Wealth Collector in Surah Al-Humazah
(A Review of Ferdinand De Saussure's Semiotics)

Pengumpul Harta Dalam Surat Al-Humazah
(Tinjauan Semiotika Ferdinand De Saussure)

Ismi Wakhidatul Hikmah
UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta
ismi.wakhidatul@gmail.com

Maulana Yusup
UIN Raden Intan Lampung
maulana.yusup1797@gmail.com

Muhammad Nur Alif
Ma’had Ali Miftahul Khair Lampung
muhamadnuralif28@gmail.com

Received: 25-03-2022   Revised: 11-05-2023   Accepted: 15-05-2023

Abstract

This paper examines the wealth collector in Surah al-Humazah, where they frequently disregard their obligation to worship God and are continually focused on multiplying their riches until they believe all they acquire could make them eternal. They believe they have abundant wealth, so they easily belittle others. This study employed a literature review method based on
Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic theory approach. The stages of the approach are syntagmatic analysis, paradigmatic analysis, binary opposition, and history confirmation. According to the findings of this study, there is coherence between verses in the Surah al-Humazah when using syntagmatic analysis. Second, wealth collectors are those with immoral tendencies who like to curse and blame. Also, they believe that their fortune would be able to eternalize them, making them hesitant to share. Hence, they threatened with hell huthamah. Furthermore, Surah al-Humazah has a secret message for every Muslim to practice social charity to create harmony among individuals in society.

Keywords: al-Humazah; Binary opposition; Paradigmatic; syntagmatic.

A. Introduction

Working to meet everyday necessities is crucial for everyone, especially the family's head. Unsurprisingly, everyone is fighting to amass a large amount of riches for their future
survival. Everyone is focused on buying food, diapers, children's milk, school fees, health expenditures, buying houses, motorcycles, automobiles, pension funds, and other necessities. Various jobs are performed, including online commerce, which became popular during the Covid-19 pandemic.¹ People also pursue professions, such as teachers, doctors, builders, traders, parking attendants, and any other employment that pays well. Not only do adults labor, but 2.3 million Indonesian youngsters aged 7 to 14 work to aid their families' finances.² This phenomenon demonstrates that wealth is necessary, and everyone wants as much as possible. When wealth is already in hand and amounts to a lot, some individuals are careless and boast about it to humble, blame, and curse those below them.

Surah al-Humazah greatly condemns individuals who are so preoccupied with amassing riches that they forget about life after death. An overly ambitious person in terms of riches becomes careless and discontented with what he has. He aims to amass as much wealth as possible without distributing it to those in need while abusing and reproaching those beneath him. He believes that because he is wealthy, he is honorable, whereas impoverished people have the right to be humiliated.³ Many individuals today only think about their work without thinking about their prayers, who only think about money without wanting to donate zakat to the poor, who collect money without having rest, which accumulates money only to be spent on vain activities, and so on.

The Qur'an mentions this phenomenon specifically in Surah al-Humazah, yet, the discussion is less explicit. It is still


³ Hamka, Tafsir Al-Azhar, Jilid. 10 (Singapura: Pustaka Nasional LTD, 1982), 8107.
extremely generic to mention wealth collectors. This study intended to discover more about the wealth collector mentioned in Surah al-Humazah using the literature review method with a semiotic theory approach from Ferdinand de Saussure. This topic has never been studied before, so it is interesting to study further. Furthermore, this research is projected to be a new insight for the reader, after which the author hopes that the reader recognizes what wealth collector means in Surah al-humazah through the point of view of Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic theory.

Based on the background of the problem, this study's purpose was to thoroughly explore Surah al-Humazah utilizing Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotics approach. The first stage was to conduct a syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis of Surah al-Humazah. According to Saussure, meaning can be discovered through sign selection and combination with syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis. Linear combinations of signs generate syntagmatic sentences, but paradigmatic sentences focus on the region of signs (such as synonyms) by picking all available signs.\(^4\) Syntagmatic analysis in Surah al-Humazah is to investigate the linear relationship between variables in Surah al-Humazah. Applying paradigmatic analysis in this research tries to discover the meaning next to the words in the Surah al-Humazah.

