

Indirect Speech of Qur'anic Discourse

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Abstract

In Arabic linguistic research, the term *حكاية القول* 'reporting speech' covers two main uses: *حكاية لفظ* 'direct speech' and *حكاية معنى* 'indirect speech'. The reporter is assumed to be faithful to the form and meaning of the original speech when he adopts the former mode, while he is limited to the meaning when adopting the latter. As far as 'indirect speech' is concerned, Arab grammarians suggest some formal indicators of the occurrence of this mode, like pronouns and deictic expressions backshift, and the use of the 'explanatory' *أَنَّ* '*anna*'. However, misconception of the real nature of indirect reported speech by Arab scholars is apparent since most of them consider the absence of such indicators as a sign of direct speech even when it reports speeches of plural subjects. In addition reportive verbs of indirect speech have not been studied thoroughly either. The present study hypothesises that there are some linguistic indicators which precisely reveal the indirect nature of a reported speech in Arabic, and that this reportive mode employs a limited number of reportive verbs and reportive constructions in the Qur'anic discourse. In its theoretical account, the study characterizes the linguistic indicators of this mode in Arabic. The stylistic and statistical types of analysis validate the hypotheses of the study. They describe uses of this reportive mode, its speakers, and the reportive verbs adopted in the Qur'anic discourse.

Keywords: indirect reported speech, Qur'anic discourse, reportive verbs, reportive constructions, reportive mode.

1. Introduction

In Arabic linguistic research, the term *حكاية القول* 'reporting speech' covers two main uses: *حكاية لفظ* 'direct speech' and *حكاية معنى* 'indirect speech'. The reporter is assumed to be faithful to the original form and meaning when he adopts the former mode, while he is limited to the meaning when adopting the latter. As far as 'indirect speech' is concerned, Arab grammarians suggest some formal indicators of the occurrence of this mode, like pronouns and deictic expressions backshift, and the use of the 'explanatory' *أَنَّ* '*anna*' and other particles. However, misconception of the real nature of indirect reported speech by Arab scholars is apparent since most of them consider the absence of such indicators in a report as a sign of direct speech even when it reports speeches of plural subjects. In addition reportive verbs of indirect speech have not been studied thoroughly either. The present study hypothesises that there are some linguistic indicators which precisely reveal the indirect nature of a reported speech in Arabic, and that this reportive mode employs a number of 'reportive verbs' as well as 'reportive clausal constructions' in the Qur'anic discourse.

2. Stylistic Perspectives of Indirect Speech

The term *حكاية القول* 'reporting speech' had been in Arabic scholarly usage until the 10th Century, when it was replaced by the term *رواية القول* 'narrating speech' (غريبال:Vol. 1, 1983: 830). This reflects the extent of 'faithfulness' to the original speech and the possible inclusion of indirect reported forms within the construction of *حكاية القول* 'reporting speech'. حسن (1973: Vol.2: 53) states that in principle the reported sentence should be reported 'verbatim' as it was heard, without any change, as it was uttered by the original speaker. It is also possible to report a speech according to its meaning. As such, a wisdom by a wise man like *الأمة الأخلاق*, literary 'nations ethics', could be narrated in Arabic in two main ways: (1) to quote the saying as it is without any change, preserving its grammatical structure, order, and case:

(1) قال الحكيم: «الأمة الأخلاق» 'The wise man said, 'Nations are ethics.' Or (2) to report it according to its meaning, preserving its meaning 'faithfully':

(2) قال الحكيم: الأمة ليست شيئاً إلا الأخلاق. 'The wise man said that nations are nothing but ethics.' Or:

(3) قال الحكيم: الأمة بأخلاقها 'The wise man said that nations are measured according to their people's ethics.' Similarly, when somebody says *البرد قارس*, literary 'the cold is severe/biting/cutting'.

This sentence could be reported in several ways:

(4) a. **Verbatim:** قال فلان: «البرد قارس» 'X said, 'The cold is severe.''

b. **In meaning:** قال فلان: البرد شديد. 'X said that it is very cold.'

Clearly, the options of reporting speech represent what is called in English direct and indirect speech, respectively. The latter differs not only in the degree of faithfulness but also in some changes in the deictic expressions, as in the changes of pronouns. Thus, حسن (ibid:53) adds that suppose that Fatima said 'أنا كاتبة', 'I am a writer', and the reporter addressed Zeinab with 'أنت شاعرة', 'You are a poetess', these speeches can be reported as (a), or (b):

(5) a. «أنت شاعرة»، وقلت لزَيْنَب «أنا كاتبة»، قالت فاطمة «Fatima said, 'I am a writer', and I told Zeinab, 'You are a poetess.'»

b. «هي شاعرة»، أو أنها شاعرة. «Fatima said she was a writer, and I told Zeinab she was a poetess, or (that) she was a poetess.»

