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## تحليل دلالي معرفي للحروف المقطعة في القرآن الكريم

A Cognitive Semantic Analysis of AL-Huruf AL-Muqatta'ah in Glorious Qur'an

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**Republic of Iraq  
Ministry of Higher Education  
and Scientific Research  
Wasit University  
College of Education for Human Sciences  
Department of English**



## **A Cognitive Semantic Analysis of AL-Huruf AL-Muqatta'ah in Glorious Qur'an**

A thesis

Submitted to the Council of the College of Education for Human Sciences, Wasit University,  
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in English Language and  
Linguistics

By

**Ghufran Assim Mahmmud**

Supervised by

**Prof. Khalida Hashoosh Addai Alghezzy (PhD)**

**2026 A.D**

**1448 A.H**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

حم (١) وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ (٢) إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ (٣)

صَدَقَ اللَّهُ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ (سورة الزخرف: ٤٣)

*In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Compassionate Ha Mim (1) By the Book that  
makes things clear (2) We have made it a Qur'an in Arabic, that ye may be able to  
understand (and learn wisdom).*

**Al Zukhruf (The Gold Adornments,43) (Ali, 2004, P. 1263)**

***Almighty Allah, The Most High has told the truth***

### Supervisor's Certificate

I hereby certify that the thesis entitled (A Cognitive Semantic Analysis of AL-Huruf AL-Muqatta'ah in Glorious Qur'an) by (Ghufran Assim Mahmud) has been prepared under my supervision at the Department of English/ College of Education for Human Sciences/ Wasit University as a partial fulfilment for the requirements for the degree of Education in English Language and Linguistics.

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Date: \ \ 2026

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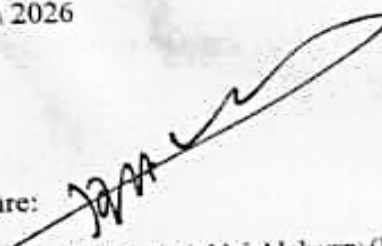
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Date: 8/9/2026

## DEDICATION

*To*

*The soul I never truly met, yet endlessly long to meet beyond this life; to my father, whose blood became the path through which I reached this journey.*

*To*

*The one who sacrificed her youth, her comfort, and her life so that we could stand strong; to my beloved mother.*

*To*

*The one who became my support, my strength, and my safe refuge throughout this difficult journey; to my dear husband.*

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## Abstract

The current study examines the Qur'anic disjointed letters (al-huruf al-muqatta'ah) within the framework of cognitive semantic perspective in order to investigate how they function within Qur'anic discourse beyond their traditional treatment as isolated lexical units. This study discusses the problem of explaining the role of these letters in meaning-making despite their apparent semantic indeterminacy. It aims to explore how al-huruf al-muqatta'ah serve as cognitive semantic opening cues, how discourse-level meaning is constructed through their interaction with the immediate co-text, and how readers' interpretive orientation is shaped during the process of comprehension. This study adopts a qualitative analytical approach and is mainly based on Fauconnier and Turner's (2002) Conceptual Blending Theory (CBT) alongside the updated version of Schema Theory developed by Rumelhart (1980) and Anderson (1984). The data consist of 14 selected Qur'anic openings containing al-huruf al-muqatta'ah, representing one-letter, two-letter combinations, and three or five-letter combinations. The key findings reveal that al-huruf al-muqatta'ah do not function as lexical units with fixed meanings, but rather as cognitively marked openings that organise interpretation and orient the reader towards the subsequent discourse. The analysis also reveals that meaning is generated through conceptual integration between the letters and the co-text, while schema activation orients the reader towards top-down interpretive processing. Therefore, the study concludes that al-huruf al-muqatta'ah play an important role in organising Qur'anic discourse at the cognitive and interpretive levels rather than at the level of isolated lexical meaning.

**Keywords:** cognitive semantics al-huruf al-muqatta'ah Conceptual Blending Theory (CBT) schema theory

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Cognitive Linguistics.....        | CL  |
| Cognitive Semantics.....          | CS  |
| Qualitative Content Analyses..... | QCA |
| Conceptual Blending Theory.....   | CBT |
| Conceptual Metaphor Theory.....   | CMT |