The binary opposition was the next stage in analyzing Surah al-Humazah. The binary opposition is an antonym or opposite word between two variables that reveals the worldview of Surah al-Humazah. The final step was to present historical facts concerning the period and place when Surah al-Humazah was originally disclosed. This stage is founded on the idea that society forms the social truths of language. Hence the meaning to be studied in Surah al-Humazah is based on the use of language during the Jahiliyyah period. It will be contextualized in the

present age based on the meaning established during the Jahiliyyah period.5

B. Semiotic in Al-Qur’an

Ferdinand De Saussure was born on November 26, 1857, in Geneva. He was born into a well-known family in his hometown. Because of his accomplishment in the field of linguistics, he was dubbed the "Father of Linguistics,"6 because he hailed from a well-known family in his hometown. Ferdinand De Saussure is a philosopher who has impacted linguistic and semiotic theory. Ferdinand De Saussure and Emile Durkheim were born contemporaries. Despite his young age, he already had numerous works in the language field in the form of papers or essays.7

Besides Saussure (1857-1913), Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) invented the phrase modern semiotics. These two figures have significantly impacted linguistics and semiotics, with each having different conceptions, such as Saussure's concept of sign and signifier and Pierce's concept of sign, object, and interpretant.8

Saussure is well-known for his sign and signifier system but never published a book. Instead, whenever there is a lecture or public lecture, the notes from his discussion description are captured by students and then formed into an outline. A book titled Course in General Linguistics is one of the works that has

been issued. The work then proved extremely influential in the subject of language or linguistics. The term "structuralism" refers to this work.9

Ferdinand De Saussure's concept includes the signifier (signifier, signifiant, semaion) and the signifier (signified, signifier, seminoma), individual speech (parole) and general language (langue), syntagmatic and paradigmatic, diachrony and synchrony.10

C. Syntagmatic Analysis

The first stage in analyzing Surah al-Humazah is to construct syntagmatic relationships, which are relationships established in the chain of an utterance. This relationship is commonly referred to as in presentia because the elements connected are related to speech. A syntagm is a series with distinct boundaries that consists of at least two parts. This piece could be a phoneme, syllable, morpheme, word, phrase, or something else.11 Thus, syntagmatic research can be conducted in the presence of whole sentences linked or cohesive between one word and another.

Syntagmatism includes syntactic fact, which is the grouping of words in the syntagma in which at least two words are in one space.12 As a result, while analyzing Surah al-Humazah, the author employed a syntactic technique to aid in dissecting the syntagmatic link in Surah al-Humazah to determine the relationship between one word and another.

وَيْلٌ لِّكُل ِّهُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍٍۙ، الَّذِّيْ جَمَعَ مَالًا وَّعَدَّدَه ٍۙ، يَحْسَبُ اَنَّ مَالَ ه ٗٓ اَخْلَدَه ٗۚ، كَلََّّ لَيُنْْۢبَذَنَّ فِّى
الْحُطَمَةِِّۖ ، وَمَاٗٓ اَدْرٰىكَ مَا الْحُطَمَةُ ۗ، نَارُ اللّٰهِّ الُُّْوْقَدَةٍُۙ، الَّتِّيْ تَطَّلِّعُ عَلَى الًَْفْـِٕدَةِّۗ، اِّنَّهَا عِلْمٌ م مؤْصَدَةٍٍۙ، فِّي عَمَدٍ مممَدَّدَةٍ

“Woe to every backbiter, slanderer, who amasses wealth greedily and counts it repeatedly. Thinking that their wealth will make
them immortal! No! He will surely be thrown into the Crusher. And what can make you know what is the Crusher? It is the fire of Allah, [eternally] fueled. Which mounts directed at the hearts. Indeed, hellfire will be closed down upon them in extended columns.” (QS. al-Humazah/104: 1-9)

In the first verse, the word (ويل) wail is a mustada’ of nakirah. This word includes in isim ma’rifah and لَّكَنُ هُمَزَةُ is the khabar. The word لَّكَنُ is the badal of the word humazah. In the second verse, the word المَالَا which can be made rafa’ because it is the Khabar of the omitted mustada.’ The word مَالَا takes the form of nakirah and utilizes tanwin with the nun sound. However, the pronunciation of the sound is not clarified because it is included in the pronunciation of the letter, و which is the initial letter in the next word. In the third verse, the word أَخْلَدُ shows a past verb (madhi) but has a future meaning (mudhari).

