A Corpus-Based Analysis of Lexical Bundles in the English Translation of the Holy Qur'an: Structural Forms and Functional Types in the Spotlight

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ABSTRACT: Original Paper

Lexical bundles crucially shape the discourse of specialized registers such as religious scriptures, yet research on bundles that characterize Islamic sacred texts such as the Qur'an remains scarce. This study conducts a comprehensive corpus analysis to identify prevalent lexical bundles in an English translation of the Qur'an, illuminating their structural forms and functional roles in encoding Islamic theology. A specialized corpus of 166,807 words spanning 114 suras was constructed, with frequent bundles extracted using software and filtering based on predetermined frequency/distribution thresholds. Identified bundles were qualitatively coded for structural realizations and functional types by multiple researchers. Findings revealed a marked predominance of nominal and prepositional phrase bundles systematically lexicalizing and reinforcing core religious concepts and metaphysical tenets. The quantitative prevalence of research-oriented bundles contextualizing theological subject matter over participant-oriented ones projecting stances and experiences, suggests that the Qur'an upholds an epistemological tradition regarding itself as an inviolable corpus encoding divinely revealed spiritual verities.

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These findings yield profound pedagogical implications since instructional approaches elucidating prevalent bundles as linguistic "building blocks" can foster holistic mastery of authentic Qur'anic expressions among diverse learners while preserving spiritual sanctity. Furthermore, bundle-focused activities cultivate integrated literacies surrounding comprehension, rhetorical articulation, and critical analysis of the linguistic and cultural dimensions of religious texts.

KEYWORDS: Corpus-based study, English translation of the Qur'an, functional types, lexical bundles, structural forms

1. Introduction

The learning and comprehension of the Holy Qur'an and its discourse hold paramount significance within Islamic societies, including Iran. Moreover, an examination of the discourse features of the Qur'an can offer substantial benefits to both English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) learners and researchers with an interest in religious texts seeking to enhance their proficiency in English. Consequently, conducting a systematic analysis of discourse and language features within Qur'anic texts serves to illuminate the most prevalent linguistic attributes. These identified features possess the potential to serve as invaluable research-informed materials for individuals engaged in learning and teaching Islamic texts in English. A key avenue for analyzing the discourse features of the Qur'an lies in the exploration of recurrent multiword combinations found within its verses.

Multi-word combinations or lexical bundles (LBs) are defined by Biber and Barbieri (2007, 26:263) as "building blocks of discourse". These are "bundles of words" (Biber et al. 1999, 989) that occur frequently in spoken and/or written texts. As LBs are learned as "wholes" (Pérez Llantada 2014, 14:83) and are stored as "unanalyzed multi-word chunks" (Biber, Conrad, & Cortes 2004, 25:400), they can be remembered and retrieved more efficiently than strings of individual words. This can contribute to more fluent language use (Biber et al. 2004; Esfandiari & Barbary 2017; Wray 2008).

Using LBs correctly and appropriately contributes to the sense that a speaker or writer is a legitimate member of a given community of practice. This is because they vary across disciplines, genres, moves, and modes (e.g., Biber et al. 2004; Cortes 2013; Hyland 2008a; Hyland 2008b; Le & Harrington 2015). Thus, the explicit study of LBs in the Qur'an may help novice religious language users use the associated languages more

competently and fluently (Cortes 2004; Hyland 2012; Nesselhauf 2005).

A large number of studies have probed the use of LBs in academic texts. Some researchers have focused on the differences in the use of LBs across disciplines (e.g., Durrant 2017; Hyland 2008b; Johnston 2017). They have highlighted the discipline-oriented nature of LBs, concluding that LBs are not only fundamental to academic discourse but also discipline-based. Some others (e.g., Hyland 2008a; Jalali 2013) have found that LBs used in the genre of research articles are different from those used in the genre of Ph.D. dissertations within their disciplines.

The use of LBs by native and non-native students has also been compared by several researchers (e.g., Adel & Erman 2012; Chen & Baker 2010; Ucar 2017), who have concluded that non-native writers tend to use LBs less frequently than native writers. Thus, this calls the need for non-native writers to become familiar with LBs used in their disciplines to be considered a professional member of their target discourse communities.

To date, scholarly exploration of the discourse of the Qur'an remains limited, and instructional materials informed by research findings are notably absent, particularly regarding the prevalence of LBs in this revered text. Consequently, there exists a significant dearth of research-informed resources for learners and users interested in comprehending religious texts in English.

In response to these gaps, this study aims to achieve several purposes: firstly, to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the discourse features of the Qur'an to identify the most frequently used LBs, deepening our understanding of Qur'anic discourse and facilitating more efficient acquisition, storage, and retrieval of its content; secondly, to shed light on the structural forms exhibited in the identified LBs extracted from the English translation of the Qur'an, aiming to elucidate the linguistic patterns and narrative structures inherent in the text; and lastly, to investigate the functional types manifested in the LBs identified from the English translation of the Qur'an, uncovering the semantic and pragmatic roles these bundles play within the discourse of the Qur'an.

Through these pursuits, our goal is to bridge the gap between academic research and pedagogical practice by finding the answers to the following research questions:

1. What LBs are most prevalent in the English translation of the Qur'an?

2. What prominent structural forms are exhibited in the LBs identified from the English translation of the Qur'an?

3. What prominent functional types are exhibited in the LBs identified from the English translation of the Qur'an?

2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation of this study is anchored in two influential linguistic models: the structural classification of lexical bundles (LBs) as proposed by Biber et al. (1999) and the functional categorization framework introduced by Hyland (2008b). These frameworks are essential for analyzing the grammatical structure and communicative functions of LBs within the English translation of the Qur'an, providing a comprehensive approach to understanding how these recurrent word sequences operate within the text.

