



AN ANALYSIS OF VOCATIVE MARKERS IN THE QURAN

Kur'an-ı Kerim'deki Hitap Biçimleri Üzerine bir İnceleme

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Abstract: This study quantitatively examines three types of addressing forms in the Quran: the use of the two markers "ya", and "ya ayyuha", and addressing through zero morphology. The results indicate that the most commonly used marker is "ya", followed by "ya ayyuha." Zero morphology, on the other hand, is observed as the least frequent form of addressing. Specifically, "Ya ayyuha l-latheena amanuu" (O believers), "rabbi" (O my Lord), and "rabbana" (O our Lord) are the most frequently encountered phrases of addressing in the Quran. Additionally, by analyzing the linguistic structures of vocative messages, it has been apparent that the imperative is the most prevalent structure, followed by declaratives and interrogatives.

Keywords: *Addressing forms, The Quran, Addressing particles, Vocative messages.*

Öz: Bu çalışma, Kuran'daki üç tür hitap biçimi olan, "ya" ve "ya ayyuha" ilgeçleri ve sıfır biçim birimle işaretlemeyi niceliksel olarak incelemektedir. Sonuçlar, en çok kullanılan ilgecin "ya" olduğunu, ardından "ya ayyuha"nın geldiğini göstermektedir. Sıfır biçim birimle işaretleme yoluyla hitap biçimi ise en az görülen hitap biçimi olarak gözlemlenmektedir. "Ya ayyuha l-latheena amanuu" (Ey iman edenler), "rabbi" (Ey Rabbim), ve "rabbana" (Ey Rabbimiz)

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Received: 21 July 2023; Accepted: 18 October 2023

How to cite: Tellou, S. (2023). An Analysis of Vocative Markers in The Quran. *Mersin Üniversitesi Dil ve Edebiyat Dergisi*, 19(2), 151-163.

ise Kuran'da en sık karşılaşılan hitap ifadeleri olarak öne çıkmaktadır. Çalışmada ayrıca, hitapların işaret ettiği iletilerin yapıları da incelenerek, emir yapısının en yaygın yapı olduğu, ardından bildirimsel ve soru yapılarının geldiği görülmüştür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Hitap biçimleri, Kuran, Hitap edatları, Hitap mesajları.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Being the essence of its religion, a Scripture is the container of all principles, practices, morals, and worldviews sacred in a religion. It guides its believers to the straight path. Thus, understanding the Scriptures correctly is crucial for their believers to follow them accurately. To achieve this goal, people ought to obtain the intended meaning regardless of whether it is indirect, hidden, or ambiguous. Pragmatics, “the study of contextual meaning” (Yule, 1996, p. 3), is the field that is concerned with such meaning issues. It takes the literal meaning of the individual words in a sentence and reflects it upon the context to reveal the intended meaning.

One of the most intriguing topics in pragmatics is *Pragmatic Markers*. They are words that are not part of the main proposition of a sentence but add up to it in different ways (Fraser, 1996). Pragmatic markers are of various types and each type is divided into subtypes. Hence, it is a broad area that can be studied from diverse aspects. Vocative markers form such a subtype of pragmatic markers. They are linguistic items by which an addressee’s attention is attracted to be informed that a message is directed to them.

A large part of the Scriptures tends to be dedicated to narrations where dialogues take place. Therefore, vocative markers, which serve the purpose of calling an addressee’s attention, are logically essential in them. The Quran embraces remarkable instances of vocative markers associated with a wide range of addresses, sentence structures, and messages. This paper aims to explore the vocative markers occurring in the Quran both quantitatively and qualitatively.

2. VOCATIVE MARKERS

Vocatives belong to the wider category of Pragmatic Markers whose definition will pave the way for understanding what vocatives are. One

of the simplest and most comprehensive definitions is obtained by considering two distinct components of sentence meaning. The first one is the “*propositional content*” which indicates the proposition encoded in a sentence; “*the state of the world which the speaker wishes to bring to the addressee’s attention*”. The other component, is “*everything else*” other than words contributing to the propositional component. Pragmatic markers are everything else other than the propositional component (Fraser, 1996).

Numerous classifications of pragmatic markers have been proposed. However, Fraser’s classification (1996) is considered to be suitable for this paper. He divides pragmatic markers into four main categories: basic markers, commentary pragmatic markers, parallel markers, and discourse markers. Each one of them is divided into various subtypes. Vocatives belong to the category of parallel markers “*whose function is to signal an entire message in addition to the basic message*”. In the case of vocative markers, the additional message is the act of addressing.

2.1. CLASSIFICATION OF VOCATIVES

In the literature on vocatives, there is a lack of unanimity regarding their classification. Consequently, numerous studies have attempted to classify them based on their categorizations on various factors. This diversity in classification has resulted in the identification of several types of vocatives.

