





















offered by Cuypers, like interpreting surah al-'Alaq verse 1 on the word "iqra!" as a call to prayer, is not a proper interpretation since it ignores *asbâb al-nuzûl*, the hadith of the Prophet, and the etymological meaning. These three elements are the primary sources in the process of interpreting the Qur'an.<sup>66</sup>

For example, in *iqra*'s interpretation, Aishah narrated that Jibril came to the Prophet in the cave of Hira' who was worshipping and Jibril said: *iqra*! Then the Prophet said: *Mâ ana bi Qâri*' (I cannot read). This conversation repeated three times until Jibril read verses 1-5 in surah al-'Alaq. If *iqra*' means a call to prayer or worship, as Cuypers explained, this is illogical because the Prophet was worshipping at that time, so there was no need for orders to worship. Besides that, the Prophet's answer indicated that Jibril's command was to read, not to worship. If *iqra*' interpreted as a call to worship, then the Prophet's answer should also be "I cannot worship," but his answer was "I cannot read" since the word *qâri*' in the Prophet's answer is *ism al-fâ'il* (subject form) from the verb *iqra*' (to read). In conclusion, that was not a call to prayer or worship since the Prophet was worshipping and was known to be a worship expert.

Nevertheless, on the other hand, this model of interpretation through text structure has a unique feature as an interpretation by the al-Qur'an itself (*tafsîr al-Qur'ân bi al-Qur'ân*) which the interpretation of one verse refers to the description in other verses.<sup>67</sup> This interpretation model takes precedence over interpretation using information from the Sunnah, the words of *sahâbah* and *tâbi'in*, interpretation through Arabic language

rules, and interpretation through other sciences.<sup>68</sup>

Cuypers' interpretation model based on text structure is closely related to the science of occasions (*'ilm munâsabât*). This science discusses the relationship between sentences in verse, several verses, and chapters.<sup>69</sup> The aim is to deepen the meaning of verses and determine the unity of its meaning with other verses' meanings.

The achievement of meaning in this interpretation model uses word order indicators around it, or better known as *siyâq*. In the sciences of the Qur'an, there are three kinds of *siyâq*. *First*, indicators in the form of the surah contents from beginning to end; *second*, indicators in the form of several pieces of conversation in one surah; *third*, indicators in the form of words in a verse. The three of them affect the interpretation of a word or verse in the Qur'an.<sup>70</sup>

## Conclusion

Based on the point of view of *'ulûm al-Qur'ân*, the Semitic Rhetoric analysis method in the study of the Qur'anic text structure has many advantages and disadvantages. Among the advantages referred to is the emergence of new interpretations that utilize information in the Qur'an (*tafsîr al-Qur'ân bi al-Qur'ân*), indicators of word order around it (*siyâq*), and verse correlation (*munâsabât*). However, in some instances, such as the interpretation of surah al-'Alaq verse 1, Cuypers' interpretation contradicts the narration of *asbâb al-nuzûl* or the testimony of the Prophet's hadith. Both are compulsory in the Qur'anic interpretation, according to classical Muslim scholars.

This study found Cuypers' inconsistencies and subjectivity in dividing the texts based on Semitic Rhetoric principles. However, this study also found SRA's influence on the discourse of al-Qur'an's authenticity among orientalist. Those who do not believe in the authenticity of

<sup>66</sup> Al-Zarkasyî, *al-Burhân*, vol. 1, 22-35; al-Qaṭṭân, 75-99; 'Abd al-Rahmân al-Suyûṭî, *al-Itqân Fî 'Ulûm al-Qur'ân*, vol. 1 (Mesir: al-Hay'ah al-al-Mishriyyah 'Ammah Li al-Kitâb, 1974), 101-106; Muhammad al-Zurqânî, *Manâhil al-'Irfân Fî 'Ulûm al-Qur'ân*, vol. 1 (Aleppo: Maṭba'ah 'Îsâ al-Bâbi, n.d.), 106-137.

<sup>67</sup> Al-Zarkasyî, vol.2, 175; al-Qaṭṭân, 346.

<sup>68</sup> M. Ridwan Nasir, *Perspektif Baru Metode Tafsir Muqarin dalam Memahami al-Qur'an* (Surabaya: Imtiyaz, 2011), 11-12.

<sup>69</sup> Al-Qaṭṭân, 96.

<sup>70</sup> M. Quraish Shihab, 253-257.

the Qur'an, consider its composition to be random and irregular, and study its meaning based on non-Arabic languages, will find 'new opponents' in academia. Thus, Cuypers indirectly affirms the al-Qur'an's authenticity as found in the discourse of *'ulûm al-Qur'ân*.

Finally, this article has provided a different perspective from previous research on Semitic Rhetoric in studying the structure of Qur'anic text. This perspective has nothing to do with biblical studies, interreligious dialogue, racist theology, or structural linguistics. Nevertheless, it is purely from the Qur'anic sciences formulated by Muslim scholars for a long time. Hopefully, this study could give a brief direction to apply Cuypers' approach properly in analyzing Qur'anic structure and then interpret Qur'anic text correctly based on its structure.

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