



A Cognitive-Pragmatic Study of Regret in Biblical and Quranic Verses

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KEY WORDS

Cognitive-pragmatics Regret Biblical texts Qur'anic text Speech act Deixis Metaphor **Abstract:** Regret reflects the cognitive states of the speakers (or other agents) specified in the propositional contents. Each one may find him/herself tending to experience painful feeling for his/her unsuitable choices. Therefore, The study approaches regret from a cognitive-pragmatic perspective and it aims at: finding out the felicity conditions to identify regret as a speech act in Biblical and Quranic verses, pinpointing the strategies and ways through which this act is recognized in the selected texts, identifying the deictic expressions in the texts of regret, showing the impacts of metaphor in such texts and contrasting the most common cognitive-pragmatic strategies that are involved in the two texts.

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INTRODUCTION

Chomsky states that language has to be approached from a mentalist perspective. Indeed, his major tenet is that the essence of language is a mental 'organ'^[1]. Language is a superficial manifestation of hidden, highly abstract, cognitive constructions. Essential to such constructions is the operation of structure projection between domains. Therefore, essential to the understanding of cognitive construction is the characterization of the domains over which projection takes place^[2]. Cognitive scientists have found that pragmatic levels of meaning construction operate in general reasoning, narrative structure and other high-level aspects of communication^[1].

This study discusses the notion of regret from a cognitive-pragmatic perspective because it has not gained its due attention in the field of cognitive-

linguistics. Regret is termed a cognitively-laden or cognitively-determined emotion in unusual way. It is loaded with feeling and thus, qualifies as a true emotion. It is a more or less painful cognitive and emotional state of feeling sorry for misfortunes, limitations, losses, transgressions, shortcomings, or mistakes. It is an experience of felt-reason or reasoned-emotion. The regretted matters may be sins of commission as well as of omission; they may be moral or legal transgressions or morally and legally neutral^[3]. The questions of the study are:

- How can regret be approached from a cognitivepragmatic perspective?
- What are the similarities and differences in the cognitive-pragmatic deployment of regret in Biblical and Quranic texts?

The aims of the study are: the study approaches regret from a cognitive-pragmatic perspective and it aims at:

- Finding out the felicity conditions to identify regret as a speech act in Biblical and Quranic verses
- Pinpointing the strategies and ways through which this act can be recognized in the selected texts
- Identifying the deictic expressions in the texts of regret
- Showing the impacts of metaphor in such texts
- Contrasting the most common cognitive-pragmatic strategies that are involved in the two texts

The study adopts the following procedures:

- Surveying the literature review that clarifies the concepts of cognitive-pragmatics and regret
- Discussing certain pragmatic strategies such as deixis and metaphor which form the major terms of the model aimed at for the analysis of the two texts
- Analyzing English texts (The Holy Bible) and Arabic texts (The Glorious Quran) and discussing their results

Cognitive-pragmatics: Cognitive-pragmatics can be broadly defined as encompassing the study of the cognitive principles and processes involved in the construal of meaning-in-context. In particular, scholars in this field focus on both the inferential chains necessary to understand a communicator's intention, starting from their utterance and the different mental representations underlying the comprehension of various cognitive phenomena as cognitive processes^[4]. cognitive-pragmatics is characterized as "an explanatory account of a specific performance mechanism conducted at the level of representations-and procedures"^[5].

According to Shevchenko *et al.*^[6] pragmatics is cognitive by nature. Treated against psychological (cognitive-science), philosophical and sociological backgrounds Gricean conversational principles, Searlean speaker's intentions and Sperber and Wilson's relevance-theoretical framework are inwardly cognitive. The pragmatic principle of relevance has been a cornerstone for the understanding of other principles and implicatures as it explains the way of construal of "what is meant" (meaning-in-context) on the basis of "what is said".

According to relevance theory, any internal representation which provides an input to cognitive processes might be relevant to an individual at some

time. Utterances raise expectations of relevance not because speakers are expected to submit to cooperative principles and maxims or some other communicative convention but because the search for relevance is a basic feature of human cognition^[7].

Regret as a speech act: Regret can be appraised as thinking that one could do something about the event as caused by oneself. One feels regret when he realizes that the outcome would have been better had he chosen differently^[8]. Regret is one of life's most painful experiences because it can be seen as one of those strategies that directly damage the speaker's positive face as it is an admission of guilt or responsibility, e.g., for having done or not done an act, or for ignorance of something that the speaker is expected to know^[9]. The feelings of regret that can overwhelm people when they have done something wrong that they suspect might change the course of their life forever. Guiraud et al.[10] base their approach to regret as a speech act on Searle understanding of expressive speech acts (1969) that if there is a psychological state specified in the sincerity condition, the performance of an act counts as an expression of that psychological state. Regret is seen as a negative, cognitively determined emotion that he/she experience when realizing or imagining that his/her present situation would have been better had in case of acting in different way. They based it on the agent's beliefs that their own responsibilities lead to their goals or ideals either coming true or not, thus, regret is regarded as more complex emotions^[10].

