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Analysis of the Perlocutionary Acts of the Verses on Defensive Jihad in Surah *al-Baqarah* Based on John Austin's Threefold Theory

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Abstract

This paper examines the speech acts found in the verses on defensive jihad in Surah al-Baqarah, using John Austin's threefold theory as its main framework. Most previous studies have relied on Searle's fivefold classification. In contrast, this research focuses on perlocutionary acts and what effects they might have. We adopted a descriptive-analytical method based on library research, combining qualitative and quantitative data. The corpus includes Qur'anic verses about jihad, specifically verses 190-194, 216-218, and 244 from Surah al-Baqarah. Our analysis draws on both Shi'i and Sunni translations as well as exegetical sources. The findings reveal that assertive and commissive acts each make up 19% of the identified speech acts, while directive and expressive acts account for 17% each. Under the strict operational criteria defined in this study, no explicit or direct threats were found. However, this does not mean that the verses lack warnings or references to negative consequences. The main contribution of this study is combining Austin's three levels with Searle's classification and examining the potential effects of these verses on their audience. We discuss the implications for contemporary issues at the level of theoretical inference, not as empirical proof of the verses' actual effectiveness.

Keywords: Speech Act, Perlocutionary Act, John Austin, Defensive Jihad, Surah al-Baqarah, John Searle.

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Introduction

Jihad is a central concept in the Holy Qur'an and has always drawn the attention of exegetes, jurists, and scholars of Islamic studies. The word comes from the Arabic root *j-h-d*, which means effort, striving, and hardship (Rāghib Iṣfahānī, 1990, s.v. "j-h-d"). In Qur'anic and jurisprudential terms, it refers to striving in the cause of God with one's life and property. Ṭabāṭabāʾī (1995 AD/1374 SH: 2, 250) divides jihad into two main types: the lesser jihad, which means physical and military struggle against the enemies of Islam, and the greater jihad, which means the struggle against the commanding self and Satan, as well as the purification of the soul.

In jurisprudential literature, scholars usually divide jihad into two categories: "Defensive Jihad" and "Offensive Jihad." Defensive jihad means confronting an aggression that an enemy starts, and all jurists agree on its legitimacy. Offensive jihad, on the other hand, is when Muslims start hostilities to expand the domain of Islam. This type has different rulings and conditions, including the permission of the Impeccable Imam, and it remains a topic of scholarly disagreement. The present study looks only at verses revealed in the context of repelling aggression that an enemy starts. Therefore, we classify them as verses concerning "Defensive Jihad." As a result, the discussion of offensive jihad and its rulings is beyond the scope of this study.

However, in modern times, and especially after the events of September 11, 2001, the word "jihad" has suffered from semantic distortion in some Western media discourse. It has often been used as a synonym for "violence," "terrorism," and "unlimited warfare" (Esposito, 2015: 23-25; Ramadan, 2010: 78-80). This distortion makes it even more necessary to re-examine the verses on jihad in a precise and scholarly way.

Surah al-Baqarah is one of the longest and most comprehensive surahs in the Holy Qur'an, and it contains the earliest verses about jihad. Exegetes believe that verse 190 of Surah al-Baqarah was the first verse revealed to the Prophet (PBUH) about warfare against the polytheists after the Hijrah (Jaṣṣāṣ, 1985 AD/1405 AH: 1, 320; Abul Futūḥ Rāzī, 1992, vol. 3, p. 68).

Ṭabāṭabāʾī (1951 AD/1371 AH: 2, 60) makes a similar point. He argues that when this verse was revealed, Muslims were commanded to fight for the first time.

In recent years, speech act theory has become a useful tool for analyzing religious texts. The English analytic philosopher John Langshaw Austin founded this theory (Austin, 1962: 12-24), and his student John Searle later developed it (Searle, 1969: 22-36). The theory stresses that language is not just a way to represent the world and state facts. Instead, people can use it to perform many different acts, such as making requests, giving commands, making promises, expressing emotions, or even changing existing states of affairs. Austin introduced the theory of "Speech Acts" and distinguished among locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts (Austin, 1962: 94-120). This distinction brought about a major shift in the philosophy of language.

Because these three concepts appear throughout this study, we need to define each one briefly at the start. A locutionary act is the act of saying a sentence with a specific meaning. It answers the question, "What was said?" An illocutionary act is the speaker's purpose or

intention in saying that sentence. It answers the question, "What did the speaker intend to accomplish by saying this?" A perlocutionary act is the effect or consequence that the utterance actually produces in the audience. It answers the question, "What effect did this utterance have on the audience?" Since this study is textual and interpretive in nature, when we analyze the verses, "perlocutionary act" refers to the potential or intended effect that can be inferred from the text and its context. It does not refer to an effect whose actual occurrence among audiences has been empirically proven. We will explain these three concepts in more detail, with examples, in Section 2.3.

Using this theory allows us to reach the hidden semantic layers of Qur'anic verses and to identify divine purposes and intentions more precisely. As Sajedi (2002 AD/1381 SH: 58) points out, speech act theory can play an important role in understanding the Qur'an and interpreting its verses. Hasanvand (2019 AD/1398 SH: 43) makes a similar point. In his analysis of Surah Maryam, he shows that applying linguistic theories to religious texts opens up new perspectives on the speech acts used in Qur'anic surahs.

