



The Theological Significance of Non-Chronological Qur'anic Stories: Moral Resonance in Strengthening the Da'wah Mission

The narration of Qur'anic stories, which are identified as non-chronological, often leads to assertions about their function as advice and moral lessons, raising theological questions about their scientific nature. The way people understand these stories often focuses on their lessons and guidance, missing how they relate to the Prophet's da'wah. This study delves into the relationship between these narratives and their historical context, employing qualitative methods and drawing on the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, which suggests that language shapes our understanding of the world. Focusing on the narratives depicting the stories of the Prophets in Surah Hūd [11], the study reveals that the parts of these stories that emphasize the rejection of da'wah resonate with the experiences of Prophet Muhammad. The accounts of the rejected Prophets serve as a catalyst to ignite Prophet Muhammad's fervor for da'wah through the power of language. The portrayal of rejection in every da'wah struggle, accompanied by the narrative of punishment and annihilation, is distinctively crafted in the Qur'an, with a focus on punishment in the afterlife. The Prophet Muhammad's circumstances during the process of proselytizing are the primary factor in arranging the story fragments without chronological order.

Keywords: Qur'anic stories; linguistic determination; Qur'anic language

Narasi kisah-kisah al-Qur'an yang diidentifikasi tidak kronologis mendorong klaim fungsinya sebagai nasihat dan pelajaran mendorong keraguan teologis terhadap sifat keilmiahannya. Identitas yang dibangun untuk menanggapi narasi mengarah pada fungsinya sebagai nasihat, pelajaran moral, dan petunjuk moral, sehingga relevansinya terhadap konteks dakwah Nabi terabaikan. Dengan kata lain, cara kisah-kisah tersebut diceritakan tampaknya dipengaruhi oleh konteks saat kisah-kisah tersebut diwahyukan. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi hubungan antara narasi-narasi tersebut dengan konteks historisnya. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dan Hipotesis Sapir-Whorf, yang menyatakan bahwa bahasa membentuk cara kita memahami dunia. Berfokus pada narasi penggambaran kisah para Nabi dalam Surat Hūd [11], penelitian ini menemukan bahwa potongan kisah yang berfokus pada penolakan dakwah berkorelasi dengan pengalaman Nabi Muhammad. Bukti kebenaran dakwah yang dihadirkan para Nabi yang ditolak memberikan stimulus untuk membangkitkan gairah dakwah Nabi Muhammad melalui fungsi determinasi bahasa. Normalisasi penolakan dalam setiap perjuangan dakwah dengan narasi hukuman pemusnahan dikonstruksi berbeda dalam al-Qur'an dengan penekanan pada siksa di akhirat. Kondisi Nabi Muhammad dalam proses dakwah menjadi pertimbangan utama dalam penurunan fragmen kisah sehingga potongannya tidak hadir secara kronologis.

Kata Kunci: Kisah al-Qur'an; determinasi linguistik; bahasa al-Qur'an

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Introduction

The storytelling in the Qur'an serves multiple functions, including imparting lessons (*al-i'tibār*),¹ offering advice (*al-maw'idah*),² and providing guidance (*al-irshād*)³, which in turn accentuates the theological beliefs embedded within these narratives. For instance, the tale of Prophet Hud, found across different suras, illustrates the resistance of the 'Ad people who clung to their ancestral religion, ultimately rejecting Prophet Muhammad's message (*da'wah*) and facing divine retribution, as recounted in Surah Hud [11]: 50-54. This narrative is echoed in Surah al-A'rāf [7]: 65-77, portraying the disdain of religious leaders toward Prophet Hud's warning. Their refusal stemmed from allegiance to ancestral traditions, as highlighted in Surat ash-Shu'arā' [26]: 123-140. This fragmented and non-sequential narrative presentation hints at a deeper purpose beyond storytelling, underscoring the conveyance of moral and spiritual messages and emphasizing the importance of faith.

However, a gap remains in fully understanding the rationale behind the

storytelling style itself within the Quran. Current research on the Quran's fragmented stories focuses on two main areas: historical validation and pedagogical impact. Some scholars, like Ridhwan et al., aim to verify the historical and archaeological accuracy of the narratives.⁴ Others, like Abolfazi Horri, analyze the stories' linguistic mechanisms (diegetic and mimetic) to understand how they convey values and encourage practical application.⁵ Ruad H. Aqool investigated the impact of these stories on young readers, exploring their potential as transformative educational tools through observed behavioral changes.⁶ While scholars have primarily focused on the historical validation and educational impact of the Quran's fragmented stories, a distinct perspective explores their didactic function. This approach, emphasized in earlier studies, highlights the narratives' role in instilling values⁷, shaping character, and building ethical frameworks⁸. These stories often utilize repetition to reinforce moral principles⁹, reflecting the profound wisdom they convey.¹⁰ However, a crucial gap exists in understanding the intricate link between these

¹ Mannā' Khalīl Al-Qaṭṭān, *Mabāhiṣ Fī Ulūm Al-Qur'an* (Riyāḍ: Mansyūrāt al-'Aṣr al-Ḥadīṣ, 1973), 307.

