

Thematic Roles Analysis of Al-Qur'an in Surah Al-Kahfi (A Semantic Study)**Zainul Alwi** ✉, M. Rajabul Gufron, Achwan Safar

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Keywords: Linguistics, Thematic roles, Semantic analysis, Surah Al-Kahfi, Al-Qur'an**Abstract**

This research focuses on thematic roles analysis in Surah Al-Kahfi of the Qur'an, using a semantic approach. Thematic roles are crucial elements in understanding how participants and events are related in a sentence or discourse. The purpose of this study is to examine the distribution and functions of these thematic roles in the context of Surah Al-Kahfi, providing insights into how meaning is structured and conveyed in this chapter. Using the framework of semantic theory, this research categorizes the roles of agents, patients, experiencers, and other thematic roles found in the verses of Surah Al-Kahfi. Data were collected through qualitative analysis, with each verse being carefully examined to identify its semantic components. The findings of this study contribute to a deeper understanding of the linguistic features in Surah Al-Kahfi, highlighting the richness and precision of the Qur'an's semantic structure. This study concludes that Surah Al-Kahfi contains a complex yet systematic arrangement of thematic roles that enhances the interpretive depth of the Surah's narrative. By analyzing these roles, the study sheds light on the way language is employed in the Qur'an to convey not just literal meanings but also theological and moral lessons.

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INTRODUCTION

Thematic roles are a derivative of semantic linguistics, which is fundamentally concerned with the study of meaning in language. Semantics broadly covers three major areas: the meaning of words, the meaning of phrases, and the meaning of sentences. As noted by Geoffrey Leech (Frawley, 1992) Semantics represents the most abstract level of linguistic analysis because meaning cannot be directly observed like phonetic elements; instead, it is closely tied to human cognition, logical reasoning, and interpretation (Rahmah, 2018). In this context, thematic roles also known as semantic or theta roles refer to the functions played by participants within a sentence, illustrating the relationship between syntax and semantics. Many linguistic theories assume that verbs inherently determine the semantic roles of their arguments,

thereby structuring how meaning is constructed within a clause.

The Holy Qur'an, as the sacred text of Islam, offers not only theological insights but also profound linguistic and literary richness that has attracted scholars from diverse disciplines. Western researchers such as Neal Robinson and Hamza Tzortzis have explored its linguistic and rhetorical features, while Arab rhetoricians have traditionally analyzed it through the frameworks of al-Ma'ani, al-Bayan, and al-Badi', which focus respectively on meaning, figurative language, and literary aesthetics (Noor & Mangrio, 2018). The study of meaning in the Qur'an can be approached both theologically and linguistically, with semantics playing a central role in uncovering how language conveys divine messages. This highlights the importance of thematic role analysis as a tool

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for understanding how lexical items function within Qur'anic discourse.

Building on this foundation, the present study focuses on analyzing thematic roles in Surah Al-Kahf, particularly in relation to extraordinary or significant lexical items within the verses. Previous research, such as that discussed by (Noor & Mangrio, 2018) and (Fatih, 2021), has examined specific narratives like Ashab al-Kahf using semantic and corpus-based approaches, revealing variations in interpretation across religious traditions. However, this study aims to contribute a new dimension by systematically identifying how each lexical item in the selected verses fulfills a particular thematic role within its syntactic and semantic context (Kasper, 2008). The underlying hypothesis is that every word in an ayah carries a distinct function that can be explained through thematic role assignment, ultimately enhancing the understanding of meaning construction in Qur'anic language.