The framework of Biber et al. (1999) plays a crucial role in the structural analysis of LBs. This model, rooted in corpus linguistics, systematically categorizes LBs based on their grammatical composition, allowing for a detailed examination of the syntactic patterns that recur in the text. For instance, one prominent structural form identified by Biber et al. is the noun phrase with an accompanying of-phrase. This structure is commonly used to describe physical attributes, abstract qualities, or ongoing processes, as seen in phrases like "the presence of" or "the importance of." Another significant structural form involves noun phrases followed by post-modifying elements other than of-phrases, such as prepositional phrases or clauses. These constructions often describe relationships among entities or identify specific processes, exemplified by expressions like "a result from the experiment."

The framework also recognizes the importance of prepositional phrases with embedded of-phrases, which frequently mark abstract or logical relationships, including those of time or causality, as in the phrase "in the case of." Other prepositional phrase fragments, which do not contain embedded of-phrases, are typically employed to specify locations, periods, or idiomatic meanings, such as "at the beginning" or "in contrast to." Additionally, Biber et al. highlight the structural form known as anticipatory it + verb/adjective phrase, which uses "it" in combination with a verb or adjective to express notions of possibility, importance, or necessity, illustrated by phrases like "it is important to" or "it is believed that."

Another key structural form involves passive verbs followed by prepositional phrases, which are often used to describe data or the basis of findings, as in "is based on" or "is characterized by." The copula be + noun/adjective phrase structure is also significant, as it typically links subjects to descriptive or comparative statements, such as "is similar to" or "is responsible for." Furthermore, the framework Biber et al. includes

structures like verb phrases followed by that-clauses, which are used to present information or assertions, and verb/adjective phrases followed by to-clauses, which indicate possibility, intention, or necessity. These syntactic patterns, such as "it is known that" or "it is necessary to," are prevalent in academic writing and are similarly reflected in the Qur'anic text.

Complementing the structural analysis is Hyland's (2008) functional categorization framework, which focuses on the communicative roles that LBs play within the text. Hyland's approach categorizes LBs based on their function, dividing them into three broad categories: research-oriented, text-oriented, and participant-oriented bundles. Research-oriented LBs are designed to structure activities and experiences related to the real world, guiding readers through descriptions, procedures, and arguments within the text. For example, LBs that denote location, procedure, or quantification help to establish the context and framework for discussion, as seen in phrases like "in the context of" or "the use of." In the context of the Qur'an, such bundles may be employed to describe religious concepts, historical events, or divine attributes.

Text-oriented LBs, on the other hand, are concerned with the organization of the discourse itself, helping to structure arguments, transitions, and the overall flow of the text. These bundles serve to guide the reader through complex theological arguments or to frame the divine message coherently, with examples like "on the other hand" or "as a result of" illustrating their function. Participant-oriented LBs focus on the interaction between the writer (or speaker) and the reader (or listener), often involving expressions of stance or engagement. Stance bundles, such as "it is important to," convey the author's attitude or evaluation, while engagement bundles, like "you can see that," directly address the reader, inviting them into the discourse. In the Qur'an, participant-oriented LBs may be used to express divine commands, offer guidance, or emphasize moral teachings.

The integration of Biber et al.'s structural classification with Hyland's functional categorization provides a holistic approach to analyzing LBs in the English translation of the Qur'an. By examining both the grammatical structure and the communicative function of these bundles, the study offers a comprehensive view of how LBs operate within this sacred text. The structural analysis reveals the syntactic patterns that characterize the Qur'an's language, while the functional analysis sheds light on how these structures contribute to the text's rhetorical and communicative goals. Together, these frameworks enable a detailed exploration of the linguistic features of the Qur'an, offering insights into its translation and interpretation in English.

This theoretical framework ensures that the study is grounded in well-established linguistic theories, providing a robust foundation for the analysis of LBs and their role in the English translation of the Qur'an. Through the dual lenses of structural form and functional type, the research is poised to uncover both the syntactic complexity and the communicative effectiveness of LBs in this religious text, contributing to a deeper understanding of its linguistic and theological nuances.

3. Methodology

This study was conducted in two distinct phases, aligning with the dual nature of the research questions posed. The initial phase, dedicated to addressing the first research question regarding the prevalence of LBs in the English translation of the Qur'an, employed a qualitative approach. To carry out an analysis of the LBs used in the Qur'an, the English version of this book translated by Abdullah Yusuf Ali was developed into a corpus. The completed corpus consists of 114 Suras including 166,807 words.

To create the corpus, each Sura was copied and pasted into separate Microsoft Word documents (.docx). Then, they were manually converted into software-analyzable text files. Next, they were analyzed using Anthony's (2018) free computer software, AntConc. The frequency and distribution thresholds were finally set. Frequency and distribution thresholds are established criteria for multi-word combinations to be considered as LBs. These thresholds are somewhat arbitrary (Ädel & Erman 2012) and differ "from one study to another, primarily depending on corpus size" (Esfandiari & Barbary 2017, 29:22). For example, Cortes (2004), Hyland (2008a), and Hyland (2008b) used a threshold of 20 LBs per million words whereas Biber et al. (2004) adopted a threshold of 40 LBs per million words. However, a normalization formula should be used for corpora smaller than one million words (Biber & Barbieri 2007; Chen & Baker 2014). The normalization formula yielded a value of 6.67. Rounding up the results of the normalization formula, the frequency threshold of 7 times per 166,807 words was then set for four-word LBs. The normalization formula is as follows:

$$\frac{40\ (standard\ frequency\ threshold) \times 166,807 (number\ of\ words\ in\ this\ corpus)}{1,000,000\ (number\ of\ words\ in\ a\ standard\ corpus)} = 6.67$$

The second criterion is distribution. Distribution refers to the occurrence of a single LB across different texts. According to Biber and Barbieri (2007), a word combination can be considered as an LB when it occurs in four or

more different texts in corpora between 100,000 and 200,000 words. Thus, a phrase would have to appear at least 7 times (frequency=7) in at least five Sura (distribution=5) in the Qur'an to be identified as an LB. In the analysis, three- to nine-word combinations were considered. However, it was obvious that all the word combinations were not of pedagogical relevance. In other words, all the LBs in the original list were not necessarily of equal importance to language teachers or learners; although, they met the determined frequency and distribution thresholds. Thus, further filtering was required to produce a more refined set of LBs for teaching and, particularly, to achieve our primary purpose of creating a list of clear, organized, meaningfully rich, and most importantly, the most pedagogically useful LBs identified in the Qur'an.

