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Discourse Strategies in the Prophetic Admonitions: A Pragmatic Analysis of the Hadith "Preserve Allah and He Will Preserve You" as a Model.

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ABSTRACT:

This study aims to identify the discourse strategies and their mechanisms employed by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in his admonition to Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allah be pleased with them both), through which he conveyed educational and religious values. It examines the applicability of the pragmatic approach to analyze prophetic discourses to achieve a deeper understanding, enhance communicative effectiveness, and realize intended purposes. Adopting an analytical method grounded in pragmatic tools, the study focuses on the ḥadīth "Preserve Allah and He will preserve you." Findings reveal that the Prophet used discourse strategies to attract attention, maintain focus, guide thinking, build trust, and strengthen relationships, shaping the companions' personalities doctrinally, spiritually, morally, intellectually, socially, and educationally. The study concludes that applying modern approaches like pragmatics provides new perspectives for understanding ḥadīth and contributes to language education, communication skills, and pedagogical enrichment.

Keywords: Prophetic discourse, Prophetic admonition (Prophetic will), Discourse strategies, Pragmatics, Ḥadīth analysis.

Introduction:

Linguistic communication is the basis of human relations and one of the oldest forms of human activity. Humans engage in it every day to express themselves and their needs. Without it, their interests would be disrupted, their human and social relations would be severed, and their civilisation would come to a halt. It is fundamental to the building of civilisation and is a matter of life and death and proof of existence for every individual in society. This is what makes those who lack language or are unable to use it fall into the category of disability and impairment. Successful communication depends on the mechanisms, tools, strategies, and means of communication provided by language, which make it easier and less complicated, and help us to see our world and discover more knowledge and ideas.

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) was very keen in his communication to guide people to what would benefit them in their religion and their worldly life. He was gifted with eloquence, and he "spoke concisely, using few words but conveying many meanings[1] , to guide his ummah with rulings and commandments, which were preserved by generations, passed down from father to son, and acted upon.

The commandments are distributed in many works on various topics and for multiple purposes, some of which are related to literature and language, and others to history or Sharia law. Those familiar with the Holy Qur'an and the noble Sunnah are well aware of the various commandments they contain, which differ according to the person giving the commandment, the person receiving it, and their subjects and purposes. There are verses and hadiths that take the form of commandments, others that call for them, and others that call for their implementation and application, such as those relating to marriage, inheritance, obedience to parents, piety towards Allah, commitment to religious duties, and the application of Sharia law.

The commandments of the Prophet (peace be upon him) have legislative, psychological, social and intellectual implications. They are an expression of his love for those who believe, his concern for what regulates their lives and benefits them in the hereafter. They remain for future generations, They live on every time, and they represent a flexible discourse, in prose form, which we find in his sermons, his rulings, his parables, his exhortations, and his stories about past nations. What adds to their beauty and majesty is that they are expressed in few words that carry many meanings, which the listener never tires of, and which can be memorised by those who wish to memorise them, making it easy for them to convey them. They are linked to countless cultural and conversational situations.

The study of prophetic discourses constitutes an authentic and useful source for those interested in linguistic communication. Our research focused on the style of the will, which is one of the most important prophetic styles that delves into the depths of the human soul and probes its depths, causing the recipient of the advice to view the advisor with reverence, admiration and appreciation, stemming from the advisor's concern for him, and thus accepting his advice well. Those who follow the commandments of the Prophet, peace be upon him, can discern the motives of advice, guidance, love, compassion, kindness and mercy, which are no

(1) Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl; & Ibn Bāz, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn ʿAbd Allāh, *Fatḥ al-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. XIII, 1st ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 2017), P: 33.

different from the commandments in the Holy Qur'an, as they were detailed for what was generalised and explained for what was ambiguous"[(2)].

The Prophet's (peace be upon him) wills are numerous, some of which were artistic works in their own right, while others were part of other purposes such as letters and speeches"[(3)]. It may be that one of the Companions asked for guidance in the form of the verb "command me" or "command us." Or it may be that, without any request from the Prophet (peace be upon him), he took the initiative and used the phrase "I command you." It could also be a narration from one of them about him, in which he says "he commanded me" or "he commanded us," among other expressions that appear in the noble prophetic traditions, such as commands, requests, prohibitions, advice, covenants, exhortations, acceptance, encouragement, and warnings. His counsel came in the form of concise words and wise sayings, brief in expression yet rich in meaning.

Our research was motivated by a sincere desire to revive the Arabic-Islamic linguistic heritage by examining the rhetorical strategies employed by the Prophet ﷺ in one of his commandments, analysing them from a linguistic and communicative perspective, and determining the extent to which they can be used to develop and improve linguistic communication. It also aims to introduce the world to the Prophet ﷺ and his comprehensive and eloquent speeches, highlighting his eloquence, conciseness, and ability to penetrate the depths of the human soul, emphasising the universality of his message and confirming the richness and immortality of the Islamic linguistic heritage throughout the ages.

