The Stylistics of *Al-Mustawā Ad-Dalālī* in the Verses of Monotheism in Surah Al-Mulk

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Abstract

This study aims to reveal how the semantic level in the verses of monotheism in Surah Al-Mulk is employed to reinforce the impression of monotheism. The focus of the study is directed toward the selection of diction, polysemy, synonymy, and antonymy that carry profound meanings related to this monotheistic impression. This research adopts a qualitative method with a content analysis approach applied to the verses of Surah Al-Mulk, using tafsir sources from *Tafsīr Al-Miṣbāḥ*, *Al-Marāghī*, *Al-Munīr*, *Al-Kashshāf*, *Ibn Kathīr*, *Al-Muyassar*, and *Tafsīr Al-Qurṭubī*. The analysis is conducted by selecting the tafsir that most closely aligns with the meaning of the word under study, ensuring that the explanations remain focused and consistent. The findings indicate that the choice of words in Surah Al-Mulk is not coincidental but intentional and strategic in affirming the power and oneness of Allah, as seen in the use of the words يَد (power), أَفْئِدَةٌ (heart), and the antonym pair الْمَوْت – الْحَيَاة (death–life), which strengthen the monotheistic impression. These findings affirm that the rhetorical power of the Qur'anic language at the semantic level can convey the impression of monotheism in a profound and effective manner, while also contributing to the study of Qur'anic stylistics.

Keywords: *Stylistics, Surah Al-Mulk, Monotheism, Semantic Levels (Al-Mustawā Ad-Dalālī)*

Introduction

The Qur'an, as a holy scripture, possesses a uniqueness that sets it apart from other books, particularly in its beautiful structure and high literary value (Pachrizal & Wiwaha, 2024). Even the Arabs at the time were unable to match its eloquence. This uniqueness is evident in its word choices, sentence structure, and the profound wisdom it conveys (Marlion & Dardiri, 2019). Many people feel a deep sense of attraction when listening to Qur'anic verses, even if they find it difficult to explain why. This is because each verse contains deep and powerful meanings not only theologically, but also through the strength of its language (Nasution, 2022).

Linguistic studies play an important role in uncovering the Qur'an's uniqueness, one of which is through stylistics (Taufiqurrohman & Nashoih, 2021). As a branch of linguistics, stylistics helps understand the beauty and meaning within the Qur'an's language by analyzing meanings and sentence structures. This approach closely examines individual words and their context within sentences, providing a comprehensive picture of the Qur'an's language (Hizkil & Qalyubi, 2021). Stylistics also

serves as a key tool in exploring how divine messages are conveyed effectively and aesthetically.

Qur'anic stylistics essentially shares the same meaning as general stylistics, which is the study of how language is used in the Qur'an (Lestari & Ojim, 2022). Stylistics helps explain how the Qur'an's style of language was used in response to the social, cultural, and religious conditions at the time of revelation. Every word, repetition, and sentence arrangement is chosen with a specific purpose to strengthen the verse's meaning and message. As a guide for life, the Qur'an should not only be read ritually, but also understood for its meaning, reflected upon for its content, appreciated for its richness, and practiced in daily life (Sopian, 2017). In this way, stylistics helps us to realize that the Qur'an is a sacred text filled with linguistic beauty and extraordinary literary elements.

In the Arab intellectual tradition, the study of stylistics is also known as *'ilm al-uslūb* or *uslūbiyyah*. In this tradition, *uslūb* refers to the style or manner in which a discourse is delivered. More broadly, *uslūb* can be defined as a method of expressing a statement (Setyawan & Qalyubi, 2022).

Qalyubi provides a more detailed explanation of the five levels in stylistic analysis, known as *khamsah mustawayāt* (the five levels). These levels include: *al-mustawā al-ṣawtī* (phonological level), *al-mustawā al-ṣarfī* (morphological level), *al-mustawā al-naḥwī wa al-tarkībī* (syntactic and structural level), *al-mustawā al-dalālī* (semantic level), and *al-mustawā al-taṣwīrī* (imagery level) (Qalyubi, 2017). This study focuses specifically on *al-mustawā al-dalālī* (semantic level).