It is observed that regret as a speech act has certain conditions. According to Norrick^[11], the expressive act should have the following conditions to say that act is an expressive one: the first condition is the factive which requires the speaker's acceptance of a certain state of affairs. The second one is seen in the value judgment with regard to the effect of the recognized state of affairs on the affected person or patient. These conditions are the preparatory conditions in Searle^[12]'s terms, the last kind of condition is observed in the identifying roles of the speaker "who is responsible for the state of affairs".

Regretting is stated as a feeling of sadness about something sad or wrong or about a mistake that one has made and a wish that it could have been different and better, for instance: "I wish I had not made that mistake"^[13]. Regret can stem from things which people did that they wish they had not done whereas others involve things they did not do that they wish they had done^[14].

Regret can be distinguished from its related emotions or actions. Regret and disappointment cannot be regarded as mutually exclusive since it involves individual choice rather than happenstance or external agency. This action (regret) can also be distinguished from sadness since it surely brings about sadness but sadness is not necessarily or even usually regret. On the contrary, remorse and regret can be used in an interchangeable way since, many researchers have stated that remorse have to be regarded as a species of agent regret^[15].

According to Greenberg^[16], regret as a negative cognitive or emotional state can result in refocusing and taking corrective action or pursuing a new path. However, the less opportunity one has to change the situation, the more likely it is that regret can turn into rumination and trigger chronic stress that destroys mind and body.

Regret as a speech act has not gained its due attention, so, it has not any strategies or ways which are proposed to identify it. The study suggests the following strategies and ways for it.

Explicit performatives: According to Verschueren^[17], explicit performatives are those utterances that contain a performative verb which makes explicit what kind of act is being performed.

Implicit (primary)performatives: Verschueren (ibid.) states that the implicit performatives are performative utterances which have not a performative verb. The following ways are observed to express the speech act of regret:

- Verbal way of communication can be indicated by speech sounds (utterances)
- Non-verbal way of communication can be seen in gestures and the like
- The third way is indicated by using both verbal and non-verbal ways of communications (ibid:103)

Austin^[18] states that "there must exist an accepted conventional procedure having a certain conventional effect, the procedure include the uttering of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances". Any breaching to these conditions makes performative utterance unhappy. The felicity conditions that are presented by Searle to explicate specific acts include:

- Propositional content condition is concerned with what the speech act is about in essence
- Preparatory condition states the real-world prerequisites for the speech act

- Sincerity condition must be satisfied if the act is to be performed sincerely
- Essential condition defines the act being performed in the sense that the speaker has the intention that his or her utterance will count as the identifiable act^[19]

Thus, the felicity conditions of regret suggested here are as follows:

Propositional content conditions:

- A bad proposition has been achieved from doing or not doing specific actions
- The speaker (or other agent)is responsible for the existence of the state of affairs

Preparatory conditions:

- The speaker (or other agent) might have done something wrong or he/she might have not done anything good enough
- A harmful effect has been received or ongoing received by the addresser and or the addressee and/ or another agent

Sincerity conditions: The speaker(or other agent)is discontent and believes that the state of affairs is bad.

Essential conditions: The utterance counts as dissatisfaction or expression of regret to the effect that proposition represents the actual state of affairs.

Deixis: Schmid^[20] sheds light on Marmaridou^{[2]1}'s proposal which gives a unified account of the possible cognitive representation of deixis. Marmaridou explains the intricacies of the deictic expressions. She reviews the earlier approaches because they draw a strict dividing line between semantic and pragmatic use of these deictic expressions. She suggests looking into the cognitive processes which are responsible for the understanding of deixis. As a consequent, she argues that deixis is based on our bodily, sensory-motor experience of pointing and she proposes "pointing out ICM" which consists of discourse particpants, sharing of attention, the participants' location in time as well as the locution of utterance in space, in addition to the participant's social roles. Marmaridou says that the deictic expression is one that builds a mental space in that the addresser and the addressee are co-present at the given point in time.

