Abstract: This paper aims to explain a theoretical concept of al-ḥaml ‘alā al-ma’na‘ or muru‘āt al-ma’na‘ to evidence a correlation between meanings and texts. It states that text should be inferior to the meaning. Based on our inquiry, verbs should be formed in the feminine (mu’annath) in two situations: first, if verbs consist of ism zābir (visible noun), mu’annath ḥaqiqi (actual feminine), and no texts are bridging the verb. Second, if verbs consist of ism mustaṭr (invisible noun) with which the subject (ṣā‘il) is in actual feminine or allegorical feminine (mu’annath majāzī). Thus, the masculine or feminine form should be based on their respective meaning. The careless interpretation in constructing meaning may lead to an error understanding, which is contrary to its original meaning. To avoid this, some approaches are needed, such as semantics, ma‘ani, siyaq al-kalām, and asbāb al-nuzūl.

Keywords: Meaning, Text, Ḥaqiqi, Majāzī, Muru‘āt al-ma’na‘.


Kata Kunci: Makna, Teks, Ḥaqiqi, Majāzī, Muru‘āt al-ma’na‘.
Introduction

Language is a medium of delivering a message from the speaker to the interlocutor. The receiver could understand the meaning of the message through a medium, which is the language. Among many aspects of being prominently examined in the study of texts (lafz) are symbols (semiotics) and meaning. The primary principle in the study of the text is that symbols should be inferior to the meaning. Therefore, the task of the reader is to figure out the meaning behind semiotic features and the intended meaning of the texts.

The Qur'anic verses are ‘ilahīya codes,’ entailing messages that guide humankind. The accuracy of the instrument used to unveil the meaning will lead the reader to uncover the essence of the Qur’an. On the other hand, the absence of adequate knowledge will lead the reader to fail to grasp the meaning of the text. Thus, one will trap in the subjective justification toward the meaning. As for the Qur’an is a divine message for humankind (the prophet and his people), and it uses language as a medium, a detecting tool to understand the intended divine meaning is needed. The interaction between the Qur’anic language and human understanding requires adequate knowledge of the language. The act of reading to the Qur’an requires comprehending its grammatical structures, understanding its principles, and mastering of its secrets along with all its consequences. Linguistics analysis is inevitable because the Qur’an is revealed in Arabic, as stated in the Q.S. Yusuf [12]:2. In this sense, Arabic means the language, not the tribe, and its ethnicity, although the Arabian states are the first locus of Islamic transmission. Therefore, one cannot interpret it unless he/she has a strong background knowledge of the language. The study of Islamic linguistics is universal and flexible, entailing both the theory and

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5 Mardan, Alquran: Sebuah Pengantar Memahami Alquran Secara Utuh (Makassar: CV. Berkah Utami, 2009), 254.
practice, although it is bound to the principles based on the valid and genuine Qur’anic verses and Hadith.\(^6\)

The texts of the Qur’an are dependent on the meaning intended by God. A certain text can be categorized into the form of mudhakkar (masculine) as it accords with the intended meaning. In other places, the texts are usually used beyond the normal Arabic structure because God has a certain intended meaning that is beyond the understanding of the commoners. In this way, the form of masculine sometimes refers to the form of the feminine (mu’annath), or vice versa. Also, the form of ḥaqiqī (the true meaning) sometimes used to entail majażī meaning (metaphor). In certain cases, to show an enormous masculine meaning, the Qur’ans sometimes employs feminine forms.

On the other hand, the Qur’an uses a masculine form to refer to a small number of feminine words. In this regard, the interpreter should have adequate linguistic knowledge to analyze these unusual forms. The classical scholars of nahw (grammarian), however, did not delineate for why the feminine word is allowed to turn into masculine or vice versa. Otherwise, modern Arabic experts strive to explain this issue.

To unveil the meaning of the Qur’anic texts, one ideally possesses the ability in Arabic linguistic competence. The theoretical principle of Arabic, which states: texts should be based on the meaning, is a relevant foundation to deal with the lexical problems in the Qur’anic texts. Although the text is home to meaning, the latter should not be inferior to the former. The search for meaning should reflect on the texts because the true meaning of the revelation has been inherent in the texts as its home. Therefore, a text sometimes goes beyond its normal pattern because the meaning sometimes determines its form. The task of the interpreter is then to examine the texts by grounding in the principles of the science of nahw, which is known as al-ḥamal ‘alā al-ma‘nā or murrā‘at al-ma‘nā. This principle intends to assert that certain texts should be below and inferior to

their meaning. On this principle as well, the interpreters should regard
them while understanding the meaning of the Qur'anic verses.
Otherwise, it will lead to a misinterpretation of the text.