Surah Al-Mulk is known as a surah that powerfully conveys the message of monotheism and the sovereignty of Allah. However, studies that specifically examine how this meaning is constructed through the semantic level within Qur'anic stylistics are still rarely conducted. Most previous research has focused on aspects of phonology, morphology, or thematic interpretation. For example, Harnida (2022) shows that the beauty of sound and diction reinforces the meaning of the verses. Komara & Wiwaha (2024) emphasize the phonological effect in delivering the message. Fadila et al. (2024) underline the importance of accuracy in meaning to avoid misinterpretation. Mannan (2020) explains that words that appear synonymous can carry different meanings depending on the context. These findings support the focus of this study on the semantic power of words in conveying the message of monotheism in Surah Al-Mulk. This highlights a research gap, particularly in exploring semantic relationships such as diction, *musytarak al-lafẓī* (polysemy), *tarāduf* (synonymy), and *al-taḍāḍ* (antonymy) used to affirm monotheism. Several words in this surah possess not only lexical meanings but also contextual meanings that enrich understanding, such as the word مَصَابِيْح which lexically means "lamps" but in Surah Al-Mulk verse 5 is interpreted as "stars." Therefore, this study offers novelty by focusing the analysis on the semantic level to demonstrate how Surah Al-Mulk effectively conveys the meaning of monotheism and touches the readers' consciousness.

According to Ahmad Mukhtar Umar, the scope of semantic study includes various forms of symbols and signs used in communication, such as traffic signs, hand gestures, as well as head movements, all of which function as indicators of meaning (Wahyudi et al., 2024). Emphasizing the semantic level aims to uncover the deeper meanings embedded in Surah Al-Mulk, especially in its representation of verses about monotheism. This analysis will highlight how diction and semantic relationships within these verses contribute to their meaning.

The researcher has chosen to adopt the stylistic theory outlined by Qalyubi in his book *'Ilm al-Uslūb*. This approach provides a systematic and comprehensive analytical framework. This theory offers an in-depth perspective for understanding the relationship between linguistic structure and the message being conveyed

Method

This study employs a qualitative method with a content analysis approach. The data consist of both primary and secondary sources. The primary data include the Qur'anic text, specifically Surah Al-Mulk, and selected exegetical works such as *Tafsīr Al-Miṣbāḥ, Tafsīr Al-Marāghī, Tafsīr Al-Munīr, Tafsīr Al-Kashshāf, Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr, Al-Muyassar,* and *Tafsīr Al-Qurṭubī*. The secondary data comprises scholarly articles, academic works, and books on linguistics, semantic studies, and stylistics relevant to this research.

The approach is based on the stylistic theory developed by Qalyubi, which encompasses five levels of linguistic analysis: phonological level, morphological level, syntactic and stuctural level, semantic level, and imagery level (Qalyubi, 2017).

This research focuses specifically on the semantic level, analyzing diction, polysemy, synonymy, and antonymy in the verses of monotheism *(tawḥīd)* within Surah Al-Mulk. These verses include 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 13, 15, 22, 23, 24, 28, and 29.

Surah Al-Mulk is the 67th chapter of the Qur'an, consisting of 30 verses, and is categorized as a Makkiyah surah, as revealed in Mecca after Surah Al-Tur. Its name is derived from the first verse and means "dominion" or "sovereignty." The surah emphasizes Allah's absolute authority over the universe and the importance of acknowledging His power (Al-Hafidz, 2012). Its content invites reflection on God's creation, reminds readers of the transient nature of worldly life, and stresses the significance of deeds in the hereafter. It begins with the glorification of Allah and ends with a warning regarding His decrees (Al-Rayahneh & Awawdeh, 2024). The surah also discusses life and death as tests, Allah's control over the heavens, warnings to disbelievers, promises to the faithful, and admonitions for those who disobey His commands (Hasanah et al., 2024).