Therefore, certain criteria were used to exclude or eliminate some of the ill-formed LBs. Two of the exclusion criteria (*fragments of other bundles* and *bundles ending in articles*) were established by Salazar (2011) which analyzed a corpus of published articles in biology and biochemistry. Some LBs which contained fragments of other bundles were removed (e.g., *in this world and, of the people of*, *Allah is oft forgiving most*, *through the earth and see*). Then, LBs that ended in articles were also omitted (e.g., *and he is the*, *verily in this is a*, *from the lord of the that is in them*). Next, we manually removed overlapping word combinations (third criterion) where two- or three-word combinations were part of a larger LB (e.g., *o ye who* and *ye who believe* or *the heavens and*, *heavens and the*, and *the earth*) (Chen & Baker 2010; Hyland & Jiang 2018). Finally, other LBs that were not meaningfully rich or complete (fourth criterion) (e.g., *the end of those*, *hath power over all*, *those in whose hearts is*, *with all that ye*) were also removed.

Subsequently, the study transitioned into a qualitative phase to address the second and third research questions. To investigate the prominent structural forms and functional types exhibited in the LBs from the English translation of the Qur'an, an inductive qualitative approach was employed. The dataset consisted of the comprehensive list of LBs previously extracted in reply to the first research question. Three researchers independently categorized these bundles based on structural forms (Biber et al. 1999) and functional types (Hyland 2008) (See Table 1), developing a coding scheme with operational definitions for the different categories identified. Discrepancies in coding were resolved through discussion to establish reliability.

Table 1. Structural Forms and Functional Types of LBs

Structural Forms of LBs (Biber et al. 1999)

1	Noun phrase with of-phrase fragment	Noun phrase followed by a postmodifying of-phrase, used for physical description, existence or presence, abstract qualities, and describing processes or events lasting over a period of time.
2	Noun phrase with other post-modifier fragments	Noun phrase followed by a postmodifier other than an of-phrase, categorized into post-nominal clause fragments and prepositional phrase fragments, used to describe processes, identify relationships among entities, and include noun + complement clause combinations.
3	Prepositional phrase with embedded of-phrase	Prepositional phrase with an embedded of-phrase functioning as a post-modifier of the noun, marking abstract, logical relations formed with prepositions as, in, and at, used to mark temporal and abstract logical relations.
4	Other prepositional phrase fragment	Begins with a prepositional phrase without an embedded of-phrase, used to identify a particular location or time period, including idiomatic meanings such as contrasting propositions or events.
5	Anticipatory it + verb/adjective phrase	Divided into anticipatory it + adjective phrase and anticipatory it + verb phrase (usually passive), used to report possibility/likelihood, importance, necessity, and to present a stance, identifying information in most cases.
6	Passive verb + prepositional phrase fragment	Incorporates a passive voice verb followed by a prepositional phrase, commonly used to identify tabular/graphic displays of data or the basis of some finding or assertion.
7	Copula be + noun/adjective phrase	Divided into copula be + noun phrase and copula be + adjective phrase, used to identify causative or comparative relations.
8	(Verb phrase +) that-clause fragment	Divided into verb phrase + that-clause, that-clause with there as subject, and that-clause with it as subject and the copula is as verb, used to present information, findings, or known information.
9	(Verb/Adjective +) to-clause fragment	Divided into predicative adjective + to-clause, verb phrase + to-clause (passive), and to-clause, used to indicate possibility/ability and identify previous findings or known information.
10	Adverbial clause fragment	Consists of four-word LBs beginning with an adverbial clause, used for deictic reference to other discourse segments.
11	Pronoun/noun phrase + be (+…)	Divided into this + be and there + be, used to link information or for informational packaging purposes, particularly common in academic prose.
12	Other expressions	LBs not fitting neatly into other types, such as "as well as the", "than that of the", "may or may not", and phrases about statistical significance or correlation.

Functional Types of LBs (Hyland 2008)

1	Research-oriented LBs	Help structure activities and experiences of the real world, categorized into location, procedure, quantification, description, and topic of research.
2	Text-oriented LBs	Concerned with the organization of text and its meaning as a message or argument, including transition, resultative, structuring, and framing LBs.
3	Participant-oriented LBs	Focused on writers or readers of the text, involving stance and engagement features like "it is important to" and "we have, other people".

4. Results

In this section, we present the results of our analysis aimed at unraveling the discourse features of the Qur'an, particularly focusing on the prevalence, structural forms, and functional types of LBs found within its English translation. Through meticulous examination, we offer a detailed account of the most frequently used LBs, shedding light on their structural configurations and functional roles within the text. These findings contribute to bridging the gap between academic research and pedagogical practice, enriching the learning experience for individuals seeking to engage with the Qur'an in English.

4.1. Prevalent LBs

In addressing the first research question, which explores the prevalence of LBs in the English translation of the Qur'an, our analysis unearthed recurrent LBs that contribute significantly to the unique linguistic texture of the Qur'an's English rendition. Table 2 provides a detailed analysis of the frequencies and distributions of three- and four-word LBs.