This study anchored in the content analysis method which
focuses on analyzing relevant documents to involve the analysis of
Qur'anic verses, nahw, and relevant texts of exegesis. This study
examines the plural noun (ism) by drawing on the perspective of
classical and contemporary Arabic grammarians. The objects of the
research are the Qur'anic texts with plural noun structure, singular
form (mufrad), the masculine form which refers to feminine, and vice
versa. The texts are then navigated through Al-Mu'jam al-Mufabras li
Alfāz al-Qur'ān al-Karīm9, whose textual meaning is interpreted using
semantics. Subsequently, it also deals with Mu'jam Maqāyīs al-Lughab
al-'Arabīyah10 with several methods: first, by identifying the texts of
masculine nouns referring to the meaning of feminine and vice versa,
and the meaning of muqāṣa and ḥaqīqī. Second, by elaborating on
the meaning under the corridor of the science of exegesis. Third,
by referring them to the theories of nahw (grammar). Fourth, by paying
attention to the explanation of exegetes who explain the texts through
the syntactic approach of Arabic, such as siyāq al-kalām, inter-relationship
(munāsabah)11, semantics, and asbāb al-nuzūl.

Scholars’ View

There are several relevant studies regarding the syntactic
structure of Arabic and the Qur'ān, such as that of 'Abd al-Salām,
Madkhal Islāmī ilā al-Lughawīyat al-'Ammah12, which delineates Islamic
approach for the linguistic studies. Āḥmad Makki al-Anṣāri authoring
Nazarīyat al-Nahw al-Qur'ānī13 who explains the syntactic structure of
the Qur'ān and reveals that how high the linguistic structure of the

8Lexy Moleong, Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif (Bandung: Renika Cipta, 1990), 23; Crippan Dot, Analisis Isi: Pengantar dan Metodologi, Trans: Farid Wajdi (Jakarta: CV
10Abū al-Ḥusayn Āḥmad b. Fāris b. Zakaryā, Mu'jam Maqāyīs al-Lughab, ed. 'Abd al-
Salām Muḥammad Hārūn (Mesir: Dār al-Fikr), 91.
11Muhammad Yusuf, Horizon Kajian Alquran: Metode dan Pendekatan (Makassar:
12'Abd al-Salām, Madkhal Islāmī, 18.
13Āḥmad Makki al-Anṣāri, Nazarīyat al-Nahw al-Qur'ānī (Jeddah: Dār al-Qiblah li al-
Thaqāfah al-Islāmīyah, 1984).
Qur’an is. Lubna Abd. Rahman, Arnida A. Bakar, and Wan Azura Wan Ahmad the authors of *Mengenali Bahasa Arab Melalui al-Qur’an* (understanding Arabic through Qur’an), strengthens the assertion that understanding the language of the Qur’an, particularly its grammar, will ease one’s understanding of Arabic. Abū Muhammad ‘Abd Allāh Jamāl al-Dīn al-Anṣārī b. Hishām, *Sharḥ Shudhūr al-Dhahab fī Ma’rifat Kālām al-‘Arab*15. Kamarul Shukri Mat16, the author of *Perkembangan Awal Nahu Arab*, opines that there has been a development in the science of *Naḥw*.

There had been several points outlined by the classical experts of Arabic, which drives contemporary syntactic experts to struggle and establish a theoretical foundation. Hakim Zainal Fardiyuz Abdul Mutalib, the author of *Analisis Sintaksis Penggunaan Kata Nama Jamak dalam al-Qur’an*17, found the chapter of plural nouns (*ism al-jam‘*), which has not been discussed by a great number of *naḥw* experts. There has been a dearth of scientific articles discussing this issue specifically, either in the old books or the contemporary ones. Besides, the presence of plural nouns (*ism al-jam‘*) in Arabic is scanty, some stated explicitly and implicitly in the Qur’an. Those that are explicitly mentioned in the Qur’an are the words “qawm, ummah, and khasm”. On the other hand, the implicitly stated in the Qur’an is the word “jaysh”.

