A Brief Review of Writing Processes in the Light of the Holy Quran

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Abstract: *This paper gives a brief review writing processes in the light of the holy Quran. The holy Quran is a Divine Book that is beyond any error. This position paper is an attempt to shed some light onto the writing strategies in the light of the holy Quran. Particularly it does not aim at rejecting or challenging the existing strategies but it is an initiation into the understanding of the Quran and its approach towards modern research of writing processes. For providing instance s of writing process in the holy Quran this paper presents the preface(Moqadama) of Tafheem-ul-Quran, written by "Allama Moududi a well know Islamic Scholar. This preface(Moqadama) of Tafheem-ul-Quran, has been presented to elaborate that the writing processes that are unanimously supported by the writing theorists and researchers are focused by the holy Quran as well. The very style of the holy Quran is recursive and non linear although it is not written by a man, it fits to the world very adequately.*
Keywords: *writing processes, rhetoric, teaching of writing, the Holy Quran, Allama*

Moududi,Tafheem-ul-Quran.

Introduction:

Writing as a skill is very complicated and since the notion researchers have been striving to find out a unanimous model for writing. Although it is very difficult to come to a single point but efforts are being made to reduce the frictions. There are a lot of factors that affect the process and product of writing both in L1, L2 and FL. A big treasure of research on these factors is available in Literature. Among these factors , writing strategies seem particularly remarkable because many researchers(Arndt,1987; Beare,2000; Raimes,1985; Victori,1995; Zamel,1982,) claim that it is the writing strategies that primarily separate successful from less successful writers(Congjun). Although there is a considerable body of research analyzing the way writers compose both in L1 and L2 (see Flower & Hayes, 1981; Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Sondra Perl,1987; Zamel,1983, Raimes,1985; Silva 1993; Cumming 1989, among others) effort has not been made either to validate or explore more strategies of composing from the Holy Quran which is a Divine Book . It is an ideal source of integrity and unanimity among diverse schools of thought. All of the Prophets have been the source of an ideal teaching and learning and they all addressed social, cognitive and individual needs of the people.

The Muslims believe the holy Quran to be the book of divine help and path for mankind, considering the original Arabic text to be as the final revelation of Allah Almighty. Muslims also view the Quran as the end of series of divine messages that started with those revealed to Adam, regarded in Islam as the first prophet, and continued with the Scrolls of Abraham, the Torah of Moses, the Psalms of David and the Gospels of Jesus.

Islamic outlook regarding these books is different from the Biblical views. To a Muslim, all of these books are divine revelations, devoid of any distortion by human error at the time they were revealed. They have all come from the same source, i.e., from a Divine, heavenly source. Muslims believe that the Quran, an expansion of these books that seals them and rules over them, was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in parts and not as whole. Thus, the Quran was revealed at intervals on different occasions during the Prophet's life because it addressed not only the issues related to faith but also other issues related to life events and incidents that serve as general declarations for Muslim life.

In the beginning, the Quran was communicated by the word of mouth; only toward the end of Muhammad's(PBUH) life it was documented by his companions. The text of the Quran was compiled in the time of Abu Bakr, the first caliph, and was standardized in the time of Uthman, the third caliph (Al-Sindi 2009).

"The present arrangement of the Qur'an is not the work of later generations, but was made by the Prophet under Allah's directions. Whenever a surah was revealed, the Prophet summoned his scribes, to whom he carefully dictated its contents, and instructed them where to place it in relation to the other Surahs. The Prophet followed the same order of Surahs and verses when reciting during ritual Prayer as on other occasions, and his Companions followed the same practice in memorizing the Qur'an. It is therefore a historical fact that the collection of the Qur'an came to an end on the very day that its revelation ceased. The One who was responsible for its revelation was also the One who fixed its arrangement. The one whose heart was the holder of the Qur'an was also responsible for arranging its order. This was far too important and too subtle a matter for anyone else to become involved in.