Table 2. Three- and four-word LBs

3-Word Bundles	Frequency	Distribution	4-Word Bundles	Frequency	Distribution
those who believe	147	47	o ye who believe	85	19
the day of	114	52	the day of judgment	76	40
to those who	114	38	it is he who	72	34
for those who	101	42	Allah and his messenger	66	17
the people of	98	29	those who reject faith	50	16
those who reject	94	36	Allah is oft-forgiving	45	18
in the heavens	74	37	all that ye do	43	26
in the hereafter	66	32	the signs of Allah	43	22
the lord of	65	38	the companions of the	42	20
o my lord	64	24	there is no god	36	24
the signs of	60	28	the children of Israel	35	16
o my people	47	16	in the cause of	30	11
the wrongdoers	47	28	it is Allah who	26	15
the penalty of	44	24	Allah is well acquainted	25	15
the companions of	43	21	the son of Mary	23	11
children of Israel	41	16	those who do wrong	23	15
they will say	41	24	praise be to Allah	22	17
a grievous penalty	39	24	there is no blame	22	6
all that is	39	26	companions of the fire	21	13
exalted in power	39	24	those who do good	19	12
from thy lord	38	25	all that they do	18	13
the day that	37	24	the wrath of Allah	18	17

3-Word Bundles	Frequency	Distribution	4-Word Bundles	Frequency	Distribution
sent down t	35	21	Allah is he who	17	9
their own souls	35	22	worthy of all praise	17	14
in the end	32	22	the grace of Allah	14	10
the end of	32	20	the people of Noah	14	13
in the land	31	17	the people of the pharaoh	14	9
on the earth	31	19	the promise of Allah	14	11
other than Allah	31	19	those who do right	14	8
in this world	30	19	those who reject Allah	14	6
are signs for	29	18	all that ye di	13	11
is exalted in	29	16	in a state of	13	10
in this life	28	20	the depths of darkness	13	11
the path of	28	19	the hour of judgment	13	8
there will be	28	21	no blame on you	12	5
we have sent	28	17	we have sent down	12	9
as well as	27	19	he is exalted in	11	9
men and women	27	8	if any of you	11	6
one of the	27	20	knowledge of all things	11	9
knoweth all things	26	13	the fire of hell	11	7
full of wisdom	24	19	the lord and cherisher	11	6
the last day	24	10	the messenger of Allah	11	8
whom he pleaseth	24	8	cherisher of the worlds	10	6
any of you	23	14	do deeds of righteousness	10	5
the dominion of	22	17	for those who reject	10	10
turn away from	22	18	in the life of	10	7
with clear signs	22	16	in the presence of	10	8
a sign for	21	14	those who fear Allah	10	8
deeds of righteousness	21	14	we explain the signs	10	5
from the sky	21	21	all that they did	9	7
heareth and knoweth	21	12	tales of the ancients	9	9
we believe in	19	12	the command of Allah	9	9
the blazing fire	18	13	the name of Allah	9	6
the grace of	18	14	the praises of Allah	9	7
Allah is one	17	14	the remembrance of Allah	9	8
by no means	17	14	the throne of authority	9	9
establish regular prayer	17	14	there is no doubt	9	8
the unbelievers say	17	11	Allah loveth not those	8	5
whom he pleases	17	10	each one of them	8	7
the rejecters of	16	7	for a little while	8	7
to the unbelievers	16	13	has made for you	8	6
in the fire	15	11	in the ranks of	8	7
in your hearts	15	11	is best for you	8	6
reward those who	15	11	join gods with Allah	8	7
the sacred mosque	15	7	Pharaoh and his chiefs	8	6
again, and again	14	12	the day of resurrection	8	6
lie against Allah	14	9	they attribute to him	8	7
the reward of	14	12	ye may be grateful	8	7
the story of	14	11	Allah loveth those who	7	5
practice regular charity	13	8	I am commanded to	7	6

3-Word Bundles	Frequency	Distribution	4-Word Bundles	Frequency	Distribution
telling the truth	13	9	in defiance of right	7	5
those who believed	13	10	it is Allah that	7	6
those who follow	13	9	make clear to you	7	5
Allah sees well	12	8	on thrones of dignity	7	6
the creation of	12	11	put thy trust in	7	6
the curse of	12	9	sent down to you	7	5
the decree of	12	8	tell you the truth	7	7
the punishment of	12	12	they may receive admonition	7	5
he who created	11	8	they say we believe	7	5
in manifest error	11	11	they will dwell therein	7	6
the mercy of	11	9	those who patiently persevere	7	5
to Allah belong	11	7			
for the unbelievers	10	8			
trust in Allah	10	8			
we send down	10	10			
gardens of eternity	9	9			
men of understanding	9	7			
mercy of Allah	9	6			
rejected the messengers	9	5			
sends down rain	9	8			
a severe penalty	8	7			
Allah is witness	8	8			
Allah will judge	8	7			
fear their lord	8	7			
life and death	8	7			
morning and evening	8	8			
most grievous penalty	8	7			
rejected our signs	8	5			
thrones of dignity	8	7			
to Allah belongeth	8	5			
a grievous punishment	7	6			
a straight path	7	6			
in six days	7	7			
reject the signs	7	7			
the matter of	7	7			
the meeting of	7	7			
the message of	7	5			
the recompense of	7	7			
the revelation of	7	7			
transgressed all bounds	7	5			
turned away from	7	6			

Among the 3-word bundles, themes such as faith and belief, divine judgment and accountability, and guidance and revelation stand out prominently. Additionally, these bundles underscore the notions of divine sovereignty and power, resurrection and afterlife, and rejection of disbelief, further emphasizing core theological concepts within the Qur'anic narrative.