Some classifications proposed in the literature are as follows: Mehrotra identifies nine types of address terms, including names, invocations, addressing pets, honorifics, titles, situation factors, multiple uses of address forms, and greetings (1981). Chaika lists address terms such as first names, titles, titles combined with last names, last names, and special nicknames (1982). Braun classifies address terms into nominal, pronominal, and verbal categories, with nominal address terms further divided into subcategories like names, kinship terms, and occupational terms (1988). Fitch suggests a classification involving second-person pronouns, proper names, kinship terms, nicknames, titles, and adjectival terms (1991). Wardhaugh highlights the use of titles, names, last names, and their combinations as address terms (2006). Aliakbari and Toni offer a categorization that includes personal names, general titles, occupation-based titles, religious terms, kinship terms,

honorifics, intimacy terms, personal pronouns, descriptive phrases, and zero address terms (2008).

2.2. VOCATIVE COMPONENTS

Two important components of vocatives have been, usually separately, studied; their forms and their functions. Most scholars have defined and studied vocatives either from a completely formal perspective or a completely functional one. It is useful to mention some traditional definitions here. For instance, a sample definition from a formal perspective state that a vocative “*is set off from the sentence it occurs in by special intonation, and it doesn’t serve as an argument of a verb in this sentence*” (Zwicky, 1974). It is clear that Zwicky does not mention anything about the vocative’s function but formally describes what sets it apart from other referential phrases. However, an exemplifying functional definition describes a vocative as “*a form used for calling out and attracting or maintaining the addressee’s attention by using a term referring to*” (Michael Daniel, 2008). This definition focuses more on the vocative’s function rather than its form.

2.2.1. FORMS OF VOCATIVES

Vocative forms are usually investigated at three levels: morphological, phonological, and syntactic. In terms of morphology, some languages mark vocatives through specific morphological processes, while others do not use any morphological means. Scholars disagree on whether the marking of vocatives is part of the case system in a language. The disagreement stems from the fact that vocatives do not function as sentence arguments and their presence is not obligatory (Sonnenhauser & Hanna, 2013). Languages that do not mark vocatives morphologically utilize intonation to indicate the presence of a vocative. In spoken conversations, a vocative is often characterized by an initial high pitch, serving as a prosodic unit. In written dialogues, punctuation is used to achieve the same effect (Hill B. C., 2013).

Traditionally, vocatives have been considered optional in sentences since they do not serve as arguments. Therefore, syntactic studies on vocatives have been limited. However, recent studies, such as “Vocatives and the Pragmatics–Syntax Interface” (Hill V., 2007), have explored the internal structure of vocatives and their connection to the external syntactic structure.

2.2.2. FUNCTIONS OF VOCATIVES

Beyond their form, the functions of vocatives have garnered significant attention. Zwicky (1974) identified two main functions: "to call" and "to address." The calling function captures someone's attention before delivering a message, while the addressing function maintains the addressee's attention within a conversation. Vocatives also serve an expressive function, contributing pragmatically without affecting the semantic meaning or truth conditions of a sentence. They serve as performative tools for specifying the addressee (Sonnenhauser & Hanna, 2013).

Furthermore, Geoffrey Leech is known for his influential research on vocatives. He emphasizes that vocatives serve functions beyond mere communication purposes as they can also have an emotive function. For instance, a vocative that is employed to warn someone to lower the volume of the music demonstrates that a speaker can use a vocative to convey negative emotions. In another example, a mother addressing her child illustrates the emotive function too (1999, pp. 107-108).

3. VOCATIVE MARKERS IN ARABIC AND SIMILAR STUDIES

When discussing vocatives in Arabic, two points should be addressed. Firstly, Classical Arabic employs numerous vocative particles. Traditional Arabic grammarians have identified numerous particles, including "a," "ay," "ayaa," "hayaa," "aay," "aa," and "waa" (Moutaouakil, 1989, p. 143). However, Modern Arabic recognizes only three particles: "ya," "ya ayyuha," and "a," and it is also possible to omit the particle altogether. Secondly, vocatives in Arabic are morphologically marked. The Arabic case system is complex, with variations based on gender, number, and definiteness. For vocatives, the case markers depend on the definiteness: the accusative case marker is used for indefinite vocatives, while the nominative case marker is used for definite vocatives (Al-Bataineh, 2020, p. 5). Although the topic of case markers falls outside the scope of this paper, it is worth noting that vocatives are morphologically marked in Arabic.

Vocatives in Arabic have not received the same level of attention as other topics in Arabic grammar. Consequently, studies on vocatives in the Quran are limited. Most of these studies, whether in Arabic or English, focus on analyzing the rhetorical features of vocatives. Arabic studies aim to examine the speech acts performed by vocatives, while

English studies predominantly assess the preservation of rhetorical features in translation. Examples of such studies include (Salahuddin, 2014) and (Omar, Mohd & Kadhim, 2015).