The main problem addressed in this research is represented by the following questions:

- What is meant by discourse strategies?
- What are the most important discourse strategies used by the Prophet (peace be upon him) in his will to Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both)?
- What is the role of discourse strategies in achieving the objectives of the will?
- Does the communicative approach help in understanding and analysing the discourses of the Prophet (peace be upon him)?

)[2](Shaymāʾ Aḥmad Muḥammad al-Badrānī, *Waṣāyā al-Rasūl –ṣallā Allāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallam– fī Ṣaḥīḥay al-Bukhārī wa-Muslim: Dirāsa Balāghiyya*, 1st ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2019), p: 41.

)[3](Rūnāq Tawfīq ʿAlī al-Nūrsī, *Waṣāyā al-Udabāʾ wa-l-Khulafāʾ wa-l-Ḥukamāʾ fī al-ʿAṣr al-ʿAbbāsī: Dirāsa Fanniyya*, 1st ed. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2007), p: 22.

- Does identifying and analysing the discourses of the Prophet (peace be upon him) help improve our communication?

<u>This research sought to answer these questions by addressing the following:</u>

- The concept of the will, discourse, and discourse strategy.

- Types of discourse strategies.

- Discourse strategies in the will of the Prophet, peace be upon him, to Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them, mentioned in the hadith, "Preserve Allah, and He will preserve you".

B. *<u>The concept of the will:</u>*

In Lisan al-Arab by Ibn Manzur, it is stated: "He entrusted the man and appointed him: he entrusted him with... I entrusted him with something and appointed him when I made him my trustee... The people entrusted each other, meaning they entrusted some of them to others... The guardian is the one who entrusts and the one to whom it is entrusted..."[(4)] .

The word 'testament' has similar meanings, such as connection, communication, and covenant, as if the testator wants to make a covenant between himself and the beneficiary and maintain communication with him by committing to his will.

The will is defined as an important art form of literary prose, revealing the mentality of society, its ideas and concerns, its ideals and hopes, as well as many of its political, social and religious circumstances.

There are many commandments with different meanings, including commandments from the Holy Qur'an, commandments from the prophets (peace be upon them), commandments from the caliphs, commandments from scholars and jurists, and commandments from writers and poets"[(5)]. The will has three basic pillars: the testator, the beneficiary, and the bequest.

It is clear from the above that the concept of a will is not merely a limited legal or religious term, but rather a broad semantic and cultural construct, involving linguistic, legal, social and literary dimensions. Ibn Manzur showed in Lisan al-Arab that the will carries the meanings of trust, entrustment and covenant, i.e. it is based on mutual trust between the testator and the beneficiary, making it a tool for preserving rights and ensuring continuity after

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)[4](Jamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad Ibn Manẓūr, ʿĀmir Aḥmad Ḥaydar, and ʿAbd al-Munʿim Khalīl Ibrāhīm, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, 2nd ed., vols. I, III, XV (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2009), p: 610.

)[5](Bībiyya ʿAlliya, *Al-Muqāraba al-Taʿāduliyya fī Fann al-Waṣāyā: Namādhij Taṭbīqiyya min Waṣāyā al-Naṯr al-Jāhilī*, Majallat al-Naṣṣ, Université d'Oum El Bouaghi, vol. 7, no. 1 (2021), p: 08.

the testator's death. It is also clear that the meaning of 'will' is linked to connection, communication and covenant, which gives it a human dimension that transcends its abstract meaning and makes it an act of remembrance and symbolic continuity.

On a literary level, the will, as a form of prose, highlights the most important features of the society that produced it; it is a mirror of its mentality, aspirations, and religious, political, and social values, as well as being a guiding discourse that reflects the relationship between the individual and his community. Therefore, the study of wills is not limited to analysing their formal structure, but extends to revealing the cultural and cognitive structure that created them.

The diversity of wills – from Qur'anic, prophetic, caliphal, jurisprudential and literary – confirms the comprehensiveness of this art and its ability to encompass multiple dimensions of human experience. Despite their different contexts, they all converge in three essential elements: the testator, the beneficiary, and the bequest, which gives them a clear methodological framework that can be relied upon in their reading and analysis according to modern discursive and rhetorical approaches.

C. *Definition of discourse strategies:*

The diversity of context and discourse-forming elements leads to diversity in the discourse itself when it is produced by the sender, "which entails diversity in the linguistic forms of discourse. It becomes clear that this diversity is the result of a process that occurred over an extended period between contextual diversity and linguistic formation, and this process is characterised as a discourse strategy"(6).

The term 'discourse strategy' consists of two terms: strategy and discourse. In order to define its meaning, we will briefly refer to the concept of discourse.

C.01. Discourse:

The book Asas al-Balaghah states that discourse is "confrontation through words"(7). Al-Ghazzali classified discourse among a group of related concepts, saying: "Speech, discourse, talking, communicating, and pronunciation are all one and the same in the reality of language... (8).