Since Prayers were obligatory for the Muslims from the very beginning of the Prophet's mission(It should be noted that while five daily Prayers were made obligatory several years after the Prophet was commissioned, Prayers were obligatory from the very beginning; not a single moment forgotten when Prayers, as such, were not obligatory in Islam) and the recitation of the Qur'an was an obligatory part of the Prayers, Muslims were committing the Qur'an to memory while its revelation was continued. Thus, as soon as a fragment of the Qur'an was revealed, it was memorized by some of the Companions. Hence the preservation of the Qur'an was not only dependent on its verses being inscribed on palm leaves, pieces of bone, leather and scraps of parchment - the material used by the Prophet's scribes for writing down Qur'anic verses. Instead those verses came to be inscribed upon scores, then hundreds, then thousands, then hundreds of thousands of human hearts, soon after they had been revealed, so that no scope was left for any devil to alter so much as one word of them.

When, after the death of Prophet, the storm of apostasy convulsed Arabia and the Companions had to plunge into bloody battles to suppress it, many Companions who had

memorized the Qur'an suffered martyrdom.This led 'Umar to appeal that the Qur'an ought to be preserved in writing, as well as orally. He therefore impressed the importance upon Abu Bakr. After slight hesitation, the later agreed and entrusted the task to Zayd ibn Thabit al-Ansari, who had worked as a scribe of the Prophet (For an account of the early history of the Qur'an see Subhi-al Salih, Mabahith fi 'Ulum al-Qur'an, Beriut, 1977, pp. 65 ff -Ed).

The procedure decided upon was to try and collect all written pieces of the Qur'an left behind by the Prophet, as well as those in the possession of the Companions (There are authentic traditions to the effect that several Companions had committed the entire Qur'an, or many parts of it, to writing during the lifetime of the Prophet. Especially mentioned in this connection are the following Companions of the Prophet: 'Uthman, 'Ali, 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ud, 'Abd Allah b. 'Amr al 'As, Salim the mawla of Hudhayfah, Mu'audh b. Jabal,Ubbay b. Ka'b, and Abu Zayd Qays b. al-Sakan.) When all this had been done, assistance was sought from those who had memorized the Qur'an. No verse was incorporated into the Qur'anic codex unless all three sources were found to be complete agreement, and every criterion of verification had been satisfied. Thus an authentic version of the Qur'an was prepared. It was kept in the custody of Hafsah (a wife of the Holy Prophet) and people were permitted to make copies of it and also to use it as the standard of comparison when rectifying the mistakes they might have made in writing down the Qur'an.

In different parts of Arabia and among its numerous tribes their existed a diversity of dialects. The Qur'an was revealed in the language spoken by the Quraysh of Makkah. Nevertheless, in the beginning, people of other areas and other tribes were permitted to recite it according to their own dialects and idioms, since it facilitated its recitation without affecting its substantive meaning. In course of time, in the wake of the conquest of a sizeable part of the world outside of the Arabian Peninsula, a large number of non-Arabs entered the fold of Islam. These developments affected the Arabic idiom and it was feared that the continuing use of various dialects in the recitation of the Qur'an might give rise to grave problems. It was possible, for instance, that someone hearing the Qur'an in unfamiliar dialect might pick a fight with the reciter, thinking that the later was deliberately distorting the Word of Allah. It was also possible that such differences might gradually lead to the tampering of the Qur'an itself. It was also not inconceivable that the hybridization of the Arabic language, due to the intermixture between the Arabs and non-Arabs, might lead people to introduce modifications into the Qur'anic text, thus impairing the grace of the Speech of Allah. As a result of such considerations, and after consultations with the Companions of the Prophet, 'Uthman decided that copies of the standard edition of the Qur'an, prepared earlier on the order of Abu Bakr, should be published, and that publication of the Qur'anic text in any other dialect or idiom should be proscribed.

The Qur'an that we possess today corresponds exactly to the edition which was prepared on the orders of Abu Bakr and copies of which were officially sent, on the orders of 'Uthman, to various cities and provinces. Several copies of this original edition of Qur'an still exist today. Anyone who entertains any doubt as to the authenticity of the Qur'an can satisfy himself by obtaining a copy of the Qur'an from any bookseller, say in West Africa, and then have a hafiz (memorizer of the Quran) recite it from memory, compare the two, and then compare these with the copies of the Qur'an published through the centuries since the time of 'Uthman. If he detects

any discrepancy, even in single letter or syllable, he should inform the whole world of his great discovery (Syed Abul A'ala Maududi 2006, Translated by Dr. Zafar Ishaq Ansari)".

