

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.12426173

RHETORICAL DEVIATION IN THE INTERROGATIVE STYLE AND ITS ROLE IN CLARIFYING QUR'ANIC OBJECTIVES: AN ANALYTICAL PRAGMATIC STUDY

Iyad Tatour*An-Najah National University, Nablus
Eiad_03@hotmail.com*

Received: 07/07/2025

Accepted: 29/01/2026

Corresponding author: Iyad Tatour

*(Eiad_03@hotmail.com)***ABSTRACT**

his study aims to explore the rhetorical and purposive dimensions of the interrogative style manifested in the Qur'anic discourse, based on the doctrinally established premise that a genuine interrogative (i.e., one seeking knowledge of the unknown) originating from the Divine Speaker is impossible. The research is founded on a central concept: "rhetorical shift," which refers to the movement of a style from its original purpose toward higher, figurative objectives. The results show that this shift is not a sporadic phenomenon but the prevailing principle in the Qur'anic discourse, serving significant functions such as assertion, negation, admonition, astonishment, exaggeration, stimulation, and command. The study also reveals a causal relationship between this rhetorical shift and the generation of a strong "influential force," which moves the audience from a passive state to active engagement with the discourse, elucidated through a pragmatic (speech-act) analysis. Applications to selected suras demonstrate that the shifted interrogative acts as a superlative Qur'anic miracle, achieving intellectual and emotional obligation, illustrating the psychological states of characters in Qur'anic narratives, concentrating admonition in short suras, and regulating behavior in Medinan suras. Thus, it functions integrally across doctrinal, legislative, and educational objectives of the Qur'anic discourse.

KEYWORDS Qur'anic interrogation, rhetorical shift, influential force, Qur'anic purposes, pragmatic analysis, speech acts, negation, assertion, Sūrat al-Raḥmān, Sūrat al-Zumar.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Qur'anic discourse represents the highest model of eloquence and miracle, where the meanings of words integrate harmoniously with the purposes of the speech. The interrogative style is among the most prominent rhetorical devices in this discourse—not merely to seek knowledge of the unknown, but to achieve profound rhetorical objectives that transcend the apparent meaning of the question. This deviation from the original purpose, known in rhetoric as “rhetorical shift,” is the primary key to understanding the true role of interrogation in the Qur'an, which emanates from a Speaker whose knowledge encompasses all things.

This study aims to analyze the rhetorical style of interrogation in the Qur'anic discourse and to reveal its impact on clarifying the doctrinal, educational, and emotional objectives that the discourse seeks to convey. It also seeks to examine the phenomenon of rhetorical shift as a central driver for generating an “influential force” that stimulates the recipient and transforms them from a passive listener into an active participant in the reception process, through analyzing the semantic and pragmatic mechanisms underlying this style.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employs a descriptive-analytical approach, combining theoretical grounding in the concepts of interrogation, rhetorical shift, and influential force with practical application to selected Qur'anic texts. It also utilizes a statistical method to enumerate interrogative tools and classify their functions, alongside a pragmatic perspective to interpret the interactive and psychological dimensions of interrogation in its communicative context.

The study is limited to analyzing the rhetorical interrogative style and focuses textually on selected suras (Juz' 30, al-Rahman, al-Zumar, Saba', Yusuf, and al-Ma'ida), emphasizing the rhetorical shift as a central analytical framework. It aims to provide an integrated perspective that combines traditional rhetorical insight with modern analytical methods, highlighting an aspect of the Qur'anic linguistic miracle that remains inexhaustible.

Research Question

This study seeks to answer the following question:

- How is the interrogative style employed in the Qur'anic discourse as a device shifted from its original purpose, and what is the effect of this rhetorical shift in elucidating the doctrinal, educational, and legislative objectives of the Qur'an?

Research Approach

The study adopts a descriptive-analytical approach to uncover the phenomenon of rhetorical shift in the Qur'anic interrogative style by describing interrogative tools and analyzing their meanings in their Qur'anic contexts. It also uses a partial statistical method to identify the locations of interrogatives in the selected suras and classify their rhetorical functions. The study benefits from a pragmatic approach, especially the speech-act theory, to interpret interrogation as a performative act that generates intellectual and emotional effects on the audience. This integration of methods highlights the relationship between rhetorical shift and the achievement of Qur'anic purposes.

2. Chapter One: Theoretical Foundations of the Interrogative Style in the Qur'anic Discourse

2.1. The Semantic Nature of Interrogation: Linguistic and Rhetorical Boundaries

Interrogation is a performative, request-oriented rhetorical device aimed at seeking knowledge of the unknown. It is necessary to begin by defining its linguistic and technical meanings to establish a solid analytical framework.