Metaphor theory: Human beings find certain phenomena that they can see, hear, feel, taste and smell easier to understand and categorize than other

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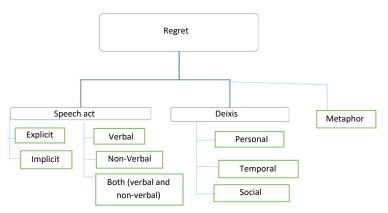


Fig. 1: Model of the analysis

phenomena they cannot. It is a perceptibility that makes the former phenomena concrete and the lack of it that makes the latter abstract. Humans systematically comprehend the abstract concepts in terms of concrete concepts. Thus, abstract concepts such as life, time and emotions are systematically understood in terms of concrete phenomena. For instance, emotions are represented by drawing on the domain of forces "I was overwhelmed" [22].

According to Fauconnier^[2] metaphor is a salient and pervasive cognitive process that links conceptualization and language. It depends on a cross-space mapping between two inputs (the source and the target), for instance, "to dig one's own grave" which implies that a person is doing things that will lead him to failure without being aware of it. According to Bajwa^[23], metaphor is the comparison of two unlike things. Simile, personification, anthropomorphism, hyperbole, parable, fable and analogy are metaphors.

The model: The data of analysis consist of 10 texts. Five texts represent the Holy Bible and the other five texts represent the Glorious Quran. All the texts of analysis deal with regret from a cognitive-pragmatic perspective. The eclectic model of analysis consists of the following items. The first item deals with regret as an expressive kind of speech act. In other words, the researchers agree with Guiraud *et al.*^[10] view of regret. The second item deals with Verschueren^[17], s view of explicit and implicit strategies of performative act as well as verbal, and nonverbal ways in which the act (regret) can be delivered. The third item deals with Marmaridou^[21]/s proposal of deictic expression. The last item deals with a metaphor theory from a view point of Bajwa^[23] (Fig. 1).

The data Biblical texts **Text 1:** For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though [it were] but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing (2 Corinthians7:8)^[24].

Speech act: One can observe the implicit performative strategy of regret in Paul's hurtful letter. The verbal way is used to convey this kind of speech act. It is not easy for the congregation to receive but nor is it easy for Paul to write. At first he regrets that he writes it but his regret has lasted for a short time. Now he is glad that he has sent it to them. He is not glad that they were hurt but he is glad because he prompts them to repent through his letter.

Deixis: Paul does the action by himself, thus, the first person pronoun has been repeated for five times. This kind of pronoun reflects the inner struggle inside the mentality of the speaker. His inner struggle ends when he observes the good behavior of the congregation.

Text 2: Then Judas which had betrayeth him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What [is that] to us? see thou [to that.] And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed and went and hanged himself (Matthew, 27:3-5)^[24].

Speech act: The implicit performative strategy of regret as speech act is indicated in "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood". Both the verbal and

non-verbal way of performing this act can be seen in the text. He takes the responsibility of this wrong doing (killing the prophet, Jesus) because he betrays him by telling Jesus's opponents about the place of the prophet. The bad consequences of regret are exemplified in the text. Judas believes that he has not had solutions: his regret produces guilt, shame, resentment, anguish, despair, depression, hopelessness and death. If it does not lead to actual suicide, it leads to emotional, psychological or spiritual suicide. He experienced deep remorse over what he had done in betraying an innocent man, a friend no less. But, he saw no way out; he did not believe such awful action was forgivable.

Deixis: Matthew displays the deep regret of Judas. He mimics the mentality of Judas. He expresses his deep suffering and regret which lead him to commit suicide.

Metaphor theory: Judas does not state that he betrays the prophet in a direct way. On the contrary, he confesses that he has committed a great crime by killing Jesus. So, the addressee has to make a connection in his mind between the innocent blood and Jesus.

Text 3: "Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon [my] thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth" (Jeremiah 31:19)^[24].

Speech Act: The implicit performative strategy of regret is indicated in "I was ashamed, yea, even confounded,..". The verbal way of regret can be seen in his confession of sins and mistakes .The non-verbal way can be seen in his action (he smote upon his thigh). Ephraim begins to hate the sins and morns over them with broken heart. His utterances express his self-abhorrence which indicates the strongest emotions of grief and holy indignation .He expresses his abhorrence because of his former sins.

Deixis: The first person pronoun (I) is also repeated in this text to express the pain of regret which comes from the mentality of Ephraim. He is the name of youngest of two sons of Joseph's. The time of sins is in his youth. His sin can be seen in "Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim whose glorious beauty is a fading flower which [are] on the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine! Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, [which] as a tempest of hail [and] a destroying storm. The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden under feet" (Isaiah,28:1-4).

Metaphor theory: Ephraim depicts his sins as something heavy. So, he weeps because of them. The regret of Ephraim has a good consequence because Allah forgives him.