The importance of semantic analysis becomes even more pronounced when applied to sacred texts such as the Holy Qur'an, which is regarded by Muslims as the ultimate source of divine guidance and knowledge. Beyond its religious significance, the Qur'an is also widely recognized for its unparalleled linguistic and literary excellence (Marlina, 2012). The importance of this research lies in its contribution to both linguistic theory and Qur'anic studies, particularly in understanding how meaning is constructed through thematic roles. As emphasized by Geoffrey Leech, meaning represents the most abstract level of linguistic analysis, and examining it through thematic roles allows for a systematic explanation of how participants in a sentence function semantically and syntactically (Okeke, 2013). This perspective is further strengthened by William Frawley, who classifies thematic roles into detailed categories such as agent, experiencer, patient, and spatial roles, providing a comprehensive framework for analyzing how meaning is structured within linguistic expressions (Frawley, 1992). This study is also significant because it focuses on the Holy Qur'an, specifically Surah Al-Kahf, which embodies not only religious values but also profound linguistic and literary features; therefore, analyzing its verses through thematic roles helps reveal deeper layers of

meaning that are not always apparent in conventional interpretations. Furthermore, the research offers a novel and integrative perspective by combining thematic role analysis with sentence structure across Arabic and English, thereby bridging semantic and syntactic approaches and addressing gaps left by previous studies. This integration provides valuable insights for scholars, students, and future researchers in the fields of semantics, translation, and Qur'anic linguistics, making the study both academically relevant and practically useful.

The significance of conducting a thematic role analysis of the Qur'an lies in its potential to deepen our understanding of how meaning is constructed within the text. While traditional exegesis (tafsir) has provided invaluable insights into the interpretation of Qur'anic verses, it often relies on theological, historical, and contextual considerations rather than formal linguistic analysis. By contrast, a semantic approach grounded in thematic roles allows for a more structured examination of how meaning is encoded at the level of syntax and semantics. This approach enables researchers to identify the specific roles played by different elements within a sentence and to analyze how these roles contribute to the overall meaning of the text. Furthermore, such an analysis can reveal patterns and structures that may not be immediately apparent through traditional interpretative methods. In an academic context, this study is particularly relevant as it bridges the gap between modern linguistic theory and Islamic studies, thereby contributing to interdisciplinary scholarship. It also enhances the methodological rigor of Qur'anic studies by introducing analytical tools that can be systematically applied to the text.

Previous studies provide an essential foundation for this research by offering insights into the application of thematic role theory across different contexts and helping to identify research gaps. (Marlina, 2012) examines narrative texts and identifies nine thematic roles, with the theme role being the most dominant, emphasizing the importance of thematic roles in constructing meaning and supporting language learning. (Rahmah, 2018) Then expands this perspective by identifying fifteen thematic roles and forty-one role patterns in conversational data, highlighting that

noun phrases functioning as subjects often assume roles such as agent, experiencer, and author, while also demonstrating variations through equivalence and role shifts. More recently, (Abduljabbar, 2021) investigates Ghareeb lexical items in the Qur'an, particularly in Surah Al-Rahman, using John I. Saeed's framework, and finds that each extraordinary word carries a specific thematic role shaped by its context, thereby confirming the study's hypothesis. Compared to these studies, the present research offers a more integrated approach by combining thematic role analysis with sentence structure in both Arabic and English, particularly in Surah Al-Kahf, thus contributing a novel perspective that bridges semantic and syntactic analysis within Qur'anic discourse.

This observation points to a significant research gap in the existing body of literature. Despite the valuable contributions of previous studies, a more substantial research gap becomes evident when these findings are examined in relation to the focus of the present study. (Marlina, 2012) Analyzed thematic roles in general narrative texts and identified nine types of thematic roles, with the Theme role being the most dominant. The study emphasizes the importance of thematic roles in understanding grammatical functions and facilitating comprehension, particularly in educational contexts. However, the analysis is limited to general narrative texts and does not extend to sacred texts such as the Qur'an, which possess more complex linguistic, stylistic, and semantic characteristics. Following this, (Rahmah, 2018) identified fifteen thematic roles and forty-one thematic role rules within conversational discourse, focusing on the distribution of roles such as agent, experiencer, and author, as well as issues of translation equivalence. Although the study provides a detailed account of thematic role variation, it is confined to conversational data and translation analysis, and therefore does not address how thematic roles function within Qur'anic texts or how they contribute to meaning construction in religious discourse. More recently, (Abduljabbar, 2021) investigated the thematic roles of Ghareeb (extraordinary) words in Surah Ar-Rahman using Saeed's (2009) model, successfully demonstrating that each lexical item carries a specific role influenced by its contextual environment. Nevertheless, the scope of the study is limited to

the first ten ayahs and primarily focuses on identifying thematic roles rather than examining the deeper interaction between these roles within broader and more complex narrative structures.