Surah Al-Mulk contains verses of monotheism depicting Allah's power through creation, life, and death. Semantic uncover how these verses affirm divine oneness and awaken awareness of His greatness, thereby contributing to the field of Qur'anic stylistics.

Results

Based on the analysis of Surah Al-Mulk, several words were found to carry significant meaning and possess distinct semantic characteristics. These words are categorized into several key groups within the study of semantic: diction, polysemy, synonymy, and antonymy. The following table presents the elements of semantic found in Surah Al-Mulk:

Table 1. Semantic Levels in the Monotheism Verses of Surah Al-Mulk

No	Verses	Semantic Levels	Words
1	3, 4, 5 and 28, 8, 9 and 29, 15, 23, 24	Diction	سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ، كَرَّةٌ، عَذَاب السَّعِيرِ – عَذَاب أَلِيْم، الْغَيْظ، ضَلَال كَبِيْرِ – ضَلَال مُبِيْنٍ، مَنَاكِب، أَفْئِدَة، تُحْشَرُوْنَ
2	1, 5, 15	Polysemy	يَد، مَصَابِيْح، ذَلُوْلًا
3	2 and 15	Synonymy	خَلَقَ – جَعَلَ
4	2, 5 and 15, 13, 22 and 29	Antonymy	المَوْت – الحَيَاة، السَّمَاء – الأَرْض، أَسِرُّوْا – اجْهَرُوْا، مُسْتَقِيْم – ضَلَال

Discussion

A semantic analysis of Surah Al-Mulk reveals a diversity of meanings in the word choices employed in the verses. By applying the semantic approach, elements such as diction, polysemy, synonymy, and antonymy are identified, all of which reinforce the impression of monotheism in its verses. The following presents the findings and discussion of the analysis:

Diction

In Surah Al-Mulk, several words exhibit unique diction, including:

1. سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ

Lexically, the word سَبْعَ in *Kamus Al-Munawwir* is defined as "seven", and سَمَاوَاتٍ is the plural form of سَمَاءٌ, which is defined as "كُلَّ مَا عَلَاكَ" (everything that is above you) (Munawir, 1997).

Contextually, this phrase is understood by some scholars as referring to the planets in the solar system other than Earth that were within human perception and knowledge at the time of the Qur'an's revelation (Shihab, 2007). Meanwhile, it is mentioned that the phrase سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ implies the creation of the layered and orderly heavens as a sign of Allah's power, knowledge, and wisdom without imbalance since the cosmic system is entirely governed by Him (Katsir, 2024).

The uniqueness of the phrase سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ lies in its deliberate and expansive diction. It not only states a quantity but also suggests the orderliness and perfection of creation. In this context, the mention of "seven heavens" emphasizes the doctrine of tawḥīd, that only Allah is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. The heavens, perfectly structured and free of flaws, reflect the perfection of His creation and affirm Allah's oneness and majesty as the sole Being who governs the universe without any partner (Katsir, 2024).

2. كَرَّةٌ

Lexically, the word كَرَّةٌ in *Kamus Al-Munawwir* is defined as "a return of something, counterattack, turn, rotation, or repetition" (Munawir, 1997).

Contextually, it is explained that the use of the word مَرَّةُ and its dual form مَرَّتَيْن indicates the meaning of "twice," not "many times." Although كَرَّتَيْن linguistically means "multiple times," the scholars interpret it as "two times." This meaning refers to one observation to see the beauty of Allah's creation and another to examine its harmony and orderliness (Shihab, 2007). Meanwhile, it is also interpreted that كَرَّتَيْن means "twice again in confusion," meaning repeating and increasing, vision after vision (Al-Maragi, 1993). Imam Qatadah also explained that كَرَّتَيْن means two observations with more scrutiny and emphasized that this repetition further clarifies the majesty of Allah's creation (Katsir, 2024).