In the late 19th century, Christoph Luxemberg wrote a book entitled *Die Syrisch-Aramaische Lesart des Koran: eine Entschlüsselung der Koransprache* (translated into English entitled *The Syro-Aramaic Reading of the Koran: A Contribution to the Decoding of the Language of the Koran*). This book, as has been stated by the author, is the continuity of the analysis model coined by Abraham Geiger and other scholars who attempted to prove that the Qur’an derives from the teachings of the previous holy books. Philip K. Hitti, in his book *History of The Arabs* further points out that the Islamic holy book does not only entail the

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teachings of the previous holy book. Similarly, W. Montgomery Watt and H.A.R. Gibb assert that the background of the Islamic emergence of the Qur’an is the Arabic milieu, despite many elements of Judeo-Christian absorbed in its formation and development.

Since the 20th century, the rapid development of linguistics has yielded discourse analyses that require justification proven by strong scientific evidence. In this century, studies were done by orientalists who moved to embrace a phenomenological approach in reaction to the previous historical approach. W. Brade Kristenses opines that the historical approach cannot understand the absolute characteristics of religion, as for the existing gap between the researcher and the objects investigated that makes religious teachings unidentifiable as contemplated by its believers. Some non-Muslim scholars draw on phenomenological approach like Charles J. Adams who stated that the Qur’an is a divine revelation of God received by Muhammad; William A. Graham who asserts that Qur’an is divine revelation, not written and documented; and Marcel A. Boisard who opines that the Qur’an is a reminder for all human. The Qur’an is a final expression intended by God that assures the authenticity and truth of the previous revelation, yet does not ensure its application due to the expiry.

The use of a phenomenological approach for the study of the Qur’an relatively generates positive outcomes. It is different from a historical approach that argued that the Qur’an is a creative product of Muhammad. The current widely adopted and novel approach is linguistical structuralism. There has been a dearth of research employing this approach. Two prominent scholars deploying this approach include Toshihiko Izutsu (1914-1933) and Richards C. Martin. The complexity of the Qur’anic language causes many scholars to fail to generate a trustworthy research tradition. The uniqueness of the Qur’anic language has made its analysts amazed, even to its adherent.

Arabic syntactic experts have discussed and set rules that require verbs (fi’l) to operate in the feminine in two circumstances: first, if the verbs are composed of ism zāhir (visible noun), mu’annath

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19 Muhammad Marwan Ismail & Wan Moharani Mohammad, Kajian Tata Bahasa Arab Dahulu dan Sekarang (Nila: Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia, 2008), 17.
and no pronunciation that connects the verbs. Secondly, if the verbs consist of *ism musta‘fir* (hidden noun), and the subject (*fa‘il*) serves as both *mu‘annath ḥaqiqi* and *mu‘annath ma‘ajiz*. Other than these two states, verbs can be in feminine or masculine form. If the feminine form refers to mean as masculine. It is known as the theory of *al-ḥamāl ‘alā al-ma‘nā* or *muw‘āt al-ma‘nā*, which means a certain text is directed toward its meaning. This perspective explains that meaning determines its symbols. Certain pronunciation is formalized into feminine because its meaning indicates its plural form. On the other hand, it is changed into masculine because it refers to a small number. A similar case is also found in the Qur’an.

Apart from al-Sāmūrāī, ‘Aẓīzah Fawwāl Babsī also writes *Al-Mu‘jam al-Mufassal fi al-Nahw al-‘Arabi* discussing the principles of grammatical Arabic. The syntactic experts have successfully elaborated them in practice. However, they have not explained why the texts entailing feminine often use verbs in the form of masculine, which is conversely often found in the Qur’an. Nawwāf b. Jazā al-Ḥarīthī authoring *Al-Asmā‘ al-Āmilah ‘Amal al-Fi‘l: Dirāsah Nahwīyah* discusses the syntactic problems, which focuses on describing the nouns followed by verbs. The book almost delineates the theory of *taḥammul ‘alā al-ma‘nā*, yet because it focuses on the study of Arabic grammar, the cases in the Qur’an are not discussed. Concerning the arguments in the case of masculine, which serve as feminine and vice versa, these were not explained because the author focused on the nouns that function as verbs (*‘amal al-fi‘l*). Besides, the *usūlî* scholars employ the linguistic rules as their tool of analysis in understanding law in the Qur’an. A book entitled *Al-Baḥth al-Nahw ‘ind al-Uṣūlīyīn* authored by Muṣṭafā Jamāl al-Dīn discusses the paramount

22Ibid.
importance of Arabic knowledge in comprehending the Islamic jurisprudence. This book is an attempt to respond to the need; however, with its important role, it does not point out how the rules of the language or the principles of *al-tahammul 'alā al-ma'na* are applied in its texts and variation.