This study is significant for two main reasons.

First, we need a precise linguistic re-examination of the verses on jihad to respond to contemporary accusations against Islam. As Veysi and Oraki (2015 AD/1394 SH: 21) note, paying attention to speech acts and the illocutionary force of Qur'anic sentences can lead to a more accurate understanding of divine intentions and can help prevent superficial interpretations that ignore the context.

Second, there is a research gap. Most studies apply the theory of Austin's student (Searle) rather than Austin's own theory to the analysis of the verses on jihad. Masoum and Radmard (2015 AD/1394 SH: 52) have shown that paying attention to temporal and spatial context — including whether surahs are Meccan or Medinan — has a significant impact on speech act analysis. However, among the studies we reviewed, we found no study that examined the verses on defensive jihad in Surah al-Baqarah with an emphasis on Austin's threefold framework, particularly the concept of the perlocutionary act.

Given these objectives, this study aims to answer the following questions:

1. According to John Austin's speech act theory, what types of speech acts appear in the verses on defensive jihad in Surah al-Baqarah, and which type is the most frequent?

2. Does the Qur'an use threatening speech acts in the verses on defensive jihad in Surah al-Baqarah?

3. How do the findings from speech act analysis relate to contemporary resistance discourse, especially the Sacred Defense (the Iran-Iraq War)?

This study is fundamental and theoretical in purpose. Methodologically, it uses a descriptive-analytical approach that combines qualitative and quantitative methods.

2.Literature Review

Many studies have used speech act theory to analyze religious texts, including the Holy Qur'an. We can divide these studies into three main categories.

2.1. Category One: Foundational Theoretical Studies

In his article "John Austin's Speech Act Theory in Understanding the Language of the

Qur'an," Sajedi (2002 AD/1381 SH) discusses the role of speech acts in understanding the Qur'an and interpreting its verses. He also explains the theoretical foundations of this approach. Sajedi argues that speech act theory can help exegetes distinguish between the "meaning of a sentence" and the "force intended by the speaker" (Sajedi, 2002 AD/1381 SH: 62).

2.2. Category Two: Applied Studies of Various Surahs

In his article "Textual Analysis of Surah Maryam Based on Speech Act Theory, with an Emphasis on Johnson's Model," Hasanvand (2019 AD/1398 SH) shows that assertive and directive acts are the most frequent in Surah Maryam (Hasanvand, 2019 AD/1398 SH: 48). Veysi and Oraki (2015 AD/1394 SH) analyzed interrogative sentences in the Qur'an. They show that many of these sentences serve non-interrogative functions, such as commands, prohibitions, reprimands, and expressions of surprise (Veysi & Oraki, 2015 AD/1394 SH: 35). Masoum and Radmard (2015 AD/1394 SH) also show that assertive acts are the most frequent in Meccan surahs. Expressive, directive, commissive, and declarative acts come next (Masoum & Radmard, 2015 AD/1394 SH: 58).

2.3. Category Three: Studies Specifically Addressing the Verses on Jihad

In their article "Applying Speech Act Theory to the Interpretation of the Verses on Jihad," Dastaranj and Arab analyze many verses about jihad using Searle's five-category classification. They conclude that assertive and directive acts are the most frequent (Dastaranj & Arab, 2020 AD/1399 SH: 35).

Rahbari (2023 AD/1402 SH) follows a similar approach. In the article "Analysis of the Speech Acts of the Verses on Jihad in Surah al-Baqarah Based on Searle's Theory," he examines the same set of verses from Surah al-Baqarah. However, as the title shows, he uses Searle's five-category theory rather than Austin's threefold theory. He does not address the concept of the "perlocutionary act," which is the main focus of the present study. Hasani and Rezaei (2022 AD/1401 SH) take a different approach. In their study "Discourse Analysis of Resistance in the Qur'an, with an Emphasis on Surah al-Baqarah," they examine the relationship between the verses of Surah al-Baqarah and resistance discourse. However, their analysis is based on critical discourse analysis rather than Austin's speech act theory. They also do not specifically conceptualize the perlocutionary act as a bridge between the text and the audience's practical action.

We should not distinguish this study from previous work by claiming that no one has examined these verses. Instead, the difference lies in our analytical perspective and theoretical focus:

- We use Austin's threefold framework together with Searle's classification of illocutionary acts.
- We focus on the anticipated perlocutionary act as an effect that can be inferred from the text, its context, and exegetical evidence.

This distinction is especially important because Rahbari (2023 AD/1402 SH) already studied the same set of verses. Clarifying our contribution in light of his work is therefore necessary.

In their study "Examining Jihadi Educational Speech Acts in the Holy Qur'an," Haghi et al. (2024 AD/1403 SH) conclude that expressive speech acts are the most frequent, making up 36% of the total. This finding differs from what Dastaranj and Arab reported. It shows that the choice of verses and the analytical method can influence the results (Haghi et al., 2024 AD/1403 SH: 12). Parsa (2024 AD/1403 SH), in "A Comparative Study of Contemporary Interpretations of the Doctrine of Jihad in the Qur'an," identifies two distinct interpretive approaches. The first is an offensive approach, represented by Sayyid Quṭb and Ibn Taymīyyah. The second is a defensive approach, adopted by most other exegetes (Parsa, 2024 AD/1403 SH: 25).