In the fourth verse, the word نَبَذَنْ is derived from nabadza, which is paired with lam which functions as an amplifier. This word contains the fathah of the letter dzal, originally sukun because it is fi’il mu’dhri’ with nun tawkid. The letter dzal is given a harakat because of the meeting of two sukuns. It uses fathah because it is the lightest harakat. At the fifth verse, وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحُطَمَةُ is a question form to ask about الحطمة. This verse is an istifham sentence aimed at tafhim (exaggerate) and tahwil (scare). In the sixth verse, the phrase نَارُ اللَِّلّٰ الُُّْوقَدَةُ is the answer to the previous statement. Idhafah نَار is the isim jalalah of the word المُوقَدَةُ is the isim maf’ul.

In the seventh verse, the word النَّارِ is the na’at of the word nar. The word تَطَّلِّعُ of the word wazan تَفتعل and فاعل تفعل of the word النار is تَطَّلِّعُ. The phrase على الأُلَفِّيدَةُ النار is a word bound with تَطَّلِّعُ. In the

---

16 Muhammad Thohir Ibnu Asyur, Tafsir at-Tahrir wa at-Tanwir, Juz III (Tunisia: Jam’i’ huku’ al-thob’I Mahfudhah, 1984), 541.
17 Ad-Darwisy, Al-I’rabu Al-Qur’ani al-Karimi wa Bayanuhu, 410.
ninth verse, the word عَمَدٍ is the fathkah of ain and dzal, which means isim jama'.

D. Paradigmatic Analysis

The next stage in analyzing Surah al-Humazah is to look at a paradigmatic relationship, which is a language-based relationship that may be seen when comparing one phrase to another. In other words, this relationship will present another meaning of an adjacent sentence. To determine the paradigmatic meaning of Surah al-Humazah, the process of revealing paradigmatic relationships was aided by reference to works of tafsir published by Muslim scholars.

Wail, according to Quraish Shihab, is a condition that depicts sadness, tragedy, and dishonor. Others think that wail is a valley in hell. Wahbah az-Zuhaili defines wail as loss and painful punishment intended to cause remorse and humiliation. Humazah can be identified by gossiping and opposing human pride and glory. Lumazah means insulting, and it is mainly done using gestures of the eyes, brows, hands, and head to humiliate individuals. Shihab went on to say that humazah is both a powerful pressure and an encouragement. According to Shihab, the definition of humazah evolved from pushing others with the tongue or saying to gossip, swear, or blame. Today's meaning is derived from gossip. Lumazah is a form of ridicule that includes laughter. According to Muqatil, a humazah is someone who backbites people, whereas a lumazah is someone who insults people in front of them. Ibn Abbas further stated that humazah and lumazah are persons who enjoy insulting and criticizing others.

According to the first verse's explanation, the author is more inclined to choose the meaning of wail with painful

18 az-Zuhaili, Tafsir Al-Munir, 667.
21 Shihab, Tafsir Al-Misbah, 151.
22 az-Zuhaili, Tafsir Al-Munir, 667.
24 az-Zuhaili, Tafsir Al-Munir, 668.
punishment since it has a larger connotation that depicts despair, woe, loss, and dishonor. The author still believes that the customary use of the Qur'an translation is an accident. While *humazah* is associated with swearing, *lumazah* is associated with reproach. As a result, the author's interpretation tends to be a terrible retribution for people who gossip or swear and those who attack or disparage.

In the second verse, the word جَمَعَ مَالًا means hoarding abundance of wealth. Shihab states that مَالًا means inclined or pleased. The scholars of *tafsir* also interpreted the word مَالًا as a lot of wealth or a little wealth. The word عَدَّدَهُُ is derived from عَدَّ, meaning counting, diversifying, or preparing. This word is related to the first verse, i.e., the mockers and despisers diligently diversify their wealth, are very fond of their wealth, and are very stingy. The word عَدَّدَهُُ is explained in Tafsir al-Munir as counting them one by one because they wish to cherish them or make their wealth a preparation for possible futures.

Based on the explanation, الَّذِّي جَمَعَ مَالًا وَعَدَّدَهُ means someone who fond of counting, diversifying, or preparing his wealth. The author was inclined to define عَدَّدَهُُ as diversifying wealth because it incorporates all of the meanings associated with a person's attempts to achieve wealth diversity by counting, collecting, and preparing riches so that his wealth becomes diversified.