Some Qur’anic exegesis, which focuses on linguistics, has also begun to delineate some linguistic bias as though it violated the normal principles. Due to the absence of the strong epistemological ground of Arabic *al-tahammul 'alā al-ma'na*, the explanation is not completed. Now that the studies of the Qur’an, including its linguistics rules have seen an exponential increase performed by *nahw* experts on the Qur’an. Al-Anṣārī (1984) in his book, *Nāzarīyat al-Nahw al-Qur’ānī*, presents a theory of *nahw* that focuses on the Qur’anic grammar. The studies concern Arabic *nahw* lies in the premise that the Qur’an also adds another value to the field of *nahw* that consequently yields perfect *nahw* principles with exclusive syntactic-structure verses. The study on the plural names is a part of previous studies pertinent to the Qur’anic *nahw* by previous scholars.

Plural words are for plural meanings, and singular (*mufrad*) words are for singular meanings. However, behind the general linguistic rules, there are exceptions with their collocation to put in the texts. Every text in the Qur’an has its message and meaning according to the context. To put precisely and proportionally the meaning of each Qur’anic recitation, the exegetes (*mufassir*) needs social and linguistic knowledge background in understanding its meaning. The readers should embrace several aspects before constructing the meaning of each verse, such as linguistic structures, socio-economic background, and context. *Mufassir* acts as a detector to understand the text as a sign of meaning (semiotics). The text acts as a symbol of meaning, which requires readers’ semiotic knowledge to understand the whole meaning. As a detector, the interpreter is required to understand the semiotic resources associated with the context in order to interpret the meaning from the text. The

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28 Mutalib, “Analisis Sintaksis”. 
masculine and feminine symbols of the text have their own messages and meanings in each context of their usage in the Qur’an.

**The Feminine Words Serves as Masculine**

The view of al-Sāmurrāʾī, which explains that if the text formed in feminine and followed by a verb in a masculine, the word should be in the masculine. In other words, the text should be inferior to meaning. It appears in the Qur’an, for example, in the word the ضلالة (al-ḍalālah): as in surah al-A’raf [7]: 30, Farqan badā wa farqan ḥaqqa ‘alayhim al-ḍalālah ittakhdhibū al-shayātin alwliya wa yakhsbawn annabum muhtadin; also in surah al-Nahl [16]:36, wa laqad ba’athnā fī kull ummat rasūlan an ‘inda Allāh wa ijanihibi al-taghūt fa minhum man bada Allāh wa minhum man ḥaqqat ‘alayh al-ḍalālah fasirū fī al-arḍ fa unzūrū kayf kāna ‘aqibat al-mukadhdhibīn. Related to both verses above, the word حق (ḥaqqa) is in the form of the masculine in surah al-A’raf verse 30, while in surah al-Naḥl the word is in the form of feminine, marked with tāʾ ta’ni, حق (ḥaqqa). It shows that once the word ضلالة (al-ḍalālah) mentioned referring on the العذاب (al-‘adab), the verbs should be in the form of the masculine. In this, the word ضلالة refers to the context of the hereafter, not the life in the earth. It is different from the case of the verb حق (ḥaqqa), which signifies its original meaning, which is a strayed way (in the world). In this, the word ضلالة shows a misguided process in the world, not in the hereafter. Therefore, once the word denotes its original meaning, it refers to the form of the feminine; and when the word connotes other than its original meaning, it should be in the form of the masculine.