2.1.1. Definition and Original Purpose

Linguistically, interrogation is derived from the root (عَفَى), which signifies knowledge or understanding by the heart (Ibn Faris, 1979, p. 457). Understanding is defined as knowing something in the heart or grasping the meaning from the interlocutor's words (Ibn Manzur, 1414 AH, p. 459; Al-Jurjani, 1983, p. 169).

Terminologically, scholars have defined it as "requesting to acquire the mental image of a thing" (Tounani, 2010, p. 79) or "inquiring about what is in the addressee's mind" (Al-Jurjani, 1983, p. 18). The original purpose of interrogation is thus to seek understanding or clarification (Yusuf, 2000, p. 8).

Interrogatives can be classified according to the type of request: those seeking conceptualization (to define or identify) and those seeking affirmation (to establish or deny a proposition). The hamza (أ) is considered the “mother of interrogatives” because it encompasses both conceptualization and affirmation, a feature no other tool shares, whereas هـ is restricted to seeking affirmation only (Al-Maraghi, 2007, p. 64; Nawawi, 2019, p. 25). Other tools (such as ما, كيف, من) are used solely for conceptualization (Al-Maraghi, 2007, p. 64). Recent findings confirm the efficacy of the interrogative style: Qur'anic questions facilitate understanding and lead to deep intellectual engagement from the recipient (Muhammad, 2024, p. 98).

2.1.2. Interrogation in the Divine Context (The

Impossibility of Genuine Inquiry)

From a doctrinal standpoint, true interrogation – that is, seeking unknown knowledge – is impossible for God, who is “All-Knowing of all things” (Al-Razi, 1420 AH, p. 527). God, Exalted, encompasses all knowledge of the heavens and the earth (Haqqah, 2022, p. 565).

Therefore, any use of interrogation in the Qur’an represents a deviation from its original purpose toward rhetorical, figurative ends that are inferred from the text and contextual cues (Abu Husayn, 2025, p. 19). This semantic shift underscores the necessity of studying interrogation within the field of ‘ilm al-ma’ani (science of meanings), which emphasizes purpose-driven interpretation.

2.2. The Concept of Rhetorical Shift: The Central Mechanism of Qur’anic Influence

Due to the impossibility of genuine interrogation from the Divine Self, the concept of rhetorical shift becomes the central mechanism for understanding the interrogative style in the Qur’an.

2.2.1. Nature of the Shift

In rhetoric, a shift is defined as “a deviation of speech from its usual level” or “departure from the original form” (Haqqah, 2022, p. 564). In the context of interrogation, it refers to the diversion of the interrogative from its original purpose (seeking understanding) to higher secondary purposes, such as denial, affirmation, or reproach (Abu Husayn, 2025, p. 19; Al-Awadhy, 2025, p. 58).

Applied studies, such as the analysis of the interrogative style in Sura al-Zumar, show that interrogation in this sura consistently departs from its original purpose, confirming that rhetorical shift is the prevailing feature of Qur’anic interrogation (Haqqah, 2022, p. 563). Studies on Juz’ 29 and 30 indicate that figurative or metaphorical interrogation is the most frequent type, which rhetoricians describe as a departure from the literal meaning to other figurative significations (Na’ili, 2022, p. 105).

2.2.2. Shift as an Inherent Feature of Divine Discourse

Since the original purpose of interrogation (seeking unknown information) does not apply to the Divine Speaker, it is academically justifiable to consider rhetorical shift as a standard rule in Qur’anic rhetorical analysis, not an exception. This understanding reinforces the fact that the essential function of the interrogative is performative and influential, aiming to compel and stimulate the recipient rather than merely inform.

The rhetorical distinction of the shift lies in its motivational function, designed to provoke the

recipient into engagement with the intended meaning rather than passive reception. Interrogatives that deviate from their original purpose are more capable of motivating the audience and transforming them into participants in thought and discourse, making them more effective than negation or direct assertion (Haqqah, 2022, p. 565).

2.3. Interrogative Tools and Their Functional Characteristics in the Qur’anic Context

Interrogative tools are classified into particles (hamza, هل, أم, ما, ماذا, أي, كم, متى, كيف, أين, أين, أنى) (Abu Husayn, 2025, p. 18). Studies have highlighted the varied distribution of these tools across different suras:

- Tools in Juz’ 30: Research on Juz’ 30 indicated the presence of only six interrogative tools, fulfilling eight distinct rhetorical purposes (Abu Husayn, 2025, p. 15).

- The Hamza (أم): The hamza is considered the “mother of interrogatives,” as it alone serves both conceptualization and affirmation. Researchers note that the hamza predominates over all other tools in conveying non-original meanings, such as reproach, denial, warning, or affirmation (Sharif, 2007, p. 119).

- Semantic Perspective on Tools: Analysis of each tool should extend beyond its original purpose (indicating agent, place, or time) to the rhetorical goal it serves in the context of shift. For example, أين is used to inquire about future time with emphasis and magnification (Yusuf, 2000, p. 11), as in:

(أَيَّانَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ) (Adh-Dhariyat: 12) (Yusuf, 2000, p. 11)

Similarly, the hamza tends to serve the purposes of affirmation and denial.