**Table 1.***Arabic Transliteration System*

| No. | Arabic Alphabet | Translation |
|-----|-----------------|-------------|
| 1-  | أ               | ā           |
| 2-  | ب               | b           |
| 3-  | ت               | t           |
| 4-  | ث               | th          |
| 5-  | ج               | j           |
| 6-  | ح               | ḥ           |
| 7-  | خ               | kh          |
| 8-  | د               | d           |
| 9-  | ذ               | dh          |
| 10- | ر               | r           |
| 11- | ز               | z           |
| 12- | س               | s           |
| 13- | ش               | sh          |
| 14- | ص               | Ṣ           |
| 15- | ض               | ḍ           |
| 16- | ط               | ṭ           |
| 17- | ظ               | Ẓ           |
| 18- | ع               | ‘           |
| 19- | غ               | gh          |
| 20- | ف               | f           |
| 21- | ق               | q           |
| 22- | ك               | k           |
| 23- | ل               | l           |
| 24- | م               | m           |
| 25- | ن               | n           |
| 26- | ه               | h           |
| 27- | و               | w           |
| 28- | ي               | ī           |
| 29- | ء               | ?           |

**Note.** Adapted from *Ethnosemantic, pragmatic, and textual analysis of kinship terms in Arabic and English discourse* (p. XIV), by Nakhilawi, H. A. M. (2016). Doctorate Thesis. University of Sains Malaysia.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1. Background to the Study

The Glorious Qur'an is one of the most revered texts in the Arabic-Islamic tradition owing to its highly structured nature, eloquent language, and distinctive mode of conveying messages from Almighty Allah to mankind, as highlighted by Stewart (2008). It is a structured medium of communicating messages from revelation to man's thoughts. In addition, the Glorious Qur'an is not only religious in nature but serves as an intermediate between revelations and man's understanding. According to Sharifian (2017), meaning is not an intrinsic property of text but rather a product of mental processing. This means that the Glorious Qur'an supports meaning construction of God's message and supports its interpretation. Its unique discourse has been studied by many scholars, who are fascinated by its ability to convey complex ideas in a clear and beautiful way. Exploring the Glorious Qur'an's language and structure allows for a deeper understanding of its message and significance. A key concern, then, is clarifying how such meanings are understood by the human mind.

Al-huruf muqatta'ah are disjoined letters consist of one to five letters which occur at the beginning of 29 surahs of the Qur'an's 114 surahs, including, Alif Lām Mīm (الم) or Hā' Mīm (حم). Most of the classical exegetes have addressed these letters and they were generally regarded as part of the Glorious Qur'an's i'jāz (miraculous nature) like al-Ṭabarī (1992) and Ibn Kathīr (1999) while others, such as al-Zamakhsharī (1987), considered them rhetorical devices to mark the threshold of revelation and therefore part of the language of the Glorious Qur'an that is meant to be

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perceived as deliberate and significant, although the specific meaning was not established. The letters have been interpreted as symbolic and spiritually charged.

Within Cognitive Semantics (CS), meaning is seen as arising from conceptualisation rather than arbitrary symbol-reference pairing. Langacker (1987) argued that linguistic meaning reflects conceptualisation, whereas Evans and Green (2006) emphasised that meaning is grounded in imagery, embodied experience, and schematic knowledg. From this perspective al-huruf al-muqatta'ah similarly function as non-lexical cognitive cues that orient the believer's mind toward revelation. Within the early Islamic interpretive tradition, disjointed letters were understood as carrying meanings beyond their phonetic value and became the subject of diverse exegetical interpretations (Nguyen, 2012). From a cognitive semantic perspective, they may be viewed as activating culturally shared cognitive schemas embedded in the Arabic-Islamic conceptual system (Geeraerts, 2007).

Thus, instead of viewing them as something mysterious, they may be interpreted in terms of their linguistic function and cognitive relevance. Their occurrence at the beginning of selected Qur'anic surahs marked by semantic ambiguity, inviting readers to reflect upon the divine message and giving rise to diverse exegetical interpretations (Nguyen, 2012). In this context, CS provides a framework for explaining how meaning emerges through mental representation and conceptualization (Geeraerts, 2007). Recent studies have also highlighted the aesthetic and cognitive effects of disjointed letters on readers (Tahmasebian & Gould, 2024).

Sells (1999) and Stewart (2008) have explored how disjointed letters function as a cognitive pivot producing a state of suspense during which the listener is rendered even more attentive and this effect is particularly relevant to cognitive approaches.

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These letters can be approached through a CS framework such as CBT and Schema Theory. CS, instead of viewing meaning as constant, emphasises the mental processes engaged in its creation, whereby cognitive models are configured and blended with physical and sensory data to create new meaning (Evans & Green, 2006). Al-huruf al-muqatta'ah therefore function not as mysterious or unexplained aspects of scripture but rather act as a threshold or transition point, demarcating the transition from formal perception to meaning construction.