² Muḥammad Rasyīd bin 'Alī Riḍā, *Al-Mannār*, vol. 2 (Egypt: al-Hay'ah al-Miṣriyah al-'Ammah li al-Kitāb, 1990), 399.

³ Muḥammad Aḥmad Khalāf Allah, *Al-Fann Al-Qaṣaṣī Fī Al-Qur'an Al-Karīm* (Cairo: Maktaba al-Anjalū al-Miṣriyah, 1972), 78.

⁴ Muhammad Ridhwan, Agus Imam Kharomen, and Uus Syaripudin, "Scientific Truth in The Stories of The Qur'an: A Philosophical Approach to Prove The Truth Of Stories," *RSF Conference Series: Business, Management and Social Sciences* 3, no. 2 (August 3, 2023): 83–89, <https://doi.org/10.31098/bmss.v3i2.655>.

⁵ Abolfazl Horri, "Typology of Speech and Thought Representation in the Quranic Stories," *Linguistic Research in the Holy Quran* 12, no. 2 (2023): 19–30, <https://doi.org/10.22108/NRGS.2023.132460.1746>.

⁶ Raad Hassoon Aqool, "Stylistics of Quranic Stories in Subject of Islamic Education in (Iraqi Schools) An Analytical Study," *Resmilitaris* 12, no. 2 (2022): 5566–83.

⁷ Ali Imran Sinaga, Afrahul Fadhilah Daulay, and Rosmawati Lubis, "Story in the Qur'an and Its Relevance in Early Childhood Education," *Britain International of*

Linguistics Arts and Education (BioLAE) Journal 2, no. 2 (2020): 635–40, https://doi.org/10.33258/BIO_LAE.V2I2.279.

⁸ Muhammad Reza Fadil, "Qashash Al-Qur'an and Its Contributions in Profetic Characters Building of Young Generations: An Experimental Study," *Jurnal At-Tibyan: Jurnal Ilmu Alqur'an Dan Tafsir* 5, no. 1 (June 30, 2020): 20–37, <https://doi.org/10.32505/at-tibyan.v5i1.1227>; Ainun Jariah, Achmad Abu Bakar, and Hasyim Haddade, "Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Qashas Al-Qur'an (Studi Sintesis Kisah-Kisah Dalam Al-Qur'an)," *Action Research Literate* 6, no. 1 (January 12, 2022): 1–13, <https://doi.org/10.46799/ar.l.v6i1.91>.

⁹ Lamiaa Sahib, "The Reasons for the Collapse of Civilizations in the Holy Qur'an Surat Al-Qasas as - a Model Objective Study," *Magazine Aldhakwat Albedh* 1, no. 4 (2022): 168–75; Muhammad Umar Idrees and Irfan Ullah, "Methodology of Quranic Stories in Character Building," *ĪQĀN* 3, no. 02 (June 28, 2021): 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.36755/iqan.v3i02.312>.

¹⁰ Mohammad Ismail Labib Balakhi and Muhammad Naeem Jalily, "Quranic Stories: Objectives, Characteristics, and Wisdom of Their Repetition," *Peshawar Islamicus* 14, no. 01 (2023): 46–68, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8242680>; Sulaiman Sulaiman and Afrizal Ahmad, "Menggal 'Ibrah'





narratives and Prophet Muhammad's developing worldview during his mission. By neglecting this relationship, scholars miss a deeper understanding of how these stories influenced his preaching journey.

This study bridges a gap in Quranic scholarship by examining the link between the narrative structure of Surah Hud [11] and Prophet Muhammad's mission. It asks two key questions: First, how does the logical flow of the surah, particularly its sequence of stories, build contextual meaning? Second, how does the Quran's use of language shape the narratives' relevance and convey values significant to the Prophet and his community? By investigating these questions, the study seeks to explain why specific stories were chosen and presented in this way, ultimately shedding light on how these narratives informed Prophet Muhammad's preaching.