(6) Al-Shahri, ʿAbd al-Hādī ibn Ẓāfir, *Istrātījiyyāt al-Khiṭāb (Muqārabah Lughawiyyah Tadāwuliyyah)* (Benghazi: Dār al-Kitāb al-Jadīd al-Muttaḥidah, 2004), P: 52.

(7) Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd ibn ʿAmr ibn Aḥmad al-Zamakhsharī and Muḥammad Bāsil, *Asās al-Balāgha*, vol. I–II, 1st edition (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1998), p: 255.

(8) Rukn al-Dīn Abū al-Maʿālī ʿAbd al-Malik ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Juwaynī, *al-Kāfiya fī al-Jadal*, 1st edition (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1999), p: 25.

Two meanings of discourse come to mind: a message and speech directed at a specific occasion"[9]. It appears in the Arabic Terminology Dictionary with the meaning of (letter)which is (a written text conveyed from a sender to a recipient, containing news that concerns only them).It has become a literary genre similar to the essay in Western writing"[10].

The linguistic meaning of discourse in Arabic dictionaries is close to that found in Western dictionaries, namely the term discourse, which means "speech, lecture, article"[11]. Discourse refers to speech and words directed from a speaker to an addressee for the purpose of understanding and comprehension"[12].

John Dubois et al. provided three definitions of discourse in their linguistic dictionary"[13]:

01- Discourse is speech as opposed to language, in the sense that de Saussure presented the term speech. Thus, discourse is the use of language for the purpose of expression and communication.

02- Discourse is an utterance that is equal to or exceeds a sentence. It consists of a sequence that forms a message with a beginning and an end, and is synonymous with utterance.

03- Discourse is an utterance that exceeds a sentence when viewed from the perspective of the rules of sentence sequence.

Many linguistic researchers have sought to broaden the scope of linguistic study by moving beyond the sentence to larger units, such as the sentence sequence, utterance, text, or discourse. They have attempted to present the most important differences between discourse, text, and sentence. This approach has helped to give rise to new fields of study, such as functional grammar, discourse linguistics, and pragmatics"[14]. Thus, it is no longer sufficient to study linguistic expressions in isolation; rather, it is necessary to go beyond them and observe their role in context. Therefore, attention to context and the conditions of discourse production has become essential in any attempt to analyse discourse.

Perhaps the most famous definition of discourse is that of Emile Benveniste, who defines it based on what distinguishes it as "a practice within a social context, regardless of its

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)[9](Maḥmūd ʿUkkāsha, *Lughat al-Khiṭāb al-Siyāsī: Dirāsa Lughawiyya Taṭbīqiyya fī Ḍawʾ Naẓariyyat al-Ittiṣāl*, 1st edition (Cairo: Dār al-Nashr lil-Jāmiʿāt, 2005), p: 35.

)[10](Ibid, P: 159.

)[11](Ibid, P: 159.

)[12](Ibid, P: 35, 36.

)[13](Jean Dubois & Jean-Pierre Mével, *Dictionnaire de linguistique et des sciences du langage*, 1st edition (Paris: Larousse, 1994), p : 156.

)[14](Moulay Marouane Aloui, *al-Sharṭiyyāt fī Lisāniyyāt al-Khiṭāb: Dirāsa fī Ḍawʾ al-Manṭiq wa-l-Dalāla al-Ṣūriyya*, 1st edition (Germany: Noor Publishing, 2017), P : 13.

rank among grammarians; that is, as a sentence or more or less, there is no difference between these grammatical levels in discourse"[15]. He says: "Discourse must be understood in its broadest sense as any utterance that presupposes a speaker and a listener, with the former intending to influence the latter in some way"[16].

This means that discourse emerges through communication and requires the presence of a speaker and a listener, between whom there is an exchange of influence and impact.

It is clear from the above definitions of discourse that the concept of discourse goes beyond the boundaries of a single sentence to include larger linguistic units related to the social context and communication between the speaker and the listener. Classical and contemporary Arabic definitions emphasise that discourse is not merely speech or utterance, but rather an integrated message that aims to convey a specific meaning and achieve understanding and impact on the recipient, as explained by al-Ghazali, al-Okasha and al-Zamakhshari. From the perspective of Western linguists such as Dubois and Benveniste, it is clear that discourse is understood as the use of language for expression and communication, and that it is a unit that transcends a single sentence and is formed within a coherent sequence with a beginning and an end. This expansion in the study of discourse has contributed to the emergence of new scientific fields such as functional grammar, discourse linguistics, and pragmatics, highlighting the importance of considering the context and circumstances of discourse production when analysing it, which makes understanding discourse a dynamic process that requires studying the relationships between the speaker and the listener and their influence on each other.