Thus, the use of the distant forms of the 'pronouns of the absent addressee', called in Arabic ضمير الغائب 'third person' is evidence that the speech is reported according to its meaning (i.e. according to the present study, indirect speech). In this form, it is not required to preserve the original speech grammatical or lexical form, i.e., nominal, verbal, case ends, etc. It is sufficient that the narrated sentence is 'identical in meaning to the original, and not including any pronouncing mistake' (ibid:Vol.2:54).

Discussing the indirect type of حكاية القول under the concept حكاية المعنى, the speech can be paraphrased, as in paraphrasing a nominal sentence into a verbal form, or doing the reverse of this. Words can be replaced by some semantic equivalences, providing that the new paraphrased version preserves the original meaning. However, according to الأسييلي d. 669 (1982:Vol.2:461), Arab scholars agree upon the possibility of reporting the well formed grammatical speeches in the form of حكاية لفظ 'direct speech', or حكاية معنى 'indirect speech'. They, however, disagree upon the way of reporting the ungrammatical speeches. They prefer reporting such language forms indirectly. حسن (1973:Vol.2:54) states that to narrate a speech that includes a grammatical mistake, one has two options: to narrate such speech by its meaning in order to avoid such mistake, which is the preferable choice; or to intentionally narrate it as it is including those mistakes, when there is a reason to do so, as in the intention to highlight that mistake (see instances of the latter choice by الجاحظ d. 255 A.H. (n.d.Vol.2:210-24)).

3. Syntax of Indirect Speech

This section involves two main points: the syntactic indicators of indirect reported speech, and its reportive verbs.

3.1. Syntactic Indicators of Indirect Speech

Scattered in different works of ancient and modern Arab scholars, grammarians, and linguists, the syntactic indicators of indirect speech can be reduced to seven main forms: (1) pronoun backshift, (2) the use of the particle 'أَنَّ', (3) the use of the particle 'أَنَّ', (4) reporting speech of plural subjects, (5) the use of the subordinator إِنَّ *inna*, (6) using translated forms, and (7) demonstrative backshift. Some of these indicators are matters of debate.

(i) Pronoun Backshift

Second person pronouns of direct speech are changed into third person pronouns in their indirect versions. These changes are called "الانتقال من ضمير المخاطب الى ضمير الغائب", 'shift from addressee's to absentee's pronouns (ابن عاشور 1984:Vol.9:344):

"قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنْ يَنْتَهُوا يُغْفَرْ لَهُمْ مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ وَإِنْ يَعُودُوا فَقَدْ مَضَتْ سُنَّةُ الْأُولَئِينَ" [الأنفال : 38] (6)

"Tell those who disbelieve that anything they have done in the past will be forgiven once they stop [doing so], while if they should ever do it over again, the precedent with the earliest men has already been set." (Irving, 2011:181).

The verb in the form يَنْتَهُوا is حكاية معنى of the verbatim form تنتهوا (ibid).

First person pronouns of direct speech, as well, are changed into third person pronouns in the indirect versions:

"وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ لَئِنْ جَاءَتْهُمْ آيَةٌ لَيُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهَا" [الأنعام : 109] (7)

"They swear by God with their stiffest oaths that if a sign were given them, they would believe in it" (Irving, 2011:141).

The direct speech forms of جَاءَتْهُمْ and لَيُؤْمِنُنَّ are, جاتنا and لنؤمننَّ, respectively (الغرناطي d. 754 A.H., 1978:Vol. 4:201). Similarly, the following shift occurs from **first person possessive pronoun** to third person pronoun:

"يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا أَحَلَّ لَهُمْ" [المائدة : 4] (8)

"They will ask you what has been made allowable for them." (Irving, 2011:107).

The form 'لهم' is used instead of 'لنا' because it is a case of 'reporting meaning' (الزمخشري d. 538 A.H., 1978: Vol. 1:606).

A rare form of shift is that from **second person pronoun** to the first:

"فَحَقَّقَ عَلَيْنَا قَوْلَ رَبِّنَا إِنَّا لَذَائِقُونَ" [الصفافات : 31] (9)

"Our Lord's sentence has been confirmed against us; we are indeed tasting it!" (Irving, 2011:447).

The direct form of the above pronoun 'إننا' 'we' is 'إنكم' 'you' (ابن هشام d. 761 A.H., 2005:Vol.2:413). This instance is considered by the present study as a direct speech which embodies indirect one; the whole text is direct speech of speakers reported by Almighty Allah. The form إِنَّا لَذَائِقُونَ 'we are indeed tasting it' is indirect speech of Almighty Allah by those people.