3. Chapter Two: Major Rhetorical Purposes: Functional Compilation and Classification

Interrogation in the Qur’anic discourse departs from its original purpose and assumes multiple rhetorical significations, which are inferred from the context. These purposes are functionally organized to serve the Qur’anic objectives in doctrinal establishment and admonition.

3.1. Poles of Negation and Affirmation: Affirmation and Denial as Doctrinal Tools

Affirmation (taqrīr) and denial (inkār) are among the primary purposes toward which interrogation deviates. Studies on Sura al-Zumar indicate that most interrogative uses are directed toward either affirmation or denial (Haqqah, 2022, p. 563).

3.1.1. Affirmation (Taqrīr)

The purpose of affirmation is to compel the addressee to acknowledge a known truth, making it

more binding than direct assertion (Safi, 1995, p. 214). This is evident in verses enumerating divine blessings, such as:

﴿أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ الْأَرْضَ مِهَادًا﴾ (An-Naba: 6)

Here, God affirms the creation of the earth and its preparation for humanity, using interrogation to stimulate gratitude (Al-Zamakhshari, 1407 AH, p. 685).

Affirmation also appears in Sura At-Tin:

﴿وَالْيَسْنَ اللَّهُ بِأَحْكَمِ الْحَاكِمِينَ﴾ (At-Tin: 8)

to assert God's absolute justice (Al-Mawardi, 1986, p. 303; Al-Wahidi, 1994, p. 526). Similarly, in Sura Az-Zumar:

﴿وَالْيَسْنَ اللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ﴾ (Az-Zumar: 36)

3.1.2. Denial and Negation (*Inkār*)

Interrogation is used for denial, refuting claims or rejecting assumptions (Safi, 1995, p. 333). This is essential in debating disbelievers or those who deny resurrection. For example, when the Quraysh said:

﴿يَقُولُونَ إِنَّا لَمَرْدُودُونَ فِي الْحَاظِرَةِ﴾ (An-Nazi'at: 10)

the interrogative serves to negate and reject their claim about being returned to the grave (Al-Tabari, 2001, p. 69).

Interrogation also conveys emphatic negation, as in:

﴿مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ﴾ (Al-Baqarah: 255)

which negates the audacity of anyone interceding without God's permission (Ibn Kathir, 1999, p. 679).

3.1.3. Affirmation and Denial as a Doctrinal System

The dominance of affirmation and denial in doctrinal disputation suras (e.g., Az-Zumar, Saba', Juz' 30) indicates that interrogation is a powerful tool for establishing faith-based reference points. Affirmation consolidates positive truths (monotheism, blessings), whereas denial eliminates falsehoods (polytheism, rejection of resurrection). This dual use ensures cognitive and rational obligation on the addressee, making the method more persuasive than merely presenting facts through direct assertion.

3.2. Purposes of Emotional Impact: Reproach, Wonder, and Magnification

Emotional rhetorical purposes aim to stir feelings and generate a deep impression on the recipient (Abdelqader, 2019, p. 7001).

3.2.1. Reproach and Censure

Interrogation is used to rebuke or admonish the recipient for wrongdoing (Safi, 1995, p. 332). This appears when confronting the arrogant or unjust, e.g., in Sura Al-Balad:

﴿أَلَيْسَ أَنْ لَنْ يَقْدَرَ عَلَيْهِ أَحَدٌ﴾ (Al-Balad: 5)

Here, the Qur'an rebukes the arrogant human who believes he will not be held accountable (Al-Tabari,

2001, p. 404).

Similarly, in Sura Al-Mutaffifin:

﴿أَلَا يَبْظُنُّ أُولَئِكَ أَنَّهُمْ مَبْعُوثُونَ﴾ (Al-Mutaffifin: 4)

the interrogative censures those who cheat in trade (Al-Zamakhshari, 1407 AH, p. 720). Another example:

﴿أَلَتَعْبُدُونَ مَا تَدْعُونَ﴾ (As-Saffat: 95)

3.2.2. Wonder, Magnification, and Awe

Interrogation expressing wonder highlights the audacity or actions of the addressee and invites the listener to share the emotion (Al-Wahidi, 1430 AH, p. 239). Examples include:

﴿قَالُوا كَيْفَ نَكَلِّمُ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الْمَهْدِ صَبِيًّا﴾ (Maryam: 29)

﴿أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يَنْهَى عَبْدًا إِذَا صَلَّى﴾ (Al-'Alaq: 9-10)

where God addresses the Prophet with astonishment at Abu Jahl's boldness (Al-Tabari, 2001, p. 523).