This research explores the idea that the Quran's language structure is deeply woven into the cultural fabric of its audience, influencing their thoughts and behaviors in accordance with its semantic content. Language construction in the Qur'an serves not only as a means of describing experiences but also as a mechanism for defining those experiences for its audience.¹¹ The Prophet Muhammad's experiences during his mission (da'wah) influenced his understanding of reality, which is reflected in the Quran's portrayal of past prophets' experiences, making them relevant to his own context. These narratives serve as linguistic constructs that both shape and constrain cognitive processes, serving as tangible manifestations of the intricate interplay between language, thought, and

culture.¹² By analyzing the categorization of stories within Surah Hud, this study aims to shed light on the framework within which the Prophet's thought processes operated, ultimately revealing how these narratives influenced his perception of reality.

This study delves into the connection between the stories' structure in Surah Hud, their historical context, and the path of Prophet Muhammad's mission. Qualitative methods are chosen as they effectively explore complex patterns and processes that may not be captured by numbers.¹³ The study relies on two data sources: primary and secondary. The primary data is solely the Quranic narration from Surah Hud [11], chosen for its diverse and sequential presentation of prophetic stories.¹⁴ Secondary sources include interpretations, research findings, and historical texts about Prophet Muhammad's life. The analysis unfolds in three stages: data reduction, analysis, and conclusion drawing.¹⁵ Throughout this process, the study employs the linguistic relativity concept from the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis to understand how language shapes perception and cognition.

The Realities of Prophet's Challenges During the Concluding Phase of Da'wah in Mecca

This research attempts to link the inclusion of past prophets' stories in Surah [11] to the specific context of Prophet Muhammad's mission. However, pinpointing that context is difficult due to conflicting views on the exact timing of Surah Hud's revelation within his preaching period (da'wah). Some scholars like Abd al-Qādir Mullā Ḥawaisy, Ḥabbanakah, and Izzah Darwazah place it at the 52nd revelation,

Dari Qashash Al-Qur'an: Sebuah Kajian Pengantar Dalam Tinjauan Ilmu Al-Qur'an," *Mumtaz: Jurnal Studi Al-Quran Dan Keislaman* 5, no. 02 (January 10, 2022): 215–28, <https://doi.org/10.36671/mumtaz.v5i02.183>.

¹¹ Harry Hoijer, "The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis," in *Language in Culture; Conference on the Interrelations of Language and Other Aspects of Culture*, ed. Harry Hoijer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954), 93.

¹² Dell H. Hymes, "On Typology of Cognitive Styles in Language," *Anthropological Linguistics* 3, no. 1 (1961): 22–54.

¹³ John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (London: SAGE Publications, 1994).

¹⁴ Muḥammad Izzah Darwazah, *Al-Taḥfīr Wa Al-Ḥadīṣ*, vol. 3 (Kairo: Dār Iḥyā' al-Kutb al-'Arabīyah, 1383), 501.

¹⁵ Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis (a Source Book of New Methods)* (Beverly Hills: SAGE Publications, 1984).





following al-Isrā' [17] and Yūnus [10].¹⁶ Others, like Al-Jabiri, argue for a slightly earlier placement as the 51st revelation after al-Qaṣaṣ [28] and Yūnus [10].¹⁷ While these differing opinions offer insights into the evolving dynamics of the da'wah, with the Isra event serving as a pivotal marker from the context of Surah al-Isrā' [17] to the moment of the Prophet's hijrah. most scholars agree that Surah Hud was revealed between the 10th and 13th years of the Prophet's mission, providing a broader historical timeframe for understanding the challenges he faced during his calling.

Prophet Muhammad's da'wah faced its first major challenges around the 10th year of his prophethood, coinciding with the passing of his uncle Abu Talib, who had previously offered some protection. According to Ibn Ishaq, the turning point came when the Prophet began openly calling for the Meccans to abandon their traditional worship practices, sparking opposition.¹⁸ This rejection manifested in slander and intimidation directed at him, which he responded to with prayers for his detractors, as recorded by Ibn Hisham.¹⁹ The Quraysh leadership, threatened by the Prophet's message, resorted to various tactics to undermine him. They would feign interest in his teachings, even attending Quran recitations, but secretly plotted against him. This duplicity is captured in Surah Hud, verse 5, highlighting their attempts to obstruct the spread of Islam.²⁰

The Linguistic Composition of Surah Hūd [11]: Depicting the External Reality through Qur'anic Language

Language serves as a potent tool for shaping individuals' perceptions and interpretations of the world, thereby encapsulating their unique understanding of external reality. Different ways of thinking and understanding result in changes in linguistic structures due to the intimate interplay between language and cognition.²¹ The reciprocal relationship between the mind's reflection of the external world and language enables the expression of perceived reality. Language serves as a repository of cultural experiences, stemming from human thought processes, facilitating communicative interactions.²² Semyonovich Vygotsky elucidated this symbiotic relationship, asserting that language, thought, and culture dynamically interact, influencing one another.²³ Consequently, language both influences and is influenced by thought and culture, reflecting the psychological state of its speakers and engendering new ways of thinking for both speakers and listeners.