In the third verse, the word يَحْسَبُ means presuming by ignorance, and the word أَخْلَدَهُُ means eternal. Therefore, يَحْسَبُ أَن مَالَهُ أَخْلَدَهُ means that swearers and detractors who think with ignorance that their wealth may make them eternal in the world and cannot destroy them.

In the fourth verse, the word كُلَا means never, لَيُنْبَذَن means that he must have been thrown with contempt and reproach. The word في الخَطْمَة means hellfire which is called *huthamah*, which means crusher. This type of hell destroys everything that is thrown into it. According to Tafsir al-Misbah, *hatama*, the origin of the word *huthamah*, implies destroyed; hence, *al-

26 *az-Zuhaili, Tafsir Al-Munir*, 667.
27 *az-Zuhaili*, 667.
28 *az-Zuhaili*, 667.
**Huthamah** is translated as crushing or demolishing. The explanation points out that means never, he will certainly be thrown with humiliation and reproach into the hell that breaks/crushes/destroys. The author prefers crusher because it encompasses the two meanings mentioned above.

In the fifth verse, is an interrogative sentence directed to the word . In the next verse, the word meaning the fire of Allah, implying that this fire is not ordinary but was created particularly for a specific purpose, and the phrase denotes that which burns. As explained above, the continuance of the fourth verse is stressed again in the fifth verse with a question regarding . This question is meant to scare and exaggerate. The sixth verse responds to the fifth verse , which refers to Allah's searing fire. This fire is not just any regular fire; it serves a specific purpose.

In the seventh verse, responses to the questions in the fifth verse. The word denotes fire that burns up to the heart (). Because the heart is the root of mistaken ideas and harmful behaviors, the fire will burn to the heart. In the eighth verse, the phrase means closed down upon them. In the ninth verse, which means extended columns. Muqatil says," The gates of hell have closed down upon them, and they are reinforced with iron columns; no door opens to them, and no air penetrates." In the seventh verse, means fire that burnt up to the heart. The next verse ( ) means the fire has closed down upon them. In the ninth verse, which means they are tied to extended columns.

### E. Binary Opposition

If paradigmatic analysis aims to show adjacent meanings, then binary opposition presents the opposite word. It departs from

---

29 Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah*, 156.
31 az-Zuhaili, 668–69.
the assumption that a word can be understood definitively from its opposite. The following is a table of binary opposition in Surah al-Humazah.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Binary Opposition</th>
<th>نَجَاحًا لَّكُنَّ خَامِدًا كَارِمًا</th>
<th>وَلَدًا لَّكُنَّ مُهْمِّزًا أَلْدَةً</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Woe to every backbiter and slanderer.</td>
<td>Fortunate is the one who speaks in a praiseworthy and noble manner.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who amasses wealth greedily and counts it repeatedly.</td>
<td>He who spends (infaq) and counts his wealth.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking that their wealth will make them immortal.</td>
<td>He does not believe that his wealth will eternalize him.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No! He will surely be thrown into the Huthamah (crusher)</td>
<td>Surely he will indeed be admitted to Paradise.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And what can make you know what the Crusher is?</td>
<td>And do you know what Paradise is?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is the fire of Allah,</td>
<td>That is the Paradise of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Surah al-Humazah in Binary Opposition
[eternally] fueled. Allah, under which rivers flow.

Which mounts directed at the hearts That soothes the heart.

Indeed, hellfire will be closed down upon them. Verily, Paradise is opened wide for them

In extended columns. And they are in the highest Paradise.

Tabel 2. Arti surah al-Humazah dalam oposisi Biner

The author intends to reveal the meaning of the binary opposition of Surah al-Humazah. The author used binary opposition to reveal the viewpoint or worldview to uncover the hidden meaning or goal of Surah al-Humazah or reveal the desire that Surah al-Humazah intends to express to the world.

In this article, the author talked about the wealth collector in Surah al-Humazah. The collector of wealth described in Surah al-Humazah is (1) a swearer and a detractor, (2) collects wealth and counts it, (3) believes that his wealth can eternalize him, and (4) as a punishment for his behavior, he will be thrown into Hutamah, where the fire burns to the heart and the fire is closed down upon them and they are tied to extended columns.