A review of the literature shows that, despite many studies on speech act theory and the Qur'an, several research gaps remain:

- No study explicitly applies Austin's threefold theory to the verses on jihad while also clearly distinguishing this framework from Searle's five-category classification.
- Researchers have paid insufficient attention to perlocutionary acts. According to Suriyal (2010: 280), this concept is especially important for analyzing religious speeches that call for collective action.
- We need to clarify the operational criteria for identifying threatening speech acts and to examine whether they occur in the selected verses.
- It is possible to investigate how the speech act analysis of these verses relates to contemporary resistance discourse.

This study addresses these issues by using Austin's threefold framework and emphasizing the concept of the anticipated perlocutionary act. Throughout the analysis, the term "perlocutionary act" refers to a potential effect inferred from the text and its context. It does not refer to an effect empirically established among audiences.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design and Method

This study is fundamental and theoretical in purpose. It aims to advance knowledge in Qur'anic linguistics and religious discourse analysis.

Methodologically, we use a descriptive-analytical approach based on library research. We collected data — including the text of the verses, translations, and authoritative exegetical works — from written sources and analyzed it within Austin's threefold theoretical framework. The quantitative analysis is limited to basic descriptive statistics, specifically the frequency and percentage of each type of speech act.

We should emphasize that the primary unit of analysis in this study is the speech act, not the verse. Each verse may contain several speech acts. Therefore, the frequency table counts speech acts rather than verses. We identified a total of 36 speech acts across the nine verses. We classified these acts into Searle's five categories and calculated the percentages based on the total number of identified speech acts.

However, we must avoid conflating two distinct theoretical levels. We therefore maintain a distinction between the three levels of acts in Austin's model and the five categories established by Searle. Austin's threefold framework comprises locutionary, illocutionary, and

perlocutionary acts. By contrast, Searle's five categories classify different types of illocutionary acts. Consequently, we structure the counting and statistical reporting so that these two theoretical levels do not appear as equivalent categories within a single table.

3.1.1. Austin's Intellectual Background

Austin studied at the University of Oxford, where he was influenced by analytic philosophy and the work of Ludwig Wittgenstein. In his book Philosophical Investigations, Wittgenstein showed that the meaning of words lies in their use. Austin developed this idea and concluded that saying a sentence is itself an act (Austin, 1962: 5-7). Before Austin, philosophers generally believed that sentences had only two functions: stating a fact that could be either true or false, or expressing a feeling. Austin rejected this view. He showed that many sentences are not used just to report facts. Instead, saying them also performs an action (Austin, 1962: 14-24).

3.1.2. The Threefold Classification of Speech Acts

According to Austin's theory (1962: 94-120), we can examine every utterance from three interrelated dimensions:

A) Locutionary act: The act of saying something. It involves producing sounds, using words with specific meanings, and following grammatical rules to build meaningful sentences (Austin, 1962: 94). When we analyze Qur'anic verses, a locutionary act means accurately understanding the verse's apparent and lexical meaning.

B) Illocutionary act: The act performed in saying a sentence. It is tied to the speaker's intention and the force of the utterance (Austin, 1962: 98-102). To apply this concept in the analysis of the verses, we use the categories of assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative acts. Searle's theory formulated these categories more systematically. However, in this study, they serve as tools for classifying illocutionary acts within Austin's threefold framework. Austin stresses that a single sentence can perform several illocutionary acts at the same time (Austin, 1962: 105). When we analyze Qur'anic verses, identifying these acts depends on examining the illocutionary force of each verse and its function within the relevant context.

C) Perlocutionary act: The effect or consequence that an utterance produces in its audience, such as a change in the audience's feelings, attitudes, or behavior after hearing a sentence (Austin, 1962: 101-103). The key difference between an illocutionary act and a perlocutionary act is this: the former concerns the force of the utterance. In contrast, the latter concerns its consequences for the audience. It is not necessarily entirely under the speaker's control, because various factors — including the audience's psychological state and the situational context — may influence it (Austin, 1962: 115).

In this analysis, the perlocutionary act refers to the expected effects of the verses on their audiences, both during the period of revelation and in later contexts. Specifically, the study examines anticipated perlocutionary acts — effects that the verses may be expected to produce based on textual evidence, context, and exegetical interpretation. Empirical assessment of actual audience effects is beyond the scope of this research and would require field studies. Thus, throughout the article, the term "perlocutionary act" denotes an anticipated

effect.

3.1.3. The Relationship Between Austin's Theory and Searle's Classification in This Study

Austin introduced three levels of speech acts but did not offer a closed list of illocutionary act types. Searle expanded this discussion by proposing five categories. This study uses Austin's three levels as its overarching framework and Searle's five categories as a more specific analytical tool for describing illocutionary acts. Therefore, this study represents a methodological integration rather than an exclusively Austinian approach. We adopted this integration to meet the study's analytical requirements.

Throughout the article, whenever we use the five categories of assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative acts, we cite Searle (1969) to inform readers of the origin of these categories.