Text 4: "And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out and wept bitterly" (Luke22:61-2)^[24].

Speech act: The implicit performative strategy and nonverbal way of regret as speech act are indicated in Peter's crying. Jesus states that Peter would deny him three times before the rooster crowed. Peter does not believe the prediction of the prophet because he is overconfident and prideful .He says that he would never deny Jesus but Peter's three denials have happened just as the prophet has predicted. The account of Peter's denial includes the ending with Peter weeping bitterly after the denials. Peter experienced regret and remorse over his sin.

Deixis: The speaker is Luke who narrates the state of Peter. The social and time deictic expressions are indicated in Lord (the prophet, Jesus) and "Before the cock crow" (morning). They lead Peter to weep which is a sigh of his deep regret.

Text 5: "Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all [was] vanity and vexation of spirit and [there was] no profit under the sun" (Ecclesiastesor 2:11)^[24].

Speech act: The implicit performative strategy and verbal way of regret are observed in the texts. Ecclesiastesoris the teacher who is decided to test himself. He wants to learn the purpose of his life. So, he makes a decision that he should be happy with his work. He is interested in his work as he achieves his plans. But then he thinks about what he has achieved. He thinks about all his hard work. Then he reasons the truth. He had done it all to please himself. And this leads him to regret. There is no permanent benefit if one searches for his happiness only.

Deixis: Ecclesiastesor is the speaker who exerts many efforts to be the best of all through his hard work but he recognizes that all his efforts go in vain so he expresses his regret.

Metaphor theory: Ecclesiastesor makes a connection between the hard work and vanity and vexation of spirit. Thus, the addressees have to fill their mental spaces to comprehend the text.

Quranic texts

Text 1:

" وأحيط بشورة قامليج يقالب فقايه على ما الفقى قبيها وجي خاوية على غزوشها ويقول يا ليتشب لة أشارك بزيي أخلاس (التجيف :42)

"And his wealth was destroyed; so he began to wring his hands for what he had spent on it, while it lay, having fallen down upon its roofs and he said: Ah me! would that I had not associated anyone with my Lord. [25].

Speech act: The implicit performative strategy of regret is indicated in المسترات (Ah me! would that I had not associated anyone with my Lord). The verbal and nonverbal ways of conveying the regret can be seen in المسترات (so, he began to wring his hands) and his speech when he says" المسترات (Ah me! would that I had not associated anyone with my Lord). These ways display his deep regret over his wrong doing. The reason of regret in the verse is related to gatherings where Allah's name is not mentioned.

Deixis: Allah is the narrator of this story. He displays His ability to transform the state of the man from pride to deep regret. The man wishes that he had not associated another one or be a proud of himself because of his richness. The first person pronoun is seen in الله المتكاف (pronoun which refers to the speaker) in that the arrogant man takes the responsibility for his wrong doing.

Text 2:

ويؤد بعض الطائد طلى ينذيه يقول با ليُقتل القشاء م الرئيول سيبلار 27 ، يا ويُقتل ليُقتل لذ الفظ قلال غليلا (29) للذ اضطفى عن القفر بغد إذ جاملى وعن التليفان للجسان عقولار1999 والرفاق : 25-29)

"And the day when the unjust one shall bite his hands saying: O! would that I had taken a way with the Messenger. O woe is me! would that I had not taken such a one for a friend!. Certainly he led me astray from the reminder after it had come to me; and the Shaitan fails to aid man"^[25].

Speech act: The implicit strategy of the act of regret is observed in ابنا ويَقْلَى لِيَسِّى لَمُ أَتَّفِذَ فَالَانَا عَلِيلًا (O woe is me! would that

I had not taken such a one for a friend!). Glorious Quran has conveyed his regret through verbal (oppressor's speech) and non -verbal way (وَيَوْمُ نِعَصُّ الطَّلِمُ عَلَى يَتَنِيُهُ and the day when the unjust one shall bite his hands saying). This verse describes the scene of oppressors on the Day of Judgment. There will be an intensified regret. The oppressor will regret bitterly on that day and the Qur'an talks about his reaction.

Metaphor theory: ﴿ رَبِيرُ بِمِنْ لِمُعْلَمُ مُرِيعُهُ (And the day when the unjust one shall bite his hands saying) is used in the verse as metaphor to express the oppressor's deep regret.

Text 3:

سولة طيرن إذ لمب تفعيد فقط أن لن تقدر عليه التعدي في مطلعات أنّ لا إنه إذ الله شيعتك إلى قلتُ من مطاعمين ٣٠ (الأمياء :87)

And Yunus, when he went away in wrath, so,he thought that We would not straiten him, so,he called out among afflictions: There is no god but Thou, glory be to Thee; surely I am of those who make themselves to suffer loss^[25].