The semantic uniqueness of the word كَرَّتَيْن not only indicates "twice" but also gives an impression of intensive repetition vision after vision which emphasizes the futility of human attempts to find flaws in Allah's creation (Al-Maragi, 1993). This word shows a dense yet meaningful stylistic uniqueness, as the limited repetition still conveys awe towards the order of creation. In terms of monotheism, it reinforces the belief that even with repeated observation, Allah's creation remains perfect without deficiency, affirming that only Allah is Most Perfect in creating and governing the universe (Katsir, 2024).

3. عَذَابٌ أَلِيْمٌ – عَذَاب السَّعِيْر

Lexically, the word عَذَابٌ in *Kamus Al-Munawwir* is defined as "punishment, torment, and suffering." While أَلِيْمٌ is defined as "painful, hurtful, sorrowful" (Munawir, 1997).

Allah says:

وَلَقَدْ زَيَّنَّا السَّمَآءَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصَابِيْحَ وَجَعَلْنٰهَا رُجُوْمًا لِّلشَّيٰطِيْنِ وَاَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابَ السَّعِيْرِ

"And We certainly beautified the nearest heaven with lamps, and We made them as missiles for the devils, and We have prepared for them the punishment of the blazing Fire."

Contextually, Katsir (2024) interpreted verse 5 that this disgrace is intended for the devils in the worldly life, and We have prepared for them the punishment of the blazing Fire in the Hereafter.

Lexically, the word السَّعِيْرُ in *Kamus Al-Munawwir* is interpreted as "the one that is blazing, burning, scorching" (Munawir, 1997).

Contextually, Al-Qarni interpreted the phrase عَذَاب السَّعِيْر as indicating a punishment that causes tremendous pain and suffering, both physically and spiritually, as a form of retribution for disbelievers who rejected faith (Al-Qarni, 2015).

The uniqueness of using the phrases عَذَابٌ أَلِيْمٌ and عَذَاب السَّعِيْر lies in the different forms of torment from the perspective of severity and the way the punishment is felt. عَذَاب السَّعِيْر depicts the punishment of Hell as extremely hot and terrifying (Al-Maragi, 1993). Meanwhile, عَذَابٌ أَلِيْمٌ emphasizes deep and tormenting pain (Al-Qarni, 2015). The choice of words leaves an impression on the concept of monotheism, that only Allah has the right to punish in accordance with human deeds.

4. الْغَيْظ

Lexically, the word الْغَيْظ in *Kamus Al-Munawwir* is defined as "extreme anger, burning rage, anger that is harbored in the heart" (Munawir, 1997).

Contextually, Al-Zamakhsyari (2009) explains that الْغَيْظ indicates a deeper and more intense rage compared to الْغَضَبُ, which is more evident in expressions and actions. Shihab (2007) adds that this word is chosen because it illustrates an outburst of anger that remains hidden, as if Hell is so furious it is about to explode (تَمَيَّزُ). This shows that Hell is not only a place of punishment but also seems to harbor hatred towards sinners.

The uniqueness of using the word الْغَيْظ presents a strong theological meaning. Hell is described not only as a place of torment but also as if it possesses its deep-seated anger and hatred toward the sinful. This portrayal emphasizes the tawḥīd teaching that only Allah has full authority to punish or forgive according to His will (Al-Zamakhsyari, 2009).

5. ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ – ضَلَالٍ كَبِيْرٍ

Lexically, the word ضَلَالٍ in *Kamus Al-Munawwir* is defined as "misguidance, straying from the path, or deviating from the truth." And the word كَبِيْرٍ is defined as "great, significant, old, or leader" (Munawir, 1997).

Contextually, Katsir (2024) interprets that Allah SWT mentions His justice upon His creations that He does not punish anyone without establishing proof and sending a messenger to them first. As mentioned in His statement:

وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّىٰ نَبْعَثَ رَسُولًا

"And We never punish until We have sent a Messenger" (QS. Al-Isra: 15).

Lexically, the word مُبِينٍ in *Kamus Al-Munawwir* is defined as "clear, manifest, obvious, or explaining" (Munawir, 1997).

Contextually, Shihab (2007) explains that when punishment comes, you will know which of the two groups was truly astray from the truth.