Taken together, these studies indicate that although thematic role theory has been widely applied across different contexts, there remains a lack of research that systematically and comprehensively applies this theory to the analysis of Qur'anic narratives, particularly in Surah Al-Kahf. Previous research tends to focus either on limited textual data, non-religious discourse, or general narrative structures without integrating a detailed examination of how thematic roles interact dynamically within complex Qur'anic syntax and semantics (Wilkins, 1988). In addition, earlier studies have not sufficiently explored how lexically significant or extraordinary words function within these structures to contribute to deeper layers of meaning. Therefore, the present study seeks to fill this gap by providing a more holistic and in-depth analysis of thematic roles in Surah Al-Kahf, not only by identifying the roles assigned to lexical items but also by examining how these roles interact within the sentence structure and across narrative contexts to construct meaning. This approach offers a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between syntax and semantics in the Qur'anic text and contributes to the development of a more robust and context-sensitive model of thematic role analysis in religious discourse (Fatih, 2021).

The novelty of the present study lies in its systematic application of thematic role theory to the analysis of Surah Al-Kahf, with a particular emphasis on what may be described as "extraordinary words" or lexically significant items within the text. Unlike previous studies that have primarily focused on general semantic or rhetorical features, this research seeks to identify and analyze the specific thematic roles associated with each lexical item in selected verses, thereby providing a more granular and detailed understanding of how meaning is constructed at the micro-level of linguistic structure. In contrast to (Marlina, 2012), who examined thematic roles in general narrative texts without addressing the complexity of sacred discourse, this study applies thematic role analysis to Qur'anic narratives that involve more intricate syntactic and semantic

patterns. Similarly, while (Rahmah, 2018) explored thematic roles within conversational discourse and emphasized role distribution and translation equivalence, the present study extends this framework into the domain of religious texts, where meaning construction operates within a more layered and context-dependent system. Furthermore, although (Abduljabbar, 2021) analyzed thematic roles of Ghareeb words in Surah Ar-Rahman, the analysis was limited in scope and did not explore the dynamic interaction between roles across broader narrative structures. This study advances beyond these limitations by not only identifying thematic roles but also examining how these roles interact with one another within the same sentence and across different narrative segments in Surah Al-Kahf. In addition, the integration of qualitative semantic analysis with a more systematic and structured approach to textual data represents a methodological advancement over prior studies that tended to rely on descriptive analysis alone. Therefore, the novelty of this research lies in three key aspects: the application of thematic role theory to a more complex and narratively rich Qur'anic chapter, the focus on the interaction and interdependence of thematic roles within context, and the incorporation of lexically significant or extraordinary words as central elements in meaning construction. This interdisciplinary and integrative approach not only strengthens the theoretical contribution of the study but also offers a new analytical model for future research in linguistic semantics and Qur'anic studies, particularly in exploring the relationship between syntax, semantics, and contextual interpretation in sacred texts.

The conceptual framework of this study is based on the theory of thematic roles as proposed by William (Frawley, 1992), which identifies twelve major roles that explain how participants are involved in events expressed by predicates. These roles function as a bridge between syntax and semantics, showing how meaning is constructed through the relationship between verbs and their arguments. Frawley classifies thematic roles into participant roles and non-participant roles. Participant roles are central to the meaning of a sentence and are divided into three groups: logical actors (agent, author, and instrument), logical recipients (patient, experiencer, and

benefactive), and spatial roles (theme, source, and goal). Each of these roles represents a different type of involvement, such as initiating an action, being affected by it, or indicating movement and location.