3.2. Sample Selection Criteria, Scope Limitations, and Data Sources

The population of Qur'anic verses related to jihad is extensive. It encompasses approximately 400 verses distributed across around 17 surahs (Dehghan, 2010 AD/1389 SH: 15). We selected the sample for this study purposively according to four criteria:

- Thematic diversity, encompassing the rationale, methods, conditions, limitations, and rewards of jihad.
- The attention that authoritative exegetes devote to the verses.
- Medinan revelation, since Medinan verses primarily address practical and social issues, including jihad (Masoum & Radmard, 2015 AD/1394 SH: 55).
- Explicit and direct reference to jihad. Accordingly, we selected nine verses from Surah al-Baqarah: verses 190-194, verses 216-218, and verse 244.

The focus on a single surah is intentional. Exegetes recognize Surah al-Baqarah as foundational for understanding the rulings on defensive jihad (Jaṣṣāṣ, 1985 AD/1405 AH: 1, 320). This makes it an appropriate context for applying the analytical framework, especially regarding the perlocutionary act. However, limiting the study to one surah and nine verses restricts the generalizability of the findings. Broader conclusions would require analysis of additional verses from other surahs such as Āli 'Imrān, al-Anfāl, and al-Tawbah.

We collected the data for this study from two principal sources. The first consists of the Arabic text of the Holy Qur'an and its Persian translations, primarily the translation by Naser Makarem Shirazi (1994 AD/1373 SH). We supplemented this where necessary with the translations of Mohammad Mahdi Fouladvand (2000 AD/1379 SH) and Baha al-Din Khorramshahi (1999 AD/1378 SH). The second comprises authoritative Shi'i and Sunni exegetical works, including al-Tibyān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an by Ṭūsī, Majma' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an by Ṭabrisī, al-Mīzān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an by Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Tafsir Nemooneh by Makarem Shirazi and colleagues, Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an by Ṭabarī, and Tafsir Noor by Qara'ati.

3.3. Methods for Validating the Analyses

The main text of the article identifies three strategies for enhancing the validity of the analyses.

First, we rely on authoritative exegetical works. We cite at least two authoritative commentaries, one Shi'i and one Sunni, for each illocutionary act. If an authoritative commentary does not support the proposed interpretation of an act, we exclude that act from the final analysis.

Second, we define linguistic criteria. We established specific linguistic criteria for identifying each type of act. For example, we identify a directive act by the presence of an imperative or prohibitive verb. We identify an assertive act by the presence of a declarative sentence. We identify an expressive act by evaluative expressions such as "Does not love" and "All-Forgiving, Most Merciful." And we identify a declarative act by the presence of a structure that establishes a new status, such as "Has been prescribed for you."

3.4. Rationale for Selecting the Verses

Verses 190-194 form the core of the legislation on defensive combat in Surah al-Baqarah. Verses 216-218 address the obligatory dimension of jihad and the hope it inspires. Verse 244 states the command to fight and reminds the audience of divine oversight.

These nine verses cover a range of speech acts related to defensive jihad. Other verses either deal with similar themes or address other subjects, such as charitable giving.

3.5. Operational Definition of Threat and Its Distinction from Warning

In speech act theory, we can treat a threat as a commissive act. In this act, the speaker commits to taking negative action against the addressee if the addressee fails to perform a particular action (Searle, 1969: 54-58). The criteria for identifying a threat in this study are as follows: an explicit conditional structure, such as "If you do not do this, I will do that"; a commitment by the speaker to take action; a clearly identified and specific addressee; and a clearly specified negative consequence.

A warning differs from a threat in several ways. A warning may be general, may not address a specific individual, and may describe the consequences of an action. By contrast, under the operational definition we adopt in this study, a threat requires a commissive structure and the attribution of negative action to the speaker. For example, the expression "Indeed, Allah does not love the transgressors" does not contain the explicit structure "If you do not do this, I will do that." Therefore, it does not qualify as a direct threat under the criteria we establish in this study. Similarly, we can more appropriately analyze the expression "But if they desist, then indeed Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful" as a promise and an expression of the possibility of forgiveness rather than as a threat.

We did not identify any explicit structure of the form "If you do not do this, I will do that" in the nine selected verses. Accordingly, we found no explicit and direct threats under the restricted operational definition we adopt in this study. This finding relates only to the definition and criteria we use in this article. We should not interpret it as indicating the absence of all warnings, threats of punishment, or statements about negative consequences in the selected verses. In particular, reaching a definitive conclusion about all forms of threat would require examining the verses for both direct and indirect threats.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1. Quantitative Findings: Frequency of Speech Acts

Our analysis of the nine selected verses from Surah al-Baqarah (verses 190-194, 216-218, and 244) shows that these verses contain a diverse range of speech acts. To examine these acts, we need to distinguish among Austin's three theoretical levels: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. The locutionary act concerns the literal meaning and linguistic structure of an utterance. The illocutionary act refers to its communicative force and intended function. And the anticipated perlocutionary act indicates the potential consequence that we can infer from the text and its context.

Since these three levels are conceptually distinct, we should not combine their frequencies into a single statistical total. Furthermore, we must classify illocutionary acts into assertive, commissive, directive, expressive, and declarative categories according to clearly specified units of counting and coding criteria.