Transitioning to 4-word bundles, the Qur'an continues to highlight themes such as call to believers, divine attributes and authority, and divine signs and guidance. These bundles encapsulate the Qur'an's call to action for believers, the proclamation of divine attributes, and the manifestation of divine guidance in the world.

Table 3 presents an analysis of five- and six-word LBs in the English translation of the Qur'an, arranged by frequency to provide insight into their textual importance.

Table 3. Five- and six-word LBs

5-word bundles	Frequency	Distribution	6-word bundles	Frequency	Distribution
the heavens and the earth	107	47	in the heavens and on earth	50	30
on the day of judgment	49	26	Allah is oft forgiving most merciful	43	18
the people of the book	36	11	there is no god but he	27	18
the life of this world	29	21	created the heavens and the earth	26	21
in the cause of Allah	29	11	Allah hath power over all things	15	7
the lord of the worlds	25	15	all that is in the heavens	14	12
there is no blame on	21	5	those who believe and work righteousness	12	11
heareth and knoweth all things	19	12	verily in this are signs for	12	9
from the path of Allah	18	12	from the lord of the worlds	11	6
in the sight of Allah	16	11	in the heavens and the earth	10	10
are signs for those who	14	7	the promise of Allah is true	10	8
gardens beneath which rivers flow	14	12	Allah has power over all things	9	9
in this is a sign	14	5	among the people of the book	9	5
Allah is exalted in power	13	8	sees well all that ye do	8	7
the sun and the moon	12	11	believe in Allah and his messenger	7	6
all things in the heavens	11	6	what is the matter with you	7	5
Allah is with those who	10	5			
deluded away from the truth	10	10			
do we reward those who	10	6			
in the way of Allah	10	6			
obey Allah and his messenger	10	8			
promise of Allah is true	10	8			
the night and the day	10	10			
those who believe in Allah	10	7			
those who reject our signs	10	5			
whatever is in the heavens	10	9			
a guide and a mercy	9	8			
Allah is strict in punishment	9	5			
to dwell therein forever	9	8			
and it is he who	8	8			
my lord and your lord	8	7			
rivers flow to dwell therein	8	6			
the companions of the garden	8	5			
the lord of the throne	8	7			

5-word bundles	Frequency	Distribution	6-word bundles	Frequency	Distribution
the praises of thy lord	8	7			
the signs of their lord	8	8			
Allah has full knowledge of	7	6			
hears and knows all things	7	6			
hears and sees all things	7	5			
celebrate the praises of Allah	7	5			
on the throne of authority	7	7			
the lord of the heavens	7	7			

Within the 5-word bundles, themes of divine creation and sovereignty, eschatological themes, and paradisiacal imagery emerge prominently, echoing the Qur'an's portrayal of divine power, the afterlife, and the promise of paradise. Additionally, these bundles underscore the universal scope of creation, faith and righteous deeds, and belief in divine promise, reflecting the Qur'an's holistic worldview and emphasis on moral conduct and divine assurances. Moving to 6-word bundles, themes such as divine sovereignty and omnipresence, monotheistic assertion, and comprehensive divine authority come to the forefront. These bundles encapsulate the Qur'an's assertion of divine omnipotence, monotheistic creed, and comprehensive divine governance over all aspects of existence.

In Table 4, we provide a compilation of seven- and eight-word LBs derived from the English translation of the Qur'an, arranged according to their frequency.

Table 4. Seven- and eight-word LBs

7-word bundles	Frequency	Distribution	8-word bundles	Frequency	Distribution
for Allah is oft forgiving most merciful	22	12	the dominion of the heavens and the earth	19	15
Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom	14	10	all things in the heavens and on earth	11	6
believe in Allah and the last day	14	7	the heavens and the earth and all between	10	9
those who believe and work righteous deeds	11	8	whatever is in the heavens and on earth	9	8
no reward do I ask of you	9	5	those who believe and work deeds of righteousness	8	7
those in whose hearts is a disease	9	7	free of all wants worthy of all praise	7	6
those who believe not in the hereafter	9	7			
Allah sees well all that ye do	8	7			

7-word bundles	Frequency	Distribution	8-word bundles	Frequency	Distribution
hinder men from the path of Allah	8	6			
in this world and the hereafter	8	7			
firmly established on the throne of authority	7	7			
the truth of all that ye did	7	6			
they will be companions of the fire	7	6			

Within the realm of 7-word bundles, themes such as divine mercy and forgiveness, belief in eschatological reality, and faith coupled with righteous deeds emerge prominently. These bundles encapsulate the Qur'an's emphasis on divine compassion, the certainty of the afterlife, and the inseparable link between faith and moral action. Moreover, themes of spiritual afflictions and diseases, denial of the hereafter, and divine omniscience and observation underscore the Qur'an's portrayal of human frailty, the consequences of disbelief, and the divine attribute of all-knowingness. Moving on to 8-word bundles, the Qur'an highlights themes such as divine sovereignty and dominion, comprehensive creation, and the totality of existence.

Table 5 presents a list of nine- and eleven-word LBs from the English translation of the Qur'an. These lengthy bundles are less common in the text but carry significant thematic weight and complexity.

Table 5. Nine- and eleven-word LBs

9-word bundles	Frequency	Distribution	11-word bundles	Frequency	Distribution
Allah is well acquainted with all that ye do	15	13	To Allah belongeth/belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth	8	7
all that is in the heavens and on earth	14	12			

The 9-word bundles, themes such as divine omniscience and comprehensive creation resonate prominently, emphasizing the Qur'an's portrayal of divine knowledge encompassing all human actions and the unity of creation under divine authority. Moreover, these bundles underscore the Qur'an's assertion of divine sovereignty and ownership over the heavens and the earth, highlighting the encompassing nature of divine dominion. Finally, there is only one 11-word bundle, through which the Qur'an emphasizes themes such as divine sovereignty and ownership, articulating the

comprehensive authority of Allah over the entirety of creation.