After a brief review of the revelation, compilation and authenticity of the Quran it is clear now that this is not an ordinary reading book in sense it is just for reading but it is for deliberation and comprehending the principles it has. Also alike the other Divine books its preservation is in safe hands and the companions and the Muslim Ummah very consciously took measures to memorize it so it can be claimed that this the only book in the world that has been memorized on such a large scale.

Although most of the Muslims researchers believe that Quran is not a human book, little attention has-been paid to explore writing strategies described in Quran. Secondly Since now the theorists vary in defining process of writing. According to Faigley(1986) there are two major perspectives on composing, an expressive view including the work of "authentic voice "which is proposed by, William Coles,Peter Elbow,Ken Macrorie, and Donald Stewart and a cognitive view including the research of those who analyze composing processes such as Linda Flower, Bay Kroll, and Andrea Lunsford. Lee Odel and Dixie Goswamil(1985) edited a collection of essays in which they stressed upon the third perspective on composing they called it a social view. They proposed that processes of writing are social in character instead of originating within an individual. Finally the Marxist studies of literacy can be included as a fourth social position on composing (Faigley,1986). Marxist view of writing can be summed up as any act of writing or teaching of writing must be understood within a structure of power related to modes of production (Faigley, 1986).

Before I present a comparison and contrast of these four views on composing with the goal of presenting the Quranic views on the process of writing, it would be suitable to understand the underlying assumption of all of the existing views on writing. The underlying assumptions are summed up by Faigley(1986) in an article as " the study and teaching of writing should aspire to disciplinary status. According to Aronowitz and Giroux(1985,cited in Faigley,1986), the development of writing program as a part of a more general trend toward a theoretical and skill-oriented curriculum that regards teachers as civil servants who dispense pre-packaged lessons. This assessment truly illustrates the goal of education in the world driven by pragmatic approaches. In Islamic view any program that is to be introduced must not be confined to a limited trend that deprives one group from the right it deserves so it must be an embracing term covering theory, action and education. According to Aronowitz and Giroux(1985,cited in Faigley,1986),

> "We wish to suggest that schools, especially the colleges and universities, are now battlegrounds that may help to determine the shape of the future. The proliferation of composition programs at all levels of higher education may signal a new effort to extend the technicization process even further into humanaties. . . . The splitting of composition as a course from the study of literature, is an attack against critical thought and because it results in demoralization of teachers and their alienation from work"(52).

According to Faigley (1986) they allow for the possibility that teachers and students can resist domination and think critically, thus leaving open the possibility for historically aware theory and pedagogy of composing. But Faigley too ignores the Islamic thought that has a very prominent status in the world. If the techicization of composing process is mere related to Marxist theory and historical

perspective then what is the place of Islamic views and philosophy that emphasizes wisdom. According to the Islamic point of view education helps learners differentiating between good and bad and prepares them for resisting domination of the oppressive and think freely within the limits. This position paper is an attempt to shed some light onto the writing strategies in the light of the holy Quran. Particularly it does not aim at rejecting or challenging the explored strategies but an initiation into the understanding Quran and its approach towards modern research of writing processes.

"Allama Moududi(2006) asserted in the preface(Moqadam) of Tafheem-ul-Quran, We are accustomed to reading books that present information, ideas and arguments systematically and coherently. So when we embark on the study of the Qur'an, we expect that this book too will revolve around a definite subject, that the subject matter of the book too will be clearly defined at the beginning and will then be neatly divided into sections and chapters, after which discussion will proceed in a logical sequence. We likewise expect a separate and systematic arrangement of instruction and guidance for each of the various aspects of human life."

In above lines the characteristics of a well accustomed book are a true illustration of a linear model of writing and written product. A linear model of writing stresses upon three constant stages of writing: pre-writing, writing, and re-writing.

Allama further illustrates, "However, as soon as we open the Qur'an, we encounter a hitherto completely unfamiliar genre of literature. We notice that it embodies precepts of belief and conduct, moral directives, legal prescriptions, exhortations and admonition, censure and condemnation of evildoers, warning to the deniers of the Truth, good tidings and words of consolation and good cheer to those who have suffered for the sake of Allah, arguments and corroborative evidence in support of its basic message, allusions to anecdotes from the past and the signs of Allah visible in the universe. Moreover, these myriads subjects alternate without any apparent system; quite unlike the books to which we are accustomed, the Qur'an deals with the same subject over and over again, each time couched in a different phraseology.