We can define discourse, in the context of our research, as a meaningful communicative unit, verbal or written, which may be a sentence or a complete text, using language as its medium. It is created by a speaker in a social or cultural communicative context, either verbally or in writing, through which he aims to inform, persuade, enlighten or influence the addressee. The type of discourse is determined by the situations in which it is delivered and the nature of the methods and techniques used by the speaker in his communication, so that it may be religious, educational, political, social or scientific discourse, etc.

C.02. Discourse strategy:

)[15](Al-Shahri, op. cit, P: 37.

)[16](Benveniste, Émile, *Les Problèmes de linguistique générale* (Paris: Gallimard, Bibliothèque des sciences humaines, 1966), P : 241, 242.

Human beings live within society and engage in numerous social, cultural, economic, administrative, scientific, educational, linguistic and other activities. and through these activities, they seek to achieve many goals that benefit themselves or others. They do not do this randomly, without taking into account the frameworks that organise their society, the relationships that connect them with their fellow human beings, and the circumstances surrounding them. Rather, they adopt various methods, techniques, and skills.

These techniques and methods are referred to as strategies. To explain this concept, "we can use the example of sailing. When you sail, you rarely reach your destination by heading directly towards it. Between you and your destination, there are many winds, hurricanes, tides, rocks, and storms. In order to reach your desired destination... you have to manoeuvre and negotiate your way to it"[(17)].

Strategy is defined as "specific methods for addressing a problem or performing a task, or a set of operations aimed at achieving specific goals, or measures designed to control and manage specific information"[(18)].

Because discourse cannot be expressed without the use of appropriate signs, communication between people does not depend on natural language alone, but requires the use of certain non-verbal signs, which may cause discourse to be described as polite or aggressive behaviour, among other descriptions"[(19)].

Therefore, we can define discourse strategy as an art used by the sender, a method adopted when producing discourse, through which he seeks to express his intentions, achieve his goals, and influence others, employing the verbal and non-verbal communication methods available to him, taking into account the context and its various elements, the natural language used, the nature and circumstances of the recipient, their reaction, and the various obstacles and barriers that may stand in their way.

There has been a proliferation of research and studies on discourse strategies, which vary in type depending on the field in which they appear. In our research, we will rely on the classification established by Abdulhadi bin Zafar al-Shahri in his book "Discourse Strategies: A Linguistic-Pragmatic Approach". He has compiled these strategies and presented them in four types: solidarity strategy, guidance strategy, suggestive strategy, and persuasive strategy.

)[17](Al-Shahri, op. cit, P: 53.
)[18](Ibid, P: 53.
)[19](Ibid, P: 55, 56.

D. *<u>The Prophet's Discourse Strategies in the Hadith "Preserve Allah and He Will Preserve You":</u>*

One day I was behind the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) [riding on the same mount] and he said, "O young man, I shall teach you some words [of advice]: Be mindful of Allah and Allah will protect you. Be mindful of Allah and you will find Him in front of you. If you ask, then ask Allah [alone]; and if you seek help, then seek help from Allah [alone]. And know that if the nation were to gather together to benefit you with anything, they would not benefit you except with what Allah had already prescribed for you. And if they were to gather together to harm you with anything, they would not harm you except with what Allah had already prescribed against you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried"[(20)].

<u>- Contextual components:</u>

- Subject of the speech: The rulings and advice given by the Prophet (peace be upon him) to his cousin Abdullah ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both).

- Attendees: The Messenger (peace be upon him) and Abdullah ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both).

- Place: Most likely Medina.

- Time: Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, was born in the third year before the Hijra, corresponding to 618 CE, and was nine years old when he rode with the Prophet, peace be upon him, or ten, according to some sources"[(21)]. This means that the speech was delivered in the sixth or seventh year after the Hijra, corresponding to 624 CE or 626 CE.

- Circumstances of the speech:

It was the practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to teach, nurture and guide young children, and he was compassionate and kind to them. Once,

Abdullah ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) accompanied him, and he was a young boy at the time. The Prophet gave him seven words of comprehensive advice and profound wisdom in a concise and precise manner, because he "saw him as worthy of advice despite his young age[(22)] . This is a great hadith, containing many noble benefits. Ibn al-Jawzi, may Allah have mercy on him, commented on it, saying: "I pondered this hadith, and it

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)[20](Al-Albānī, Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn ibn al-Ḥājj Nūḥ ibn Najātī ibn Ādam. *Ṣaḥīḥ wa-Ḍaʿīf Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, no edition, vol. VI (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Maʿārif li-l-Nashr wa-al-Tawzīʿ, 2000), P: 16.