This study adopts (Frawley, 1992) model of thematic roles as its analytical framework. In this model, a clause expresses a proposition in which a predicate is related to its participants, and each participant is assigned a thematic role, such as [list the participant roles used in your study, e.g., agent, patient, experiencer, instrument]. These participant roles form the core of the clause. They are distinguished from non-participant roles, namely locative, reason, and purpose, which are optional elements that add contextual information without affecting the core meaning of the clause. Non-participant roles indicate where an event occurs, why it happens, and what its intended outcome is. The model also emphasizes the close relationship between thematic roles and sentence structure, since the assignment of roles is reflected in grammatical positions within the clause. Because the model describes roles within the clause, the sentence is taken as the upper limit of analysis, in line with Leech's view that the sentence is the largest unit that grammar aims to describe (Leech, in Bach, 1997). Applied to Surah Al-Kahf, this framework allows a systematic examination of how lexical items, including significant or extraordinary words, function within sentences and interact to construct meaning, thereby contributing to semantic theory and Qur'anic linguistic studies (Hind Mansour, 2010).

In contrast, Arabic demonstrates a more flexible syntactic system, traditionally categorized into nominal (Jumlah Ismiyyah) and verbal (Jumlah Fi'liyyah) sentence types, as discussed by (Alduais, 2012). A nominal sentence begins with a noun phrase (mubtada') followed by a predicate (khabar), while a verbal sentence starts with a verb followed by its subject (fa'il) and possible complements. This flexibility allows Arabic to alternate between (VSO) and (SVO) structures, although it shows a preference for verb-initial constructions. Unlike English, which strictly adheres to a fixed order, Arabic is often described as a free-word-order language due to its reliance on inflection and case marking rather than position alone. Consequently, while both languages share

the fundamental requirement of forming meaningful units through subject–predicate relations, their structural realization differs significantly, reflecting deeper typological distinctions that are essential for comparative syntactic and semantic analysis.

The focus of this research is on the analysis of thematic roles in selected verses of Surah Al-Kahf (Noor & Mangrio, 2018), with particular attention to the functions of lexical items within the syntactic structure of each verse. The study seeks to identify the various roles assigned to different elements, such as agents, patients, experiencers, and instruments, and to examine how these roles contribute to the overall meaning of the text. In addition, the research explores the relationship between syntactic structure and semantic interpretation, highlighting how linguistic form and meaning interact. By concentrating on a specific surah and employing a well-defined analytical framework, the study aims to provide a detailed and focused examination of Qur'anic language.

The objectives of this study are multifaceted and systematically designed to address both theoretical and analytical dimensions of the research. Specifically, the objectives of this research are to address the research questions outlined above, namely: to identify and classify the thematic roles found in Surah Al-Kahf, to examine the simple sentence structures present in Surah Al-Kahf as a foundation for semantic analysis, and to investigate how thematic roles influence and interact with other roles within the same context. Ultimately, this research aspires to enhance our understanding of the Qur'an's linguistic structure, to provide a more comprehensive explanation of the relationship between syntax and semantics, and to offer new insights into how meaning is encoded, structured, and interpreted within the Qur'anic text, thereby contributing to the development of more context-sensitive and theoretically grounded approaches in linguistic and Qur'anic studies.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research design, as it seeks to explore and interpret meaning

within linguistic data, particularly in relation to thematic roles in Qur'anic text. Qualitative research is defined by John C. Shank as a systematic empirical inquiry into meaning, emphasizing organized procedures, experiential data, and interpretive understanding. Similarly, Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (2000) argue that qualitative research adopts a naturalistic and interpretive approach, where phenomena are examined in their natural context to understand the meanings attributed to them. In line with this perspective, the present study applies qualitative content analysis as its primary method, focusing on identifying, classifying, and interpreting thematic roles within selected Qur'anic verses. Content analysis, as noted by Gall and Borg, is a systematic technique used to draw inferences by objectively identifying specific characteristics of messages (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

The object of this research is Surah Al-Kahf, the 18th chapter of the Holy Qur'an, which consists of 110 verses and is categorized as a Makkiyah surah. This surah is selected due to its rich narrative content and thematic diversity, including stories related to faith, knowledge, morality, wealth, and divine power. In particular, the study focuses on verses 60 to 82, which contain the story of Prophet Musa and Khidr, a passage known for its complex linguistic and semantic structures. These verses provide a suitable corpus for analyzing thematic roles, as they include a variety of participant and non-participant roles embedded in meaningful narrative contexts.