For magnification and fear, interrogation is used to emphasize the magnitude of events, especially resurrection scenes, e.g.,

﴿الْقَارِعَةُ (1) مَا الْقَارِعَةُ (2) وَمَا أَذْرَاكَ مَا الْقَارِعَةُ (3)﴾ (Al-Qari'ah: 1-3)

The repetitive interrogatives magnify the Day of Judgment and instill awe (Ibn Kathir, 1999, p. 468).

3.2.3. Humiliation and Mockery

Interrogation can serve to belittle the object of inquiry, often associated with idol worship or disbelievers, e.g.,

﴿إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ﴾ (As-Saffat: 85)

It is also used for mockery or sarcasm, as in Sura Saba':

﴿وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هَلْ نَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَى رَجُلٍ يَنْبئُكُمْ إِذَا مَرَقْتُمْ كُلُّ مِرْقٍ إِنَّا لَفِي سَاحِلٍ عَالٍ﴾ (Saba': 7) (Al-Awadhy, 2025, p. 60)

3.3. Purposes of Invitation and Motivation: Curiosity and Imperative/Desiderative Functions

Some rhetorical purposes employ interrogation as an entrance to exhortation and encouragement.

3.3.1. Curiosity

Curiosity aims to arouse the recipient's interest and attract attention to forthcoming guidance, enhancing readiness to receive instruction (Hussein, 2024, p. 802). Example:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَى تِجَارَةٍ تُنْجِيكُمْ مِنْ عَذَابِ أَلِيمٍ﴾ (As-Saff: 10)

This interrogative motivates believers to sacrifice and struggle in God's cause, presenting it as a profitable trade (Al-Sabuni, 1997, p. 352).

3.3.2. Imperative and Desiderative

Interrogation may function as an imperative or encouragement, e.g.,

﴿فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدْكِرٍ﴾ (Al-Qamar: 15) (Al-Baghawi, 1997, p. 429)

interpreted as "take heed of its lessons." Another

imperative

(فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ) (Al-Ma'idah: 91)

It can also imply desiderative meaning of powerless wish, as in the speech of the people of Hell:

example:

(فَهَلْ لَنَا مِنْ شُعَاءٍ فَيَشْفَعُوا لَنَا أَوْ نُرَدُّ فَنَعْمَلْ غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ) (Al-A'raf: 53)

Here, the interrogative expresses a desperate wish (Al-Qurtubi, 1964, p. 218).

Comparative Table 1: Distribution of the Main Rhetorical Purposes in the Selected Surahs

Rhetorical Purpose	Juz' 30	Sura Ar-Rahman	Sura Saba'	Sura Az-Zumar	Sura Al-Ma'idah	Sura Yusuf
Affirmation (Taqrir)	Predominant (Abu Husain, 2025, p. 21)	Predominant (Hussein, 2024, p. 802)	Present	Predominant (Haqqah, 2022, p. 563)	2 occurrences	Present (implicit)
Denial/Negation (Inkar/Nafi)	Frequent (Abu Husain, 2025, p. 20)	Present	Frequent (Al-Awadhy, 2025, p. 53)	Predominant (Haqqah, 2022, p. 563)	6 occurrences	Present (implicit)
Reproach/Censure (Tawbikh/Taqri')	Present (Abu Husain, 2025, p. 21)	Present	Present (Al-Awadhy, 2025, p. 53)	Present (Haqqah, 2022, p. 564)	Yes	Present
Wonder (Ta'ajjub)	Present (Abu Husain, 2025, p. 19)	Present (Hussein, 2024, p. 802)	Present (Al-Awadhy, 2025, p. 60)	–	4 occurrences	Present (Hijazi, 2021, p. 1901)
Magnification/Emphasis (Tahwil/Ta'zim)	Present (Abu Husain, 2025, p. 19)	Present	–	–	2 occurrences	Present (implicit)
Imperative (Amr)	Yes	No	No	No	2 occurrences	No
Humiliation (Tahqir)	No	No	No	No	1 occurrence	No

Here's a precise English translation of your text:

4. Chapter Three: The Energy of Influence and Psychological Impact: A Pragmatic Perspective

The supreme value of the figurative interrogative lies in its ability to generate a "dynamic influence energy" that creates deep interaction within the recipient's psyche, reflecting the speaker's emotional charge and eliciting affective responses in the addressee (Abdelkader, 2019, p. 6996).

4.1. Influence Energy: Concept and Interactive Nature

4.1.1. The Essence of Energy and Its Fundamental Cause

By "influence energy," we mean the "latent capacity of this style to evoke associated thoughts and emotions" (Abdelkader, 2019, p. 7000). Studies have concluded that the source of this latent influential energy lies in the directive and interactive nature of the style itself (Abdelkader, 2019, p. 6996).