4. DATA COLLECTION AND METHODOLOGY

The initial step of data collection involved collecting Quranic verses containing vocatives. This was achieved by utilizing the search engine of a digital version of the Quran. The search results yielded verses with both vocative particles and vocatives without particles, which were then sorted into separate files based on their respective vocative forms (particles) and vocative types (addressees). The lists were repeatedly reviewed to ensure more accurate quantitative outcomes. A few instances of vocatives in the first (ya) and the third (no particle) categories may have been unintentionally overlooked, as the digital search for them was not as straightforward as that for the second category. Afterward, the collected data was statistically analyzed, focusing on sentence structure. Each verse was labeled according to the type of structure its message exhibited, and the results were also subjected to statistical calculations. Numerical results were then compared and analyzed to ascertain why certain structures were more prevalent within a particular category. The verses' transliteration was sourced from the website <https://quran411.com/>. Some modifications were made to the transliteration to enhance accuracy. For instance, the voiced dental fricative /ð/ was originally written as /z/ on the website, but in this study, it was changed to "th" in the provided examples. As for verse translations, they were obtained from the website <https://quran.com/en>, specifically from Dr. Mustafa Khattab's translation, the Clear Quran.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

5.1. FORMS OF VOCATIVES IN THE QURAN

In the Quran, only two addressing particles are observed: "ya" and "ya ayyuha." These particles are frequently used in Quranic dialogues involving various participants. In certain instances, addressing occurs without the use of any particle. The choice of form is determined by the linguistic forms of the addressee and the contextual factors. In

summary, vocatives in the Quran can be recognized in three forms: a) the use of the particle "ya," b) the use of the particle "ya ayyuha," and c) the use of zero morphology.

5.2. THE FREQUENCY OF EACH VOCATIVE FORM IN THE QURAN

The two particles, *ya* and *ya ayyuha*, have the same meaning. However, their usage differs due to complementary distribution, meaning they are conditioned by morphology. *ya ayyuha* is used before nouns that begin with the definiteness prefix "al-" and its allomorphs, while "ya" is used before anything else. The third form, when no particle is used, implies that the addressee is close. The frequencies of occurrence for the three addressing forms, along with their rates in the entire Quran and the number of addressees marked by them, are presented in the chart below.

Table 1. The frequency of each vocative form in the Quran

| Forms of vocatives | Count | Percentage of frequency | Types of vocatives (addressees) | Percentage of types of vocatives |
|--------------------|------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Ya | 180 | 39.13% | 35 | 60.4% |
| ya ayyuha | 142 | 30.87% | 16 | 28.3% |
| No particle | 138 | 30% | 5 | 9.4% |
| Total | 460 | 100% | 53 | 100% |

Ya comes in first place, occurring 180 times, as it is used in all cases except before a noun starting with the prefix "al-". It precedes proper nouns, such as prophet names, as well as general nouns and kinship titles. This category of addressees is the largest in the Quran, accounting for 60.4% of the total.

Vocatives marked with *ya ayyuha* come next, occurring 142 times, as its usage is more restricted. However, the difference in frequencies between *ya* and *ya ayyuha* is not significant, although there is a notable difference in the number of types of addressees. While *ya* marks 35 addressees, *ya ayyuha* marks only 16. This suggests that certain vocatives marked by *ya ayyuha* occur more frequently than others. This will be further clarified in the following section.

Finally, although the absence of a particle is almost limited to calls to God, it occurs 137 times, accounting for 30% of the total. It is nearly identical to the second group despite the difference in the number of

addresses. This indicates that some of these vocatives without a particle also occur more frequently than others. The subsequent section focuses on classifying the types of addressees appearing in each form.

5.3. TYPES OF ADDRESSEES APPEARING IN EACH FORM IN THE QURAN

5.3.1. ADDRESSEES MARKED BY THE PARTICLE YA

The first column of the following table displays the instances of addressees marked by the particle "ya." Their English translations are provided in the second column. The third column shows the number of occurrences throughout the Quran, followed by their respective percentages within the given formula.