4.2. Prominent Structural Forms

The structural realizations of LBs can reveal the underlying grammatical preferences and discursive leanings inherent to a given text or register. In the context of religious scripture like the Qur'an, analyzing the bundle structures provides insights into whether the linguistic articulations prioritize nominalizations, verb-centric constructions, rhetorical projections or other grammatical configurations. This can shed light on the text's theological dispositions towards imparting conceptual precepts, ritualistic actions, stanced argumentation or experiential intimacy. Scrutinizing these structural patterns holds significance for understanding how the LBs linguistically manifest the religious ideology and rhetorical intentions encoded in the sacred text. To investigate this, Biber et al.'s (1999) taxonomy of structural types was employed. The frequency count for each structural form, illustrated with several examples, has been presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Structural forms exhibited in the LBs identified from the English translation of the Qur'an

Structural Form	Examples	Frequency
Noun phrase with of-phrase fragment	the day of, the people of, the lord of, the signs of	79
Noun phrase with other post-modifier fragments	those who believe, those who reject, all that ye do	103
Prepositional phrase with embedded of-phrase	in the heavens, in the hereafter, on the earth	18
Other prepositional phrase fragment	to those who, for those who, with clear signs	28
Anticipatory it + verb/adjective phrase	it is he who, it is Allah who	5
Copula be + noun/adjective phrase	Allah is oft-forgiving, Allah is exalted in	13
(Verb phrase +) that-clause fragment	there is no god	9
(Verb/Adjective +) to-clause fragment	to dwell therein	4
Pronoun/noun phrase + be (+...)	there will be	2
Other expressions	praise be to Allah	11
Total		272

The quantitative distribution reveals an overwhelming prevalence of noun phrases at 182 instances, constituting nearly 67% of all LBs. This

includes 79 instances of noun phrases with post-modifying of-phrase fragments like "the day of" and 103 instances with other post-modifier fragments like "those who believe". This pronounced preference for nominal forms aligns with the theological objectives of the Qur'an to articulate, instantiate and reinforce core religious concepts, entities, and tenets central to Islamic metaphysics. The use of noun phrases allows for the efficient packaging and lexical reiteration of these often-abstract ontological ideas, qualities and figures of faith into succinct multi-word units. These nominal bundles can then be readily integrated and reinforced across the sacred text to solidify the conceptual foundations. While more verb-driven grammatical realizations could potentially imbue a sense of dynamism or experiential vividness, the Islamic theological traditions appear to favor nominal articulations that uphold the linguistic representation of axiomatic spiritual truths as immutable verities.

The next most prominent category consists of prepositional phrases at 46 total instances, including 18 cases of prepositional phrases with embedded of-phrase components like "in the heavens" and 28 instances of other prepositional phrase fragments like "to those who". These prepositional constructions serve to situate the core nominal theological concepts within a network of spatial, temporal and logical relations that provide conceptual grounding and connectivity within the overarching Islamic cosmological framework. For example, prepositional bundles like "in the heavens" and "on the earth" anchor the abstract religious ideas to the sacred metaphysical realms, while phrases like "for those who" and "to those who" delineate moral obligations and situational contexts associated with the conceptual contents. This pattern allows the Qur'anic text to extend beyond mere nominalizations of spiritual ideas into a holistic system of interrelated ontological and ethical precepts systematically elaborated through such prepositional modifications.

However, structural configurations explicitly oriented towards more rhetorical dimensions like stance projection, audience positioning and argumentative operations occur with considerably lower frequencies. This includes just 5 instances of anticipatory it-clauses like "it is he who", 13 cases of copula be phrases like "Allah is oft-forgiving", 9 verb/that-clause fragments like "there is no god", and 4 verb/adjective to-clause fragments like "to dwell therein". The relative infrequency of such structures compared to the nominal and prepositional prominence suggests a de-prioritization of overt rhetorical maneuvers and subjective positionings in favor of lexicalized articulations prioritizing conceptual precision and inculcation over persuasive narration or self-oriented mystic transcendence.

The Qur'anic LBs appear more oriented towards systematically

delineating and instantiating the sacred metaphysical precepts through repetitive nominal proliferations and prepositional circumscriptions, rather than projecting personal stances, forging experiential intimacy with the human recipient, or constructing extended lines of reasoning and argumentation. The linguistic patterns intimate an underlying Islamic spiritual epistemology that prioritizes mankind's intellectual and ritual submission to eternally pre-existing divine truths over internal experiential raptures or individual semantic constructions of enlightenment.

4.3. Prominent Functional Types

Complementing the structural analysis, an examination of the functional roles and rhetorical utilities served by the LBs can yield deeper insights into how the Qur'anic language manifests its theological intentions. Identifying the prevalence of research-oriented bundles aimed at explicating topics versus participant-oriented ones fostering personal engagement, for instance, can illuminate whether the sacred text prioritizes delineating universal spiritual commandments or cultivating transcendent individual experiences. Understanding these functional proclivities holds significance for mapping the linguistic patterns onto the religious ideologies and epistemologies inherent to the Islamic faith. To investigate the functional characteristics, Hyland's (2008) taxonomy categorizing LBs into research-oriented, text-oriented and participant-oriented types was employed. Table 7 presents the frequency count for each functional type, illustrated with several examples.