As like the word “al-ḍalālah”, the word العاقبة (al-‘aqibah) used in the Qur’an both in the form of masculine and feminine. If the word al-‘aqibah used in the form of masculine, then the meaning refers to its allegorical meaning, that is العذاب (al-‘adab). This type of meaning is found in the Qur’an for 12 times, as like in surah al-Anām [6]:11, qul šīrū fī al-arḍ thumn unzūrū kayf kāna ‘aqibat al-mukadhdhibīn; Surah Yunus [10]:73, fa kadhdhabū faunajaynāh wa man ma’ab fī al-fa’ilka wa ja’amānim khalatū fī wa aghbraqua wa bi al-ladhūn kadhdhabū ayātīna fa unzūr kayf kāna ‘aqibat al-mundhrīn; Surah al-A’raf [7]:83, wa amīnā ‘alayhim matara fa unzūr kayf kāna ‘aqibat al-mujrimīn;

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Muhammad Yusuf

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Surah al-Ṣaffat [37]:73, Şa unzur kayf kāna ‘aqībat al-mundharīn. The word العاقبة, which is used in the form of masculine كان (kāna), refers to the meaning العذاب (al-‘adhab): torment in the hereafter, as the word means metaphorical (majażā) in its usage.

It is different from the case if the word العاقبة refers to another metaphorical meaning that is the الجنة (paradise), which then designate the form of feminine. The use of it is found in several verses of the Qur’ān, including surah al-Qaṣaṣ [28]:37 and surah al-Anām [6]:135. In surah al-Qaṣaṣ, it says: wa qāla Mūsā rabbī a’lam bi man jā‘a bi al-budā min ‘indih wa man takūn labū ‘aqībat al-dār innabū la yuṣfih al-zālimūn. The verb تكون (takūn) is in the form of the feminine, which means heaven, not the torture. The similar case is also found in the words of Allāh in surah al-Anām verse 135: qul ya qawm i’malū ‘ala makānanatikum innāminil fasawf ta’lamūn man takūn labū ‘aqībat al-dār innabū la yuṣfih al-zālimūn. The verb تكون (takūn) in this verse is in the feminine form to mean as the heaven, not the hell.

In addition to the example in the two verses above, there are several cases when the text is feminine, and the intended meaning can be both masculine and feminine. For example the word الصلاة (prayer) in surah al-Anfāl [8]:35, wa mā kāna ṣalātubum ‘ind al-bayt ilā nukā‘an wa ṣuṣdīyāh fa dīnqū al-‘dhab bimā kunūm takfurūn. The word الصلاة (ṣalāḥ) in this verse denotes a masculine form, even though the pronunciation is in the form of the feminine: the verbs كان is in the masculine form, whereas the noun is in feminine, ṣalāḥ. It happens because what is meant by الصلاة is not prayer in general. The word الصلاة means صفهر مكايا (whistles) and also mean تصديقة which means دعاء (applause). This word, الصلاة, can also mean طواف (tawāf) or صفق (prayer). The words صفهر (whistle), تصديقة (applause), and طواف (tawāf) are all in the form of the masculine. It is an argument for why the word signifies the form of the masculine. And it also proves the theory that “the meaning determines the form of text.”

The word الصلاة can also mean طواف (tawāf). As for Ibrahim once ever prayed “O our Lord, verily I have placed a portion of my descendants in a valley that has no plants near the House of You (Bayt Allāh) to be respected, O our Lord, (that is) so that they establish prayer (QS. Ibrahim [14]: 37).” Based on the text, the word الصلاة can refers to the meaning of prayer (du‘ā) and tawāf, as the practice of Muslims pilgrimage in Mecca (Kaaba) is to perform
prayers (salāb), praying (du‘a’), and tawfî around the Ka`ba. As Muslims can perform prayer anywhere and perform tawfî only in Mecca. Thus, the word الصلاة in the text above specifically means a tawfî as the context of this verse refers to the Ka`ba.

The word صلاة can also mean as دعاء (prayer), for example, the word of God in surah al-Tawbah [9]:103, salātak sakanun labum, wa Allāh samī ‘alim. The word salāb in this verse means du‘a’ (prayer). It is clear from the use of the word sakan (سکن) as khabar in the form of masculine⁴⁰, which follows the feminine word of صلاة as its noun. As the word refers to mean as دعاء, and it is formed in the masculine, thus it determines the text to be masculine in its form, سکن, although the word salāb formed in the feminine.