This can be understood through an analysis of the linguistic mechanism: the interrogative, even when figurative, represents an implicit request for a cognitive or emotional response. This request transforms the recipient from a state of passivity to one of engagement and pursuit of an answer, making the style inherently interactive. This induced interaction generates emotional charge and ensures the impact reaches the addressee with such force that evasion of the meaning is impossible (Abdelkader, 2019, p. 7000).

4.1.2. Diversity of Influence Directions

The meanings conveyed by the interrogative style in the Qur'an, in terms of influence, are divided into

two primary directions (Abdelkader, 2019, p. 7001):

1. Revealing the speaker's psychological state: Aimed at expressing emotions such as wonder, amazement, or exaggeration, and involving the addressee in these feelings.
2. Inducing a specific psychological state in the addressee: As in interrogatives intended to report truth or guilt. Such affective acknowledgment may trigger a range of feelings, including regret, sorrow, shame, embarrassment, or diminishment when reporting sins and shortcomings (Abdelkader, 2019, p. 7001). Rarely does an interrogative convey a single meaning; rather, it usually carries a blend of meanings, evoking sensations in the listener while simultaneously expressing the speaker's emotions (Abdelkader, 2019, p. 7001).

4.2. Pragmatic Perspective and Speech Act Theory

The pragmatic perspective is the study associated with the proper handling that achieves the intentionality of indirect speech (Ebrahimi & Tand, 2021, p. 54). Based on speech act theory, the figurative interrogative is not seen as a mere question; rather, it is an illocutionary act that conveys the force of the utterance and produces a performative effect on the addressee (Rahima, 2009, p. 150). Pragmatic applications in Qur'anic discourse:

- Functional shift: Speech acts in the Qur'an embody purposes and intentions through a communicative strategy. For example, in Surah Luqman, declarative and informative acts serve an indirect purpose of encouraging believers to act

virtuously (Ebrahimi & Tand, 2021, p. 54).

- Warning and alerting: Performative acts (imperatives, prohibitions, interrogatives) in Surah Luqman indicate warning and alerting, sometimes extending to encouragement. These meanings carry psychological and emotional significance, invigorating the recipient (Ebrahimi & Tand, 2021, p. 54).

- Conciseness and semantic expansion: The performative style generally gives the speaker broader freedom for expression, persuasion, and influence, achieving both conciseness in discourse structure and expansion in semantic scope (Hussaini, 2001, p. 195; Muhammad, 2024, p. 97).

4.3. The Psychological Impact Varying with the Interrogator and Addressee (A Study of Surah Yusuf)

In Qur'anic narrative contexts, the absolute truth does not come solely from the divine speaker; the rhetorical and psychological effect varies according to the interrogating and addressed characters.

4.3.1. Pragmatic Methodology in Analysis

The study of interrogatives in Surah Yusuf examined the relationship between psychological impact and rhetorical position according to the "interrogator" (i.e., the speaker) (Hegazi, 2021, p. 1901). Seventeen interrogative instances occur in the surah, distributed among Yusuf, his brothers, Jacob, the wife of Al-Aziz, Al-Aziz and his aides, and finally from God (Hegazi, 2021, p. 1901). The key finding is that the different characters result in a clear variation in psychological impact for each interrogative (Hegazi, 2021, p. 1901). This variation in rhetorical position reflects the meticulous precision in dialogue formulation, where the interrogative serves not only to convey information but also to regulate the psychological interactions among the characters.

4.3.2. Influence Energy in Doctrinal Discourse: Denial and Mockery

In doctrinal argumentation, interrogatives appear as a dual-effect tool, especially when combined with mockery. When the Qur'an mixes denial and mockery in an interrogative (as with the deniers of resurrection in Saba), it not only compels the addressee cognitively to acknowledge the truth but also subjects them to social shame and rebuke before others (Al-Awadhi, 2025, p. 53).

5. Chapter Four: Applied Analysis: Comparative Studies in Qur'anic Surahs

5.1. Interrogatives in the Thirtieth Part: A Model of Density and Rhetorical Condensation

The Thirtieth Part (Juz' Amma) serves as a model for concentrated rhetorical and exhortative styles.

5.1.1. High Density and Multipurpose Usage

This part exhibits a high density of interrogative usage, containing six interrogative tools that serve eight diverse rhetorical purposes (Abu Hussein, 2025, p. 15). These include: reporting (الَّذِينَ اللَّهُ بِأَحْكَمِ الْحَاكِمِينَ), denial and exclusion (أَلَيْسَ لَنَا لَمْرُدُونَ فِي الْخَافِرَةِ), rebuke (أَلَيْسَتْ بِالْجَسْبِ), (أَنْ لَنْ يَغْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ أَحَدٌ), and magnification/exaggeration (مَا أَفْرَعَهُ) (Abu Hussein, 2025, p. 19).

5.1.2. Exhortative Condensation

The high density of interrogatives in this part, dominated by short Meccan surahs, indicates that the interrogative functions as a tool for exhortative condensation and spiritual stimulation. In these concise surahs, there is no room for extended narrative; the interrogative achieves maximum reminder and doctrinal obligation in the fewest words, aligning with the nature of short, dense discourse.