Table 2. Vocatives marked by the particle ya in the Quran

| Vocative | Translation | Counts | Percentage |
|---------------------|----------------------|--------|------------|
| ya banees israa'eel | O children of Israel | 6 | 3.33% |
| ya banees aadama | O children of Adam | 5 | 2.77% |
| ya ahla l-kitaab | O people of the Book | 12 | 6.66% |
| ya Qawmi | O my people | 47 | 26.11% |
| ya Qawmanaa | O our people | 2 | 1.11% |
| ya moosaa | O Moses | 24 | 13.33% |
| ya Aadamu | O Adam | 5 | 2.77% |
| ya Ibraahimu | O Abraham | 4 | 2.22% |
| ya 'isaa | O Jesus | 4 | 2.22% |
| ya Noohu | O Noah | 4 | 2.22% |
| ya lootu | O Lot | 2 | 1.11% |
| ya shu'aybu | O Shuayb | 3 | 1.66% |
| ya saalihu | O Salih | 2 | 1.11% |
| ya haaroonu | O Aaron | 1 | 0.55% |
| ya Maryamu | O Mary | 5 | 2.77% |
| ya Maaliku | O Malik | 1 | 0.55% |
| ya baniyya | O my sons | 3 | 1.66% |
| ya bunayya | O my son | 6 | 3.33% |
| ya abati | O my father | 8 | 4.44% |

| | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|------------|-------------|
| ya abaanaa | O our father | 6 | 3.33% |
| ya rabbi | O my Lord | 2 | 1.11% |
| ya ibadii | O My servants | 5 | 2.77% |
| ya fir'awnu | O Pharaoh | 2 | 1.11% |
| ya haamaan | O Haman | 2 | 1.11% |
| ya saamiriy | O Samiri | 1 | 0.55% |
| ya ibleesu | O Iblis | 2 | 1.11% |
| ya jibaalu | O Mountains | 1 | 0.55% |
| ya naaru | O fire | 1 | 0.55% |
| ya ardu | O earth | 1 | 0.55% |
| ya aamaa'u | O Sky | 1 | 0.55% |
| ya ma'shara l-jinni | O assembly of Jinns | 3 | 1.66% |
| ya bna umma | O son of my mother | 1 | 0.55% |
| ya ahla yathriba | O people of Yathrib | 1 | 0.55% |
| ya tha l-qarnayn | O Zul-Qarnain | 2 | 1.11% |
| ya uli l-albaabi | O (people) of understanding | 4 | 2.22% |
| ya uli l-absaari | O (people) of insight | 1 | 0.55% |
| Total | | 180 | 100% |

Obviously, the occurrence numbers of most of the addresses range between 1 and 6. However, only three addressees rank higher which are *ya qawmi*: *O my people* 47 times, *ya moosaa*: *O Moses* 24 times, and *ya ahla l-kitaab*: *O people of the Book* 12 times. Vocatives in this category can be divided into four groups in terms of the addressee's features.

The most prevailing group is the *proper nouns* such as messengers' and their enemies' names. Two verses containing proper nouns are given below. *1a* is the 35th verse of the second chapter in the Quran where God addresses Adam. Example *1b* is the verse 7:104² which displays a part of a dialogue between Moses and Pharaoh. The verse's transliteration is given first, then its English translation.

²7 is the chapter's number and 104 is the verse's number.

1a. Wa qulnaa yaa Adamu skun anta wa zawjukal jannata 2:35

- We cautioned, “**O Adam!** Live with your wife in Paradise 2:35

1b. Wa qaala Moosaa yaa Fir'awnu innee Rasoolum mir Rabbil 'aalameen. 7:104

- And Moses said, “**O Pharaoh!** I am truly a messenger from the Lord of all worlds, 7:104

The second group includes *general names* starting with an indefinite noun such as *qawmi: my people*, *ahla l-kitaab: people of the Book*, *banee israa'eel: children of Israel*, and *uli l-absaari: people of insight*. *1c* and *1d* illustrate two examples of this category. The verse 5:72 contains Jesus' words addressing children of Israel while the verse 36:60 contains a question asked by God addressing children of Adam.

1c. wa qaala Maseehu yaa Banee Israa'eela u'budul laaha Rabbee wa Rabbakum 5:72

- The Messiah 'himself' said, “**O Children of Israel!** Worship Allah—my Lord and your Lord.” 5:72

1d. Alam a'had ilaikum yaa Banee Aadama al-laa ta'budush Shaitaana. 36:60

- Did I not command you, **O Children of Adam**, not to follow Satan 36:60

Another group includes *kinship* titles. This group encompasses addressees such as *abati: dear father* and *bunaiya: dear son*. Examples *1e* and *1f* feature the addressees "my dear son" and "my dear father." In the first example, Luqman advises his son, while in the second example, Abraham questions his father about associating others with God in worship.

1e. ya bunaiya laa tushrik billaah 31:13

- “**O my dear son!** Never associate 'anything' with Allah 'in worship'” 31:13

1f. Iz qaala li abeehi yaa abati lima ta'budu maa laa yasma'u wa laa yubsiru wa laa yughnee 'anka shai'aa 19:42

- 'Remember' when he said to his father, “**O dear father!** Why do you worship what can neither hear nor see, nor benefit you at all? 19:42

The final category pertains to *inanimate objects* being commanded by God. Four examples fall within this category: mountains, fire, earth, and sky. The verse mentioning mountains is provided in *Ig*, while the verse mentioning fire is given in *Ih*.