(ii) The Use of the Particle أَنَّ

This particle initiates the reported clause and indicates that the reported speech is narrated according to its meaning (indirect speech). It is often used with verbs of speaking which give the meaning of saying like أوصى 'recommended', أنبأ 'predicated', نادى 'called', etc. (عياد, 1988:114):

(10)

"مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَى بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنَّهُ مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا" [المائدة : 32]

"On account of that, We prescribed with the Children of Israel that anyone who kills any person without another soul being involved or for causing mischief in the land, acts as if he had killed all mankind. Anyone who spares life acts as if he had granted life to all mankind" (Irving, 2011:113).

The reported speech in this text is by its meaning 'indirect speech' because it is initiated by the particle أَنَّ (النحاس) d. 338 A.H., 1977: Vol. 1:494).

(iii) The Use of the Particle 'أَنَّ'

According to ابن هشام d. 761 A.H. (2005:Vol.1:74), this particle is called أَنَّ المفسرة or التفسيرية 'explanatory *an*', and is often used in the sense of أَي 'that is'.

Most Arab scholars agree on the conditions according to which this particle initiates indirect speech (see, for instance (سيبويه d. 180 A.H., 2015: Vol.1:479-82); (النحاس) d. 338 A.H., 1977:Vol.3: 795-7)). The conditions can be put in modern linguistic terms, as in the following: (1) The reporting clause should include any verb of speaking except the verb 'قال' 'say'. (2) The reporting clause should be an independent sentence of a complete meaning. (3) The reporting clause should precede a syntactically independent reported sentence that reflects or includes the meaning of the reporting one. (4) The reporting clause should not be prefixed by an explicit or implicit preposition.

'أَنَّ' d.180 A.H. (2015:Vol. 1: 480) mentions some examples of such use of the particle 'أَنَّ':

(11) a. [104 : الصافات] "وَنَادَيْنَاهُ أَنْ يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ"

"We called out to him: 'Abraham,'" (Irving, 2011:450).

b. [39 -38: طه] "إِذْ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّكَ مَا يُوحَىٰ (38) أَنْ اقْذِيفِي فِي النَّبُوتِ .."

"when We revealed whatever was revealed to your mother. 'Cast him into the chest, [...]" (Irving, 2011:314).

In this respect the السامرائي (1998:244) states that the particle 'أَنَّ' initiates the مضمون 'content' of the narrated speech. It does not precede a verbatim reported speech, hence a sentence like 'أمرته أن أذهب' 'I ordered him to go' does not include a report of the exact words of the original order. Instead of the verb 'أذهب', the original speech could be 'أخرج' 'Get out', 'لا تبقى هنا' 'Don't stay here', 'أمض من هنا' 'Leave form here', 'سافر' 'Travel', etc. Reported clauses of this type (explanatory), whether verbal or nominal, are among those called in grammar of Arabic الجملة التي ليس لها (الطويحي (2007:143-58)).

(iv) Reporting Speech of Plural Subjects

Some Arab scholars think that the use of plural subject in the reporting clause indicates that the reported speech is by its meaning. In such case, the form of the reporting clause used is 'قالوا' 'they said'. This construction often reflects the indirect nature of the reported speech (البروسي) d. 1137 A.H., 1989:Vol.1:213), and (ابن عاشور) , 1984:Vol. 5:87):

(12) [116 : البقرة] "وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ وَلَدًا .."

"They say: 'God has adopted a son!' [...]" (Irving, 2011:18).

Tannen (1989:113, 118), in Metzger and Bahan (2004:133), for instance, maintains that reports of plural speakers (as well as non-human speakers) are indirect forms of reported speech. This is because it is difficult to find "choral dialogue", that is "a group of people uttering an identical sentence simultaneously".

(v) The Use of the Subordinator إِنَّ *inna*

Ryding (2005:425) argues that the "subordinating *inna* 'that'" is one of the indicators of indirect speech in Arabic; "as a subordinating conjunction, it is used exclusively after the verb *qaal-a* 'to say'":

(13) a. "وقال انه ناقش هذا الموضوع." , 'He said **that** he had discussed this topic.'

b. "قال المدرب انه راضٍ." , 'The coach said **that** he was satisfied.'

c. "قال إن السياسيين يستخدمون مصطلحات دينية." , 'He said **that** the politicians use religious terminology.'

However, Ryding's (ibid) opinion is rejected when considering argument of سيبويه d.180 A.H. (2015:Vol.1:62) that when the reporting verb قال 'said' is used, the reported sentence (clause) in this form of القول 'the construction of saying'(direct speech) must be independent; expressing complete sense. It could be removed from the whole structure of saying and yet preserving its grammatical and semantic acceptability. As such, he (ibid) limits the reported speech in Arabic to what is contemporarily called direct speech. He (ibid) appeals to the following Quranic text in which the reported clause is initiated by إِنَّ, not أَنَّ:

(14)

"إِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنْهُ اسْمُهُ الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَجِبْهًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ" [آل عمران : 45]

"Thus the angels said 'Mary, God announces word to you about someone whose name will be Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, [who is] well regarded in this world and the Hereafter, and one of those drawn near [to God]" (Irving, 2011:55).