5.2. Surah Ar-Rahman: Repetition of Interrogatives as a Strategy for Acknowledging Blessings

The interrogative style in Surah Ar-Rahman is unique due to its repeated use in a single formula (فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ), serving the purpose of affective reporting.

5.2.1. From Information to Reflection

The interrogative in Surah Ar-Rahman transcends information-seeking to invite reflection on God's greatness and innumerable blessings, evoking awe and wonder. It stimulates the reader's curiosity, directs attention to the mentioned blessings, and reinforces the meanings of the verses (Hussein, 2024, p. 802).

5.2.2. The Function of Repetitive Interrogatives (Cumulative Reporting)

The repeated interrogative functions as a rhetorical refrain, achieving "cumulative reporting." This repetition does not pose a single question to be answered; rather, it surrounds the addressee with blessing upon blessing, ensuring maximal obligation to acknowledge God's favor and greatness. This intensification transforms the surah into a continuous spiritual exercise in gratitude and self-accountability, making the use of repetition rhetorically deeper than merely expressing figurative meaning (Hussein, 2024, p. 801).

5.3. Surah Az-Zumar and Surah Saba: Comparison in Doctrinal Argumentation

5.3.1. Az-Zumar: Shift Toward Denial and Logical Reporting

Interrogatives in Surah Az-Zumar were modified in all instances, with the primary purpose being denial and reporting (Haqqah, 2022, p. 563). They focus on affirming monotheism, denying polytheism, and rejecting equivalence between

opposites, as in: ﴿قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾ (Az-Zumar: 9) (Haqqah, 2022, p. 565); the goal is to compel the addressee to acknowledge the inequality of the two groups (Haqqah, 2022, p. 567).

5.3.2. *Saba: Shift Toward Mockery and Rejection*

In Surah Saba, interrogatives are used to deny the doctrine of resurrection, combined with threat, astonishment, and rebuke (Al-Awadhi, 2025, p. 53). For example, the disbelievers use a mocking interrogative: ﴿وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هَلْ نَدُوكُمْ عَلَىٰ رَجُلٍ يَنْتَبِئُكُمْ إِذَا مُرِّقْتُمْ﴾ (Saba: 7) (Al-Awadhi, 2025, p. 60); this style depicts their rejection of the truth with severity and sarcasm (Al-Awadhi, 2025, p. 53).

5.3.3. *Additional Analysis: Interrogatives in Surah Al-Ma'idah (The Medinan Model)*

Surah Al-Ma'idah represents Medinan surahs focusing on legislation and behavioral regulation. Interrogative usage was examined, totaling eighteen verses, and its meanings transformed from literal to diverse figurative senses serving the legislative context (Shafi'i, 2025, p. 1). The rhetorical purposes included denial (6 instances), astonishment (4), command (2), reporting (2), magnification (2), threat (1), belittlement (1), and alerting (1) (Shafi'i, 2025, p. 110). This distribution demonstrates how the interrogative adapts to become a behavioral and regulatory tool in Medinan surahs, beyond its role as a doctrinal argumentative device.

6. Chapter Five: Research Enrichment and Synthesized Findings

A comprehensive analysis of the interrogative style in Qur'anic discourse allows the extraction of higher semantic truths that reveal the rhetorical miracle and the purposive function of this style.

6.1. *Synthesized Findings: The Rhetorical Miracle of the Interrogative as a Unifier of Qur'anic Objectives*

6.1.1. *Causal Relationship between Deviation and Influence Energy*

Linking the concept of deviation (al-'udul) with influence energy represents an integrated causal relationship. Influence energy (the emotive power of feelings) is the direct fruit of the rhetorical phenomenon of deviation (Abdelkader, 2019, p. 7000). The style transforms from seeking information to requesting a response or acknowledgment. This interactive style precludes passive reception, turning the interrogative into a psychological and cognitive compulsion that cannot be resisted (Haqqah, 2022, p. 565; Abdelkader, 2019, p. 7000).

6.1.2. *The Miracle in Precise Tool Selection to Serve the Context*

Interrogative tools vary in their intrinsic semantic

properties, and each tool is selected in full harmony with the rhetorical purpose intended in the context of deviation (Haqqah, 2022, p. 565). For instance, "Ayyan" is specifically used in contexts of magnification and future-oriented awe (e.g., the Day of Resurrection) (Yusuf, 2000, p. 11; Al-Suyuti, 1974, p. 17). This alignment between the tool and rhetorical goal confirms the uniqueness and aesthetic beauty of Qur'anic expression.