Ig. yaa jibaalu awwibee ma'ahoo wattaira 34:10

- “**O mountains!** Echo his hymns! And the birds as well.” 34:10

Ih. Qulnaa yaa naaru koonee bardan wa salaaman 'alaa Ibraaheem 21:69

- We ordered, “**O fire!** Be cool and safe for Abraham!” 21:69

5.3.2. VOCATIVES MARKED BY THE PARTICLE YA AYYUHA

The second form of addressing involves the use of the particle *ya ayyuha*. The vocative with the highest frequency, *ya ayyuha l-atheena aamanoo*, falls into this category. As mentioned earlier, in terms of meaning, *ya* and *ya ayyuha* convey the same idea; the difference lies in their usage. *ya ayyuha* is used before nouns that begin with the definiteness prefix "al-" and its various allomorphs, which are numerous. The /a/ in the prefix is only pronounced in speech-initial position and is often omitted. Additionally, the /l/ assimilates completely with coronal consonants when attached to a word beginning with one. Consequently, the vocatives found in the Quran exhibit the following allomorphs of "al-": {l, n, r}. Table 3 presents the vocatives marked by the particle *ya ayyuha* along with their translations, frequencies, and percentages. It is evident that certain vocatives are mentioned significantly more frequently than others.

Table 3. Vocatives marked by the particle *ya ayyuha* in the Quran

| Vocatives | Translation | Count | Percentage |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-------|------------|
| Ya ayyuha l-latheena amanuu | O you who have believed | 89 | 62.67% |
| Ya ayyuha n-naasu | O mankind (Plural) | 20 | 14.08% |
| Ya ayyuha r-rasoolu | O messenger | 2 | 1.4% |
| Ya ayyuha r-rusulu | O messengers | 1 | 0.7% |
| Ya ayyuha n-nabiyyu | O prophet | 13 | 9.15% |

| | | | |
|---|---|------------|-------------|
| Ya ayyuha l-muzzammil | O you who wraps himself (in clothing) | 1 | 0.7% |
| Ya ayyuha l-muddatthir | O you who covers himself (with a garment) | 1 | 0.7% |
| Ya ayyuha l-kafiruna | O disbelievers | 1 | 0.7% |
| Ya ayyuha l-latheena kafaru | O you who have disbelieved | 1 | 0.7% |
| Ya ayyuha l-latheena ootu l-kitaaba | O you who were given the Scripture | 1 | 0.7% |
| Ya ayyuha l-latheena hadoo | O you who follow the Jewish faith | 1 | 0.7% |
| Ya ayyuha l-insaan | O mankind (singular) | 2 | 1.4% |
| Ya ayyuha l-mala'u | O eminent ones | 5 | 3.52% |
| Ya ayyuha n-namlu | O ants | 1 | 0.7% |
| Ya ayyuha l-lathee nuzzila 'alayhi l-thikru | O you to whom the reminder is revealed | 1 | 0.7% |
| Ya ayyuha l-'aziizu | O chief minister | 2 | 1.4% |
| Total | | 142 | 100% |

It is important to note that the relative pronouns in Arabic start with the definiteness prefix. Two relative pronouns are found in the Quran following the particle *ya ayyuha*; they are "al-latheena" and "al-lathee" (with a voiced dental). Both of them mean "who/that/which," but the first one is used with plural nouns, while the other is used with singular nouns. Two examples are given below to illustrate this. In *2a*, God addresses the Jews and Christians with the referent expression "who were given the Book." In *2b*, it talks about the disbelievers' accusation to Prophet Mohammad, peace be upon him, using the referent expression "who the reminder is revealed to."

2a. Yaa ayyuha latheena ootu l-Kitaaba aaminoo bima nazzalnaa 4:47

- **O you who were given the Book!** Believe in what We have revealed 4:47

2b. Wa qaaloo yaa ayyuha l-lathee nuzzila 'alaihiz Zikru innaka lamajnoon 15:6

- They say, “**O you to whom the Reminder is revealed!** You must be insane! 15:6

Other than relative pronouns, titles and definite general nouns are seen in this category. *Messenger*, and *chief minister* are examples of titles. God addresses the prophet Mohammad peace be upon him using the title *messenger* in 2c. In 2d, prophet Joseph’s brother addresses him using the title *chief minister*.

2c. *Yaa ayyuha r-Rasoolu balligh maaa unzila ilaika mir Rabbika...*
5:67

- **O Messenger!** Convey everything revealed to you from your Lord...
5:67

2d. *Qaaloo yaa ayyuhal 'Azeezu inna lahoo aban shaikhan kabeeran*
12:78

- They appealed, “**O Chief Minister!** He has a very old father 12:78

This category also includes definite general vocatives marked by the particle *ya ayyuha*. This group comprises nouns such as *humankind* both in singular and plural forms. Both *naas* and *insan* are translated to humanity in the English translation of the following verses. In fact, the word *naas* appearing in 2f is the plural form of the word *insaan* appearing in 2g.