Instruments

A checklist research instrument is a tool used to systematically collect data by recording the presence or absence of certain aspects or characteristics in the research object. A checklist typically consists of a list of items or criteria that need to be observed, marked, or evaluated by the researcher, (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

Procedures

The method of data collection in this study uses a purposive sampling technique, selecting verses that are most relevant to the analysis of thematic roles. The researcher conducts a close textual reading of the selected verses in Surah Al-Kahf and systematically identifies

expressions that reflect thematic roles based on the theoretical framework proposed by William Frawley. The process involves classifying lexical items according to their semantic roles such as agent, experiencer, patient, and others and interpreting their functions within the sentence structure. Through this structured and interpretive approach, the study aims to reveal how meaning is constructed in Qur'anic discourse by examining the interaction between syntax and semantics.

Data analysis

Data analysis techniques in this study involve systematically organizing, describing, and interpreting the collected data to answer the research questions and draw valid conclusions. According to Sugiyono (2018), data analysis refers to the processes used to examine data in order to address research problems and test proposed hypotheses. In this research, the analysis begins with a careful and structured reading of Surah Al-Kahf, particularly verses 60–82, to identify expressions of thematic roles. The researcher examines each verse in detail by explaining its meaning and identifying the function of each thematic role within the sentence. Additionally, similar sentence structures containing different thematic roles are compared to highlight variations in meaning and usage.

Furthermore, the data are systematically classified based on the types of thematic roles identified, following the framework proposed by William Frawley. This classification helps the researcher to organize and categorize the data effectively, making it easier to identify patterns and address the research problem. The approach also facilitates a clearer understanding of how thematic roles function within the Qur'anic text. Finally, the researcher interprets the findings by analyzing the context and underlying reasons behind the use of specific thematic roles in Surah Al-Kahf, thereby providing a comprehensive explanation of how meaning is constructed through the interaction of semantic roles and sentence structure.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Thematic Roles of Surah Al-Kahfi

Based on the data analysis, the findings showed the kinds of thematic roles found in Surah

Al-Kahfi. With analysis of Surah from 60 to 82 ayah, the study then uses Frawley's theory (Frawley, 1992). The analysis identified eleven thematic roles: Agent, Author, Patient, Instrument, Benefactive, Experiencer, Theme, Goal, Source, Reason, and Purpose, as well as Locative.

The Agent was the most dominant thematic role, occurring in 22 data points (24%). This indicates that the verses analyzed frequently emphasize participants who actively perform actions. Goal was the second most frequent role, with 12 data points (14%), followed by Benefactive with 9 data points (10%). Experiencer accounted for 8 data points (9%), while Reason occurred in 7 data points (8%). Author appeared in 6 data points (7%), and both Patient and Locative occurred in 5 data points (6%). Theme and Purpose each accounted for 4 data points (5%), Source occurred in 3 data points (4%), and Instrument was the least frequent role, with 2 data points (2%).

The dominance of Agent and Goal suggests that the discourse in these verses primarily represents actions and their participants, particularly the relationship between actors and the entities toward which their actions are directed. Meanwhile, the presence of Benefactive, Experiencer, Reason, and Purpose demonstrates that the verses also convey participants' experiences, motivations, intentions, and the purposes underlying particular actions.