This is similar to what Hamka wrote in his tafsir, that the collector of wealth who always counts his possessions but denounces, insults, vilifies others, swears, gossips, then individuals like this his life is of no benefit, and he will be placed in hell. Hell is the appropriate abode for him, and that hell is known as hell hutamah.32

Surah al-Humazah's binary opposition suggests that a collector of wealth should behave (1) praiseworthy and noble, (2) spends wealth and counts it (to be spent), (3) he does not believe that the wealth he has will last him, and (4) he will be included in a paradise where rivers flow down to the heart. The Paradise is wide open for them, and they are in a high paradise.

32 Hamka, Tafsir Al-Azhar, 8108.
According to the explanation above, the worldview of Surah al-Humazah is that a wealth collector should have good manners in speaking and a humble mindset so that he does not readily underestimate others with his words. He is commanded to give away his fortune to the poor, orphans, and other persons in need. This value teaches that it is necessary to behave well and be charitable to others. It is not justified for a wealth collector to be so preoccupied with the world that he forgets the precepts taught in Islam, particularly in Surah al-Humazah.

A person who adheres to the ideas of Surah al-Humazah will be saved by Allah and bestowed with an incomparably pleasing reward, namely Paradise, where rivers flow wide open for individuals who are noble and do good deeds. A person who disregards Surah al-Humazah's warnings will suffer later because the place they belong is the hell named **hutomah**.

Surah al-Humazah is applicable in our day and age. Its messages instruct humans to constantly have excellent values and to share with others, resulting in a community that is harmonious and works together. Those are the meanings of the Qur'an's binary opposition to human affairs. Thus, a wealth collector is separated into two types: one who likes to curse and blame because he feels richer or more than others due to his position. He merely hoards wealth without sharing. The second is a wealth collector with a positive attitude and a calculated plan to spend his riches in Allah's way.

**F. Historical Facts**

In this section, the author investigated the history of Surah al-Humazah by referring to the worldview with sociocultural data to understand the circumstances that transpired when this Surah al-Humazah was revealed. The author refers to tafsir books or publications examining historical details about when the Qur'an verse was revealed, known as **asbab nuzul**.

To investigate the asbab nuzul of Surah al-Humazah, the author consults Ibn Munzir, who quotes Ibn Isaac as saying, "Whenever Umayyah bin Khalaf met the Messenger of Allah, he always insulted and abused the Messenger of Allah." Then Allah revealed these words completely." This is a harsh punishment for
individuals who share these beliefs and behave accordingly. "It is still fresh in our ears that this verse (QS. 104: 1-2) was revealed in connection with Ubay bin Khalaf, a wealthy Quraysh leader who always mocked and insulted the Messenger of Allah with his wealth," Usman and Ibnu Umar remarked in another narration.  

As-Suddi told Ibn Abi Hatim that this Surah, verses 1-3, was revealed in conjunction with Al-Akhnas bin Shariq, who continually mocked and swore at people. The verses were presented to condemn such behavior. Verses 1-3 were revealed concerning Jamil bin Amir al-Jumbi, a polytheist who always derided and abused people, according to another narrative related by Ibn Jarir from a member of the tribe of Riqqa.

G. Conclusion

From the initial analysis to the end, this study discovered that, first, the Surah al-Humazah contains coherence from the first verse to the last, as proven by syntagmatic analysis. Second, the people who amass wealth in Surah al-Humazah tend to curse and blame their neighbors. They have poor morals and undervalue those around them. Furthermore, they are solely concerned with accumulating their fortune and do not consider the people around them who need assistance. They even believe that their wealth will allow them to live forever in the world. As a result, they are threatened with hell huthamah. Third, Surah al-Humazah contains a secret meaning: every Muslim has high morals through uttering praiseworthy and honorable things to others and the command to spend their wealth in Allah's way so that they receive high divine compensation for carrying out what Allah has told them. Furthermore, this Surah conveys a reminder to every Muslim to practice social charity in everyday life so that there is harmony among individuals in society.

33 Jalaluddin as-Suyuthi, Asbabun Nuzul: Sebab Turunnya Ayat al-Qur’an, trans. oleh Tim Abdul Hayyie (Jakarta: Gema Insani, 2009), 640.
35 Shaleh, Dahlan, dan Dkk, 610.
References