2e. *yaa ayyuha n-naasu innamaa baghyukum 'alaa anfusikum* 10:23

- **O humanity!** Your transgression is only against your own souls
10:23

2f. *Yaa ayyuha l-insaanu maa gharraka bi Rabbikal kareem* 82:6

- **O humanity!** What has emboldened you against your Lord, the Most Generous, 82:6

5.3.3. VOCATIVES MARKED BY ZERO MORPHOLOGY

Having examined vocatives marked with particles, we are now left with the last way of forming vocatives in the Quran which uses no particles at all. This form of addressing is primarily recognized in calls for God. They appear in three ways: *rabbi: my Lord*, *rabbanaa: our Lord*, and *Allahumma: O Allah*. There are two other examples of this form where

the addressee is not God; *Yoosufu: Joseph*, and *ibna umma: son of my mother*. This form is identified 138 times throughout the Quran. Table 4 shows the distribution of vocatives with no particles, their translations, counts and percentages.

Table 4. Vocatives with no particle in the Quran

| Vocatives | Translation | Count | Percentage |
|---------------|-----------------|------------|-------------|
| Rabbi | My Lord | 65 | 47.1% |
| Rabbanaa | Our Lord | 65 | 47.1% |
| (a)l-laahumma | O Allah | 5 | 3.6% |
| Yoosufu | O Joseph | 2 | 1.5% |
| (I)bna umma | O son of mother | 1 | 0.7% |
| Total | | 138 | 100% |

Interestingly, *rabbi* and *rabbanaa* are mentioned equally in terms of counts; both of them appear for 65 times with a percentage of 47.1 %. Obviously, these two vocatives almost make up the whole category of no-particle vocatives. The other three forms of addressing appear exceedingly less.

The following examples are given to illustrate the no-particle vocatives. *3a* contains prophet Moses' call upon God to forgive him when he mistakenly killed one of Pharaoh's men. In *3b*, God shows us a scene from the Judgement Day of a person, who had not given charity during their life, appealing to God and wishing they could go back to donate.

*3a. Qaala **rabbi** innee zalamtu nafsee faghfir lee faghafaralah 28:16*

- He pleaded, "**My Lord!** I have definitely wronged my soul, so forgive me." 28:16

*3b. fa yaqoola **rabbi** lawlaa akhkhartanee ilaaa ajalin qareebin 63:10*

- and you cry, "**My Lord!** If only You delayed me for a short while..." 63:10

Examples *3c* and *3d* contain two beloved prayers that Muslims tend to say in their daily lives.

*3c. Wa minhum mai yaqoolu **rabbanaa** aatina fid dunyaa hasanatanw wa fil aakhirati hasanatanw wa qinaa azaaban Naar 2:203*

- Yet there are others who say, “**Our Lord!** Grant us the good of this world and the Hereafter, and protect us from the torment of the Fire.” 2:203
- 3d. *Rabbanaa laa tuzigh quloobanaa ba'da iz hadaitanaa wa hab lanaa mil ladunka rahmah; innaka antal Wahhaab 3:8*
- ‘They say,’ “**Our Lord!** Do not let our hearts deviate after you have guided us. Grant us Your mercy. You are indeed the Giver ‘of all bounties’. 3:8

Allahumma is equivalent to *O Allah* though the suffix –umma does not appear to be used in any other Arabic words other than the name of God ‘Allah’. 3e contains another popular prayer among Muslims.

- 3e. *Quli l-laahumma Maalikal Mulki tu'til mulka man tashaaa'u wa tanzi'ul mulka mimman tashaaa'u wa tu'izzu man tashaaa'u wa tuzillu man tashaaa'u biyadikal khairu innaka 'alaa kulli shai'in Qadeer 3:26*
- Say, ‘O Prophet,’ “**O Allah!** Lord over all authorities! You give authority to whoever You please and remove it from who You please; You honour whoever You please and disgrace who You please—all good is in Your Hands. Surely You ‘alone’ are Most Capable of everything. 3:26

The following verse contains a very rare form of address in the Quran where the addressee, other than God, is called without a particle.

- 3f. *Yoosufu a'rid 'an haaza 12:29*
- **O Joseph!** Forget about this. 12:29

5.4. TYPES OF STRUCTURES OF VOCATIVE MESSAGES IN THE QURAN

This section is dedicated to analyzing structures of sentences holding the messages intended to be delivered to the addressees. These sentences usually follow the vocatives; however, many cases where the vocatives appear in middle or final positions were spotted in the Quran. Separate research can be conducted to analyze vocative messages’ positions. For now, it is sufficient to note that they may appear in the three positions.