)[21](Abd al-ʿĀl Saʿd al-Shulayyah, *Sharḥ Ḥadīth (Iḥfaẓ Allāh Yaḥfaẓk, Iḥfaẓ Allāh Tajidhu Tijāhak) min al-Arbaʿīn al-Nawawiyyah*, al-Ukah, 19 March 2016, https://www.alukah.net/sharia/0/100433

)[22](Taqī al-Dīn Abū al-Fatḥ Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. Wahb al-Qushayrī Ibn Daqīq al-ʿĪd, *Sharḥ al-Arbaʿīn al-Nawawiyyah fī al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah al-Nabawiyyah*, 6th ed. (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Rayyān, 2003), p: 76.

astonished me and I almost lost my mind. How unfortunate is the ignorance of this hadith and the lack of understanding of its meaning"[23].

- Discourse strategies in the previous hadith:

These are seven words that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) addressed to Abdullah ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both). He prefaced them by employing a "guiding and solidarity-oriented strategy "through the act of calling out, aiming to motivate him and draw his attention to the advice he was about to deliver. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) embodied the principle of "affection and kindness", which was clearly present throughout his speech. The linguistic indicator of this is the use of the "vocative “O” " and the term "young man". This call carried an "executive force", transforming the words into action, making Abdullah ibn Abbas feel important and fostering his love for the pursuit of knowledge. He did not address him by his personal name, perhaps to indicate that these instructions could apply to any young boy who hears the hadith. We cannot know the exact "intonation "with which the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) spoke, but it is clear that this was a "non-verbal mechanism of solidarity "that captured Abdullah ibn Abbas’s attention and increased his love for and attachment to the Prophet.

In order to define the subject of the discourse and capture the attention of the addressee, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said: "I shall teach you some words", meaning matters that would benefit him from Allah. In this statement, there is a "persuasive guiding mechanism": he emphasized the message using a tone and phrasing that clearly indicated the importance of what he was about to convey. This declaration alerted Abdullah ibn Abbas that the source of these words and instructions was the Prophet himself and that he was the intended recipient of the advice. It convinced him of the significance of the guidance and signaled that the Prophet was now directly addressing him, so he should focus solely on learning these words and not be distracted by anything else. There is no doubt that this careful use of guiding mechanisms increased Abdullah ibn Abbas’s attention, focus, and engagement with both the content and purpose of the discourse.

Then the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said: “Be mindful of Allah, and He will protect you; be mindful of Allah, and you will find Him before you.” These are two words in which he repeated the same guiding linguistic verb, which is the imperative verb “Be mindful”;

)[23](Zayn al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad al-Dimashqī al-Ḥanbalī Ibn Rajab, and Muḥammad al-Aḥmadī Abū al-Nūr, *Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm wa-al-Ḥikam fī Sharḥ Khamsīn Ḥadīthan min Jawāmiʿ al-Kalim*, 2nd ed., vol. 2 (Cairo: Dār al-Salām, 2004), p: 548.

the intended meaning is to preserve the commands and limits of Allah, to obey what He has commanded, and to refrain from what He has forbidden.

"And Allah's commands are of two types: the first is His predestined command, and preserving it requires patience with the decrees; the second is His legislated command, fulfilled by leaving obligations, avoiding prohibitions, and believing in the permissibility of what is lawful"[24].

And those who preserve the limits of Allah are the ones whom Allah the Exalted praised in His saying:

﴿هَذَا مَا تُوعَدُونَ لِكُلِّ أَوَّابٍ حَفِيظٍ، مَنْ خَشِيَ الرَّحْمَنَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَجَاءَ بِقَلْبٍ مُنِيبٍ﴾[QAF: 32-33]

"And this is what you are promised for every repentant guardian, who fears the Most Merciful unseen and comes with a penitent heart".

They are those who maintain the purity of their bodies and hearts, preserve their prayers, guard their oaths, heads, tongues, stomachs, and private parts, rely upon Allah Almighty, and seek His help in all matters. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) used linguistic argumentation to support his guidance and advice, through causal reasoning in the request and the response to the request, which serves as an answer and a reward. The verbs "protect you" and "you will find Him" are present tense verbs in the jussive mood responding to the imperative "Be mindful", with the meaning: *If you are mindful of Allah, He will protect you; if you are mindful of Allah, you will find Him before you.*

The protection of Allah for His servant encompasses religion, body, wealth, and family "[25]. This is supported by many verses in the Book of our Lord, including: ﴿وَالَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا زَادَهُمْ هُدىً وَآتَاهُمْ تَقْوَاهُمْ﴾[Muhammad: 17]

"And those who are guided, He increases them in guidance and grants them their piety".

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَنصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ﴾[Muhammad: 7]

"O you who believe! If you support Allah, He will support you and make your feet firm".

﴿وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِي أُوفِ بِعَهْدِكُمْ﴾[Al-Baqarah: 40]

"And fulfill My covenant [O Allah], I will fulfill your covenant [O My servants]".

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[24] Ṣāliḥ al-ʿUṣaymī, *Sharḥ al-Arbaʿīn al-Nawawiyyah*, lecture delivered in Najrān (1439/2018), YouTube video, July 3, 2019, accessed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9kROmtruHJw&ab_channel

[25] Muḥammad b. Ṣāliḥ Al-ʿUthaymīn, Sharḥ Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn, vol. 1, 1st ed. (Riyadh: Dār Madār al-Waṭan li-l-Nashr, 2005), p: 488.