Speech act: The implicit performative strategy and verbal way of regret are conveyed through Yunus's supplication in المعلى المعلى المعلى المعلى المعلى المعلى (There is no god but Thou, glory be to Thee; surely I am of those who make themselves to suffer loss). The prophet asks Allah to forgive him because he leaves the people who are supposed to call them to worship Allah without taking His permission. Yunus's regret brings forgiveness for him as it can be seen in the following verse:

"So We responded to him and delivered him from the griefand thus do We deliver the believers." [25].

Deixis: The personal and social deictic expression can be seen in) القائدة (those who make themselves to suffer loss). The authorized speaker in this verse is Allah who narrates the prophet deep regret through the supplication.

Text 4:

ولغ أنّ تُكُن تُلَس فلنعث ما في الاَرْض الأفنات به وأستروا الثنامة لنا راؤه أنطاب وقضي بَيْنَهُم بِلْفناطا وقم لا ليظامون (يونس :54)

And if every soul that has done injustice had all that is in the earth, it would offer it for ransom and they will manifest regret when they see the chastisement and the matter shall be decided between them with justice and they shall not be dealt with unjustly^[25].

Speech act: Allah says أَوْسُورُ اللَّهُ لِمَا اللَّهُ لِعَالَ اللَّهُ اللهُ وَاللَّهُ اللهُ (and they will manifest regret when they see the chastisement). Thus, the explicit performative strategy and verbal way of conveying the act of regret can be seen in the description of the unjust people. People will regret over their actions because they bring to them unpleasant consequences, when they realize torture with certainty. Some kinds of regret can be done to atone the wrong actions. On the contrary, there are the other type of regret in which nothing can be done. Then, peoplefeel completely helpless and the fire of regret burns them deeper. This is the type of regret that theunjust people will experience it on the Judgment Day.

Deixis: The speaker is Allah in this verse. He states the oppressors' situation in the Judgment Day.

Metaphor theory: Allah deploys over statement device. He says وَلَوْ اَلِوْ الْكُلُّ الْفُلِ طَالِقَتُ مَا فِي الْأَرْضَ لِالْتَثَتْ بِهِ الْمُرْضَ لِالْتَثْتُ بِهِ الْمُرْضَ لِالْتَثْتُ بِهِ (And if every soul that has done injustice had all that is in the earth, it would offer it for ransom). Oppressors attempt to escape from the punishment but all their attempts will be worthless. They feel the pain. As a result, they will live in endless regret.

Text 5:

قَالَا رَبِّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِنَّ لَمْ تَغْفِرُ لِنَا وَتَرْحَمُنَا لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخاسِرِين" (الأعراف : 23)"

They said: Our Lord! We have been unjust to ourselves and if Thou forgive us not and have [not] mercy on us, we shall certainly be of the losers^[25].

Speech act: The implicit performative strategy and verbal way of regret can be observed in the supplication of Adam and Eve. In their saying, they disobey the order of Allah because they are cheated by Satan.

Deixis: Allah is the speaker in the verse. He mimics their speech. They utilize the first person pronoun which can be observed in نالنكلين (us) in which they take the responsibility of their wrong doing.

CONCLUSION

The cognitive-pragmatic analysis of regret texts displays that there are two kinds of regret in the selected

texts: the first kind results in correcting the wrong doing as in the case of Ephraim, Yunus and Adam and Eve. But, the second kind brings physical and spiritual destruction as it happens to Judas and disbelievers.

Regret as speech act is delivered only by the implicit performative strategy in Biblical verses. Implicit performative strategy of regret is more commonly used than explicit one in Quranic verses. Both verbal and nonverbal ways of expressing the act are recognized in the selected text. Both ways have been recognized together in some texts to display the deep regret of the speaker or/and other agent who is under the description of the narrator.

The speakers or the persons under discussion in the selected texts prove the opinion of researchers in the sense that regret can be classified as expressive speech act. The mentioned persons believe that they choose the unappropriated action so they behave in that way. The cognitive-pragmatic approach to the deictic expressions in texts displays that the regret of the speakers in the Bible are of two kinds: first, the one who performs or choose an action, then, he expresses his regret. Second, the narrator who mimics the mentality of persons to reveal their suffering because they perform inappropriate action. The cognitive- pragmatic study of personal deixis shows that there is one speaker in all Qur'anic verses. Allah reports words of persons who express their painful experience of regret. Metaphor theory is utilized as a cognitive-pragmatic model because the addressee has to fill his mental-spaces to understand the indirect meaning of the selected texts.

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