The reader also encounters abrupt transitions between one subject matter and another. Audience and speaker constantly change as the message is directed now to one and now to another group of people. There is no trace of the familiar divisions into chapters and sections. Likewise, the treatment of different subjects is unique. If an historical subject is raised, the narrative does not follow the pattern familiar in historical accounts. In the discussion of philosophical or metaphysical questions, we miss the familiar expressions and terminology of formal logic and philosophy. Cultural and political matters, or questions pertaining to man's social and economic life, are discussed in a way very different from that usual in work of social sciences. Juristic principles and legal injunctions are elucidated, but quite differently from the manner of conventional works. When we come across an ethical instruction, we find its form entirely differs from anything to be found elsewhere in the literature of ethics. The reader may find all this so foreign to his notion of what a book should be that he may become so confused as to feel that the Qur'an is a piece of disorganised, incoherent and unsystematic writing, comprising nothing but a disjointed conglomeration of comments of varying lengths put together arbitrarily."

Before illustrating a consolidated summary of the writing strategies mentioned in this preface I have made an attempt to extend writing model of Flower and Hayes (1980a) onto the writing processes

described by the holy Quran. Flower & Hayes (1980a) developed a model of the writing process by observing college students and expert writers. They were seeking to describe features common to all writers and needed a way to identify the processes writers used and how these processes were organized in order to produce a text.

Flower & Hayes (1980a) argued that composing processes were best seen as cognitive processes and used cognitive theory to analyze the process of writing as a set of distinctive thinking activities. Thus, they studied writing as a process of discovering and problem-solving in which ideas are actively constructed to satisfy communication goals. Accordingly, writing involves using and coordinating different processes in order to satisfy goals that vary due to content, task, and audience. Flower & Hayes (1980a) looked at the processes which contribute to understanding the types of cognitive problem-solving processes used by mature writers.

The Flower and Hayes' model consists of three interacting components: the task environment(the writing assignment, text produced so far, physical environment, intended audience), the writing process(the sub processes of planning, including generating and organizing ideas, as well as setting goals; translating, which included generating written text from internal representations and reviewing, which included reading, evaluating and revising), and the writer's long-term memory(knowledge of topic, audience and gere). They proposed that these are all controlled by a "monitor" that determines when the writer moves from one process to another, thus, the writer is able to switch back and forth among processes. A great part of skill in writing is the ability to direct one's own composing process. This may also vary from writer to writer and from writing task to writing task.

Through their work, Flower & Hayes (1981a) identified four features of composing:

1. Writing consists of distinctive processes (planning, translating, and reviewing).
2. The processes of writing are hierarchically organized and embedded in other processes (processes are recursive).
3. Writing is a goal-directed process (global for affecting an audience and local that guided the act of writing).
4. Writers continually create new goals and sub goals.
   This theory considers writing a dynamic, recursive process of developing and editing text within various constraints.

The theory of Flower & Hayes (1980a) can be summarized that writers do not write in a linear fashion meaning that they do not typically write by planning first, then drafting, and finally revising. They used the described writer as a switchboard operator dealing simultaneously with the constraints of knowledge, written speech, and the rhetorical problem. These constraints shape the writers' goals, influencing both what they write and how they write it. Accordingly writers must juggle many constraints in order to satisfy the demands of the writing task, the audience, and their personal goals.

After a brief review of the writing process model summary of writing processes would help elaborating process of writing in the light of holy Quran:

Strategy	Description	Domain	Example
Repeating	Repetition of key words and phrases this is an activity which often seems to provide impetus to continue composing.(Arndts 1987)	Cognitive	Qur'an deals with the same subject over and over again, each time couched in a different phraseology. This [RHETORICALASPECT] explains the repetitions we encounter in the Qur'an. The interests of a message and a movement demand that during a particular stage emphasis should be placed only on those subjects which are appropriate at that stage, to the exclusion of matters pertaining to later stages. As a result, certain subjects may require continual emphasis for months or even years. On the other hand, contant repetition in the same manner becomes exhausting. Whenever a subject is repeated, it should therefore be expressed in different phraseology, in new forms and with stylistic variations so as to ensure that the ideas and beliefs being put over find their way into the hearts of the people.
Repetition as Purpose			At the same time, it was essential that the fundamental beliefs and principles on which the whole movement was based should always be kept fresh in people's minds; a necessity which dictated that they should always be repeated continuously through all stages of the movement.
Organizing	In this process the writer organizes the general ideas(Sasaki 2000)	Cognitive	Moreover, these myriads subjects alternate without any apparent system; quite unlike the books to which we are accustomed, the Qur'an deals with the same subject over and over again, each time couched in a different phraseology.(ORGANIZING) The reader also encounters abrupt transitions between one subject matter and another. There is no trace of the familiar divisions into chapters and sections. Likewise, the treatment of different subjects is unique. If an historical subject is raised, the narrative does not follow the pattern familiar in