As for his statement (peace and blessings be upon him): "you will find Him in front of you", meaning *"in front of you"*[26], in trials and hardships, it guides you toward good, keeps harm away from you, and directs you to what improves your condition. This is confirmed by the words of Allah, the Exalted:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مُحْسِنُونَ﴾[An-Nahl: 128]

"Indeed, Allah is with those who fear Him and those who are doers of good". As for the third and fourth words, they are his saying (peace and blessings be upon him): "If you ask, ask Allah; and if you seek help, seek help from Allah". Here, he employed a guiding strategy through the conditional structure, using the imperative verb combined with the conjunction fa' (so/then), which serves as the answer to the condition. By this, he directed Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) to ask for nothing in worldly or religious matters except from Allah alone, to seek help only from Allah in fulfilling his needs, and to be independent of all creatures, who if asked may give or withhold.

In this context, we recall the words of Allah, the Exalted:

﴿وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ﴾[At-Talaq: 3]

"And whoever relies upon Allah – He is sufficient for him".

And the poet's words illustrate this meaning:

لا تَسأَلَنَّ بُنَيَّ آدم حاجة ** وسلِ الّذي أبوابه لا تحجبُ

"Do not ask, my son, of the children of Adam for any need; ask Him whose doors are never closed."

اللهُ يغضبُ إن تركت سؤاله ** وبُنيَّ آدم حين يُسأل يغضبُ

"Allah is angered if you leave His asking, and the children of Adam are angered when asked".

The repetition of this structure and the divine name twice is a strong emphasis by the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) on the necessity for Allah to be the fundamental pillar and the sole refuge for every believer.

And the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) began the fifth and sixth words with "And know", which is an imperative verb. He used it for hinting, guiding, and persuasion. It signals to Ibn Abbas that the words and advice are not yet finished, and it directs him to

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)[26](Al-ʿUthaymīn, Ibid, P: 489.

understand that knowing and acting upon these words falls within the realm of knowledge, the highest form of worship in which one serves Allah. It also invites Ibn Abbas to focus on what will be said and persuades him that what he is about to convey is true and beyond doubt. The use of “and” before the verb “know” indicates that these instructions are not separate from what preceded them but are part of a single purpose: to rely on Allah, trust Him sincerely, and delegate matters to Him alone.

Then he (peace and blessings be upon him) mentioned what should be known: “That if the nation were to gather together to benefit you with anything, they would not benefit you except with what Allah had already prescribed for you.” In this part of the speech, he employed a persuasive strategy using several linguistic mechanisms: the causal connector “that” to emphasize the truth of his message; the conditional “if”; the negative form “would not benefit you”; the restricting connector “except”; the particle of certainty and emphasis “already”; and the repeated pronoun referring to the addressee “you.” These tools guide the listener toward the conclusion intended by the speaker. The meaning is: be completely certain that nothing will occur except what Allah has willed and decreed for you, even if all the people of the earth were to gather to benefit you, for "He is the One who has made for you those who benefit you, show you kindness, and remove your distress"[(27)].

He employed the hinting strategy by moving away from direct address, using a rhetorical mechanism known as the numerical reference shift, between the absent singular and the absent plural. This refers to the pronouns “she/it” and “they” in the verbs “gather” and “benefit”. The reasoning is that in life, a person does not interact with the entire nation at once but deals with a group of people, not a large number. Perhaps he intended this to generalize first and then specify. He also used the speech unit “the nation” to magnify the significance of what they attempt to use for his benefit, and to clarify afterward that this benefit—even if great—cannot occur unless Allah has decreed and written it in the Preserved Tablet.

Then he (peace and blessings be upon him) employed linguistic reasoning through a strong argumentative technique called reciprocal reasoning, presenting a second proof that mirrors and reinforces the first. He used the same argumentative mechanisms mentioned previously, saying: “And if they were to gather together to harm you with anything, they would not harm you except with what Allah had already prescribed against you.” This means: know that you will not be afflicted by any harm or misfortune that Allah has not decreed for you, even if all the people of the earth were united against you.

)[27](Al-ʿUthaymīn, Ibid, P: 492.

The previous two statements—through the mechanisms employed in them—also serve as guidance for Ibn Abbas, emphasizing the necessity of relying solely on Allah, and having faith and submission to the fact that people possess neither harm nor benefit for themselves or others.

Then he (peace and blessings be upon him) used the final phrase: "The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried", which is a metaphor indicating that the writing of all decrees has been completed and finished long ago". When the writing is completed, the pens are lifted, their ink is exhausted, and the pages on which they were written have dried. This is one of the most eloquent and expressive metaphors"[28].