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

The study of Qur'anic discourse has traditionally focused on theology, exegesis, and rhetoric, while the cognitive dimension of the text has received far less attention. Among its most enigmatic features, the disjointed letters opening 29 surahs remain one of the most debated yet least understood elements within Qur'anic studies. Classical exegetes such as (al-Tabarī, 1992; al-Zamakhsharī, 1987; Ibn Kathīr, 1999) viewed them as markers of divine inimitability (i'jāz al-Qur'an) or rhetorical signals, while modern scholars such as Sells (1999) and Stewart (2008) highlighted their aesthetic role. An illustrative example can be observed in the opening of Surat Ṣād (38:1–2). ص "Sād By the Qur'an, Full of Admonition (1) But the Unbelievers (are steeped) in Self and Separatism (2)" (Ali, 2004). Here, the disjointed letter Ṣād is seen as an independent component before the oath "By the Qur'an, filled with reminder, وَالْقُرْآنُ ذِي الذِّكْرِ". The letter is not a component of a lexical unit, nor does it convey an easily understandable semantic meaning within the traditional linguistic framework. Consequently, its role within the discussion stays ambiguous under conventional exegetical and linguistic methods. This underscores the lack of a framework that can clarify how these non-lexical components aid in meaning creation during interpretation.

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Consequently, the main issue examined in this study is the absence of a unified cognitive semantic explanation of al-muqatta'at. Although conventional methods have illuminated their theological and rhetorical aspects, they have not addressed their cognitive function in shaping interpretation. In this regard, the present study is designed to address this research problem by exploring the use of disjointed letters as cognitive cues under the frameworks of CBT and Schema Theory.

### 1.2 Aims of the Study

This study intends to achieve the following aims:

- 1- Exploring the cognitive semantic functions of the disjointed letters (al-huruf al-muqatta'ah) functioning as opening cues rather than fixed lexical units in the Glorious Qur'an.
- 2- Explaining the meaning-making process at the discourse level when encountering these letters using CBT.
- 3- Investigating and analysing how Schema Theory accounts for the reader's interpretive orientation, expectation, and cognitive processing when encountering the disjointed letters.

### 1.3 Research Questions

Based on the identified gap, this study answers the following questions:

- 1- How do the Qur'anic disjointed letters function as cognitive semantic opening cues rather than as lexical units with fixed meaning?
- 2- How can CBT explain the discourse-level meaning constructed through the conceptual interaction between the disjointed letters and their immediate co-text?

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3- How does Schema Theory account for the reader's interpretive orientation, expectation, and processing when encountering the disjointed letters at the openings of Qur'anic chapters?

### **1.4 Scope and Limits of the Study**

This study is qualitative in nature and seeks to analyse al-huruf al-muqatta'ah in the Glorious Qur'an using a Cognitive Semantics approach. It focuses on the examination of 14 chosen Qur'anic surahs that start with separate letters. Despite being present at the 29 surahs of the Glorious Qur'an, disjointed letters have been selected to enable deeper analysis without unnecessary repetition. Furthermore, the study limits its scope to the cognitive semantic role of these letters during text processing; it does not attempt to settle the historical importance of these letters, nor does it provide thorough analysis of every variant. Finally, the theoretical apparatus utilised is restricted to Conceptual Blending Theory and Schema Theory.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study significantly contributes to the field of Arabic language and cognitive semantics. These letters require an examination of their conceptual role in forming meaning during the reading process. Moreover, it is useful for those studying Qur'anic language because it approaches the topic from the cognitive semantic angle. It offers an analytical framework grounded in CBT and Schema Theory to clarify the role of non-lexical components in discourse. Additionally, the results of this study may be significant for translators of the Glorious Qur'an, since these letters pose difficulties that cannot be resolved with direct lexical equivalence. Comprehending their cognitive role could help identify their purpose as elements that structure discourse instead of being merely translatable lexical items.

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### **1.6 Layout of the Study**

This study is composed of five chapters. Chapter One introduces the background of the study, its problem, objectives, questions, scope and limits, significance and organisation. Chapter Two introduces the literature review of the study by identifying the comprehension of the cognitive semantic role of al-huruf al-muqatta'ah, disjointed letters. Chapter Three presents with research methodology, which deals with the nature of the study, the data selection and the theoretical framework of the study. Chapter Four is devoted to the analysis of the data under study. Chapter Five presents the findings of the study and the conclusion; it also contains some recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Literature Review

#### 2. Introduction

The present chapter reviews the relevant literature that forms the conceptual and empirical foundation for this study. The purpose of this chapter is to explore and synthesise scholarly discussions that address the phenomenon of Qur'anic symbolism in general, and al-huruf al-muqatta'ah in particular, from linguistic and interpretive perspectives. Therefore, certain theoretical and linguistic concepts are tackled and discussed, including: overview and interpretations of al-huruf al-muqatta'ah in the Glorious Qur'an, historical context and occurrence, symbolic functions of al-huruf al-muqatta'ah, psychological impact of symbolic language in the huruf al-muqatta'ah, cognitive semantic approaches to symbolism and meaning-making, structuralist and narrative approaches, cognitive linguistics and the analysis of religious language. Finally, some previous studies that are, in one way or another, related to the current study are presented and explained.