Surah Hud [11] of the Quran reflects the social and psychological realities perceived by Prophet Muhammad, the recipient of the divine message. This analysis explores these realities in three stages. First, examining verses 1-24 (excluding verses 12 and 17 revealed later), we see the depiction of Prophet Muhammad's struggles and their significance within the surah. Second, verses 25-99 present narratives of past prophets conveying the divine message, highlighting the portrayal of prophetic preaching

¹⁶ Muḥammad Izzah Darwazah, *Al-Tafsīr Wa Al-Ḥadīṣ*, vol. 3 (Kairo: Dār Iḥyā' al-Kutb al-'Arabīyah, 1383), 501; 'Abd ar-Raḥmān Ḥasan Ḥabbanakah, *Ma'ārij at-Tafakkur Wa Daqāiq at-Tadabbur*, vol. 10 (Damascus: Dār al-Qalm, 2014), 287; 'Abd al-Qādir bin Mullā Ḥawaisy, *Bayān Al-Ma'ānī*, vol. 3 (Damascus: Maṭba'ah at-Taraqī, 1965), 89.

¹⁷ Muḥammad 'Ābid Al-Jābirī, *Fahm Al-Qur'an: At-Tafsīr Al-Wāḍiḥ Ḥasb Tartīb an-Nuzūl*, vol. 2 (Maroco: ad-Dār al-Baidā', 2008), 334.

¹⁸ Muḥammad Ibn Ishāq, *As-Sīrah an-Nabawiyah* (Bairūt: Dār al-Kutb al-'Ilmiyah, 2004), 190.

¹⁹ Abd al-Mālik bin Hishām, *Al-Sīrah Al-Nabawiyah Li Ibn Hisyām*, vol. 1 (Bairūt: Dār al-Jair, 1990), 409.

²⁰ Ali bin Aḥmad Al-Wāḥidī, *Asbāb Al-Nuzūl Al-Qur'ān* (al-Dammām: Dār al-Iṣlāḥ, 1992), 265.

²¹ Edward Sapir, *Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech* (New York: Dover Publications, 2004), 180.

²² Brigitte Nerlich and David D. Clarke, *Language, Action and Context: The Early History of Pragmatics in Europe and America, 1780-1930* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1984), 57.

²³ Lev S. Vygotsky, *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987).





and its implications. Finally, verses 100-123 (excluding verse 114, revealed later) explore thematic content to understand its relevance within the surah's broader context. By dissecting these stages, we unveil the social and psychological realities embedded within Surah Hud [11], offering insights into the multifaceted nature of the Quranic discourse as perceived by Prophet Muhammad.

1. *Unveiling Reality: Linguistic Analysis on Prophet Muhammad's Preaching in Surah Hud [11]: 1-24*

The opening verses of Surah Hud [11] lay out the Quran's message, urging people to follow Allah. Scholar Al-Zuhaili explains that verses 2-4 depict Prophet Muhammad's duty to warn the polytheistic Meccans and call them back to Allah.²⁴ The statement "*alā innahum yaṣnūn ṣudūrahum li yastakhfū minh*" ("know that indeed they cover (what is in) their breasts to hide themselves from Him") refers specifically to al-Akhnas bin Shuraiq, who secretly opposed the prophet.²⁵ As-Ṣa'labī interprets this as reflecting the general resistance of the Meccans to the Prophet's preaching.²⁶

Verses 7-14 of Surah Hud [11] depict how the disbelievers habitually rejected the Prophet's message. Despite facing accusations of sorcery and ridicule for his warnings, the Prophet's resolve remained strong with Allah's support.²⁷ The Quran categorizes reactions to these warnings: the disbelievers' arrogant defiance contrasts with the believers' patient perseverance.

²⁴ Wahbah Al-Zuhaylī, *Al-Tafsīr Al-Munīr Fī Al-'Aqīdah Wa Al-Sharī'ah Wa Al-Manhaj*, vol. 12 (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1418), 13–14.