Therefore, initiating the reported clause with the particle إِنَّ is an indicator of the presence of originally emphasized direct speech rather than indirect one.

(vi) Translated Reported Speeches

Dickins et al.(2002:9) refer to what they believe to be a universal language phenomenon in respect to indirect reported speech, which is that all translated forms are indirect forms of reported speech. They (ibid) put it in the following way:

All translation might be regarded as a form of indirect speech, inasmuch as it does not repeat the ST, but reformulates it. [.. Most translations] mask the fact that they are indirect speech by omitting such markers as 'The author says that .. .' or modulation of point of view (as in substituting 'we' for 'you', or 'he' for '!').

(vii) Demonstrative Backshift

Khalil (1999:283-4) states that in indirect speech, "the demonstrative pronouns change from near forms to the distant ones", e.g., هذا 'this' changes into ذلك 'that', and هؤلاء 'these' into أولئك 'those'.

(viii) Tense Backshift

Khalil (ibid:282-3) remarks that Arabic does not require a tense backshift in reporting speech, thus a direct speech like قال الولدُ غداً سأسافرُ غداً 'I will travel tomorrow' may be reported as قال الولدُ أنه سوف يسافرُ غداً 'The boy said that he would travel the following day'.

3.2. Reportive Verbs

According to حسن (1973:Vol.2:54), the grammatical and semantic account of the verb 'قال' 'say' in the construction of حكاية القول 'reporting speech' can be generated to other verbs which include the meaning of uttering speech, like نادى 'called'; أوحى 'inspired/revealed'; قرأ 'read'; أوصى 'recommended'; نصح 'advised', etc. These verbs are similar to the verb 'قال' 'say' in the sense that they occur in the reporting part of the حكاية القول construction, and also require one or two objects in terms of transitivity, as in the following three texts:

(15) a. [77 : الزخرف] "وَنَادُوا يَا مَلِكُ لِيَقْضِ عَلَيْنَا رَبُّكَ قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ مَأْكُتُونَ"

"They will cry out: "Master, have your Lord put an end to us!" He will say: "You must stay on here!" (Irving, 2011:495).

b. [10 : القمر] "فَدَعَا رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَغْلُوبٌ فَانْتَصِرْ"

"He appealed to his Lord: 'I have been overpowered, so support [me].'" (Irving, 2011:529).

c. [13 : إبراهيم] "فَأَوْحَى إِلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ لَنُهْلِكَنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ"

"Their Lord [however] inspired them [as follows]: 'We shall wipe out wrongdoers'" (Irving, 2011:257).

In such cases, there is no need to suppose that there is a use of the verb 'قال' 'say', since the meaning of speech is evident and the structural acceptability is preserved (ibid).

Speakers employ verbs like 'نادى', 'صرخ', etc., which convey the meaning of speaking. They do so to add some semantic and rhetorical meanings to the construction of حكاية القول (see الفراهيدي d. 175 A.H. (1987:150)).

The verb زعم *za'ama*, for instance has several meanings; among which, the following two meanings are often used (حسن, 1973:Vol.2:7): (i) اليقين 'certainty', as in the following verse which is delivered by Abu-Talib, addressing the Prophet (PBUHP):

(16) دعوتني وزعمتُ انك ناصحٌ / ولقد صدقتُ , وكننتُ تمّ أمينا

This line may be put as 'Invited me, and assured [literary 'claimed'] that you were advising, and you have been honest, and been loyal'.

(ii) الاعتقاد من غير دليل, having an opinion without evidence:

(17) [7 : التناجين] "رَعِمَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنْ لَنْ يُبْعَثُوا"

"The ones who disbelieve claim they will never be raised up again." (Irving, 2011:556).

In the above example, the verb زعم is used in the sense of 'lie' (ibid). According to ابن هشام d. 761 A.H. (2005:Vol.2:65-6), it is possible to report by the verb قال or one of its synonyms, like نادى 'recommended', نادى 'called', and دعا 'supplanted'.

4. Data Analysis

Two types of analysis are adopted: stylistic and statistical. The former concentrates on some representative extracts from the narrative Qur'anic discourse. It is intended to highlight uses of the indirect reported speeches in their real contexts. The latter covers the whole uses of this mode in the Qur'anic discourse.

4.1. Stylistic Analysis

Extract (1):

"وَإِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاصْطَفَاكِ عَلَى نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ (42) يَا مَرْيَمُ اقْنُتِي لِرَبِّكِ وَاسْجُدِي وَارْكَعِي مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ (43) ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يَقُولُونَ أَفَلَمَنَّهُمْ آيُهُمْ يُكْفَلُ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ (44)" (آل عمران: 44-42).