This phrase also serves as "proof reinforcing the previous two arguments", through two declarative sentences. Both verbs are in the past tense, with the first in the passive voice, conveying knowledge of the unseen revealed by Allah. It indicates that Allah has recorded the decrees of everything in the Preserved Tablet, and what He has written is finalized; the pens have been lifted, and the ink has dried, leaving no possibility for revision"[29]. Thus, "What befalls you was never meant to miss you, and what misses you was never meant to befall you"[30].

The previous arguments can be represented in the following "argumentative hierarchy":

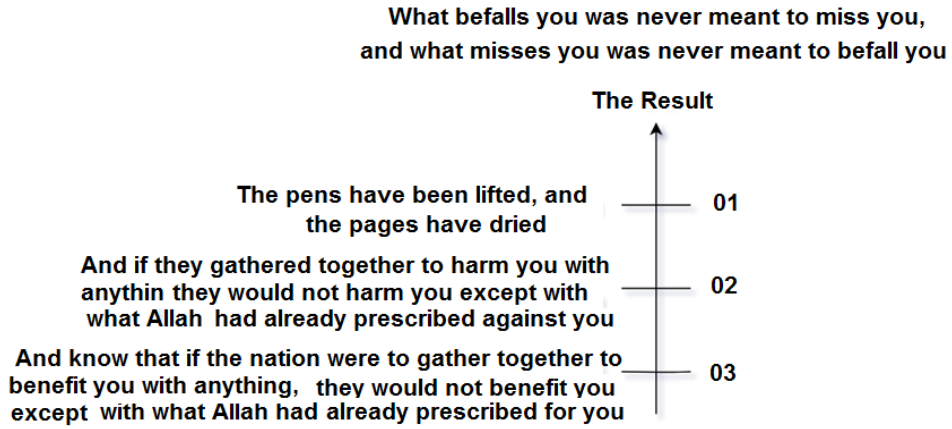

Figure 01: An argumentative ladder illustrating the arguments presented by the Prophet (peace be upon him) and their intended purpose.

)[28](Muḥammad Ṣaqr Shaḥātah, *Dalīl al-Wāʿiẓ ilā Adillat al-Mawāʿiẓ (Mawḍūʿāt lil-Khuṭab bi-Adillatihā min al-Qurʾān al-Karīm wa-l-Sunnah al-Ṣaḥīḥah) maʿa mā Tayassara min al-Āthār wa-l-Qaṣaṣ wa-l-Ashʿār*, vol. 1 (al-Buḥayrah: Dār al-Furqān li-l-Turāth, n.d.), p: 246.

)[29](Al-ʿUthaymīn, Ibid, P: 492.

)[30](Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn b. al-Ḥājj Nūḥ b. Najātī b. Ādam al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ wa-Ḍaʿīf Sunan Abī Dāwūd li-l-Imām Sulaymān b. al-Ashʿath al-Sijistānī*, 1st ed., vol. 3 (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Maʿārif li-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzīʿ, 1998), p: 148.

The argumentative ladder presented in the figure serves as an excellent model for illustrating the rhetorical mechanisms in Prophetic commandments, as it proceeds by linking causes and results in a gradual and ascending manner. It can be analyzed within the research context of your paper as follows:

- **First principle: "The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried".** This step represents the foundation of the discourse, as it establishes the general state of divine reality and preordainment. It provides the argumentative framework that prepares the addressee to understand the subsequent stages. From a pragmatic perspective, this statement functions as a rhetorical prelude, affirming divine determinism and addressing the listener's awareness in a reassuring manner.
- **Second principle: "If they gathered to harm you, they would not harm you except with what Allah had already prescribed against you".**

Here, the discourse introduces the first detailed argument: clarifying the limited influence of human beings in contrast to divine decree. This stage demonstrates the use of an assertive strategy, as the text connects human action to divinely predetermined outcomes, thereby strengthening the force of the commandment and leading the addressee to accept the results as inescapable truth.

- **Third principle: "And if they gathered to benefit you, they would not benefit you except with what Allah had already prescribed for you".**

At this step, the principle is generalized to encompass all human actions, whether harm or benefit, and the ladder concludes with the ultimate result: the absolute divine responsibility in determining outcomes. This stage represents the peak of the argument, where the discourse reaches its highest level of persuasion, affirming the unity of cause and result from both a religious and moral perspective.

From the standpoint of discourse strategies, the following points can be observed:

- **Gradual argumentation:** Moving from a general principle to specific examples and then returning to a general conclusion reflects a meticulous rhetorical strategy designed to capture attention and reinforce acceptance.
- **Repetition and parallelism:** The use of symmetrical expressions regarding harm and benefit enhances rhetorical rhythm and strengthens the persuasive force.
- **Linking theoretical knowledge with practical reality:** The text connects divine doctrine with human behavior, which lies at the very heart of the Prophetic commandment.