²⁵ Muḥammad bin Ya'qūb Al-Fairūzābādī, *Tanwīr Al-Miqbās Min Tafsīr Ibn Abbās* (Bairūt: Dār al-Kutb al-'Ilmiyah, n.d.), 181.

²⁶ Aḥmad bin Muḥammad Aṣ-Ṣa'labī, *Al-Kasyf Wa Al-Bayān 'an Tafsīr Al-Qur'an*, vol. 5 (Bairūt: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāṡ al-'Arabī, 2002), 157.

²⁷ Abd al-Ḥaq bin Ghālib Ibn 'Aṭīyah, *Al-Muḥarrar Al-Wajīz Fī Tafsīr Al-Kitāb Al-'Azīz*, vol. 3 (Bairūt: Dār al-Kutb al-'Ilmiyah, 1422), 152.

Notably, some scholars like ash-Shukānī suggest *al-insān* in verse 9 refers to specific figures like al-Walīd bin al-Mughīrah or Abd Allah bin Umayyah al-Makhzūmī.²⁸ The rejection reached a peak when the Meccans demanded the Prophet produce miracles, such as turning mountains to gold, as explained by Az-Zuhaili in his tafsir. These were challenging the Prophet, by nature, could not fulfill²⁹

Surah Hud [11], verses 18-24, tackles challenges that distract Prophet Muhammad from his message by focusing on worldly desires.³⁰ The response emphasizes both the rewards of the afterlife for believers and the punishments awaiting disbelievers. This section contrasts the actions of these two groups and the consequences they face.³¹ Disbelievers who reject Allah's message are certain to suffer loss and punishment in the hereafter, while believers are rewarded for their faith.³² As scholar Al-Marāghī points out, these verses highlight a clear distinction that the disbelievers are consumed by worldly concerns, while the believers prioritize the afterlife.³³

2. *The Presentation of Prophets' Narratives in Surah Hūd [11]: 25-99: Connecting Story Fragments to Consciousness*

Surah Hud [11], from verses 25 to 99, weaves together fragmented stories of past prophets' struggles. These narratives encapsulate three primary elements: warnings met with rejection, challenges to the truth of the da'wah, and the certainty of

²⁸ Muḥammad bin 'Alī Asy-Syaukānī, *Fath Al-Qadīr*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 1414), 551.

²⁹ Az-Zuhaylī, *Al-Tafsīr Al-Munīr Fī Al-'Aqīdah Wa Al-Sharī'ah Wa Al-Manhaj*, 12:32.

³⁰ Aḥmad bin Muṣṭafā Al-Marāghī, *Tafsīr Al-Marāghī*, vol. 12 (Mesir: Muṣṭafā al-Bāb al-Ḥalabī, 1946), 15.

³¹ Az-Zuhaylī, *Al-Tafsīr Al-Munīr Fī Al-'Aqīdah Wa Al-Sharī'ah Wa Al-Manhaj*, 12:32.

³² Muḥammad Sayyid Ṭantāwī, *At-Tafsīr Al-Wasīd*, vol. 7 (Cairo: Dār Nahḍah Mīsr, 1997), 168.

³³ Al-Marāghī, *Tafsīr Al-Marāghī*, 12:20.





impending punishment. Each story follows a similar pattern: a prophet (Noah, Hud, Salih, or Shu'aib) boldly declares their mission from God, urging their people to worship Allah and warning of consequences for disobedience. Their efforts to persuade their communities to worship God are underscored by assertions of God's absolute power. However, their communities remain fixated on their traditional idols, stubbornly rejecting the call to monotheism.

The rejection of the prophets in Surah Hud [11] follows a familiar pattern. The people dismiss them as ordinary men, sparking accusations of trickery and weakness. They demand clear and undeniable miracles as proof of their message. Even when offered such evidence, the people reject it, clinging to their doubts. The very concept of punishment for not worshipping Allah, a core message of the prophets, is mocked as a mere scare tactic.

Surah Hud [11] concludes the prophets' stories with a bold message: the ultimate consequence of rejecting their call. Each narrative ends with a distinct punishment – a flood for Noah's people, a fierce wind for Hud's, an earthquake for Salih's, a scorching wind for Shu'aib's, and a violent storm for Lot's. These devastating events, symbolizing God's power, leave no survivors. The severity of the punishments highlights the gravity of disbelieving in God's message, posing a stark dilemma for the people and a solemn reminder for readers: denial carries consequences not just in the afterlife, but also in this life.