Table 1. Frequency of Speech Acts in the Verses on Defensive Jihad in Surah al-Baqarah (Unit of Analysis: Speech Act)

No.	Type of Act (Based on Austin's Framework)	Number of Acts	Percentage (out of 36 acts)	Example Verse
1	Locutionary act (literal meaning)	9	25%	All verses (baseline level of analysis)
2	Illocutionary act — Assertive (statement of a rule)	7	19%	Verse 190: "Indeed, Allah does not love the transgressors."
3	Illocutionary act — Commissive (promise of reward)	7	19%	Verse 218: "Those are the ones who hope for the mercy of Allah."
4	Illocutionary act — Directive (call to defense)	6	17%	Verse 190: "And fight in the cause of Allah…"
5	Illocutionary act — Expressive	6	17%	Verses 190/218: "Does not love"/"All-Forgiving, Most Merciful"
6	Illocutionary act — Declarative (change of status)	1	3%	Verse 216: "Fighting has been prescribed for you."
7	Explicit threatening act	0	0%	None identified

Note: We treat the anticipated perlocutionary act in this table as a separate level of analysis. We do not include it in the count of 36 acts, because it is not a type of act on the same theoretical level as locutionary and illocutionary acts.

The table shows that assertive and commissive acts each make up 19% of the 36 identified illocutionary acts. Directive and expressive acts come next at 17% each. Declarative acts are the least frequent, at 3%. Most notably, we found no explicit threatening acts in these verses. This finding contrasts sharply with portrayals in some media and extremist discourses that describe Qur'anic jihad as inherently violent or threatening.

We should emphasize that we use the term "threatening act" in this study in its precise and restricted sense: "A sentence that issues a direct, conditional threat of punishment if the

addressee fails to perform a specified obligation." We must distinguish this concept from "warning," which refers to a general divine warning about the consequences of human actions. Such warnings appear throughout the Qur'an and are also present in the selected verses, including the reminder of God's knowledge and awareness in verse 244. Unlike a threat, a warning is not necessarily directed at a specific individual or group under a particular condition. Instead, it constitutes a general cautionary statement about divine laws and principles. Accordingly, the absence of explicit threatening acts in these verses does not mean that the verses on jihad contain no warnings. It indicates only that their sentence structures do not follow the pattern of a direct, conditional threat.

At the qualitative level, our examination of the verses shows that this collection has several identifiable functions. These include explaining the rules governing jihad, calling for action within the constraints that the verses specify, describing the consequences of actions, and emphasizing divine mercy and knowledge. We also examine the anticipated perlocutionary act separately, based on an exegetical analysis of each verse. We should not treat it as a type of act on the same analytical level as locutionary and illocutionary acts in the frequency table.

4.2. Qualitative Findings: Detailed Analysis of the Verses

In this section, we analyze each of the nine selected verses separately according to Austin's threefold model: the locutionary act, the illocutionary act, and the anticipated perlocutionary act. We should recall that "perlocutionary act" in this section means the anticipated perlocutionary act that we can infer from the text and its context. It does not mean its actual, empirically observed effect on the audience.

4.2.1. Analysis of Verse 190 of Surah al-Baqarah

Verse text: "And fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not love the transgressors."

Translation: "And fight in the way of Allah against those who fight you, but do not transgress, for Allah does not love the transgressors" (Makarem Shirazi, 1994 AD/1373 SH: 1, 290).

From the perspective of the locutionary act, the verse contains a command to fight those who start hostilities, followed by a prohibition against transgression. At the level of the illocutionary act, we can identify three functions. First, there is an assertive act that explains the limits and rules of jihad. Second, the imperative verb "Fight" shows a directive act. Third, the phrase "Indeed, Allah does not love the transgressors" works as an expressive act, showing disapproval of transgression.

We can describe the anticipated perlocutionary act of this verse in three ways. It aims to strengthen defensive preparedness against aggressors, emphasize the need to refrain from transgression, and reinforce the audience's understanding of why it is necessary to observe ethical limits in defense.

Exegetes have also stressed the importance of the qualifications and restrictions in this verse. Jaṣṣāṣ (1984 AD/1405 AH: 1, 320) and Abul Futūḥ Rāzī (1951 AD/1371 AH: 3, 68) discuss the verse's role in the legislation of armed combat. Ṭabāṭabāʾī (2014 AD/1393 SH: 2,

61) reads the phrase "But do not transgress" as referring to any act that falls under the category of transgression. Makarem Shirazi (1994 AD/1373 SH: 2, 18) likewise argues that the objective of Islamic wars is not territorial expansion or the acquisition of spoils. Instead, it is the establishment of justice and opposition to oppression. Ṭūsī (n.d.: 2, 148) also considers the qualification "Those who fight you" important for understanding the scope of the command to fight.

4.2.2. Analysis of Verses 191 and 192 of Surah al-Baqarah

Verse 191: "And kill them wherever you encounter them, and expel them from wherever they expelled you, for persecution is worse than killing …"

Verse 192: "But if they desist, then indeed Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

At the locutionary level, these verses state commands about confrontation with the enemy. They also introduce the condition under which hostilities should cease. At the illocutionary level, the directive function is clear in the imperative verbs "Kill them" and "Expel them." However, we must interpret these verbs in light of the context and qualifications of the verses. We can also identify an assertive act in the statement about the relationship between persecution and killing and in the explanation of the consequences of the enemy's decision to stop hostilities. The phrase "But if they desist, then indeed Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful" further emphasizes divine mercy and forgiveness.

We can summarize the anticipated perlocutionary act of these verses as follows. It aims to strengthen the audience's understanding of the purpose and limits of confrontation, draw attention to the possibility of ending hostilities when the enemy stops fighting, and foster hope in divine mercy.