Besides, a similar case also happens in the word “أية.” It sometimes signifies as both masculine and feminine. The case which the word أية serves as masculine is like the word of Allāh in Surah Ālī ‘Imrān [3]: 13, qad kāna lakum āyat fī jātayn itqaqātā fiat tuqātil fī sabīl Allāh wa ukhrā kāfirat yaraamahum mithlayhum ra’y al-‘ayn wa Allāh yu’ayid bi nasrībī man yasha’ inna fī dhālik la ‘ibrat li ‘lī al-abṣār. The word أية in verse serves as masculine, identified with the word كان which is in the form of the masculine. This verb formed as masculine because the word أية أية in this text means as أية أية والبرهان الدليل (arguments), which regarded as masculine. A different case occurred when the word أية أية serves as feminine, as like in Surah al-An’ām [6]:4, wa mā ta‘īhim min āyat min āyat rabbibim illā kānū ‘anbā mu’ridūn. In this verse, the word أية أية serves as feminine due to its meaning القرآنية الآية, which is feminine words, and therefore the verb تأتي تأتي is used. The use of which is feminine is not because the word أية أية serves as the subject, but as the meaning signifies القرآنية الآية (al-āyat al-qur’ānīyyah), thus it should also refer to the feminine form.

In line with the case above, it was found also in the word of God. In surah al-An’ām [6]:109, la‘īn ja‘āthum āyat layu’minunna bihā. In this verse, the word أية أية serves as feminine, because it means المعجزة (miracle); therefore, the verb جاءت used in the form of feminine. The similar case occurs in Surah al-An’ām [6]: 124, wa idhā ja‘āthum āyat qālū lan nu‘min ḥattā nu‘tā mitbla mā ʿitiya rasūl Allāh Allāh a’lam bayth

yaj‘al risālatah saynūb al-ladīn ajramū saghār ‘ind Allāh wa ‘adhib shādid bīmā kānū yamkūrin. In this verse, the word أية is used also as feminine, because it contains the meaning of حجة (argument); therefore, the verb جاءت serves as feminine.

Based on the description above, the word أية in both singular and plural forms has various meanings based on their respective contexts. Understanding the context of the discussion of verses could help the reader to understand the meanings that lie within the texts. In this regard, two contexts are important to note in constructing meaning. First, the external context of the texts which could be in particular (micro) and universal (macro). Second, the internal context of semiotic features that connect between texts, contexts, and the structure of sentences. The first context is close to the term of asbab al-nuzūl, while the second is close to the term of munāsabat. The asbab al-nuzūl requires a historical approach, while the latter requires a linguistic approach, especially on the siyāq al-kālam (the context of the conversation) and linguistic signs (semantics).

The Masculine Words Serve as Feminine

Sometimes, the feminine is formed in the Qur‘an when the meaning shows a large quantity, while the masculine is formed when the meaning has less in number. Al-Samurra‘ī says, كان إذا التأنيث يغلب العدد في كثرة الجمع من المراد (Generally mu‘annath occurs when it signifies a large quantity). The form, for instance, occurs in the words of Allah in surah al-Hujurat [49]: 14: qālat al-a‘rāb āmānā. In this verse, the verb is in the form of feminine and marks with تا‘ ta’nīth (feminine feature). The verb قالت is written in the form of feminine because it is followed by the word الأعراب. The word al-a‘rāb shows the meaning of a large number that is an invisible subject (mahdhu‘f) to mean as جماعة (jamā‘ab). Therefore, the word qāla is formed in feminine to be qālat. Muḥammad b. Yazīd explains that the letter تا‘ (ت) means تأنيث (ta’nīth al-jamā‘ab). Thus, the word qālat al-a‘rāb āmānā contains the meaning qālat jamā‘at al-a‘rāb āmānā. As the theory says when the word signifies a large number of quantity thus, in this context, it refers to the form of feminine.

31Al-Samurra‘ī, Ma‘ānī al-Nahw, 136.
Historically, the revelation of the verse related to the Bedouin people who came to the Prophet to get alms by signifying a word that indicates a large number of it. According to al-Wāhidī (d. 468 H.), the verse descended when a group of Bani Asad b. Khuzaymah arrived in Medina during the dry season. They declared their creed in the absence of their true faith inside their hearts. They came to the Prophet and said, “we come to you, Messenger of Allah, with a heavy burden with our family. We also do not fight you like Banu Fulan who fight, so give us alms”\footnote{Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī b. ʿAḥmad al-Wāhidī, Astabāt Nuzūl al-Qurʾān, ed. Kamāl Bāshūnī Zaghlūl (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyah, 1999), 225.}. They constantly mention it. Therefore, the verse descends to respond to the situation and give guidance for the Prophet to be proportionate to them. Among other considerations are:1) a large number of people in the request of the assistance could have an impact on the economic burden; 2) if a large number of people come to claim a faith, it should be clarified. Therefore, to help in the name of humanity needs some consideration of caution for its real circumstances.