"[42](V) so the angels said: "Mary, God has selected you and purified you. He has selected you over [all] the women in the Universe. [43] Mary devote yourself to your Lord; fall down on your knees and bow alongside those who so bow down." [44] Such is some information about Unseen We have revealed to you. You were not in their presence as they cast [lots with] their pens [to see] which of them would be entrusted with Mary. You

were not in their presence while they were so disputed” (Irving, 2011:55-6).

The underlined form of Extract (1) is an indirect reported speech. The reporting clause of this mode is “ قالت ” ‘the angels said’. It includes the reportive verb ‘قال’ ‘said’, and the subject ‘الملائكة’, ‘the angels’. As such, the mode is indirect in spite of its apparently direct indicators of the reported clause, like the use of the vocative, direct imperatives, and the particle إِنَّ. The criterion adopted in this study is that when the speakers are more than one, a mode is indirect unless it is proved to be chorally or simultaneously uttered by the speakers in the same form.

Extract (2):

“فَحَمَلَتْهُ فَانْتَبَتْ بِهِ مَكَانًا قَصِيًّا (22) فَأَجَاءَهَا الْمَخَاضُ إِلَى جِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ قَالَتْ يَا لَيْتَنِي مِتُّ قَبْلَ هَذَا وَكُنْتُ نَسِيًّا مَنَسِيًّا (23) فَفَادَاهَا مِنْ تَحْتِهَا أَلَّا تَحْزَنِي قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيًّا (24) وَهَزَى إِلَيْكِ الْجُدْعَ النَّخْلَةَ فَنَسَقَطَ عَلَيْكَ رُطْبًا جَنِيًّا (25) فَكَلَى وَاشْرَبِي وَقَرِّي عَيْنًا فَمَا تَرَيْنَ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أَكَلِمَ الْيَوْمَ أَنسِيًّا (26) فَأَنْتَ بِهِ قَوْمَهَا تَحْمِلُهُ قَالُوا يَا مَرْيَمُ لَقَدْ جِئْتِ شَيْئًا فَرِيًّا (27) يَا أُخْتُ هَارُونَ مَا كَانَ أَبُوكَ أَمْرًا سَوْءًا وَمَا كَانَتْ أُمُّكَ بَغِيًّا (28) فَأَشَارَتْ إِلَيْهِ قَالُوا كَيْفَ نُكَلِّمُ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الْمَهْدِ صَبِيًّا (29) قَالَ إِنِّي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ آتَانِيَ الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلَنِي نَبِيًّا (30) (مریم: 22-30).

“[22] So she conceived him, and withdrew to a remote place to have him. [23] Labor pains came over her by the trunk of a datepalm. She said: “If only I had died before this, and been forgotten, overlooked!” [24] Someone called out to her from below where she was: “Don’t feel so sad! Your Lord has placed a brook at your feet. [25] Shake the trunk of the datepalm towards you so it will drop some fresh dates on you. [26] Eat and drink, and refresh yourself. Should you see even a single human being, then say: ‘I have vowed to keep a fast to the Mercygiving whereby I’ll never speak to any person today!’ [27] She carried him back to her family. They said: “Mary, you have brought something hard to believe! [28] Kinswoman of Aaron, your father was no evil man, nor was your mother a loose woman.” [29] She pointed to him. They said: “How shall we talk to someone who is a child in the cradle?” [30] He said: “I am God’s servant. He has given me the Book and Made me a prophet” (Irving, 2011: 206-7).

Extract (2) includes three indirect speeches:

IS (1):

It is represented by:

فَفَادَاهَا مِنْ تَحْتِهَا أَلَّا تَحْزَنِي قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيًّا (24) وَهَزَى إِلَيْكِ الْجُدْعَ النَّخْلَةَ فَنَسَقَطَ عَلَيْكَ رُطْبًا جَنِيًّا (25) فَكَلَى وَاشْرَبِي وَقَرِّي عَيْنًا فَمَا تَرَيْنَ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أَكَلِمَ الْيَوْمَ أَنسِيًّا (26) (مریم: 24-26).

The reporting clause of this indirect speech is ‘فناداها من تحتها’ ‘Someone called out to her from below where she was’. The reportive verb used in the reporting clause is ‘نادى’ ‘called’, which is usually employed in indirect constructions. The subject is the subjective ‘dummy’ pronoun ‘he’, which refers to that newly born infant, Jesus. The optional addressee of the speech is also mentioned, which is the suffixed pronoun in the objective case, ‘her’, which refers to Mary. The mode includes several connected reported clauses. The form ‘أَلَّا’ is one of the syntactic indicators of the indirect nature of the report. It is formed by the incorporation of the explanatory أَنَّ with the negator لَا. The reported clauses are mainly coordinated by the coordinators ‘و’, and ‘ف’. The explanatory أَنَّ is also used in the form فَمَا, which is a matter of incorporation of the coordinator ‘ف’, the explanatory أَنَّ and the dummy ‘ما’ (see (الطيرسي) d. 548, 2005:vol.6:412-13); and (الأهدلي) d.1390 A.H. (2009:vol.5:10-11)).