The use of the two forms of *"dalāl"* in Surah Al-Mulk reflects varying levels and characteristics of misguidance:

   a. ضَلَالٍ كَبِيْرٍ (great misguidance due to rejection after being warned)
   b. ضَلَالٍ مُبِيْنٍ (evident misguidance that cannot be denied once punishment arrives)

The uniqueness of using both ضَلَالٍ كَبِيْرٍ (verse 9) and ضَلَالٍ مُبِيْنٍ (verse 29) in Surah Al-Mulk displays a stylistic distinction in the degree and nature of deviation. ضَلَالٍ كَبِيْرٍ portrays significant misguidance that occurs after the arrival of divine messages, stressing Allah's justice in not punishing without warning (Katsir, 2024). On the other hand, ضَلَالٍ مُبِيْنٍ refers to obvious deviation that cannot be denied when the punishment comes (Shihab, 2007). This contrast reinforces the theological message that guidance and punishment are entirely within Allah's control. Every act of divine retribution is preceded by undeniable evidence and warning.

6. مَنَاكِب

Lexically, the word مَنَاكِب in *Kamus Al-Munawwir* is defined as "shoulders, sides, or edges of something" (Munawir, 1997).

Contextually, Shihab (2007) portrays مَنَاكِب as uneven terrain of the earth, like mountains and valleys, implying that seeking sustenance requires effort, not merely walking on flat land. And Al-Zuhayli (2013) interprets مَنَاكِب to emphasize the diverse topography of the earth that humans may explore to earn their livelihoods, different from جِهَاتٌ which merely denotes direction without geographical exploration. The use of this word also demonstrates that Allah created the earth with various terrains yet still suitable for habitation and benefit.

The uniqueness of the word مَنَاكِب in Surah Al-Mulk verse 15, meaning "corners" or "extremities," conveys a richer meaning than جِهَاتٌ which only means "directions." Semantically, the word choice reflects the grandeur of Allah's creation and reinforces the message of tawḥīd, that only Allah can create the earth with such complexity while maintaining its habitability for human life.

7. أَفْئِدَةٌ

Lexically, the word أَفْئِدَةٌ in *Kamus Al-Munawwir* is the plural of فُؤَادٌ, which means "heart or core" (Munawir, 1997).

Contextually, Shihab (2007) explains that the word أَفْئِدَةٌ is chosen because it encompasses both intellectual and emotional levels in comprehending and reflecting upon Allah's creation, unlike قَلْبٌ, which focuses more on spiritual levels as the center of faith. Al-Zuhayli (2013) adds that أَفْئِدَةٌ relates to wisdom and deep understanding. It is mention alongside السَّمْعُ (hearing) and البَصَرُ (sight) shows the cognitive functions of humans in perceiving truth, not just emotional or spiritual belief as represented by قَلْبٌ.

The uniqueness of the word أَفْئِدَةٌ in Surah Al-Mulk as opposed to قَلْبٌ lies in its encompassing of both intellectual and emotional capacities, reason that contemplates, and a heart that feels. Unlike قَلْبٌ, which emphasizes spiritual faith alone, أَفْئِدَةٌ portrays the intellect's role in grasping the truth (Al-Zuhayli, 2013). From a theological perspective, this affirms the *tawḥīd* message: only Allah grants humans intellect, emotions, and senses as tools to recognize His greatness and oneness.

8. تُحْشَرُونَ

Lexically, the word تُحْشَرُونَ in *Kamus Al-Munawwir* is the passive present verb *(fi'il mudhāri' majhūl)* derived from the verb حَشَرَ – يَحْشِرُ, which means "to gather, to mobilize, or to assemble" (Munawir, 1997).

Contextually, Al-Zuhayli (2013) explains that this word conveys a terrifying and unavoidable gathering, unlike the semantically similar word تُجْمَعُونَ, which is more neutral. Meanwhile, Al-Zamakhsyari (2009) emphasizes that the use of تُحْشَرُونَ indicates a grand and orderly congregation for accountability *(hisāb)*, reflecting Allah's majesty and justice.

