’
‘who believe in the Ghaib and perform As-Salat (prayer)….’

(18) الذين يؤمنون بالغيب ويعقمو الصلاة
(Verse: 3)

(19) ‘perform As-Salat/ give Zakat’

(20) ‘Jews / Christians / Sabians’

(21) ‘we have heard / disobeyed’

(22) ‘Circumambulating/ staying/ prostrating’

(23) ‘Pour forth on us patience/ Set firm our feet/ Make us victorious’

(24) ‘Our messenger reciting to you our verses purifying you, teaching, the book,/ Hikmah (Islamic Law ).’

(25) ‘Perform As-Salat (prayer) / give Zakat / Whatever of good deeds send for yourselves’

(26) ‘afflicted with poverty / ailments / were shaken’

(27) ‘Punishment is prescribed in case of murder: the free for the free / the slave for the slave / the female for the female’

(28) ‘those who have believed / emigrated / have striven hard’

(29) ‘Forbidden you the Mitah (dead animals ) / blood / flesh of swine/
that which is slaughtered not for Allah’

(30) ‘Spend their wealth in night / day / in secret / public’

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‘Those who believe/do deeds of righteousness /perform As-Salat/ give Zakat’

‘To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens/ on the earth/ whether you disclose/conceal it’

‘Ibrahim (Abraham)/ Ismail (Ismael)/ Ishaq (Isaac)/ Yaqub/ Al-Asbat’

‘Allah, His Angles, His Messengers, Jabrael (Gabriel)/ Mikael (Michael)’

‘Its herbs, / its cucumbers, / Fum (garlic)/ its lentils / its onions’

‘We believe in Allah / that which has been sent down to us and which has been sent down to Ibrahim, Ismail, Ishaq, Yaqub / to Al-Asbat (the offspring of the twelve sons of Yaqub) / that which has been given to Musa (Moses) and Isa (Jesus)/ that which has been given to prophets’

‘It is not Al-Birr that you turn your faces to the east / west but of the one who believes in Allah / the Last Day / the Angles / the Book / the Prophet/ gives wealth to the Kinsfolk / to the orphans / to the needy / to the wak-farer / to those who ask / to set slaves free / performs As-Salat / gives Zakat / who fulfill their covenant / who are patient in poverty / ailment / at the time of fighting’.
There are thirteen triplets (BIs 16–28), six quadruplets (BIs 29–34), and ten literary lists (BIs 35–44). This group of BIs tends to occur in the Glorious Quran and other scriptures and their existence in Quranic verses shows the richness of the Quran and variation in its style. Duke argues that word lists are not merely lists of words, as they take on special meaning because they form an ensemble that exhibits ‘unity and purpose’.

In contrast to opposites as mostly noun + noun constructions, multinomials appear in different grammatical classes such as nouns, verbs, and adverbs. The important role played by BI in general and this type in particular in creating the texture of the Glorious Quran can easily be tested by removing some of the verses in which they occur to see the effect. In such cases, the Quranic discourse becomes disjointed rather than united and is derailed rather than following a track. As such, multinomials iconise coherence. They are also concise because they are reduced forms of longer verses. Above all, they are iconic with the purpose for which they are used, i.e., to convey Quranic messages clearly, to give
proof of Allah’s existence, and to make people and readers think about, and meditate on, the Quranic verses.

In addition to conciseness and coherence iconicity, multinomials are also made iconic by other iconicity principles—they are in general in accordance with the quantity principle since they convey a great deal of information in a single verse. The BI in /V: 140/ and other verses which begin with the names of prophets iconise firstborn (i.e., birth order) or hierarchy. The triplet in /V: 3/ is ‘believe in Ghaib….’. Similarly, the triplet ‘darkness and thunder and lightning’ is heroically iconic because it is a simile. While the triplet ‘Allah has set a seal on their heart and their hearing and their eyes’ (V: 9) is metonymically iconic since ‘heart’, ‘hearing’ and ‘eyes’ are parts of the human body, i.e., there is a relation between the human body and these parts.

The most fascinating multinomial is /V: 164/: ‘Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the Earth and in the alternation of night and day, and the ships which sail through the sea and the water which Allah sends down from the sky and makes the Earth live and the moving creatures and in the veering of winds and clouds which are held between the sky and the Earth. This verse contains six BIs. If we divide the verse into smaller structures, we have six separate verses, each of which contains one BI and we have to repeat the word ‘Verily’ six times. However, they are combined in a single verse. This BI is an economically motivated index of familiarity, while also being visually iconic because the BIs it contains are observable signs of Allah’s absolute capacity and omnipresence. It draws attention to the sky, the Earth, and other natural and universal phenomena, which, being physical, help us to conceive the mental activity of thinking as the physical activity of seeing because we gain most of our knowledge through vision. Allah never covers things up, but wants us to conceive of thinking as seeing, because this helps us to understand Quranic discourse better by making an accurate connection between the abstract and the concrete. All that we see in the sky and on Earth are Allah’s creations, be they human or non-human, animate or inanimate. The multinomials urge us to think of heaven and Earth and to worship Allah, in order to conceive that He alone is the Creator. Thus, there is a direct similarity between the elements of the BI and their meaning in the sense that they refer to the names of objects which exist in this world. The same is true of BIs which refer to the names of prophets—such BIs are examples of iconicity par excellence. The existence of such BIs in the Quran challenges the received view that
language is fundamentally arbitrary in nature and allows the iconic aspects of language to be brought into focus.