IS (2):

This mode is represented by Mary’s own folk’s speech:

“فَأَنْتَ بِهِ قَوْمَهَا تَحْمِلُهُ قَالُوا يَا مَرْيَمُ لَقَدْ جِئْتِ شَيْئًا فَرِيًّا (27) يَا أُخْتُ هَارُونَ مَا كَانَ أَبُوكَ أَمْرًا سَوْءًا وَمَا كَانَتْ أُمُّكَ بَغِيًّا (28) (مریم: 27-28).

The speech is apparently reported in a direct form: there is no backshift of tense and pronouns, in the forms جِئْتِ, جِئْتِ, and أُمُّكَ. They are syntactically indicators of direct speeches. However, the speech is semantically reported indirectly, because it is impossible that Mary’s folk uttered the same form simultaneously. It is one of the characteristics of most indirect speeches of the Quran to be in this form. This phenomenon reflects, according to the present study, the utmost faithful indirect representation of the content of a reported speech.

IS (3):

Indirect speech (3) of Extract (2) represents Mary’s folk’s speech:

“فَأَشَارَتْ إِلَيْهِ قَالُوا كَيْفَ نُكَلِّمُ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الْمَهْدِ صَبِيًّا (29) (مریم: 29).

The reported clause is in the form of direct question; yet it is semantically indirect because the subject is plural, and because the speech is not contextually understood to be chorally uttered.

Extract (3):

“إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ ادْكُرْ نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَى وَالِدَتِكَ إِذْ أَبَدْنَاكَ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ نُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا وَإِذْ عَلَّمْنَاكَ الْقُرْآنَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالْتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَإِذْ تَخَلَّقْنَا مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ بِإِذْنِي فَتَنفَخُ فِيهَا فَتَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِي وَتُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَةَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ نُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَى بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ كَفَفْتُ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَنْكَ إِذْ جِئْتَهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ (110) وَإِذْ أُوحِيتُ إِلَى الْخَوَارِجِيِّينَ أَنْ آمَنُوا بِي وَبِرَسُولِي قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَاشْهَدْ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ (111) إِذْ قَالَ الْخَوَارِجِيُّونَ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ هَلْ يَسْتَطِيعُ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ قَالَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ (112) قَالُوا نُرِيدُ أَنْ نَأْكُلَ مِنْهَا وَنَطْمِئِنَّ قُلُوبُنَا وَنَعْلَمَ أَنْ قَدْ صَدَقْتُنَا وَنَكُونَ عَلَيْهَا مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ (113) (المائدة: 110-113).

“[110] So God will say: “Jesus, son of Mary, remember My favour towards you and towards your mother when I assisted you with the Holy Spirit. You spoke to people from the cradle and as an adult when I taught you the

Book and wisdom, the Torah and the Gospel. So you created something out of clay looking like a bird with My permission; you breathed into it, and by My permission it became a bird! You cured anyone born blind, and the leper with my permission. So you brought forth the dead by My permission, and I fended off the Children of Israel from you, when you brought them explanations, so those among who disbelieved said: ‘This is sheer magic’! [111] When I inspired the disciples to believe in Me and in My messenger, they said: “We believe, so take witness that we are Muslims.” [112] When the disciples said: ‘Jesus, son of Mary, can your Lord send a Table down from Heaven for us?’, he said: ‘Heed God if you are believers!’ [113] They said: ‘We want to eat from it, and for our hearts to feel at rest, and so we know that you have told us the Truth, and that we should be witnesses for it.’ (Irving, 2011:126-7).

Extract (3) includes four indirect speeches:

IS (1):

The first indirect speech of Extract (3) is embedded within a direct speech of Almighty Allah of Text 110. The indirect speech is represented by “فَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ”, ‘so those among who disbelieved said: ‘This is sheer magic’’. The reportive verb is ‘قال’ ‘said’. The mode is indirect in spite of the use of the deictic هَذَا of a near reference, because it is a speech of plural subjects. This is the faithful presentation of the content of those people’s speech.