Considering it from a totally structural perspective regardless of the speech act performed by it, a sentence can be *declarative*, *imperative*, or *interrogative*. First of all, a piece of information is stated in a declarative sentence. In an imperative sentence, on the other hand, an order, a command, or a request is asked to be performed. Finally, a question is asked in an interrogative sentence. The sentences carrying the messages of vocatives are analyzed in terms of this classification. It is important to note that a vocative is usually surrounded by more than one message. In this study, only the closest sentence is taken into consideration. In a larger study, the compound structures of vocative messages may be investigated.

After finding out the structure type of every vocative message, their counts were calculated. The results of vocatives belonging to each category were sought separately. Then, within each category, the three most scoring vocatives were analyzed separately too. The numeral results are given in the tables below, followed by commentary on them.

5.4.1. STRUCTURE TYPES OF VOCATIVE MESSAGES MARKED BY YA

Table 5. Structure types of messages delivered to addressees marked by the particle (ya) in the Quran

| Vocatives | Declarative | Imperative | Interrogative | Total |
|------------------|-------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Ya qawmi | 17 | 20 | 10 | 47 |
| Ya moosaa | 14 | 5 | 5 | 24 |
| Ya ahla l-kitaab | 3 | 3 | 6 | 12 |
| Others | 45 | 37 | 15 | 97 |
| Total | 79 | 65 | 36 | 180 |

According to the statistics given above in table 5, declarative structures are identified 79 times making it the prevalent structure in this category. Nonetheless, imperative sentences are not significantly less than declarative ones, and interrogatives score the most in this category compared to the other two categories (as it will be seen). Therefore, it can be concluded that the structures of this category are varied. As it is clarified above, all proper nouns are addressed by *ya* as well as general nouns that do not start with the prefix *al-*. Consequently, most of these vocatives take place in dialogues between messengers and their peoples. Therefore, these vocatives occur in natural conversations between people, not God addressing people or vice versa. Thus, all kinds of structures can be seen in plausible numbers. An example of

each structure is given below. Sentences carrying the vocative messages are underlined.

4a. *qaala yaa qawmi innee baree'um mimmaa tushrikoon* 6:78

- He declared “**O my people!** I totally reject whatever you associate with Allah in worship”. 6:78 (Declarative)

4b. *Qaala alqihaa yaa Moosaa*

- ‘Allah’ said, “Throw it down, O Moses!” (Imperative)

4c. *Qaala Yaa Haaroonu maa mana'aka iz raaitahum dalloo* 20:92

- Moses scolded ‘his brother’, “**O Aaron!** What prevented you, when you saw them going astray, 20:92 (Interrogative)

5.4.2. STRUCTURE TYPES OF VOCATIVE MESSAGES MARKED BY YA AYYUHA

Table 6. Structure types of messages delivered to addressees marked by the particle (ya ayyuha) in the Quran

| Vocatives | Declarative | Imperative | Interrogative | Total |
|-----------------------------|-------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Ya ayyuha l-latheena amanoo | 17 | 69 | 3 | 89 |
| Ya ayyuha n-naasu | 14 | 6 | 0 | 20 |
| Ya ayyuha n-nabiyu | 3 | 9 | 1 | 13 |
| Others | 7 | 11 | 2 | 20 |
| Total | 41 | 95 | 6 | 142 |

The second category includes the most ranking vocative in the Quran which is *ya ayyuha l-latheena amanoo* meaning ‘O you who have believed’ occurring 89 times. Quran is doubtlessly the primary source of guidance for muslims; hence, no wonder a big portion of its vocatives are dedicated for believers. The prominent structure surrounding this form is the *imperative*. Logically, this may be a result of the fact that God commands the believers to act in certain ways, and prohibit them from acting in certain ways. Thus, as speech acts of commanding and prohibition are mostly embedded in them, imperative structures are recognized the most within the messages delivered to believers. 5a exemplifies a guidance instruction from God to the those who have believed.

5a. *Yaa ayyuha l-laatheena amanu sta'eenoo bissabri was Salaah; innal laaha ma'as-saabireen 2:153*

- **O believers!** Seek comfort in patience and prayer. Allah is truly with those who are patient. 2:153

Not only messages delivered to believers, but also almost all messages intended to be delivered to the other addresses in this category are originated by God. For instance, the 2nd and 3rd ranking vocatives marked by *ya ayyuha* are *an-nnasu* and *an-nabiyu* meaning *O humankind* and *O prophet* respectively. Again, this causes the prevailing occurrence of the imperative structure, 95 times out of 142. 5b is an example of a divine order directed to humankind.