#### 2.1 Overview and Interpretations of Al-Huruf Al-muqatta'ah in the Qur'an

The phenomenon of al-huruf al-muqatta'ah that occur at the beginning of 29 surahs of the Glorious Qur'an remains one of the most enduring and enigmatic features of Qur'anic studies (Koushki, 2016; Nguyen, 2012; Stewart, 2022). These combinations, varying from one to five Arabic letters (e.g., Alif Lām Mīm, أَلَمْ, Hā' Mīm, حَمْ, Qāf ق ) appear prominently and consistently at the openings of selected surahs, yet their lexical, semantic or rhetorical functions are not definitively established.

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From a descriptive standpoint, scholars observe that disjointed letters are confined to a limited set of verss and consist of a restricted selection of letters approximately 24 distinct letters, comprising nearly half of the Arabic alphabet which underscores their deliberate and non-random nature within the Qur'anic textual corpus according to Sayoud (2013). These letters come immediately preceding the declaration of the Qur'anic revelation in most of the verss in which they are found, which points to the possibility that they may be more than just an elaborate ornament of orthography and phonetics. The interpretive landscape of these letters is complex and controversial (Gardiner, 2017, 2021).

The most influential view in classical Qur'anic exegesis is that the full meaning of these letters is only known to Almighty Allah. As such, they are one of the so-called “mutashābihāt” ambiguous or allegorical elements of revelation whose correct interpretation belongs to the divine (Saleh, 2020). As per this opinion, their existence is a signifier of the transcendence and inimitability of Qur'anic discourse, the text is written with all letters known to the Arabs, but none could write anything similar, despite the common letters with which it opens Koushki (2016) and Mayer (2014). Another significant strand of interpretation presented by Gardiner (2021) and Subtelny (2020), treated al-muqatta'at' as symbolic initials, abbreviations, or markers of meaning for example, as representing divine names or attributes, verse titles, or thematic cues embedded within the text. For instance, some early scholars held that Kāf Hā Yā 'Ayn Ṣād (كهيعص) might map onto divine attributes such as al-Kāfī (the Sufficient), al-Hādī (the Guide), al-Ḥakīm (the Wise), al-Alīm (the Knowing), al-Ṣadīq (the Truthful) (Böwering, 2011). A nother approach regards them as structural-textual devices, perhaps signaling rhythmic, phonological or rhetorical features of the Glorious

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Qur'an's composition though empirical or systematic investigations in this regard remain limited (Azaiez et al., 2016; Mayer, 2014; Stewart, 2022).

Sayoud (2013) argued that despite these multiple proposals, it remains the case that no interpretation has achieved universal scholarly consensus. Despite these numerous interpretations, no single explanation has achieved universal scholarly acceptance or developed into a comprehensive explanatory theory (Koushki, 2016; Nguyen, 2012; Sayoud, 2013). This long-standing ambiguity guarantees that al-huruf al-muqatta'ah still occupy a significant position at the crossroads of Qur'anic exegesis, linguistics and semantics.

### **2.2 Historical Context and Occurrence**

Al-huruf al-muqatta'ah, used in the opening of some surahs of the Glorious Qur'an, as discussed by Nguyen (2012), have held a significant role in the history of Qur'anic interpretation since the time of the earliest Islamic centuries. They are found frequently in the Glorious Qur'an, having been recorded consistently by both oral and written codices, and are one of the earliest issues that attracted the attention of Qur'anic commentators, according to the scholars of tafsīr, need a particular explanation. These letters emerged in a linguistic setting in which the power of the Arabic alphabet (symbolism) and phonetic artistry (balāghah) were highly appreciated in the historical context of revelation Harb (2020) and Stetkevych (2010). This, in turn, made them salient among the introductions to surahs and attracted the interest of the early Muslim audiences and subsequent exegetes who interpreted them as an indication of the linguistic peculiarity as well as the divine purpose (Koushki, 2016; Nguyen, 2012; Shah, 2013).