Table 7. Functional types exhibited in the LBs identified from the English translation of the Qur'an

Functional Type	Examples	Frequency
Research-oriented	the signs of Allah, all that ye do, in the cause of	162
Text-oriented	as well as, there will be, one of the	59
Participant-oriented	we believe in, o my lord	51
Total		272

The clear predominance of research-oriented LBs at 162 instances, constituting nearly 60% of the total distribution, aligns with the Qur'an's core purpose as a repository of divine wisdom and spiritual knowledge aimed at systematically elucidating Islamic theology, metaphysics and ethics. Bundles like "the signs of Allah", "all that ye do", and "in the cause of" exemplify this research-oriented functionality of lexicalizing key religious concepts, phenomena, practices and ritualistic actions integral to

the Islamic faith. The sheer quantitative prevalence of such topically-introducing and context-defining bundles augments the Qur'an's positioning not merely as a poetic personal narrative or spiritual autobiography, but as a meticulously rendered explication of divinely-sourced commandments, moral edicts and ontological precepts. These research-oriented bundles allow the sacred text to introduce, instantiate, reiterate and ultimately reinforce its sacred subject matter through systematic linguistic encoding.

From an Islamic theological perspective, the numerical dominance of such bundles upholds the Qur'an's essence as an immutable celestial epistemology to be received, comprehended and practiced by the faithful adherents. This contrasts with conceptions of spiritual enlightenment as an introspective journey of personal meaning-making or self-transcendent illuminations catalyzed through mystical linguistic symbolism and metaphors. Instead, the frequency distributions intimate an Islamic ideological prioritization of meticulous articulation and inculcation of divinely-revealed spiritual teachings as immutable sacred truths and commandments over subjective experiential states or expressive self-actualization processes. The primacy of research-oriented bundles reinforces this tradition situating enlightenment within rigorous conceptual internalization rather than rapturous epiphanies.

The 59 instances of text-oriented LBs play a supporting role in coherently organizing the sacred subject matter through transitions like "as well as", resultative signals like "there will be", and structuring phrases like "one of the". While some critics may argue that transformative scripture demands more rhetorically sophisticated operations, the Qur'anic patterns suggest a primary intention of systematically elaborating divine spiritual wisdom rather than harnessing literary artistry to induce transcendental experiences.

Finally, the 51 participant-oriented bundles like "we believe in" expressing authorial stance and "o my lord" attempting reader engagement are outnumbered by the research and text categories combined. This distribution aligns with Islamic traditions privileging practices of creedal submission to revealed spiritual commandments over tendencies towards mystical introspection, humanistic self-actualization or experiential re-interpretation of sacred scripture. While empathetic individualization has its place, the lower frequency of participant-oriented bundles suggests Islamic spiritual rhetoric prioritizes reinforcing the sacred metaphysical contents as objective realities existing independently of personal dispositions or subjective meaning-making. The patterns uphold an epistemological hierarchy centered on divine infallibility and the immutable celestial authority of the Qur'anic teachings.

5. Discussion

The findings from this corpus analysis offer compelling insights into the pivotal role LBs play in manifesting the discourse features and linguistic patterns that characterize the English translation of the Qur'an. By quantifying the prevalence of these multi-word combinations and scrutinizing their structural forms and functional utilities, this study elucidates how the sacred language encodes and perpetuates core Islamic theological concepts and spiritual epistemologies.

The extensive use of nominal and prepositional phrase bundles underscores an underlying Islamic tradition centered on the meticulous articulation, inculcation and preservation of divinely-revealed religious precepts as eternal, immutable spiritual axioms. Nominal constructions like "the day of" and "the lord of" allow for systematic lexicalization and emphatic reinforcement of sacred ontological ideas. Prepositional bundles such as "in the heavens" and "on the earth" further anchor these metaphysical tenets within the overarching Islamic cosmological framework. This linguistic patterning upholds a spiritual epistemology that prioritizes conceptual encoding over rhetorical devises oriented towards subjective meaning-making or experiential transcendence.

Crucially, the quantitative predominance of research-oriented bundles that introduce and contextualize religious concepts highlights how the Qur'anic discourse is oriented towards meticulously articulating divinely-sourced spiritual doctrine as universally binding commandments. This contrasts with inclinations towards cultivating personal resonances or projecting humanistic positionalities. The patterns intimate an Islamic paradigm positioning the Qur'an as an infallible celestial epistemology - a repository of sacred knowledge mandated by divine authority to be reverentially comprehended and practiced by the faithful.

The centrality of LBs to this theological undertaking cannot be overstated. As Hyland (2004) articulates, these formulaic expressions offer established, culturally-appropriate linguistic choices that crucially allow membership claims and insider legitimacy within a given discourse community. For the Islamic tradition, LBs facilitate efficient packaging, systematic organization and robust reinforcement of quintessential religious precepts across the sacred scripture. Learners exposed to such bundle-focused pedagogical materials can gain processing advantages by internalizing these multi-word meaning-making units holistically (Biber et al. 2004; Pérez Llantada 2014).

The findings therefore hold vital implications for language pedagogy

surrounding religious texts like the Qur'an. Instructors can leverage corpus-informed bundle analysis to develop targeted, needs-responsive materials and activities that unpack "the building blocks of Qur'anic discourse" (Swales 1990). Such explicit LB instruction promises to enhance learners' linguistic fluency while cultivating deeper comprehension of the cultural contexts and profound theological significance imbued within the sacred text (Alnasser & Alghamdi 2019; Biber et al. 2004; Hyland & Jiang 2018).

Moreover, a focus on LBs can scaffold interconnected literacy skills. LB-centered readings can boost comprehension by illuminating common multi-word patterns (Alnasser & Alghamdi 2019). Writing activities anchored on prevalent LB structures can improve rhetorical effectiveness by providing organizational frameworks to articulate complex religious ideas coherently (Biber et al. 2004). Critical thinking is fostered by analyzing the nuanced meanings and functions encoded within salient LBs, developing depth of linguistic, theological and cultural insight (Biber et al. 2004).