6.1.3. *The Interrogative as a Tool to Dissect Psychological and Doctrinal States*

The rhetorical interrogative does not merely state facts; it dissects the motivations for denial and negligence. When it compels the addressee to internal psychological acknowledgment (as in interrogatives reporting sins), the style evokes feelings of shame and regret—a deep psychological impact reflecting the educational objectives of divine discourse (Abdelkader, 2019, p. 7001).

Table 2: Selected Interrogative Tools and Their Miraculous Functions in Light of Deviation

Tool	Original Purpose	Extracted Rhetorical Deviation	Miraculous Function / Context	Source / Context
Hamza (إِ)	Conception / Affirmation	Reporting, Denial, Rebuke, Astonishment	Tool of cognitive and emotional compulsion, predominant in strong doctrinal objectives; excels in conveying non-original meanings	Az-Zumar (Haqqah, 2022, p. 563), Part 30 (Abu Hussein, 2025, p. 21)
Hal (هَلْ)	Affirmation only	Negation, Suspense, Wish, Command	Tool for mobilization and encouragement, achieving eloquent negation	Ar-Rahman (Hussein, 2024, p. 802), As-Saff (Abu Hussein, 2025, p. 19)
Kayfa (كَيْفَ)	Question about state	Astonishment, Denial, Rebuke	Tool of exploratory interrogation, condemning corrupt states and deviation	Maryam (Abu Hussein, 2025, p. 19), Az-Zumar (Haqqah, 2022, p. 565)
Ayyan (أَيَّانَ)	Question about time (future)	Magnification, Exaggeration, Exclusion	Used to enhance the gravity and awe of future matters (Day of Resurrection)	Adh-Dharyyat (Yusuf, 2000, p. 11; Al-Suyuti, 1974, p. 17)
Ma/Mada (مَا / مَاذَا)	Question about inanimate/essence	Magnification, Exaggeration, Astonishment, Belittlement	Tool to amplify importance, evoke awe or diminish the status of the addressed entity	Al-Qari'ah (Ibn Kathir, 1999, p. 468)

6.2. *Recommendations for Enriching Future Research*

Considering the findings on the rhetorical interrogative style and its impact on clarifying Qur'anic objectives, the following recommendations

are proposed:

1. Deepening the Study of Psychological Impact:

Further applied studies should explore the psychological effects of figurative interrogatives in Qur'anic narrative texts, considering variables related to the identity of the "interrogator" and the "addressee" in stories, as evidenced in the analysis of Surah Yusuf.

2. Analyzing the Relationship with Rhetorical and Pragmatic Styles:

It is recommended to analyze the interactive relationship between the interrogative style and other rhetorical devices (e.g., simile, metaphor) in Qur'anic discourse, and to study its modern pragmatic dimensions via speech act theory, given that syntactic and pragmatic aspects significantly alter the meaning of the question.

3. Focusing on Deviation as a Methodological Framework:

Adopting the phenomenon of rhetorical deviation as a central analytical approach in the study of Qur'anic interrogatives allows researchers to move beyond traditional interpretations that merely list objectives, emphasizing instead the causal mechanisms that necessitate such deviation.

6.3. Summary and Conclusions

This study reveals that the interrogative style in the Qur'anic discourse goes beyond its ordinary function as a tool for seeking knowledge of the unknown. Given the impossibility of this meaning for the Divine Speaker, it transforms into a deliberate rhetorical strategy, grounded in a shift from the literal to the intended purpose. The analysis demonstrated that this shift is not a sporadic stylistic phenomenon but a structural principle governing the use of interrogatives in the Qur'an, whereby the question becomes a constructive and influential tool rather than merely informative. It performs integrated doctrinal, educational, and legislative functions.

The study further shows that the rhetorical purposes achieved through interrogation—chiefly assertion and negation—form two opposing semantic poles that underpin the system of doctrinal obligation in the Qur'an. Assertion prompts the audience to acknowledge a truth within their conscience, whereas negation refutes false claims and dispels doubts. Through this balance of affirmation and denial, the construction of faith-based referential authority is realized on a rational foundation, moving beyond direct reporting to interactive dialogical obligation.

The results also indicate that Qur'anic interrogation fulfills profound emotional functions:

it serves as a tool of admonition and reproach when eliciting a sense of guilt, as a means of astonishment and exaggeration when aiming to amplify an event and evoke awe, and as a device of stimulation and encouragement when motivating action. This functional multiplicity reflects the stylistic flexibility of interrogation and its capacity to adapt to context, serving various rhetorical objectives, whether in the Meccan suras with doctrinally admonitory character or the Medinan suras with legislative and organizational dimensions.

The pragmatic approach confirms that the essence of Qur'anic interrogatives' impact lies in their interactive, directive nature. Even metaphorical questions require a cognitive or emotional response from the audience, transforming them from passive recipients into active participants. This generates a "force of influence" as a direct result of the rhetorical shift; the more the interrogative moves from seeking information to eliciting acknowledgment, attention, or compliance, the greater its psychological and intellectual effect. Consequently, interrogation becomes a fully performative act considering speech theory, achieving performative force (obligation, reproach, motivation) accompanied by an influential effect (acknowledgment, fear, behavioral drive).