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According to early exegetical sources, the debates around al-huruf al-muqatta'ah can even be dated back to the generation of the Prophet's Companions and their successors (al-tābi'ūn) (Koç, 2021). Classical scholars such as al-Ṭabarī (d. 923 CE) and al-Zamakhsharī (d. 1144, CE) gathered diverse views regarding these letters, reflecting an already complex interpretive tradition (Nguyen (2012) and Saleh (2020)). Other early authorities in their ranks, such as Ibn 'Abbās and 'Alī ibn Abī Tālib, believed that these letters had meanings known only to God, and so were regarded as *mutashābihāt* (ambiguous) verses. Others tried to find contextual explanations, suggesting that the letters are rhetorical introductions that aim to capture the attention of the listener and then the revelation itself commences (Ilyas, 2019; Martensson, 2020).

During the medieval period, Qur'anic scholars revisited earlier discussions of al-huruf al-muqatta'ah and incorporated them into broader theological, linguistic, and rhetorical frameworks. Classical exegetes such as al-Rāzī (d. 1209 CE) and al-Suyūṭī (d. 1505 CE) examined these letters within the doctrine of *i'jāz al-Qur'ān* (the inimitability of the Qur'an) and the category of *mutashābihāt*. In *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, al-Rāzī maintained that the disjointed letters demonstrate the miraculous nature of the Qur'an because they are composed of ordinary Arabic letters while producing a discourse beyond human imitation. Likewise, al-Suyūṭī, in *al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*, compiled the major interpretive opinions of earlier scholars, illustrating the diversity of explanations that had already developed by his time (Mayer, 2014; Lagarde, 2017; Saleh, 2020). Consequently, al-huruf al-muqatta'ah came to be widely regarded as prominent examples of the *mutashābihāt*, encouraging a variety of linguistic, theological, and mystical interpretations rather than a single definitive explanation. Philologists examined their linguistic characteristics, theologians related them to the doctrine of Qur'anic inimitability, whereas Ṣūfī scholars such as al-Sulamī, al-

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Qushayrī, and Ibn ‘Arabī interpreted them symbolically as expressions of deeper spiritual realities. Although some modern scholars have proposed alternative explanations, including scribal symbols or editorial markers, al-huruf al-muqatta‘ah continue to be understood as significant Qur’anic elements whose interpretive openness has sustained scholarly discussion across different exegetical traditions (Nguyen, 2012; Saleh, 2020).

### 2.2.1 Semiotic Framing of Al-Huruf Al-Muqatta‘ah in the Qur’an

The Glorious Qur’an constructs meaning with a unique semiotic system where the term āyah (pl. āyāt) signifies not only units of revelation in the text, but also refers to features in the natural world. This double use creates an inherent connection between scripture and creation that places the two as interconnected sign-systems in which divine meaning is revealed (Abdel Haleem, 2010; Saeed, 2006). In this context, signs are not made immediately evident but function as epistemic cues that demand reflection (tafakkur), reasoning (ta‘aqqul) and contemplative perception (tadabbur). Meaning is thus produced by cognitive and interpretative interaction and not actual semantic revelation. The role of the Glorious Qur’an as a hermeneutic pedagogy that educates its audience in the art of seeing signs-linguistic, cosmic, and symbolic at various levels of reality has been stressed in classical and modern scholarship alike (Khalidi, 2014).

These al-huruf al-muqatta‘ah are present at the beginnings of 29 surahs, in both Meccan and Medinan in the chronology of revelation (Dayeh, 2009; Koç, 2021). Such combinations can contain either one letter, like Ṣād, Qāf, and Nūn (ص, ق, ن), two-letter combinations as Tahā and Hā Mim (طه, حم) or multi-letter combinations, like Kāf Hā Yā ‘Ayn Ṣād (كهيعص). These formulae are composed of 14 different Arabic characters, which are exactly half of the Arabic alphabet (Farahani & Nabavi, 2019). They are

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distributed in a non-random manner throughout the corpus of the Glorious Qur'an with some letter groups appear in several surahs which have thematic or stylistic similarities (Dayeh, 2009; Farzi et al., 2022). As an example, six surahs are presented in the sequence Alif Lām Mīm (آل), and the formula Hā Mīm (حم) indicates seven consecutive surahs (Ghāfir to al-Aḥqāf) (Qaiser, 2021). The recurrence of these letter-patterns has led scholars to regard al huruf al-muqatta'ah as a sign of textual connectivity, textual structure, or a rhetorical rhythm in the overall composition of the Glorious Qur'an (Amir & Gunawan, 2019; Stewart, 2022). In this view, the letters not only serve as disjointed exceptions, but also as part of the Qur'anic discourse structure.