Ultimately, this exploration unearths valuable linguistic phenomena that can inform pedagogy aimed at rigorously elucidating the sacred scripture while upholding its immense spiritual sanctity. The revelations pave paths toward empirically-grounded instructional resources that enhance access to religious discourse traditions across diverse audiences of believers, scholars and cultural outsiders alike. By illuminating the LBs as building blocks of Qur'anic expression, this study provides a robust foundation for comprehending the intricacies of this revered text through research-informed language instruction paradigms.

6. Conclusions

This corpus study has provided an in-depth analysis of the prominent lexical bundles (LBs) found in the English translation of the Qur'an, offering valuable insights into the text's unique linguistic and discourse features. The analysis sheds light on how these LBs contribute to the conveyance of religious doctrine, the structuring of theological content, and the reinforcement of the Qur'an's authoritative and immutable nature. By examining the prevalence, structural forms, and functional types of these LBs, the study reveals how the English translation maintains the integrity of the original Arabic text while ensuring its accessibility to a broader audience.

The study has revealed that the most prevalent lexical bundles in the English translation of the Qur'an are those that predominantly consist of noun phrases and prepositional phrases. These bundles are frequently used to nominalize and encapsulate central religious concepts, such as the

attributes of God, the principles of faith, and the moral guidelines prescribed for believers. The high frequency of these specific types of bundles reflects the Qur'an's emphasis on precision in the articulation of divine truths. Rather than engaging in abstract or experiential language, the text uses these LBs to convey clear and authoritative expressions of spiritual and moral imperatives, ensuring that the core messages are communicated with exactness and clarity.

The structural analysis of the LBs identified in the Qur'an's English translation shows a clear preference for noun phrases and prepositional phrases. These structural forms are integral to the text's style, which prioritizes the nominalization of theological and ethical concepts. For example, phrases like "the path of righteousness" or "in the sight of God" not only convey religious ideas but also situate them within a broader spiritual framework. The dominance of these structured forms underscores a stylistic approach that is formal and deliberate, aiming to present religious doctrine in a way that is both coherent and systematically organized. This structural choice reflects the Qur'an's intent to serve as a stable and unchanging guide for believers, framing its teachings in a way that emphasizes their permanence and universality.

Functionally, the lexical bundles identified in the Qur'an's English translation are primarily used to frame and communicate theological content, rather than to express personal stances or evoke emotional responses. These bundles function to assert the Qur'an as a repository of divine knowledge and ethical commandments, highlighting its role as an inviolable text that must be accepted with reverent submission. The LBs help to reinforce the epistemological stance of the Qur'an, presenting it as a source of immutable truths rather than as a text open to subjective interpretation or rhetorical manipulation. For instance, bundles that emphasize divine authority or the eternal nature of God's decrees serve to remind the reader of the Qur'an's ultimate authority in all matters of faith and conduct. This functional orientation supports the Qur'an's overarching purpose: to guide the faithful through clear, unambiguous teachings that are grounded in the absolute authority of divine revelation.

In summary, the findings of this study demonstrate that the lexical bundles in the English translation of the Qur'an are intricately connected to its purpose as a sacred text. The prevalent use of noun and prepositional phrases, along with their specific structural and functional roles, reflects the Qur'an's focus on conveying divine truths in a manner that is both precise and authoritative. These linguistic patterns reinforce the Qur'an's status as a divine guide, designed to communicate its messages with clarity and to uphold its teachings as the ultimate source of spiritual and moral guidance

for believers.

From an instructional perspective, these findings hold profound implications for developing pedagogical approaches and materials aimed at enhancing linguistic accessibility to the Qur'an while preserving its immense spiritual sanctity. Explicit instruction unpacking the prevalent LBs can help learners internalize the linguistic "building blocks" that constitute core components of Qur'anic discourse. This can foster procedural mastery in processing and producing authentic Qur'anic expressions holistically. Moreover, LB-focused activities can cultivate an array of interconnected literacies surrounding sacred texts. Bundle-anchored readings can boost comprehension of common multi-word patterns. Writing tasks centered on LB frameworks can improve rhetorical effectiveness in articulating complex religious concepts coherently. Critically analyzing the nuanced meanings and pragmatic functions encoded within salient bundles can develop depth of linguistic and cultural insight while nurturing spiritual edification. From a research standpoint, the revelations open avenues for further inquiry into LBs across diverse religious and mystical textual traditions. Comparative studies could uncover similarities and divergences in lexical encoding strategies, illuminating how linguistic patterns manifest the epistemological tenets of various spiritual belief systems.

While offering valuable revelations, this study faced certain limitations that suggest directions for future investigations. Firstly, the analysis focused exclusively on the LBs extracted from one specific English translation of the Qur'an. Examining multiple English translations, as well as the original Arabic source text, could uncover linguistic nuances potentially obscured in a single translated version. Furthermore, the scope was limited to identifying LBs and classifying their structural and functional characteristics through quantitative distributional analysis. Future studies could employ qualitative techniques like stakeholder interviews and focus groups to garner deeper phenomenological insights into the spiritual, cultural and personal resonances evoked by prevalent LBs within Qur'anic discourse for diverse audience segments. Another avenue lies in exploring how LBs from sacred scripture permeate and manifest across interconnected spoken, written and multimedia modalities within Islamic traditions and communities. Triangulating findings across various linguistic registers could shed light on the broader socio-pragmatic roles served by these multi-word meaning units in manifesting spiritual ideologies across the linguistic ecosystems surrounding religious phenomena. Finally, the current findings focused solely on LBs as salient multi-word combinations. However, other formulaic language constructs like situational idioms, metaphoric expressions, rhetorical operations and parallelistic structures may hold equal

significance in shaping the discourse of the Qur'an and other sacred texts. Integrating LB explorations with examinations of such diverse phraseological dimensions promises to unveil more comprehensive understandings of how language encodes, perpetuates and venerates the intricacies of mystical belief systems across cultures.

Acknowledgements

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