**Plural Masculine to Mean as Small Numbers**

On the contrary, the verb form will be put into masculine when feminine are used to describe a small quantity. For example, in Surah Yūsuf: 30: \textit{wa qaḍa niswāt fī al-madīnāt}. In this verse, the verb, \\textit{قَالَ}, is in the form of masculine because it doesn’t end with \\textit{ta’ ta’ni}. While in the Arabic rules it says a verb must be in feminine if it fulfills three conditions, as a rule: ً يَجْلَبُ التَّذِكِيرُ إِذَا كَانَ الْمَقْصُودُ بِالجَمْعِ قَلْةَ الْعَدْدِ (the form should be in masculine if the plural to mean as a small number). In this case, the word \\textit{نَسْوَةٌ} means a small number of women. According to the rules of Arabic, the word should be written in feminine as it describes in the form of feminine. However, the intended meaning of the word \\textit{نَسْوَةٌ} implied a few numbers of women, not in big number, who pointed Zulayḥā to persuade Yūsuf in having sexual intercourse when her husband was not at home. Therefore, the word \\textit{قَالَ} is then formed in the masculine. The sentence َوَقَالَ نَسْوَةٌ فِي المدينةِ (and the women in the city said) includes the wives of the officials and prominent person in that city. The sentence means that they do protest against the actions of al-ʿAzīz’s wife, because al-ʿAzīz
was being a minister in the city and seemed to do nothing to his wife.

In Surah al-Mumtaḥanah [60]:10, *īdāhā jā‘akum al-mu‘minat mubajirat fa intaḥināhunn*, the verse shows that the verb جاء which is formed in masculine even though the subject has a clear identity of the feminine. The word *mu‘minat* signifies مهاجرات (migrant women) in a small number, which then implies to put the word جاء in masculine form. Here, the verb جاء which followed by the word *مهاجرات* could function as a tool of detection to understand that the subject is in plural form but not in big amounts.

On the other hand, the verb جاء is formed in feminine, جاءت, although the subject is in the masculine. This happens, for example, in surah al-A’rafa [7]:43, *laqad ja‘at rusulu rabbīnā bi al-ḥaqq*. In this case, the word رسل denotes the meaning of a large number of the apostles. It seems that this verse speaks on all messengers beginning from Adam to Muhammad. It can also be interpreted as a group of apostles, لَقد جَاءَت طَائْفَةٌ مِّن الرَّسُولِ (laqad ja‘at fā’īfat min al-rusul). Thus, the feminine form on its verb refers to the group, not to the subject. Besides, this verse has also designated on the absence of a female apostle, because the texts refer to the number of the masculine. Thus, theologically the verse argues that all apostles are men.

**Conclusion**

Every single text of the Qur’an has its meaning, which could not be interpreted independently. Based on our investigation above, one should regard not only the single word but also another feature which acquainted within the structure. Therefore, in understanding the context of the verse, there are, at least, two contexts that must be considered: (1) the external context of the text, both in particular (micro) and universal (macro); and (2) the internal context of the text, that is the connection between the text and its editorial arrangement. The first context is close to the term *asbāb al-nuzūl*, which comes from the history and *makkīyab* and *madaniyab* context on a macro basis. The second context is closer to the terms *tanāṣub*, *siyaq al-kalām*, and science is done. Sometimes pronunciation can be understood by the

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desired meaning by seeing the relation with pronunciation in another verse or seeing the context of the conversation (siyāq al-kalam) and tanāṣub.

The theory of al-ḥaml ‘alā al-ma’na or murrā‘at al-ma’na, which discussed in this paper, argues on the ability of the reader to identify the meaning of the text. The meaning, according to the theory, should be regarded as the first initiative to understand the text, as the symbol (the form) should be inferior to the meaning. Thus analyzing the text could be best taken by identifying its structure alongside its meaning. In this, the reader should be aware of the type of text, whether it is majaḍa (allegorical) or ḥaqiqi (original meaning). Identifying the text is an important aspect of language set before elaborating the text so that the reader will not mislead in understanding the text. The examples put in our paper have conclusively suggested that the principle of al-ḥaml ‘alā al-ma’na could help the exegetes to have a better analysis of every single word of the Qur’an within its structure.

Bibliography