Al-huruf al-muqatta'ah occupy a distinctive position within the Qur'anic semiotic system because their meanings are not stated explicitly, inviting continuous reflection and interpretation. Placed at the openings of selected Qur'anic chapters, they draw the reader's attention to the interpretive process from the outset. Like other Qur'anic signs, such as the alternation of night and day and the order of the cosmos, the disjointed letters encourage contemplation (tafakkur) and careful reflection (tadabbur) rather than providing an immediate lexical meaning. Their non-lexical and phonetic form suggests that meaning in the Glorious Qur'an is conveyed not only through explicit lexical reference but also through symbolic structure and textual patterning. From this perspective, al-huruf al-muqatta'ah may be understood as a distinctive semiotic feature that invites sustained cognitive and interpretive engagement with the Qur'anic text (Daghistani, 2020; Sells, 1999).

### 2.2.2 Academic Perspectives on Historical Context

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Since the earliest days of Islamic scholarship, al-huruf al-muqatta'ah have captured a distinctive role in the study of the Glorious Qur'an. These letters, which are immediately noticeable at the beginning of 29 surahs, have been the subject of extensive exegetical discussion because their peculiar shape and the lack of a definite lexical interpretation. Both classical and modern authors have attempted to comprehend their historical development, role and place within the shaping environment of the Qur'anic revelation. Historically, al-huruf al-muqatta'ah have been frequently discussed against the backdrop of early Arabic literacy, or modes of transmission that are oral-aural systems and the linguistic context of Late Antiquity (Dayeh, 2009; Neuwirth, 2010). Early Islamic exegetical traditions were epistemically cautious of al-huruf al-muqatta'ah. Numerous classical commentators, such as al-Ṭabarī (d. 923) documented several interpretive perspectives and concluded that their ultimate meaning belongs to Allah. This position reflects an emerging awareness of the historical and theological delicacy of these letters: they were accepted as part of the text of the Glorious Qur'an, but were impervious to clear interpretation (al-Ṭabarī, 1992).

Ibn Kathīr (1999) also stressed the inherited ambiguity of these letters, placing them within a pious suspension of judgment, as opposed to hypothesis. Historically-philologically, contemporary scholarship has examined the question of the relationship to scribal norms, mnemonic aids, or structural indicators of the early codification of the Glorious Qur'an as to al-huruf al-muqatta'ah. The letters could have been the result of previous textual or editorial conventions, including the use of abbreviated headings or signal. Subsequent thinkers have now shifted the idea of reductionism and focused more on the internal Qur'anic reasoning behind the arrangement and repetition of the letters (Sinai, 2017).

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The recent historical-literary research has emphasised the fact that al-huruf al-muqatta'ah should be interpreted in the context of the discourse system of the Glorious Qur'an itself. Neuwirth (2010) suggested that the Glorious Qur'an imagines itself as a set of āyāt (signs), both scriptural and cosmological, and that the disjointed letters are involved in this self-reflexive semiotic system. From this perspective, al-huruf al-muqatta'ah may be understood as signs of revelation that draw attention to the process of divine communication and highlight the distinctive linguistic form of the Qur'anic discourse (Neuwirth, 2010). Also, al-huruf al-muqatta'ah have been contextualised by comparative Semitic and Late Antiquity studies in a wider setting of the symbolic use of letters, acrostics and cryptic introductions in earlier Jewish and Christian literature (Stroumsa, 2015). Although this does not imply direct borrowing, these studies hint at the possibility that the Glorious Qur'an was revealed in an environment whereby letters had the capacity to be symbolically, ritually, and cognitively used beyond their normal lexical significance. This historical background suggests the belief that alhuruf al-muqatta'ah were readable as meaningful signs in the communicative expectations of early audiences, although their actual interpretation might be open to debate.

Scholars in the modern study of the Glorious Qur'an have come to acknowledge that interpretive plurality that has persisted historically on the topic of al-huruf al-muqatta'ah in its own right is important. Sayoud (2013) has noted that even centuries of exegetical discussion did not settle on any interpretation of the letters, which underscores the lasting defiance of the letters to closure. Historically, this persisting ambiguity implies that al-huruf al-muqatta'ah have functioned to be time-spanning polyvalent markers, able to appeal to the interpretive communities of the successive generations without being depleted through being reduced to one line of explanation.

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The contemporary scholastic tradition as discussed by Nguyen (2012) treated the disjointed letters as a unique textual phenomenon that is embedded in the history of Qur'anic codification and recitation. The disjointed letters are part of the oldest layers of Qur'anic text, in which the oral-performative nature of revelation is combined with the new form of written verses. In this light, al-huruf al-muqatta'ah may be perceived as textual indicators that help in the shift of oral declaration to written scripture as highlighted by such researchers as Neal Robinson (2003) and Neuwirth (2010). Moreover, current linguistic research by (Amir & Gunawan, 2019) has investigated the phonological and stylistic roles, demonstrating the combination of sharp consonants and open vowels to produce a rhythmic prelude preparing the listener to the subsequent revelation. This phonemic salience could have been a form of communicative tool to draw attention and reinforce the sacral mood of recitation to the initial transmission of the Glorious Qur'an (Aldubai, 2015).