The uniqueness of the word تُحْشَرُونَ in Surah Al-Mulk, instead of using تُجْمَعُونَ lies in the fact that تُجْمَعُونَ denotes a regular gathering. Semantically, the use of تُحْشَرُونَ intensifies the nuance of threat and seriousness of the Day of Judgment, underscoring the tawḥīd message that only Allah has absolute authority to summon all of humanity to His judgment.

Polysemy

In Surah Al-Mulk, several words carry more than one meaning, including:

1. يَدٌ

Lexically, the word اليَدُ in *Kamus Al-Munawwir* not only means "hand", but also الْقُدْرَةُ وَالسُّلْطَانُ وَالْقُوَّةُ, which means "power, authority, strength" (Munawir, 1997).

Contextually, Shihab (2007) explains that the word بِيَدِهِ comes from يَدٌ meaning "hand," which, when attributed to Allah, implies "power" or "blessing." This phrase emphasizes that Allah has full control over everything and has the right to bestow and withdraw authority (QS. Ali-Imran: 26). Meanwhile, Al-Zuhayli (2013) interprets the phrase بِيَدِهِ الْمُلْكُ as indicating that Allah is an absolute king with independent power. This verse emphasizes Allah's authority, sovereignty, and His continuous management of His dominion.

The uniqueness of the word يَدَ lies in its lexical meaning "hand" but in the context of the verse, it transforms into "power." These two meanings remain related, as "hand" is often associated with the ability to manage and control. The phrase بِيَدِهِ الْمُلْكُ shows that all power is under the complete control of Allah. This choice of diction adds expressive force to the verse and reinforces the impression of monotheism, asserting that only Allah has the right to govern and manage the universe. This is confirmed by Shihab (2007), who notes that يَدٌ means "power" or "blessing"and by Al-Zuhayli (2013), who states that the phrase بِيَدِهِ الْمُلْكُ reflects monotheism, showing that Allah is the sole ruler who governs His dominion absolutely and continuously.

2. مَصَابِيْحَ

Lexically, the word مَصَابِيْحَ in *Kamus Al-Munawwir* is defined as "lamps, lanterns, lights" (Munawir, 1997).

Contextually, Shihab (2007) interprets the word مَصَابِيْحَ as a metaphor for the stars that adorn the sky. This usage implies that the stars resemble lamps that shine and illuminate the night's darkness. Al-Maragi (1993), in his tafsir, states that مَصَابِيْحَ is the plural of مِصْبَاحٌ, which means السِّرَاجُ (lamp or light), and what is meant here are the stars. Katsir (2024) adds that مَصَابِيْحَ refers to the stars placed above, whether revolving or fixed. The following verse وَجَعَلْنَاهَا رُجُوما لِّلشَّيَاطِيْنِ the pronoun هَا refers back to مَصَابِيْحَ, though not to each star, as they are not hurled. Rather, the shooting stars are fiery balls beneath them, sometimes originating from their fragments.

The uniqueness of the word مَصَابِيْحَ in Surah Al-Mulk verse 5 lies in its multiple interrelated meanings. Lexically, it means "lamps," but in the verse's context, it refers to stars that radiate light in the night sky. The connection between the two meanings lies in their shared function as sources of illumination. The word choice not only enhances the Qur'anic stylistic power, but also reinforces the monotheistic message that the beauty and order of the sky are proof of Allah's greatness and authority as the Creator.

3. ذَلُوْلًا

Lexically, the verb تَذَلَّلَ – يَتَذَلَّلَ in *Kamus Al-Munawwir* is defined as خضع وتواضع: "to submit, to humble oneself" (Munawir, 1997).