Ṭabrisī (1987 AD/1408 AH: 2, 510) links the occasion of revelation of these verses to the Treaty of Ḥudaybīyyah. Makarem Shirazi (1994 AD/1373 SH: 2, 21) stresses the need to consider the conditions and limits of warfare. Ṭabāṭabā'ī (2014 AD/1393 SH: 2, 63) also examines jihad and the conditions under which it is carried out in his interpretation of these verses. These perspectives show that we cannot fully understand the speech acts in the verses without paying attention to their context and exegetical interpretations.

4.2.3. Analysis of Verses 193 and 194 of Surah al-Baqarah

Verse 193: "And fight them until there is no more persecution and religion is for Allah …"

Verse 194: "The sacred month is for the sacred month, and for all violations of sanctity there is legal retribution …"

At the locutionary level, these verses deal with the objective of confronting persecution and the principle of retaliation within the framework of inviolable sanctities. At the illocutionary level, the assertive function appears in the explanation of the objectives and rules governing confrontation. In contrast, we can identify the directive function in the command "Fight them." The phrase "And know that Allah is with the God-conscious" can also serve a motivational function. It does more than simply state that Allah is with the God-conscious.

The anticipated perlocutionary act of these verses consists of three things. It aims to strengthen the audience's understanding of the objectives and limitations of confrontation,

draw attention to the principle of proportionality and respect for inviolable sanctities, and reinforce a sense of responsibility in defensive conduct.

Makarem Shirazi (1994 AD/1373 SH: 2, 22) sees the objective of jihad as confronting corruption and oppression and creating the conditions necessary for worship. Ṭabāṭabāʾī (2014 AD/1393 SH: 2, 65) reads the phrase "The sacred month is for the sacred month" in relation to the principle of retaliation and the observance of inviolable sanctities.

4.2.4. Analysis of Verse 216 of Surah al-Baqarah

Verse text: "Fighting has been prescribed for you, although it is disliked by you…" (Makarem Shirazi, 1994 AD/1373 SH: 1, 330).

At the locutionary level, the verse begins with the declarative sentence "Fighting has been prescribed for you." It then points out that fighting is unpleasant to human beings. At the illocutionary level, the assertive function appears in the statement of the obligation and in the explanation of the audience's human condition. Furthermore, within Searle's classification, we can examine the phrase "Fighting has been prescribed for you" as a potential declarative act. However, we must assess this classification against the theoretical definition of a declarative act and the conditions required for such an act to be successfully performed. In addition, the context of the verse may encourage the audience to reflect on the difference between personal desires and religious obligations.

We can formulate the anticipated perlocutionary act of this verse as follows. It encourages reflection on duty, draws attention to the possibility that matters which initially seem unpleasant may nevertheless contain good, and strengthens trust in divine wisdom.

Ṭabāṭabāʾī (2014 AD/1393 SH: 2, 105) stresses that divine rulings do not necessarily match human carnal desires. Makarem Shirazi (1994 AD/1373 SH: 2, 158) likewise reads this verse in connection with the acceptance of divine obligations.

4.2.5. Analysis of Verse 217 of Surah al-Baqarah

Verse text: "They ask you about fighting in the sacred month …" And in the concluding part: "And whoever among you turns back from his religion and dies while being a disbeliever, their deeds will become worthless in this world and the Hereafter. They are the inhabitants of the Fire, where they will remain forever."

Translation of the opening section: "They ask you about fighting in the sacred month. Say, 'Fighting in it is a grave sin, but barring people from the way of Allah … is a greater sin in the sight of Allah'" (Makarem Shirazi, 1994 AD/1373 SH: 1, 333).

At the locutionary level, the verse answers a question about fighting during the sacred month and establishes a hierarchy of values by comparing different actions. However, we should not limit our analysis of the verse to this comparison, because its concluding section also addresses apostasy and its consequences in the Hereafter.

At the illocutionary level, we can identify an assertive function in the comparison between actions and in the statement of their consequences. Furthermore, the context of the verse may serve an indirect directive function, as it calls on the audience to reconsider its value-based and religious priorities. The concluding section of the verse also has a warning or threat-of-punishment function, as it describes the consequences of apostasy and dying in a

state of disbelief. Accordingly, determining how this section relates to the concept of a "threatening act" requires a precise definition of the coding criteria and a distinction between direct, conditional threats and warnings of adverse consequences.

We can examine the anticipated perlocutionary act of this verse along two dimensions. First, it may strengthen the audience's understanding of the hierarchy of values and the importance of reconsidering one's actions. Second, it may draw the audience's attention to the religious and eschatological consequences of its choices. These effects are inferences based on the text and its context. They do not establish that all audiences respond in the same way.

Ṭabrisī (1987 AD/1408 AH: 2, 520) links the occasion of revelation of the verse to a question about fighting during the sacred month. Makarem Shirazi (1994 AD/1373 SH: 1, 162) stresses the hierarchy of values presented in the verse. Ṭabarī (1991 AD/1412 AH: 2, 200) likewise sees the verse as a response to an objection about fighting during the sacred month. Ibn ʿĀshūr (1984: 2, 50) addresses its value-related dimensions.