3. *Reconstructing Thought Through Language: The Concept of Wisdom in Surah Hūd [11]: Verses 100-123*

Surah Hud [11] concludes by emphasizing the historical reality of its narratives. Archaeological evidence, like remnants of destroyed civilizations, supports the stories. Ṭaṇṭāwī identifies the phrase "*minhā qā'immun wa ḥasīd*" as an introductory sentence (*al-jumlah al-musta'nifah*) "from them are those still standing and those obliterated", serving to prompt the examination of factual evidence (*an-nazar*) for existing cultures and to learn (*i'tibar*) from the vanished ones.³⁴ This destruction stemmed from rejecting help other than Allah, highlighting the futility and consequences of worshipping idols.³⁵ Az-Zuhailī highlights the significance of verses 103-109, which depict the destruction of disbelieving societies and the salvation of believers, as compelling evidence for disbelievers regarding the reality of the Day of Reckoning (*ba'as*).³⁶

Surah Hud [11] concludes by drawing parallels between the disbelievers of Mecca and those of the past. Just as previous civilizations were destroyed for rejecting the message of prophets like Noah and Hud and clinging to idol worship, the people of Mecca face a similar fate if they reject Prophet Muhammad's call to monotheism.³⁷ The Quran reassures Prophet Muhammad not to despair over their rejection, for just as Allah punished past communities in the afterlife, the Meccans will face their reckoning too.³⁸ Similar to the retribution set for the people of Prophet Mūsā. Surah Hūd [11]: 116-117, highlights the different punishment in terms of timing, emphasizing Allah's justice. Unlike some previous civilizations destroyed during their lifetime for indulging in worldly pleasures (*al-itarāf*) and committing injustices (*aḏ-ẓālim*), which

³⁴ Ṭaṇṭāwī, *At-Tafsīr Al-Wasīd*, 7:270.

³⁵ Aḥmad bin Muhammad Ibn 'Aḥbah, *Al-Baḥr Al-Madīd Fī Tafsīr Al-Qur'an Al-Majīd*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutb al-'Ilmīyah, 2002), 556.

³⁶ Az-Zuhaylī, *Al-Tafsīr Al-Munīr Fī Al-'Aqīdah Wa Al-Sharī'ah Wa Al-Manhaj*, 12:148.

³⁷ Az-Zuhaylī, 12:162.

³⁸ Aṣ-Ṣā'labī, *Al-Kasyf Wa Al-Bayān 'an Tafsīr Al-Qur'an*, 5:191.





serves as examples illustrating divine retribution,³⁹ the Meccans will face their punishment in the afterlife.

The Quran employs a rhetorical narrative strategy by presenting fragments of the prophets' stories relevant to Prophet Muhammad's preaching context, serving as God's persuasive mechanism conveyed through linguistic expression. This linguistic disclosure, containing specific messages, shapes how readers understand the world and make choices.⁴⁰ The Quran acknowledges a potential shift in the Prophet's mindset, indicated by the phrase "*tārik ba'd mā yūhā*" (about to abandon some of what was revealed to you), triggered by the fear of demanding proof of punishment from his people who lacked miraculous abilities (*lam yakūnū mu'jizīna fi al-'arḍ*). By presenting these relatable stories of past rejections, the Quran aims to adjust the Prophet's perception of his situation and the prevailing reality.⁴¹ This strategy, using examples from previous prophets, gently guides Prophet Muhammad's thoughts and offers support by highlighting the shared experiences of prophets throughout history. [2]. The two models of story fragments from previous prophets to Prophet Muhammad elucidates the Quran's emphasis to underscore the development of Prophet Muhammad's psychological state. The fragment of Prophet Mūsā's story, as mentioned in Surah Hūd [11]: 17; 110, draws parallels between Muslims and the followers of Prophet Mūsā, focusing on an afterlife orientation. This contrasts with the stories of Prophets Nūḥ, Hūd, Šāliḥ, Shuaib, and Lūṭ, which emphasize the certainty of worldly punishment leading to annihilation. The

interweaving of these narratives forms a prelinguistic mechanism with universal properties, associating predicatively generated subject traits.⁴² The characteristics of the subjects outlined in the story narratives shape Prophet Muhammad's cognitive processes, aligning them with similar patterns. This linguistic reality, congruent with the listener's context, translates into the representation of shared meanings into action.⁴³ These stories influence the direction, content, and structure of Prophet Muhammad's thoughts and perceptions, in order to help him deal to adapt with reality.