Contextually, Katsir (2024) states that the word ذَلُوْلًا in this verse means "subjugated" or "easy to traverse." Allah made the Earth easy to inhabit, cultivate, and settle for

humans. Unlike other planets that are difficult or impossible to live on, the Earth has resources that humans can benefit from. The word ذَلُولًا implies that the Earth was created in a condition suitable for human activity. Humans can walk on its surface, construct buildings, plant crops, and gain various benefits without significant hardship (Al-Qarni, 2015). In *Tafsir Jāmi' li Aḥkām Al-Qur'ān*, the use of the word ذَلُولًا indicates that the Earth is not hard or rough, making it difficult to live on, but rather stable and submissive to humans. This allows people to dwell on it comfortably and safely (Al-Qurtubi, 2010).

The uniqueness of the word ذَلُولًا in this verse lies in its expanded meaning from "submissive" to "an earth that is subdued for humans." This semantic expansion highlights the close relationship between the word and its contextual usage. As Katsir (2024) explains, the Earth is made easy to explore and benefit from. Al-Qarni (2015) emphasizes that humans can engage in activity on it without major difficulty and Al-Qurtubi (2010) notes that the earth is made stable and not harsh. This meaning also conveys a monotheistic message, showing that it is Allah who created the Earth with all its ease as an expression of His mercy and authority over human life.

Synonymy

Words that exhibit synonymy in the verses on monotheism in Surah Al-Mulk include:

1. خَلَقَ – جَعَلَ

Lexically, the word خَلَقَ in *Kamus Al-Munawwir* is defined as "to create, to make." And the word جَعَلَ means "to make, to create, to place, to set, to elevate" (Munawir, 1997).

Contextually, Katsir (2024) interprets that death and life are creations of Allah, not things that emerged independently. The word خَلَقَ indicates that both were created directly, as part of a test for humans to see who performs the best deeds. Shihab (2007) explains that the word جَعَلَ here shows functional arrangement, not creation. That is, the earth had already been created, then it was made smooth, spread out, and usable for humans, a form of arrangement so that humans can benefit from it safely and comfortably.

The uniqueness of the word between خَلَقَ and جَعَلَ is explained by Al-Zuhayli (2013), who states that the difference demonstrates the precision of word choice in the Qur'an. Allah uses خَلَقَ for things purely created by His power, and جَعَلَ to indicate arrangement or adjustment of creation for human benefit. Therefore, it would not be appropriate to say خَلَقَ الأرض in this context, because the emphasis is not on the process of creation, but on its function for humans after creation. This lexical difference not only shows the semantic depth but also strengthens the impression of monotheism, that the creation and arrangement of the universe are entirely under Allah's authority.

Antonymy

Words that exhibit antonymy in the verses on monotheism in Surah Al-Mulk include:

1. المَوْت – الحَيَاة

Lexically, the word المَوْت in *Kamus Al-Munawwir* is the verbal noun (maṣdar) of the word مَاتَ - يَمُوْثُ – مَوْثًا, which means "death," and the word الحَيَاة means "life, living" (Munawir, 1997).

Contextually, Al-Maragi (1993) interprets that mentioning the word الْمَوْت before الْحَيَاة indicates that humans originally came from a state of nonexistence.

The uniqueness in the usage of الْمَوْت and الْحَيَاة in this verse lies in their antonymous meaning, where the existence of death is understood through life, and vice versa. This relationship reinforces the impression of monotheism, that only Allah has the power to create, give life, and cause death. The pairing of life and death also signifies Allah's absolute authority over the destiny of His creation and shows that the entire life cycle is within His grasp. Thus, using onopposing words strengthens the message of faith that no one but Allah can govern life and death (Al-Maragi, 1993).

2. السَّمَاءُ – الأَرْضُ

Lexically, the word السَّمَاءُ in *Kamus Al-Munawwir* is defined as كلَّ مَا عَلاَكَ, meaning "everything above you," and the word الأَرْضُ is defined as "earth, land, or terrain" (Munawir, 1997).

Contextually, Katsir (2024) interprets that the mention of السَّمَاءُ and الأَرْضُ in Surah Al-Mulk affirms the vastness of Allah's power in creating and managing the universe. Allah mentions the heavens and the earth to demonstrate that all of creation, from the highest to the lowest, is under His perfect authority and governance, without flaw or deficiency.