IS (2):

The second indirect speech of Extract (3) is represented by the form “أَوْحَيْتُ إِلَى الْحَوَارِيِّينَ أَنْ آمَنُوا بِي وَبِرَسُولِي”, ‘When I inspired the disciples to believe in Me and in My messenger’. The reportive verb is ‘أوحى’ ‘inspired’, and the suffixed pronoun ‘ت’ refers to the subject, Who is Almighty Allah. In addition to these obligatory elements, this indirect speech mentions the addressees of the speech. It is put in the form of the preposition ‘إلى’ ‘to’, and the noun it governs, ‘الحواريين’ ‘the disciples’. Although the subject of the mode is singular; the mode is indirect because the reported clause is initiated by the explanatory ‘أَنْ’. The use of this particle is an indicator of the indirect nature of the mode, hence the speech is narrated by its meaning, not by its form.

IS (3):

The form “قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَاشْهَدْ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ”, ‘they said: “We believe, so take witness that we are Muslims’ is the third indirect speech of the extract. The plural subject of the reporting clause indicates the indirect nature of the report, which includes two coordinated reported clauses.

IS (4):

This indirect speech is represented by “قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ هَلْ يَسْتَطِيعُ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ”, ‘when the disciples said: ‘Jesus, son of Mary, can your Lord send a Table down from Heaven for us?’’. It is an indirect speech of the disciples asking Jesus about Allah’s ability to send them a Table from Heaven. The speech could be asked by different disciples since they are twelve, and probably formed in different forms. However, this is the faithful representation of the content of this request. As such, the direct form of the question does not affect its characterization as indirect speech.

4.2. Statistical Analysis

The statistical analysis is limited to speakers of indirect reported speeches of the Glorious Qur’an, and the reportive verbs employed in such a reportive mode of speech presentation.

(i) Speakers of Indirect speech

Indirect speech has been used for 697 times in the Glorious Qur’an, 9.03% of the Qur’anic indirect speeches are of Almighty Allah. 5.16% of the indirect speeches are of Prophets (PBUT): Muhammad, unspecified prophets, Adam, Moses and Aaron, Moses, Abraham, Jesus, Noah, Hud, Job, David and Solomon, Jonah, and Zachariah. Indirect speeches of believers (common, not prophets) form 19.94%. Those by unbelievers are 64.99%. Some of the indirect speeches are of people who are groups of believers and unbelievers, e.g., ‘معشر الجن والإنس’ ‘company of sprites and humankind’, and form 0.86%. Table (1) shows speakers of the indirect reported speech in the Qur’an, and Table (2) shows the prophets’(PBUT) uses of this reportive mode in the Qur’an.

Table 1. Speakers of Indirect Reported Speech in the Qur’an

Speakers of Indirect Speech	Uses	Frequency
Almighty Allah	63	9.03%
Prophets	36	5.16%
Believers	139	19.94%
Disbelievers	453	64.99%
Unspecified (believes and disbelievers)	6	0.86%
Total	697	99.98%

Table 2. Indirect Speeches of the Prophets (PBUT) in the Qur'an

No.	Prophet	Times of ISs	Frequency
1.	Muhammad	13	36.11%
2.	unspecified prophets	7	19.44%
3.	Adam (+ Eve)	2	5.55%
4.	Moses + Aaron	2	5.55%
5.	Moses	2	5.55%
6.	Abraham	2	5.55%
7.	Jesus	2	5.55%
8.	Noah	1	2.77%
9.	Hud	1	2.77%
10.	Job	1	2.77%
11.	David and Solomon	1	2.77%
12.	Jonah	1	2.77%
13.	Zachariah	1	2.77%
Total	13	36	100%

(ii) Reportive Verbs and Other Reportive Constructions

There are forty-five reportive verbs and reportive clauses employed in the Qur'an to form indirect speeches, as in the following list where the verbs are put in the past forms and arranged according to their frequency of use (The list is read from the right to the left):

(a) reportive verbs:

قال , أَمَرَ , أوحى , نادى , سأل , وصى , كتب , أفسم , نهى , زعم , وعد , حلف , دعا , أنذر , شهد , أذن , استجاب , قضى , تأذن , عهد , استأذن , أجمع , نبأ , بشر , تخافت , تكلم , عهد , أصرخ , انطلق , استغفر , استغاث , من .

(b) other reportive forms:

أخذ ميثاق , حقت كلمة ربك , أتينا... الحكمة , نزل عليكم في الكتاب , أذان من الله , آخر دعواهم , كتأب أكرم آياته ثم فصلت من لذن حكيم خبير , بدا لهم , تنزل عليهم الملائكة , تصف السنتهم الكذب , القوا القول , أسروا النجوى

These verbs and phrases are used in different inflected forms, as in Table (3).