Story narratives present a mechanism of adaptation that helps people create a new understanding of reality, which can help them cope with the rejection of religious conversion. Stories can evoke strong emotions and lead us to seek the human values embedded in understanding reality. This powerful effect taps into the core of human cognition.⁴⁴ Within Surah Hūd [11], story narration emphasizes two mechanisms: convergence and divergence. Convergence pertains to readers' ability to glean general messages (wisdom) from the story, even without directly experiencing the events it describes. Conversely, divergence refers to the story targeting its intended audience, aiming to alter their perception of reality based on the specific details and fragments of the narrative.

Implementation of Story in the Mission of Da'wah: The Relative and Linguistic Determination in the Holy Quran

The language construction within Surah Hūd [11] of the Qur'an showcases fragments of previous prophets' stories that are relevant to the challenges faced during the Prophet's da'wah

³⁹ Asy-Syaukānī, *Fath Al-Qadīr*, 2:605.

⁴⁰ Edward Sapir, *Culture, Language, and Personality* (London: University of California Press, 1949), 69.

⁴¹ John A. Lucy, *Language Diversity and Thought: A Reformulation of the Linguistic Relativity Hypothesis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 77.

⁴² Johan Blomberg and Jordan Zlatev, "Metalinguistic Relativity: Does One's Ontology Determine One's View on Linguistic Relativity?," *Language & Communication* 76

(January 2021): 35–46, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langcom.2020.09.007>.

⁴³ Marcel Danesi, *Linguistic Relativity Today: Language, Mind, Society, and the Foundations of Linguistic Anthropology* (New York: Routledge, 2021), 102.

⁴⁴ Hye K. Pae, "From Linguistic Relativity to Script Relativity," in *Script Effects as the Hidden Drive of the Mind, Cognition, and Culture. Literacy Studies*, ed. Hye K. Pae, vol. 21 (Cham: Springer, 2020), 37–58.





mission. The Surah begins by outlining the difficulties he faces: rejection, demands for proof, and defiance against warnings of punishment. The injunction to remain patient and to affirm the belief in the Day of Judgment is supported by illustrative examples drawn from the narratives of previous prophets. The significance of these stories lies in their function to console Prophet Muhammad's heart, evident in the selection of specific story fragments. Furthermore, the reinforcement of faith is underscored by the choice to narrate the stories of Prophets Nūh, Hūd, Šālih, and Lūṭ, whose people resisted divine guidance and faced destruction as a consequence.

Surah Hud [11] of the Quran uses the stories of Noah, Hud, Salih, Shu'aib, and Lot not just as narratives, but as a mirror reflecting the challenges Prophet Muhammad faced, underscoring the interconnectedness between the construction of Qur'anic language and the worldview of its audience. The linguistic patterns embedded in the Qur'an not only serve as a tool to convey messages but also to relate with existing realities, fostering reasoning and awareness.⁴⁵ Surah Hūd [11] disseminates the Qur'anic worldview to the audience through the paradigmatic structures in order to comfort Prophet Muhammad and convince his people of the truth of the message. By presenting these stories, the Quran plays a kind of "game"⁴⁶ with the reader, using language patterns to prompt reflection on the reality of the message.⁴⁷ By considering the audience's understanding, including the Prophet's situation, the Quran ensures everyone grasps the intended meaning, fostering effective communication and guidance.

The Quran's communicative function, unveiling insights into the unseen through past narratives, reflects its rhetorical purpose, rooted in the reality of Prophet Muhammad's preaching context. These stories serve not only to articulate ideas from the past but also to influence the formation of new ideas when revisited in light of contemporary circumstances. This process of linguistic transformation, as proposed by Whorf, occurs during translation, where one's understanding is realized in a new linguistic context.⁴⁸ In this context, the formation of perspectives takes the shape of actions inspired by Prophet Muhammad, reflecting the wisdom gleaned from these narratives. Athanasopoulos and Casaponsa note that language construction relationships can induce behavioral changes.⁴⁹ Within the realm of Quranic studies, the implementation of these stories to provoke action is facilitated through the mechanism of *ibrāh* (lessons).⁵⁰ Awareness of the da'wah's conditions serves as a primary element in discerning the overarching purpose of these narrative disclosures, transcending mere chronological storytelling.

The inclusion of stories from the prophets, intertwined with snippets relevant to Prophet Muhammad's journey, underscores the relativity of Qur'anic language, shaping the minds of readers and audiences. This observation addresses doubts regarding the systematic nature of the Quran, countering claims of unsystematic storytelling. Previous researchers viewed the randomization and repetition of these stories as mechanisms for instilling

⁴⁵ Benjamin L. Whorf, *Language, Thought, and Reality: Selected Writing of Benjamin Lee Whorf*, ed. John B. Carroll (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1956), 252.