Overall, the distribution of thematic roles demonstrates that thematic-role analysis can reveal how participants and semantic relationships are structured within the narratives and conversations of Surah Al-Kahfi verses 60–82. The findings also support Frawley's framework in identifying the semantic functions of participants within the analyzed sentences.

The Simple Sentence Structure of Surah Al-Kahfi

Based on the analysis conducted on the second problem formulation, with the research objective of analyzing simple sentence structures, there are consistent rules, while in some cases, there are differences in the structure of each. Sentences are very important in learning a language. A sentence is used in every language activity. To understand a sentence, we must study the structure of the sentence, the elements that

form it, and the meaning contained in the elements of the sentence. A good sentence will be easier to understand by the listener or reader depending on the contents and the structure of the sentence (Frawley, 1992). All of this can be learned through grammar. Besides that, the important thing in studying sentences is that we should also understand the function of the elements of the sentence. The function of the elements of each sentence is different. This matter depends on the verb of each sentence. A sentence is a group of words that expresses a statement, question, or command. A sentence usually has a verb and a subject.

Table 1: Sentence types in Q.S. Al-Kahf 60-82

Type	Verses	Qur'anic data	Structural analysis
Simple (one independent clause)	66, 67, 68, 72, 73, 75, 78	قَالَ إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا (67)	The speech frame <i>qāla</i> + hidden subject governs the quoted <i>inna</i> clause as one unit.
Compound (coordinated independent clauses)	61, 65, 69	فَوَجَدَا عَبْدًا ... أَنَّهُ رَحِيمٌ ... وَ عَلَّمَهُ (65)	Clauses joined by <i>fa</i> - and <i>wa</i> - (' <i>atf</i>).
Complex (independent + dependent clause)	60, 62, 63, 64, 70, 71, 74, 76, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82	فَلَمَّا بَلَغَا مَجْمَعَ بَيْنَهُمَا نَسِيًا حُوتَهُمَا (61)	A dependent clause is introduced by <i>lammā</i> , <i>idhā</i> , <i>in</i> , <i>law</i> , <i>hattā</i> , or <i>an</i> .

Table 1 shows that the verses of Q.S. Al-Kahf 60-82 realize three sentence types. Simple sentences are found mainly in short dialogue verses, where one speech frame (*qāla* + hidden subject) governs a single quoted statement, as in verse 67. Compound sentences appear where actions are narrated in sequence and linked by *fa*- and *wa*-, as in verse 65, which joins the finding of the servant, the giving of mercy, and the teaching of knowledge. Complex sentences are the largest group, because a dependent clause introduced by *lammā*, *idhā*, *in*, *law*, *hattā*, or *an* is attached to the main clause, as in verse 61. The simple sentence is therefore the basic unit, but most verses combine several units, which explains why the same thematic role can recur within one verse.

Table 2: Clause patterns and the Qur'anic data

No.	Pattern	Qur'anic data	Verse	Structural analysis
1	V + hidden S	قَالَ	63, 64, 67, 69, 70, 72, 73, 75-78	Past verb; subject is a hidden pronoun (<i>fā'il mustatir</i>).
2	V + S + PP	قَالَ مُوسَى لِقَتْلِهِ	60	<i>Mūsā</i> is the subject; <i>li-fatāhu</i> is <i>jār-majrūr</i> . The prepositional phrase precedes the subject.
3	V + PP + S	قَالَ لَهُ مُوسَى	66	Subject (dual or hidden) + <i>maḥḥul bih</i> .
4	V + S + O	خَرَقَهَا: فَفَقَّطَ: فَوَجَدَا عَبْدًا	71; 74; 65	Verb taking two objects.
5	V + S + O1 + O2	وَمَا أَسْلَمْنَاهُ: فَأَتَّخَذَ سَبِيلَهُ ... سَرِيًّا	63; 61	Command; <i>lā</i> + jussive.
6	Imperative / prohibition	أَيُّهَا غَدَاةَنَا: لَا تُؤَاخِذْنِي	62; 73	Demonstrative as <i>mubtada'</i> , abstract noun as <i>khavar</i> .
7	<i>Mubtada'</i> + <i>khavar</i>	هَذَا فِرَاقُ نَبِيِّ: ذَلِكَ تَأْوِيلُ	78; 82	<i>Ism</i> nominative, <i>khavar</i> accusative.
8	<i>Kāna</i> + <i>ism</i> + <i>khavar</i>	كَانَ أَبُوَاهُ مُؤْمِنِينَ: كَانَ أَبُوهُمَا صَالِحًا	80; 82	<i>Khavar</i> is a verbal clause with <i>lan</i> .
9	<i>Inna</i> + <i>ism</i> + <i>khavar</i>	إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا	67, 72, 75	Protasis with <i>in</i> / <i>law</i> ; apodosis with <i>fa</i> - or <i>lām</i> .
10	Conditiona 1	إِنْ سَأَلْتَهُ ... فَلَا تُصَلِّحْنِي: لَوْ شِئْتَ لَتَّخَذْتَ	76; 77	