Comparative applications across selected suras show that the use of interrogation is shaped by the nature of the context: in Juz' 30, it is concentrated to fulfill a focused admonitory function appropriate to the brevity and rhythmic unity of the suras; in Sūrat al-Raḥmān, repetitive interrogation operates as a cumulative assertive strategy reinforcing acknowledgment of divine blessings; in Sūrat al-Zumar and Sūrat Saba', it serves doctrinal argumentation with a clear dialectical pattern; and in Sūrat al-Mā'idah, it adapts to the Medinan context as a tool for behavioral and legislative regulation. This contextual diversity confirms that interrogation is not a mere decorative element but an intentional structure aligned with the overarching purposes of Qur'anic discourse.

In conclusion, the rhetorical shift in Qur'anic interrogation represents a facet of the literary inimitability (*i'jāz*) of the Qur'an. It combines verbal economy with semantic expansion, simultaneously achieving intellectual obligation, emotional arousal, and behavioral guidance. Thus, Qur'anic interrogation is not merely an expressive device but a comprehensive argumentative and educational mechanism in which language and purpose interact harmoniously, revealing the depth and expansive influence of the Qur'anic rhetorical structure.

REFERENCES

- Abū Ḥusayn, M. (2025). *Interrogative tools in Juz' 'Amma and their rhetorical purposes: An applied rhetorical study*. *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, 15, 13–28.
- 'Abd al-Qādir, A. (2019). The affective energy of interrogative style in Arabic rhetoric. *Journal of Arabic Language Studies*, 23(4), 6995–7012.
- Al-Baghawī, al-Ḥusayn b. Mas'ūd. (1997). *Ma'ālim al-Tanzīl (Tafsīr al-Baghawī)* (Vol. 2). Dār Ṭayyibah.
- Al-'Awāḍī, S. (2025). Rhetorical purposes of interrogation in Sūrat Saba': An analytical study. *Journal of Linguistic and Rhetorical Studies*, 12(1), 55–72.
- Al-Jurjānī, 'Abd al-Qāhir. (1983). *Dalā'il al-I'jāz*. Dār al-Ma'ārif.
- Al-Marāghī, A. (2007). *Ulūm al-Balāghah*. Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah.
- Al-Rāzī, Fakhr al-Dīn. (1420 AH). *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb (al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr)*. Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī.
- Al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad b. Jarīr. (2001). *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān* (Vol. 24). Dār Hajr.
- Al-Wāḥidī, 'Alī b. Aḥmad. (1994). *Al-Wasiṭ fi Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Majīd*. Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah.
- Al-Wāḥidī, 'Alī b. Aḥmad. (1430 AH). *Al-Tafsīr al-Basīṭ*. 'Imādat al-Baḥth al-'Ilmī.
- Ḥāqqah, R. (2022). Rhetorical deviation in interrogative constructions in Sūrat al-Zumar. *Journal of Arabic Rhetoric*, 8(3), 560–575.
- Ḥijāzī, M. (2021). Interrogative style in Sūrat Yūsuf: A rhetorical and psychological study. *Journal of Qur'anic Research*, 10(2), 1895–1910.
- Ḥusayn, A. (2024). The rhetorical dimensions of repetition in Sūrat al-Raḥmān. *Journal of Literary and Qur'anic Studies*, 18(4), 795–810.
- Ibn Fāris, A. (1979). *Maqāyīs al-Lughah*. Dār al-Fikr.
- Ibn Kathīr, Ismā'il b. 'Umar. (1999). *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm* (Vol. 1 & 8). Dār Ṭayyibah.
- Ibn Manẓūr, Muḥammad b. Mukarram. (1414 AH). *Lisān al-'Arab*. Dār Ṣādir.
- Ibrāhīmī, S., & Tānd, M. (2021). Speech acts in Sūrat Luqmān: A pragmatic analysis. *Journal of Pragmatic Linguistics*, 6(1), 45–60.
- Muḥammad, R. (2024). The pedagogical impact of interrogative style in the Qur'an. *Journal of Educational and Islamic Studies*, 9(2), 90–105.
- Nā'ili, H. (2022). Figurative interrogation in Juz' 29 and 30: A rhetorical analysis. *Journal of Qur'anic Linguistics*, 7(1), 95–112.
- Nawawī, M. (2019). *Studies in Arabic Interrogative Particles*. Dār al-Minhāj.
- Raḥīmah, F. (2009). Interrogative speech acts in Arabic discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics and Discourse Studies*, 4(2), 140–160.
- Ṣāfi, M. (1995). *Al-Naḥw al-Wāfi fi Asālib al-Inshā'*. Dār al-Fikr.