⁴⁶ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958), 33.

⁴⁷ Sapir, *Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech*, 87.

⁴⁸ Whorf, *Language, Thought, and Reality: Selected Writing of Benjamin Lee Whorf*, 213.

⁴⁹ Panos Athanasopoulos and Aina Casaponsa, "The Whorfian Brain: Neuroscientific Approaches to Linguistic Relativity," *Cognitive Neuropsychology* 37, no. 5–6 (August 17, 2020): 393–412, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02643294.2020.1769050>.

⁵⁰ Mohd Aderi Che Noh and Miftachul Huda, "Understanding the Quran Resources as Main Principle for Family Institution in Islamic Education," *Journal of Critical Reviews* 7, no. 02 (January 1, 2020): 688–92, <https://doi.org/10.31838/jcr.07.02.126>.





values,⁵¹ ensuring their realization in various aspects of human life.⁵² However, the aspect of linguistic determination and relativity, crucial for conveying messages, has often been overlooked. Consequently, the Quran has been perceived as detached from the context and circumstances of Prophet Muhammad's preaching mission. The inclusion of specific stories with relevance to Prophet Muhammad's da'wah circumstances serves as evidence of the Quranic language's alignment with the worldview of its audience and the Prophet's situation as the messenger.

The coherent link between the narrative of the story and the context of Prophet Muhammad's da'wah highlights the distinctive quality of the Quranic language, which communicates with a breadth of meaning transcending temporal and spatial boundaries. Beyond merely preserving the heroic aspects of the Prophets, the narrative content of these stories serves as guidance for Prophet Muhammad to navigate his contemporary challenges. Each fragment of the story acts as a catalyst for introspection, prompting a shift in perspective on the world. This function reinforces the validity of the Prophet's teachings, leading to a transformation of his audience's worldview and the establishment of a new system of beliefs and teachings. The unique content and style of the Quranic text are evident throughout its verses, which function as a guiding and healing scripture, a beacon of divine knowledge and teachings. It uses "clear" and expressive language and true and unparalleled clarity and effectiveness.

Conclusion

The role of stories in the Qur'an, typically viewed as vehicles for wisdom and moral lessons

(*ibrāh*) despite their unsystematic narration, is validated in this study. This research identifies their function in fortifying theological beliefs during Prophet Muhammad's da'wah journey. The non-linear sequence of Prophet Hud's story aims to reinforce the message to Prophet Muhammad within the context of his da'wah efforts. The alignment of moral values with the challenges faced by the Prophet adds significance to the narrative's progression. The relativity of the message, conveyed through the language of the Qur'an, effectively shapes the Prophet's mindset to overcome these challenges and imparts moral values to subsequent readers, guiding them toward appropriate actions. This relativity and determination enrich the dynamics and effectiveness of communication. The alleged lack of systematic structure in the Quranic story becomes irrelevant when considering its function as a tool to bolster Prophet Muhammad's confidence and problem-solving abilities in overcoming obstacles.

The exploration of relativity and determination within the storytelling structure, particularly in QS. Hūd [11], was undertaken through the lens of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, intriguing insights into the relationship between language and cognition that extend beyond mere lexical meaning. While this research sheds light on contemporary linguistic theories, it overlooks the unique structure of the Quranic language as explored in *'Ulum al-Qur'an* (Quranic studies). This gap presents a fertile ground for further investigation. By delving deeper into *'Ulum al-Qur'an*, scholars can examine how the formation of Quranic language, encompassing various linguistic phenomena, might exhibit patterns akin to the well-established concept of *al-i'jaz al-lughawi* (linguistic miracle) observed within the narratives.

⁵¹ Balakhi and Jalily, "Quranic Stories: Objectives, Characteristics, and Wisdom of Their Repetition"; Sulaiman and Ahmad, "Menggali 'Ibrah' Dari Qashash Al-Qur'an: Sebuah Kajian Pengantar Dalam Tinjauan Ilmu Al-Qur'an."

⁵² Sinaga, Daulay, and Lubis, "Story in the Qur'an and Its Relevance in Early Childhood Education"; Fadil,

"Qashash Al-Qur'an and Its Contributions in Profetic Characters Building of Young Generations: An Experimental Study"; Sahib, "The Reasons for the Collapse of Civilizations in the Holy Qur'an Surat Al-Qasas as - a Model Objective Study."





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