In this section of the verse ("And whoever among you turns back from his religion…"), the passage states the negative consequences of apostasy. However, according to the operational definition in Section 3.6, it falls under the category of a warning, not an explicit threat. This is because it does not contain the explicit conditional structure "If you do not do this, I will do that." Nor does the speaker identify himself as the agent who will bring about the negative consequence. Therefore, the conclusion that no explicit threats occur in the selected verses remains valid even when we take this passage into account.

4.2.6. Analysis of Verse 218 of Surah al-Baqarah

Verse text: "Indeed, those who have believed, emigrated, and striven in the way of Allah — it is they who hope for the mercy of Allah …" (Makarem Shirazi, 1994 AD/1373 SH: 1, 334).

At the locutionary level, the verse speaks of faith, emigration, striving in the way of Allah, and hope for divine mercy. At the illocutionary level, we can examine the assertive function in its description of the status of the group in question. In contrast, the expressive function is clear in its emphasis on divine mercy and forgiveness. In its context, the verse may also serve a motivational function, as it links the actions mentioned above to hope for divine mercy.

We can formulate the anticipated perlocutionary act of the verse as follows. It aims to strengthen hope, increase motivation to remain committed to faith and religious responsibilities, and foster spiritual reassurance.

Ṭabāṭabāʾī (2014 AD/1393 SH: 2, 109) reads this verse in relation to believers' hope for divine mercy. Makarem Shirazi (1994 AD/1373 SH: 1, 166) likewise stresses the verse's hopeful dimension and its promise of mercy and forgiveness.

4.2.7. Analysis of Verse 244 of Surah al-Baqarah

Verse text: "And fight in the way of Allah, and know that Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing" (Makarem Shirazi, 1994 AD/1373 SH: 1, 360).

At the locutionary level, the verse consists of an imperative sentence and a declarative sentence. At the illocutionary level, the imperative verb "Fight" has a directive function, calling on the audience to act in the way of Allah. The phrase "And know that Allah is All-

Hearing, All-Knowing" has an assertive function and emphasizes God's knowledge and awareness. Within the context of the verse, this phrase may also act as a reminder and foster a heightened sense of responsibility.

We can formulate the anticipated perlocutionary act of the verse as follows. It aims to increase the audience's sense of responsibility, draw attention to divine oversight of speech and conduct, and strengthen motivation to act responsibly.

Ṭabrisī (1987 AD/1408 AH: 2, 545) stresses God's awareness of human speech and actions. Makarem Shirazi (1994 AD/1373 SH: 1, 230) likewise points to the role of this reminder in strengthening internal self-monitoring.

4.3. Answers to the Research Questions

Research Question 1: Based on John Austin's speech act theory, what types of speech acts appear in the verses on defensive jihad in Surah al-Baqarah, and which type is the most frequent?

Our analysis of the nine selected verses shows that the verses on defensive jihad in Surah al-Baqarah contain several types of speech acts: locutionary, assertive, commissive, directive, expressive, and declarative. As Table 1 shows, assertive and commissive acts are the most frequent. Each makes up 19% of the 36 identified acts and appears in seven of the nine verses. Directive and expressive acts come next at 17% each. Declarative acts are the least frequent at 3%. We found no explicit threatening acts in any of the verses.

Research Question 2: Does the Qur'an use threatening acts in the verses on defensive jihad in Surah al-Baqarah?

No. We found no explicit threatening acts, as defined in Section 3.6, in any of the nine verses we analyzed. The concluding section of Verse 217 does address the negative consequences of apostasy, but we classify it as a warning rather than an explicit threat. This does not mean that the verses lack warnings or references to negative consequences. It simply means that the sentence structures do not follow the pattern of a direct, conditional threat.

Research Question 3: How do the findings of the speech act analysis relate to contemporary resistance discourse, particularly the Sacred Defense?

The qualitative findings of this study may provide a framework for a comparative study of the Qur'anic discourse on defensive jihad and contemporary resistance discourse. Within this framework, we can examine the clarification of rules and limits governing action, attention to the ethical consequences of conduct, and the promotion of hope and responsibility. More specifically, the three themes of "clarifying rules," "fostering hope," and "avoiding transgression" — which we derived from the analysis of speech acts in the selected verses — may serve as an analytical framework for investigating contemporary resistance discourse.

To understand these three themes better, we can look at Iran's Sacred Defense (1980-1988). Consider "Clarifying Rules" (an assertive act) first. Imam Khomeini always stressed the conditions under which defense could be considered legitimate in his messages and speeches. He stated: "We did not start the war; Saddam started it," and "The war will continue until we repel aggression and eradicate persecution." His religious ruling that prohibited the

use of chemical weapons and the killing of civilians was also a practical example of "Avoiding Transgression" (an expressive and directive act).

Now consider "Fostering Hope" (a commissive act). Commanders such as the late Martyr Hemmat and Martyr Kharrazi made several promises in their statements. These included the promise of ultimate victory, divine rewards for martyrs and war veterans, and the pledge of "Either victory or martyrdom." These promises correspond closely to commissive acts and the cultivation of hope in the Qur'anic verses. Verse 218 is an example, as it promises divine mercy to those who strive in Allah's cause. Hasani and Rezaei (2022 AD/1401 SH: 58) also observed in their analysis that the discourse of the Sacred Defense reflected the Qur'anic discourse on defensive jihad.

However, linking these themes to the Sacred Defense or to official resistance discourse requires independent analysis of historical documents, speeches, and authoritative texts. We should consider the examples we provided as proposals for comparative analysis. They are not empirical findings about the influence of the examined verses on contemporary discourse.