Table 2 lists eleven clause patterns and shows that the structure of each clause depends on its verb. The opening verb *qāla* takes a hidden subject (pattern 1) or an explicit subject with a prepositional phrase (patterns 2 and 3). Transitive verbs such as *kharaqa* and *qatala* take one object (pattern 4), while *ansā* and *ittakhadha* take two (pattern 5). Imperatives and prohibitions (pattern 6) stand as independent clauses in direct speech. Patterns 7 to 9 are nominal structures that describe identity, state, and emphasis, and patterns 10 and 11 organize conditions and explanations. The table shows consistent rules, such as verb-initial clauses with a hidden subject, alongside variation caused by the verb's valency. Because one verse contains several clauses, it may appear under more than one pattern.

Table 3: Word order in verbal clauses

Order	Qur'anic data	Verse	Note
V + S + O	قَالَ مُوسَى: فَوَجَدَا عَبْدًا; فَقَتَلَهُ	60; 65; 74	Basic order; the Agent follows the verb.
S + V (fronted subject)	أَمَّا السَّفِينَةُ فَكَانَتْ	79	Subject fronted by <i>ammā</i> for contrast.

Table 3 shows that verbal clauses in the passage are verb-initial: the verb comes first, followed by the subject and then the object (*qāla Mūsā, wajaḍā 'abdan, qatalahu*). The only S + V order appears in verse 79, where *al-safīnatu* is fronted by *ammā* to mark contrast and topic. This agrees with the preference for V + S + O described for Arabic, in contrast to the fixed S + V + O order of English (Alduais, 2012), and it places the Agent directly after the verb.

Thematic Roles Are Affected By The Same Other Roles.

Based on this research, in each sentence, several other roles are identical in function due to the influence of two verbs in one sentence, or, in other words, there are two clauses. Sentences have four types: simple sentences, compound sentences, complex sentences, and compound-complex sentences. A simple sentence is one independent clause. A compound sentence is two or more independent clauses joined together (Haegemen, 1994). Semantic roles are contained in a sentence called thematic roles. The thematic role is the semantic relation of entities with sentence elements (Swan, 2005). Based on the theory mentioned, a sentence consists of a subject and a verb. Thematic roles are aspects of the interface between semantics and syntax, in particular to characterize the links between the semantic classification of its participants that is inherent in a verb's meaning and the grammatical relations it supports (Saeed, 2016).

The data show two kinds of interaction: (a) the same role recurring within one verse, and (b) different roles co-occurring across verses. Both are linked to the sentence structures in

a) Recurrence of the same role within a verse.

The same role appears twice when a verse contains two predicates (two clauses), and each predicate assigns the role to its own argument (cf. Saeed, 2016). This occurred in six verses.