Table 3. The Reportive Verbs and Phrases of Indirect Speech in the Qur'an

No.	Reportive V. /Phrase	Uses	Frequency
1	قال (يقول + فاعل جمع, قيل, قالوا, يقولون, قلتم, يقول, لا تقول, لا تقولوا, لا تقولوا, قالت (اليهود, النصارى, الناس, نسوة, طائفة, رسلهم, الأعراب, أخراهم), قال + مثنى/جمع, أم يقولون, سيقولون, لا تقولوا, ليقن, قولهم (اسم), قلتم, أن تقولوا, يقول, أن تقولوا, أو تقولوا, لقلن, لنن قلت, قلن, قالوا, يقال, قول (اسم), القائلون, لولا... لقالوا, قبله)	527	75.60%
2	أمر (يامركم, أمرت, لا يامرکم, ما امروا)	20	2.86%
3	أوحى (أوحيت, أوحينا, يوحى, أوحى, نوحى, يوحى)	16	2.29%
4	نادى (نودوا, نادى, ناداها, نودي, نادينا, نادون, نادوا, ينادونهم, ينادوا)	16	2.29%
5	سأل (يسألونك, يسألك, سألو, لأن سألتهم, سألوهم, يتساءلون, لتسألن)	14	2.00%
6	وصى (وصينا, وصاكم)	12	1.72%
7	كتب (كتبتنا, كتب, لو كتبتنا)	11	1.57%
8	أفسم (أقسموا, أقسم, يقسم)	8	1.14%
9	أخذ ميثاق (أخذ ميثاق + فاعل جمع به جمع)	6	0.86%
10	نهى (نهيت, لا ينهاكم عن)	6	0.86%
11	زعم (يزعمون, زعمتم, زعم)	5	0.71%
12	وعد (يعدكم, وعد, أتعادني)	5	0.71%
13	حلف (يحلفون, سيحلفون)	4	0.57%
14	دعا (دعوا, دعا)	4	0.57%
15	أنذر (أنذرت)	4	0.57%
16	شهد (شهد + فاعل جمع, شهدوا, يشهدون)	3	0.43%
17	أذن (أذن, أذن, أذن مؤذن)	3	0.43%
18	استجاب	2	10.32%
19	حقت كلمة ربك	2	10.32%
20	قضى (قضينا الأمر, قضينا)	2	10.32%
21	أتينا... الحكمة	2	10.32%
22	تأذن	2	10.32%
23	عهد (عهدنا)	1	0.14%
24	نزل عليكم في الكتاب	1	0.14%
25	أذان من الله	1	0.14%

No.	Reportive V. /Phrase	Uses	Frequency
26	أَسْتَأْذِنُ (لَا يَسْتَأْذِنُكَ)	1	0.14%
27	أَخْرَجُوا دَعْوَاهُمْ	1	0.14%
28	الرَّ كِتَابٌ أَحْكَمْتُ آيَاتُهُ ثُمَّ فَصَّلْتُ مِنْ لَدُنِّ حَكِيمٍ خَبِيرٍ	1	0.14%
29	أَجْمَعُوا (أَجْمَعُوا)	1	0.14%
30	بَدَأْ لَهُمْ	1	0.14%
31	نَبَأٌ (نَبَأٌ)	1	0.14%
32	تَنْزَلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ	1	0.14%
33	تَصِفُ السُّنْتَهُمُ الْكُذْبَ	1	0.14%
34	الْقَوْلَ الْقَوْلَ	1	0.14%
35	بَشَّرَ (بَشَّرَ)	1	0.14%
36	تَخَافَتُ (يَتَخَافَتُونَ)	1	0.14%
37	أَسْرُوا النُّجُوزَ	1	0.14%
38	تَكَلَّمُوا (تَكَلَّمُوا)	1	0.14%
39	عَهْدٌ (عَاهَدْنَا، عَاهَدَ)	1	0.14%
40	أَصْطَرَّخَ (يَصْطَرَّخُونَ)	1	0.14%
41	أَعَاهَدُ	1	0.14%
42	أَنْطَلَقَ	1	0.14%
43	أَسْتَغْفِرُ (يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ)	1	0.14%
44	أَسْتَغَاثَ (يَسْتَغَاثُونَ)	1	0.14%
45	مَنْ (يَمْنُونَ)	1	0.14%
Tota 1	45	697	99.99%

5. Conclusion

To report speech indirectly in Arabic is to represent it in such a form which is faithful to its original meaning. Arab scholar, grammarians, and contemporary linguists limit the construction of حكاية القول بالمعنى, which is equivalent to the linguistic term 'indirect reported speech', to include those reports which involve uses of the particles 'anna', 'an', or 'in'; those which include pronouns, deictic expressions and/or tense backshift; and those which use some specific reportive verbs, particularly those associated by one of the above mentioned particles. The impossibility of reporting 'non-choral' speeches of plural subjects in a verbatim direct form has not been discussed by Arabic scholars, hence they consider any reported speech which does not include one of the above mentioned syntactic indicators as a direct one. Adopting modern linguistic viewpoints concerning the aspect, the study in its stylistic and statistical analyses has identified the Qur'anic uses of this reportive mode, its speakers, the reportive verbs and constructions employed, which validate its hypotheses.

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