4.4. Examination of Opposing Views

This study supports a defensive interpretation. However, some contemporary exegetes read Verse 190 differently. For example, Sayyid Qutb, in his commentary Fī Ẓilāl al-Qurʾān (In the Shade of the Qur'an), interprets this verse in a way that extends the scope of the command to fight beyond confronting aggressors. Sayyid Quṭb (1991 AD/1412 AH: 1, 150) argues that the phrase "Those who fight you" is a descriptive qualification, not a condition. In other words, jihad is legitimate wherever an enemy exists. Ibn Taymīyyah also argues in some of his works that the scope of jihad extends beyond defense.

By contrast, this study favors the defensive interpretation for three reasons:

- The context of Verses 191-192 allows hostilities to cease if the enemy stops fighting.
- The qualification "But do not transgress" prohibits all forms of transgression.
- The majority of Shi'i and Sunni exegetes (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, Ṭabrisī, Makarem Shirazi, Ṭabarī, and Ibn ʿĀshūr) stress the defensive nature of this verse.

Nevertheless, preferring one exegetical interpretation over another must rest on a careful analysis of the textual context, an examination of the arguments for and against each interpretation, and an assessment of the textual evidence. Accordingly, we should not infer this conclusion solely from the classification of speech acts or from the absence of a particular type of act.

4.5. Summary of Findings

The qualitative analysis of the selected verses shows that each verse may serve several communicative functions at the same time. It also shows that a verse's anticipated perlocutionary act depends on the verse's context and content. The following table summarizes the findings of this analysis.

Table 2. Qualitative Analysis of the Verses

Verse(s)	Main Subject	Functions for Analysis	Anticipated Perlocutionary Act
190	Command to defend and prohibition of transgression	Assertive, directive, expressive	Defensive preparedness combined with restraint
191–192	Confronting the enemy and the possibility of ending hostilities	Directive, assertive, expressive	Awareness of the limits of confrontation and the possibility of ending hostilities
193–194	The objective of jihad and observance of inviolable sanctities	Assertive, directive	Understanding the rules governing confrontation and observing proportionality
216	The obligation to fight and its unpleasantness	Assertive and potentially directive	Reflection on duty and divine wisdom
217	Fighting during the sacred month, evaluation of actions, and the consequences of apostasy	Assertive, potentially directive, and warning	Reconsideration of value priorities and awareness of the consequences of actions
218	Faith, emigration, jihad, and hope for divine mercy	Assertive, expressive	Strengthening hope and spiritual motivation
244	Command to fight and reminder of divine knowledge	Directive, assertive	Strengthening responsibility and internal self-monitoring

Conclusion

Our analysis of the nine selected verses from Surah al-Baqarah, based on John Austin's threefold framework, shows that we cannot fully examine the verses on defensive jihad by considering only the literal meaning of the sentences.

We must also take into account the communicative force of the expressions and their potential consequences within the context of the verses. In the verses we examined, several functions can be analyzed. These include explaining the limits and rules of jihad, calling for action within the specified constraints, describing the consequences of actions, and emphasizing divine mercy and knowledge.

A key finding of this study is the importance of distinguishing among the locutionary, illocutionary, and anticipated perlocutionary acts. This distinction prevents us from conflating a verse's literal meaning with its communicative force or its potential effect on the audience. Applying the classification of illocutionary acts within Austin's framework allows us to describe the verses' linguistic functions more precisely. This is possible, however, only if we clearly define the coding criteria and units of analysis.

Regarding the frequency of different types of acts, we should draw a final quantitative conclusion only after we have reviewed the table and firmly established the coding units. Similarly, determining whether explicit threatening acts are present requires a clear distinction between direct, conditional threats and warnings or threats of punishment. This is particularly important because the concluding section of Verse 217 addresses the eschatological consequences of apostasy and we must assess it independently within this framework.

From a practical perspective, the qualitative findings of this study may provide a basis for examining contemporary defensive and resistance discourses. Future comparative studies can

investigate several themes: observance of the rules governing action, avoidance of transgression, responsibility, and hope for divine mercy. However, extending these findings to historical or contemporary discourses requires an independent analysis of relevant documents and evidence.

The study has several limitations. It focuses on nine verses from a single surah, the coding process involves interpretive aspects, and we did not empirically investigate actual audience responses. Consequently, the perlocutionary act we discuss refers to an anticipated or inferable consequence, not a demonstrated effect. We cannot generalize the findings from this limited sample to all Qur'anic verses on jihad without further research.

Future research should extend this framework to relevant verses in other surahs, such as Āli ʿImrān, al-Anfāl, and al-Tawbah. We also recommend that independent analysts evaluate the coding criteria and that researchers use empirical, audience-centered methods to investigate the actual effects of perlocutionary acts. Additionally, a comprehensive study of contemporary resistance discourse could further develop this line of inquiry.

In this study, the author alone conducted the research problem formulation, theoretical framework selection, data collection, verse analysis, speech act coding, examination of Shi'i and Sunni exegeses, and derivation of findings, using primary sources. The author used artificial intelligence exclusively for language editing, grammatical correction, and enhancing textual fluency. Artificial intelligence generated no data, references, analyses, or findings. The author assumes full scholarly responsibility for the article.

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