4.3 Group Three
The last group of BIs includes those which are near synonyms. Look at the following BIs:

(45) /‘patience and prayer’ (Verse: 153)
(46) /‘They covered with humiliation and misery. (Verse: 61)
(47) /‘evil and sinful’ (Verse: 169)
(48) /‘alcoholic drink and gambling’ (Verse: 219)
(49) /‘protector and helper’ (Verse: 107)
(50) /‘destroy the craps and the cattle’ (Verse: 205)
(51) /‘perform As-salaat and give Zakat’ (Verse: 277)
(52) /‘sin and transgression’ (Verse: 85)
(53) /‘bringer of glad hidings and a warner (Verse: 119)
(54) /‘As-safaa and Al-Marw (Verse: 158)
(55) /‘perform the Hajj and Umrah’ (Verse: 196)
(56) /‘paradise and forgiveness’ (Verse: 221)
(57) /‘we hear and obey’ (Verse: 285)
(58) /‘makes a bequest to parents and next of kin’ (Verse: 180)
(59) /‘the book and Al-Hikma’ (Verse: 129)
(60) /‘those who believe and do rightness deeds’ (Verse: 25)
(61) /‘make mischief and shed blood’ (Verse: 30)
(62) /‘we gave Moses the Scripture (Tawraat) and the criterion (Furqan)’ (Verse: 53)
(63) /‘manna and salwa’ (Verse: 57)
(64) /‘guidance and tidings for the believers’ (Verse: 97)
(65) /‘Allah gave him (David) the kingdom and Al- Hikma (wisdom)” (Verse: 251)
(66) /‘kind words and forgiveness’ (Verse: 263)
This group is in accordance with Givón’s principle of iconic sequencing or the logical order of events. In the BI (.patient and prayer), patience precedes prayer because the latter needs patience. Allah calls believers to pray, but the completion of full faith cannot be achieved without patience. This conjures up a powerful image in the mind of the reader. Thus, in terms of power iconicity, the first element has a higher rank within the extra-linguistic organisation. There is a deep-rooted relationship between language and religion. Religion represents a regulatory system for human beings so that they do not deviate from the path of Allah. Many religious concepts find their way into people’s minds through the existence of such BIs. One of the means in which religion interacts with language is through prayer and patience. According to the Prophet Muhammad’s (PBUH) Sunnah, prayer is the pillar of religion, and this pillar requires a solid ground, which is patience. The concepts of situation and revelation require different strategies to simplify Quranic concepts and as such BIs are a facilitating strategy.

The BI (protector and helper) also iconises sequence in that waly should come first so that there may be (protector). The BI (prayer) and (gives money to the poor) also iconises sequence because prayer is the most important since it is a repeated activity every day, while /zakaat/ is given once year.

The aim of BIs 53–60 and 62–66 is to control and constrain human behaviour so that it attains the highest possible levels of refinement and perfection, enabling people to be immortal in the hereafter. Another aim of these BIs is to advise people to follow the path of Allah and avoid the path of the devil. The other BIs in this group symbolise wrong-doers who follow the path of the devil. They are iconic with Allah’s intention, i.e., either reward or punishment in the hereafter.

C. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we have explored iconicity in the BIs of the Glorious Quran, starting with the hypothesis that iconicity is richly manifested in the Quranic lexicon and discourse. The results of the analysis show that some BIs accord with Givón’s principles of iconicity (1984), while others are iconic through several iconic principles. The majority of Quranic BIs are in accordance with the human perceptual system. It is taken for granted that words related to the senses are more iconic than words with an abstract meaning, emphasising that iconicity is inherently an interdisciplinary phenomenon and cognitive process that connects linguistic form with the experience of the world. When we gain insight of good and bad,
perception of the world is not based on fear of the unknown future anymore but on excitement and anticipation for the meaningful signs of Allah’s words. This is why some BIs are iconic through various iconicity principles. They motivate Quranic readers and hearers to think deeply and carefully and to open their hearts when they read the Quran. Hence, we dare say that iconic BIs function as spiritual food for the mind. All BIs aim to advise readers to avoid bad ideas which lead to corruption, and as such they are pervasive not only in Quranic discourse but also in language. Language users exploit them in language processing since they visualise what is invisible. Each pair is wonderfully illustrated that makes it visually appealing and helpful to the readers in remembering the Quranic words as well as their meaning in an engaging way. Above all, Quranic BIs are more than a lexical or syntactic phenomenon since the whole universe is based on pairs. They are signs of Allah’s absolute capacity. They function as signals that both affirm that capacity and urge believers to have full confidence and certainty in Allah’s power. They help the reader arrive at an interpretation that is in line with Allah’s intentions, i.e., true worship. Hence, we can say that the structure of the BI is an iconic reflection of our conceptual structure. Accordingly, iconic BIs in the Glorious Quran are more than a morpho-syntactic phenomenon in the sense that they can be regarded as strategies that conceptualise the mental activity of thinking as the physical activity of seeing. In summary, we can say that a comprehensive theory of language use requires both arbitrary and iconic aspects of language. This conclusion challenges Saussurian arbitrariness and paves the way for motivated non-arbitrary form-meaning mappings in language. Iconic BIs can never be neglected in linguistic analysis because they are part of our cognitive and biological make-up. Studying one thing in comparison to another is to be able to get a richer understanding of both subjects. This is one of the mechanisms that Allah teaches readers the lessons of Quran. They reflect structures which are perceived in the universe, in human society, and in one’s own individual conceptual and cognitive structures. This implies that some iconic binomials are universal. This conclusion is in contrast with Linguistic Relatively Principle proposed by Sapir-Worf.

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