			historical accounts.
Sense of readers	In this process the writer adjusts expression(s) to the reader(s) (Sasaki 2000)	Rhetorical	Audience and speaker constantly change as the message is directed now to one and now to another group of people. Insofar as it seeks to explain the ultimate causes of man's success or failure the subject of the Book is MAN.(AUDIENCE, INDEFINITE) The Qur'an also addressed itself to those outside the fold of Islam, to the People of the Book, the hypocrites, the unbelievers, the polytheists. Each group was addressed according to its own particular circumstances and attitudes. Sometimes the Qur'an invited them to the true faith with tenderness and delicacy; on other occasions, it rebuked and severely admonished them. It also warned them against, and threatened them with punishment from Allah. It attempted to make them take heed by drawing their attention to instructive historical events. In short, people were left with no valid reason for refusing the call of the Prophet.
Planning	The writer decides and finds a focus that what he should write(Andt 1987)	Cognitive	In the discussion of philosophical or metaphysical questions, we miss the familiar expressions and terminology of formal logic and philosophy. Cultural and political matters, or questions pertaining to man's social and economic life, are discussed in a way very different from that usual in work of social sciences. Juristic principles and legal injunctions are elucidated, but quite differently from the manner of conventional works. This is why the Qur'an mentions everything only to the extent and in the manner necessary for the purposes it seeks to serve. The Qur'an confines itself to essentials thereby omitting any irrelevant details. Thus, all its contents consistently revolve around this call.
Rhetorical	The writer refines the	Rhetorical	When we come across an ethical instruction, we find its [Qurans] form entirely differs from anything to

Refining	rhetorical aspect(s) of an expression so that it might not give the impression of repetition or in other words to create a sense of uniqueness in expression(Sasaki 2000).s		be found elsewhere in the literature of ethics. The reader may find all this so foreign to his notion of what a book should be that he may become so confused as to feel that the Qur'an is a piece of disorganized, incoherent and unsystematic writing, comprising nothing but a disjointed conglomeration of comments of varying lengths put together arbitrarily.
Canons of Rhetorical Mechanics	The writer uses words that directly appeal the reader that is not any oration but a natural style of the writer.	Rhetorical	Moreover, the various fragments of the Qur'an which were revealed in harmony with the growth of Islamic movement were not published in the form of written treatises, but were spread orally. Their style, therefore, bore an oratorical flavour rather than the characteristics of literary composition. Furthermore, these orations were delivered by one whose task meant he had to appeal simultaneously to the mind, to the heart and emotions, to the people of different mental levels and dispositions. He had to revolutionize people's thinking, to arouse in them a storm of noble emotions in support of his cause, to persuade his Companions and inspire them with devotion and zeal, and with the desire to improve and reform their lives. He had to raise their morale and steel their determination, turn enemies into friends and opponents into admirers, disarm those out to oppose his message and show their position to be morally untenable. In short, he had to do everything necessary to carry out his movement through to a successful conclusion. Orations revealed in conformity with the requirement of a message and movement will inevitably have a style different from that of a professional lecture.