E. Concluding Remarks

• Linguistic communication does not only transmit information, experiences, scientific and intellectual knowledge, and skills, but also goes beyond that to convey emotions, feelings, movements, actions, and everything that is mental or physical. It is a comprehensive and broad process that is not limited to a specific field, a certain group, or one means over another. Therefore, it is permissible to use everything that can convey what the sender intends, provided that it adheres to certain conditions and ethics that clarify the message more and prevent the recipient's aversion, while also taking into consideration the circumstances surrounding communication.

• Pragmatics has gone beyond many of the difficulties that structuralism faced, through its openness to contexts and real situations during communication between language users, and it has focused on studying language within society. For this reason, many have considered pragmatics and communication as twins. Pragmatics, therefore, did not stop at theorizing but went further into application, and it has helped us in analyzing the Prophet's will (peace and blessings be upon him) and identifying the rhetorical strategies used in it.

• Discourse strategies refer to the various techniques and methods used in linguistic communication, through which speakers aim to achieve the highest levels of influence and persuasion on recipients, and they vary according to context, purpose, and audience.

• The pragmatic approach is capable of analyzing discourses and revealing their characteristics and communicative features.

• The communicative context is what makes discourse a discourse, and it plays an important role in determining the type of discourse strategy, in understanding the purposes of discourse, and in identifying its objectives.

• The ability to persuade, influence, exchange, interact, assert oneself, build social relationships, and maintain them is among the main goals sought from learning discourse strategies.

• Pragmatic analysis revealed that the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) employed the four discourse strategies in his speeches: directive, solidarity, hinting, and persuasive, and that he diversified between them, employing both verbal and non-verbal mechanisms. It demonstrated his linguistic and rhetorical ability and his communicative mastery. It also revealed that the temporal form of his counsels (peace and blessings be upon

him) is the present and the future, since one of the characteristics of counsels is that they require the directive strategy, which relates to the speaker's present time and the time that follows it.

• The directive and persuasive strategies are the most frequently used strategies in the Prophet's (peace and blessings be upon him) speeches.

• The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) used discourse strategies in his counsel for several purposes, including:

- ✓ Clarifying and simplifying his counsel to Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both) through detail, specification, and examples.
- ✓ Attracting attention, maintaining focus, and keeping Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both) engaged in his speech.
- ✓ Directing Ibn Abbas's thinking in a specific direction and convincing him of a particular view, namely that benefit and harm are in the hands of Allah alone, and that He is the best Protector and Trustee.
- ✓ Achieving compliance with the counsel through the persuasive strategy, which motivates the recipient to follow the instructions.
- ✓ Avoiding ambiguity and obscurity, as the Prophet's counsel (peace and blessings be upon him) was clear through the explanations and specifications he used, which enabled Ibn Abbas to understand it correctly and transmit it to others.
- ✓ Building trust, strengthening, and reinforcing the relationship, which made Ibn Abbas more willing to adhere to the Prophet's counsel (peace and blessings be upon him).
- ✓ Building the Muslim's personality doctrinally, spiritually, morally, intellectually, socially, and educationally, in order to establish a sound society aware of its duties and responsibilities.

• The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) was an eloquent preacher who employed various strategies and techniques in his speeches when admonishing, warning, or giving glad tidings to people, with the aim of influencing them. He would raise and lower his voice, move his hands, fingers, and head, use body language, and show his anger or satisfaction through the redness of his eyes and face or their brightness. This reflected his enthusiasm and interaction with his speech, which further attracted the listener's attention.

• The counsels after the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) were marked by the spirit of Islam, dominated by faith-based and doctrinal values and truths that called for worshiping Allah alone and purifying the souls from deviation, error, and impurity. Many of

them show the influence of the Prophet's style of speech (peace and blessings be upon him), and whoever wishes to see this clearly may refer to the counsels of Al-Hasan Al-Basri (may Allah have mercy on him).

• The Prophet's counsels (peace and blessings be upon him) were directed to his close family members and his noble companions (may Allah be pleased with them), to be a light and guidance for them in this world and the Hereafter. Generations have continued to benefit from them and will continue to do so. From his counsels emerged noble meanings such as maintaining ties, generosity, fulfilling covenants, calling for good deeds, and forbidding evils.

• In his counsels, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) employed both declarative and imperative styles, illustrating meanings with sensory images that brought the intended ideas closer through real-life examples. They came in various forms of requests, commands, prohibitions, covenants, warnings, guidance, statements, and affirmations. Many of them became fundamental principles for acts of worship, dealings, and behaviors that guide toward noble morals, revive consciences from decline, elevate spirits, purify souls, and warn against misconduct regardless of its motive.

• Applying modern approaches—such as the pragmatic approach—in studying the Prophetic discourse will provide us with new mechanisms and tools, and will open wide horizons for understanding the noble hadith, with the possibility of benefiting from the results of these studies and research in serving the field of language education, developing communication skills and strategies, and applying them in the domains of education and teaching.

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