The unique use of السَّمَاءُ and الأَرْضُ in this verse is explained by Al-Zuhayli (2013), who states that السَّمَاء – الأَرْض are understood as symbols of two complementary realms of creation: above and below, inaccessible and accessible, serving as evidence of Allah's power. This strengthens the monotheistic impression that Allah alone is the creator and manager of the entire universe, both in the heavens and on earth. Thus, the meaning functions as a rhetorical style and a reminder of Allah's greatness and dominion over everything.

3. أَسِرُّوا – اجْهَرُوا

Lexically, the word أَسِرُّوا in *Kamus Al-Munawwir* derives from أَسَرَّ – يُسِرُّ – إِسْرَارًا, meaning "to conceal, to hide, or to whisper." While اجْهَرُوا comes from جَهَرَ – يَجْهَرُ – جَهْرًا, which means "to say aloud, to voice, or to express publicly" (Munawir, 1997).

Contextually, Shihab (2007) interprets that whether you conceal your speech or proclaim it, both are the same to Allah, for He knows everything hidden in the heart. Katsir (2024) also interprets that Allah reminds humans that He sees all matters of the heart and secrets: "And whether you keep your discourse secret or make it public, indeed, He is Knowing of that within the breasts" (QS. Al-Mulk: 13). That is, whatever is stirred and kept within the heart.

The uniqueness of the words أَسِرُّوا and اجْهَرُوا, both imperative verbs (*fi'il amr*), lies in their indication of the act of expression rather than a command, as Katsir (2024) interprets that this is a declaration from Allah that He knows all things, both hidden and open, even what lies within the chest. These two words exhibit antonymy, but are considered equal before Allah. This reflects the impression of monotheism, that Allah knows all human utterances, whether hidden or revealed, because His knowledge is unlimited.

4. مُسْتَقِيْمٌ – ضَلَالٌ

Lexically, the word مُسْتَقِيْمٌ in *Kamus Al-Munawwir* is an active participle (*ism fā'il*) from استقام-يستقيم, which means "the right path." Meanwhile, ضَلَالٌ is defined as "error, deviation from truth or religious guidance" (Munawir, 1997).

Contextually, Katsir (2024) explains that these two words signify human paths's differences. مُسْتَقِيْم means straight or correct, while ضَلَالٌ means misguided. Al-Qarni (2015) elaborates on the use of مُسْتَقِيْمٌ and ضَلَالٌ, clarifying the absolute difference between those who walk in truth (faith in Allah and His guidance) and those in misguidance (rejecting His guidance and associating partners with Him).

The uniqueness of مُسْتَقِيْمٌ and ضَلَالٌ in this verse lies in their antonymic relationship, which is not only lexical but also conveys profound theological meaning. Allah is described as the sole being who guides to the straight path, while also possessing the power to lead astray those who turn away (Al-Qarni, 2015). Therefore, this antonymy emphasizes that only by following Allah's guidance can one walk the straight path, and those who reject it will fall into misguidance. This reinforces the understanding that guidance is a divine prerogative, and success in following the right path is a manifestation of one's submission to Him.

Conclusion

The semantic level in Surah Al-Mulk plays a significant role in conveying the message of monotheism. Through the analysis of polysemy, synonymy, and antonymy, it becomes clear that the diction employed in the verses related to divine unity is intentional and meticulously chosen. These lexical choices do not merely communicate literal meanings but reinforce the broader theological themes of God's sovereignty, oneness, justice, and His authority in creation, regulation, and retribution.

This study highlights the eloquence and depth of the Qur'anic language. The stylistic beauty of Surah Al-Mulk not only captivates on a literary level but also facilitates a deeper comprehension of its message. Such findings affirm that Qur'anic verses, particularly those emphasizing *tawḥīd*, carry a unique linguistic power that resonates with the intellect and the heart. As such, this research underscores the relevance of semantic analysis in Qur'anic studies and reveals how divine messages are delivered through language that is both purposeful and profound.

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