Verse	Role	First realization	Second realization
60	Goal	إِلَيْهِ, addressee of <i>qāla</i>	مَجْمَعُ الْبَحْرَيْنِ, destination of <i>ablughā</i>
63	Experiencer	أَرَأَيْتَ: Musa, who receives the information	نَسِيْتُ: Yusha', who undergoes forgetting
65	Source	مِنْ: عَيْنًا, origin of the mercy (<i>ātaynāhu</i>)	مِنْ: لَدُنَّا, origin of the knowledge (<i>'allamnāhu</i>)
70	Agent	Khidr, who instructs (<i>fa-lā tas'alnī</i>)	Musa, the potential questioner (<i>tas'alnī</i>)
71	Agent	Musa and Khidr, who travel (<i>fa-ntalaqā</i>)	Khidr, who pierces (<i>kharaqahā</i>)
74	Agent	Musa and Khidr, who walk (<i>fa-ntalaqā</i>)	Khidr, who kills (<i>fa-qatalahu</i>)
74	Experiencer	Musa and Khidr, who meet the boy (<i>laqiyā</i>)	Musa, who is shocked (<i>a-qatalta</i>)

Three patterns appear. (1) Different participants, same role (vv. 63, 70): two participants take the same role under two predicates. (2) Same participants, shifting scope (vv. 71, 74): the Agent role moves from a joint action (*fa-ntalaqā*, dual subject) to an individual action by Khidr alone (*kharaqahā, fa-qatalahu*). (3) Same slot, two realizations (vv. 60, 65): two Goal or Source phrases fill the same semantic slot, each tied to a separate verb.

Verse 60 shows this in detail. In *qāla Mūsā li-fatāhu*, Musa is Agent and *li-fatāhu* is Goal. In *lā abrahū ḥattā ablughā majma'a al-baḥrayn*, the implicit subject *ana* (Musa again) is Agent, *majma'a al-baḥrayn* is Goal, and *al-baḥrayn* is Locative. The

Goal slot is thus filled twice, once by a person and once by a place.

b) Co-occurrence of different roles.

The table shows how often roles appear together with Agent.

Pair	Verses	n
Agent + Goal	60, 62, 64, 66, 70, 73, 76, 77, 78	9 (39%)
Agent + Benefactive	63, 65, 66, 69, 70, 72, 75	7
Agent + Reason	62, 67, 69, 70, 80	5
Agent + Experiencer	63, 64, 74, 76, 78	5

Agent + Goal is the most frequent pairing because of the speech frame in pattern 2-3: *qāla + li-/lahu* + addressee assigns Agent to the speaker and Goal to the addressee in one clause (*qāla lahu Mūsā*, v. 66; *qāla li-fatāhu*, vv. 60, 62). Agent + Benefactive follows the same logic: the speaker advises, asks, or promises, and the other party benefits (vv. 66, 69, 70, 72, 75).

The author behaves differently. It occurs without Agent in four of its six verses (61, 79, 81, 82), where the originator is not a direct performer: Allah's will (*fā-arāda rabbuka*, v. 82; *yubdilahumā rabbuhumā*, v. 81) or a distant ruler (*malikun ya'khudhu kulla safinatin*, v. 79). The author therefore marks indirect causation, which distinguishes it from Agent.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Frawley (1992) provides an effective framework for analyzing the semantic functions of lexical items in Surah Al-Kahf, verses 60–82. The analysis shows that the verses contain various thematic roles determined by the semantic and syntactic contexts in which words occur. The findings also indicate that thematic roles are dynamic rather than fixed, as a lexical item may perform different roles depending on its contextual function.

Furthermore, the analysis highlights the flexibility and complexity of Arabic sentence structure, particularly in the positioning of subjects and verbs and the use of verbal and nominal sentences. This structural flexibility contributes to the diverse realization of thematic roles in the

narrative of Prophet Musa and Prophet Khidr. Overall, the study demonstrates that thematic role analysis provides a valuable semantic perspective for understanding the relationships among participants, actions, and events in Qur'anic discourse. Therefore, this research contributes to linguistic and Qur'anic studies by showing how semantic analysis can provide deeper insight into the meaning, structure, and coherence of Qur'anic narratives.

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