5b. *Yaa ayyuha n-naasu ttaqoo Rabbakum; inna zalzalatasa Saa'ati shai'un 'azeem 22:1*

- **O humanity!** Fear your Lord, for the 'violent' quaking at the Hour is surely a dreadful thing. 22:1

Declarative structures occur 41 times while interrogatives occur only 6 times with vocatives marked by *ya ayyuha*. Interrogatives found in the first category's vocative messages are far more than those in the second category. 5c and 5d are examples for declarative and interrogative structures respectively.

5c. *Yaa ayyuha n-naasu qad jaa'akum burhaanum mir Rabbikum 4:174*

- **O humanity!** There has come to you conclusive evidence from your Lord 4:174

5d. *Yaa ayyuha n-nabiyyu lima tuharrimu maa ahallal laahu laka 66:1*

- **O Prophet!** Why do you prohibit 'yourself' from what Allah has made lawful to you 66:1

5.4.3. STRUCTURE TYPES OF VOCATIVE MESSAGES MARKED BY ZERO MORPHOLOGY

Though imperatives are again with the highest count, the difference between them and declaratives is not significant. Out of 138, declaratives score 60 while imperatives score 73. Interrogatives are again scarce, occurring only 5 times. In an attempt to understand the reason behind this distribution, one can look deeper into addressers and addressees. Whereas the addressers vary in the third category, the

addressee is almost one, the almighty God, referred to by the three forms *rabbi*, *rabbanaa*, and *allahumma*. In this case, declarative structures mostly involve speech acts such as submission and confession. Imperatives, on the other hand, involve request speech acts in various degrees.

Table 7. Structure types of messages delivered to addressees marked by no particle in the Quran

| Vocatives | Declarative | Imperative | Interrogative | Total |
|--------------|-------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Rabbi | 26 | 35 | 4 | 65 |
| Rabbanaa | 31 | 33 | 1 | 65 |
| Allahumma | 3 | 2 | 0 | 5 |
| Others | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| Total | 60 | 73 | 5 | 138 |

The following examples embrace structures of the three types.

6a. *Rabbanaa innaka jaami 'un-naasi li Yawmin laa raiba feeh* 3:9

- *Our Lord! You will certainly gather all humanity for the 'promised' Day—about which there is no doubt.* 3:9 (Declarative)

6b. *waj'alhu Rabbi radiyyaa* 19:6

- *and make him, O Lord, pleasing 'to You'!* 19:6 (Imperative)

6c. *wa qaaloo Rabbanaa lima katabta 'alainal gitaala* 4:77

- They said, “*Our Lord! Why have You ordered us to fight?* 4:77 (Interrogative)

5.4.4. STRUCTURE TYPES OF VOCATIVE MESSAGES IN THE QURAN

Table 8. Structure types of vocative messages in the Quran

| Vocatives | Declarative | Imperative | Interrogative | Total |
|--------------|-------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Ya | 79 | 65 | 36 | 180 |
| Ya ayyuha | 41 | 95 | 6 | 142 |
| No particle | 60 | 73 | 5 | 138 |
| Total | 180 | 233 | 47 | 460 |

To sum this section up, the table shows the frequency of each sentence structure of vocative messages in the Quran. Imperatives are the most

occurring 233 times, then comes declaratives occurring 180, and finally, the least recognized structure is interrogatives occurring 47 times.

6. CONCLUSION

In this paper, vocative markers, vocatives, and structures of the vocative messages in the Quran are quantitatively examined. Although vocative markers, or addressing particles are quite many in Standard Arabic, only two particles which are *ya* and *ya ayyuha* and the use of zero morphology, where no particle is used at all, appear in the Quran. Vocatives marked by particle *ya* are recognized the most due to its wide uses including marking proper nouns, general or collective nouns, kinship titles, and inanimate objects. The total number of addresses marked by *ya* is 180 times. On the other hand, vocatives marked by *ya ayyuha* come next occurring 142 times appearing before any definite noun with any allomorph of the definite article *al*. Finally, the use of zero morphology comes last with a slight difference compared to the previous one occurring 138 times.

Moreover, the most prevailing addressing phrase in the Quran is *ya ayyuha allatheena amanoo* meaning “*O you who have believed*”. Then come the two forms of calling upon God, *rabbi* and *rabbanaa*, occurring 65 times each. Together, they make 130 times. That means regardless of the form of addressing, God is the most called in the Holy Quran, followed by the believers. Consequently, most calls are either between God and His believers or believers and God.

In terms of structure, imperatives are the most occurring structures in the Quran, followed by declaratives, while interrogatives are tremendously less. The reason why the imperative structure is the most occurring is again because most calls are either by God to his believers or the way around. When the call comes from God, it is usually a command. When the call comes from people to God, it is usually a request. Commands and requests are speech acts achieved mostly through the imperative structure. This clarifies the reason imperatives are the most occurring structure of the messages linked to addressing phrases in the Quran.

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