### 2.3 Symbolic Functions of Al-Huruf Al-Muqatta'ah

An emerging school of scholarship on the Glorious Qur'an has stressed the fact that al-huruf al-muqatta'ah are symbolically important to a much greater extent than they seem to be on the surface, as disjointed letters. Instead of being randomly inserted isolated phonetic elements, these letters serve as the signals of semiotic gateways that indicate the discourse transitions, foreground thematic emphasis, and position readers on the revelatory nature of the Glorious Qur'anic message. Izutsu (2002) and Neuwirth (2010) noted, classical exegetes often thought of the letters as a kind of enigmatic mark (*āyāt*), whose main meaning was not lexical, but symbolic, bringing attention to the divine origin of the text, and encouraging contemplative engagement with the meaning. This symbolic role is most evident in the interpretations that place the letters in the rhetorical architecture of the Glorious Qur'an. As an illustration, letters used in some

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interpretive traditions are frequently considered as spiritual indicators that refer to divine attributes or metaphysical realities, thus turning the textual beginning of a verse into a symbolic encounter.

The letters were described as linguistic symbols which intentionally break the standard reading patterns (Bisri, 2020). The sudden introduction of alphabetic bits as Alif Lām Mīm or Hā Mīm (الم, حم) draws attention, indicating to the audience that it is followed by heightened theological or moral significance. Their symbolic power stems not from explicit direct semantic meaning, but rather in their ability to make the reader think, to stimulate spiritual imagination and get ready to the themes of the following verses.

Moreover, one of numerous contemporary commentators, Ghmari (2021), claimed that the symbolic power of alhuruf al-muqatta'ah is that they fulfill the Glorious Qur'an's claim to miraculousness (i'jāz). Since the letters themselves are the elements of the Arabic language, their use in surahs beginnings highlights the paradox of that despite the Glorious Qur'an being built with the use of the identical alphabet available to everyone, it is able to create a discourse that is unmatched in eloquence and meaning. In this way, the letters are symbols of divine authorship, which shows that revelation is the ability to make ordinary linguistic material into extraordinary communicative power. This interpretive direction coincides with the fact that symbolic signs in religious texts tend not to indicate any predetermined meanings but to trigger the process of interpretation and challenge believers to reflect on that connection between divine speech and human understanding (Danesi, 2004; Yelle, 2012).

Together these perspectives proposed the fact that alhuruf al-muqatta'ah are multilayered symbols, which are rhetorical, theological, spiritual and epistemic. Their

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ambiguity can be understood not as a deficiency but as deliberate property which increases the possibilities of interpretation. As Izutsu (2002) argued, these are constructed to provoke meaning as opposed to delivering it, and evidenced by the fact that the letters have always been open symbolic forms and remain relevant in historical and cultural contexts. From a semiotic perspective (Eco, 1976). Al-huruf al-muqatta'ah, in this context, are threshold symbols, textual openings, which mark the onset of revelation, frame the conceptual structure of the verse, and trigger modes of cognition and reflection intrinsic to Qur'anic spirituality.

Abdel Haleem (2011) explained that al-huruf al-muqatta'ah are used to usher the listener into a state of heightened attentiveness at the onset of revelation, thus leading to a shift from ordinary speech to sacred communication. Likewise, Neuwirth (2010) demonstrated that these letters are threshold signs, which mediate between the audible form of recited language and the transcendent divine message it conveys. From a semantic perspective, Izutsu (2002) stated that the Qur'anic sign system is symbolic and it is up to the reader to reflect from the outer linguistic form to the inner conceptual meaning. Al-huruf al-muqatta'ah can therefore be perceived to be not a phenomenon of linguistic anomalies, but rather symbolic linguistic units that stir up cognitive and spiritual responses to lead the reader to the acknowledgment of the divine origin and inimitability of the Glorious Qur'an.

### 2.3.1 The Semiotic and the Communicative Role

In semiotic terms, al-huruf al-muqatta'ah function as signifiers without direct denotation, yet they activate a range of interpretive associations in the mind of the believer (Eco, 1976; O'Neill, 2008). They may invite contemplation of the origin of

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language and the creative power of divine speech. Scholars such as Izutsu (2002) and Abdel Haleem (2011) noted that these symbols signal a transition from the human to the divine voice, establishing the threshold of revelation at the opening of the verse. Vasalou (2002) and Hidayat and Solihin (2019) explained that through this symbolic threshold, the text reminds the listener that the Glorious Qur'an is composed of ordinary linguistic materials-letters familiar to the Arabs yet arranged by divine will into an inimitable discourse. Ramlan and Ludovico (2023) argued that al-huruf al-muqatta'ah therefore embody the paradox of accessibility and transcendence, the language is human in form but divine in authorship.