Genre Awareness	The writer knows about the several types of composition.	Rhetorical	It[Quran] embodies precepts of belief and conduct, moral directives, legal prescriptions……..,
GLOBAL PLANNING	The writer plans his goals on broad level and makes efforts to accomplish those set goals.	Meta-Cognitive	If we study the Qur'an with these facts in mind it is bound to strike us that the Qur'an does not deviate one iota from its main subject, its central theme and its basic objective. All the various themes occurring in the Qur'an are related to the central theme; just as beads of different colour may be strung together to form a necklace
Clarification	The writer leaves not a single point un-covered and described.		The Qur'an speaks of the structure of the heavens and the earth and of man, refers to the signs of reality in the various phenomena of the universe, relates anecdotes of bygone nations, criticizes the beliefs, morals and deeds of different people, elucidates supernatural truths and discusses many other things besides.
Elaboration	The writer leaves not a single point un-covered and described.	Rhetorical	All this the Qur'an does, not in order to provide instruction in physics, history, philosophy or any other particular branch of knowledge, but rather to remove the misconceptions people have about reality and to make that reality manifest them.
Rhetorical Situation	This is the problem writer efforts to solve.	Rhetorical	Allah chose a man in Makkah to serve as His Messenger and asked him to preach His message, starting in its own city (Makkah) and with his own tribe (Quraysh). At this initial stage, instructions were confined to what was necessary at this particular juncture of the mission.
Rhetorical place	This is the problem writer efforts to solve.	Rhetorical	For thirteen years the Islamic movement strives in Makkah. It then obtained, in Madina, a haven of refuge in which to concentrate its followers and its strength. The Prophet's movement now centered in its third stage. During this stage, circumstances changed drastically. The Muslim Community succeeded in establishing a fully-fledged state; its creation was followed by prolonged armed conflict with the

			representatives of the ancient Ignorance of Arabia. The community also encountered followers of the former Prophets, i.e. Jews and Christians. An additional problem was that hypocrites began to join the fold of Muslim community; their machinations needed to be resisted. After a severe struggle, lasting ten years, the Islamic movement reached a high point of achievement when the entire Arabian peninsula came under its sway and the door was open to the world-wide preaching and reform. This stage, like the preceding one, passed through various phases each of which had its peculiar problems and demands.
			It was in the context of these problems that Allah continued to reveal messages to the Prophet. At times these messages were couched in the form of fiery speeches; at other times they were characterized by the grandeur and stateliness of majestic proclamations and ordinances. At times they had the air of instructions from a teacher; at others, the style of preaching of reformer. These messages explained how a healthy society, state and civilization could be established and the principles on which the various aspects of human life should be based.
Translating	The writer makes effort to generate text pure and stylistic.	Cognitive	Short verses, couched in language of uncommon grace and power, and clothed in a literary style suited to the taste and the temperament of the people to whom they were originally addressed, and whose hearts they were meant to penetrate. The rhythm, melody and vitality of these verses drew rapt attention, as such were their stylistic grace and charm that people began to recite them involuntarily.
Clarification: Hypothesizing,	The writer leaves not a single point un-	Rhetorical	The local color of these early messages in conspicuous, for while the truth s they contained were universal, the arguments and illustrations used

Defining Terms, Comparing	covered and described.		to elucidate them were drawn from the immediate environment familiar to the first listeners. Allusions were made to their history and traditions and to the visible traces of the past which had crept into the beliefs, and into the moral and social life of Arabia.
Purpose	The writer decided the reader for whom he/she intends to compose.	Rhetorical	All this was calculated to enhance the appeal the message held for its immediate audience. In short, they were being trained to serve as the successors of the mission of the Prophet, with the task of carrying on the message of Islam and bringing about the reform in human life.
Rationalizing Appropriate Format	The writer organizes the produced text in a well formed, coherent organization.	Cognitive	The different parts of the Qur'an were revealed step by step according to the multifarious, changing needs and requirements of the Islamic movement during these stages. It therefore, could not possibly possess the kind of coherence and systematic sequence expected of doctoral dissertation.

Conclusion

The writing strategies discussed in the holy Quran have opened a debate for the initiation into the understanding of the Quran and its approach towards modern research of writing processes. Generally while reading the Holy Quran we assume that it presents information, ideas and arguments systematically and coherently. As usual books are divided in chapters and sections under specific headings and sub-headings. But the study of the Qur'an exposes that writing is a recursive and non-linear process and the writer does not revolve around a definite pattern, for example a defined beginning, sections and chapters, after which discussion will proceed in a logical sequence . Through the literature and the study of the Quran I have associated the teachings of the holy book to support the idea that the writers cycle back and forth while composing. Likewise each and every verse of the Holy Quran is described in a separate individual context that also supports the ideal process.

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