Symbolically, Jankowska and Imbir (2022) stated that these letters engage the cognitive and affective faculties of the reader or reciter. Their abruptness, brevity, and rhythmic isolation produce an immediate psycholinguistic effect, awakening attention and curiosity. The reader is enticed into a mind-set of anticipation, a mind-enlightenment that paves the way to the divine message about to come. The disjointed letters may function as cognitive stimuli, directing the listener's attention towards reflection rather than immediate comprehension (Rahman, 2009). Their indeterminacy may be understood not as a weakness but rather an intentional communicative approach, which entails intensive participation with the text, with regard to interpretation, remembrance, and awe.

The symbolism of al-huruf al-muqatta'ah may also be experienced as a place of theological and interpretive power too. The transcendence of divine knowledge is at one level confirmed by the ambiguity of these letters since only Almighty Allah has its final meaning (Abdel Haleem, 2011). This reflects the view of the Qur'anic idea that revelation is in a realm that people cannot understand. But, the openness of al-huruf al-muqatta'ah also welcomes the believer into the interpretive process. Izutsu (2002)

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further explained that there is no mere reception of Qur'anic meaning but its realisation in reflective action when the reader transcends the outer sign of the language to the inner semantic and spiritual revelation. Similarly, Rahman (2009) indicated that the Glorious Qur'an is challenging the believer to reflect, think and engage in meaning-making as an active moral and intellectual agent. In this aspect, Neuwirth (2010) argued that the indeterminate form of al-huruf al-muqatta'ah invites the listener to engage actively with the unfolding process of revelation. By doing so, rather than acting as passive textual fragments, al-huruf al-muqatta'ah can become symbolic reminders that legitimise both the authority of the divine and the agency of the human in their realisation that also acknowledge Almighty Allah the revealer of knowledge and the believer as the active source of its manifestation.

### 2.3.2 The Symbol as Revelation

Izutsu (2002) showed that symbolic expression in the Qur'anic discourse is not merely an ornamental form but an essential way of divine communication, in which form and meaning are one. Al-Huruf al-muqatta'ah exemplify this principle by showing that even the smallest units of language, the individual letters, can be mobilised as revelatory. He suggested that the language of the Glorious Qur'an operates on a system of signs (āyāt) in which meaning is attained by way of contemplative participation, rather than lexical correspondence. From this perspective, the disjointed letters indicate to the believer that the divine meaning is not contingent on elaborate linguistic expression, revelation may thus be understood as encoded in minimal and non-apparent forms.

Rahman (2009) also noted that the Glorious Qur'an invites the reader to shift from the surface form of the text and pass on to deeper meaning, thereby emphasising the

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incompleteness of human cognition when faced with the divine utterance. Neuwirth (2010) further observed that the arrangement of these letters at the openings of the surahs draws attention to the distinctive nature of the Qur'anic discourse and its claim to inimitability; the same alphabet used by the speakers in humanity is presented as a discourse that exceeds human capacity in revelation. This is the miraculous aspect of Glorious Qur'anic communication as conventional linguistic material of language is transformed into something sacred. By doing so, al-huruf al-muqatta'ah on the one hand represent the linguistic realisations of revelation, and on the other hand mark the inexhaustible character of divine meaning as well as the limitations of human understanding, as emphasised by Boullata (2000).

### 2.4. Psychological Impact Al-Huruf Al-Muqatta'ah

The symbolic language of al-huruf al-muqatta'ah (disjointed letters) has a profound psychological impact on cognition, perception, and understanding of the reader (Emin et al., 2013). Unlike the common meaning manifested through linguistic means, these disjointed letters, referring to what these expressions suggest, have a symbolic and metalinguistic language usage which provokes thought and intellectual involvement. Their significance lies in the fact that they may contribute to a psychological reaction and draw the reader beyond the initial understanding of what the image represents and interpretation toward a deeper sense-making level of awareness (Amir & Gunawan, 2019).

The Glorious Qur'an symbolism is not merely a literary device but a psychological mechanism where the text produces responses on the cognition, emotion and perception of the believer. Recent studies on the Psychological effect of Qur'anic discourse subtle affective and cognitive reactions take place when reading or listening to the Glorious

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Qur'an because of symbolic elements, such as sensory metaphors or evocative imagery, or both, as well as related to mysterious forms (Osborne, 2019). This fact offers useful foundation to the explanation of how al-huruf al-muqatta'ah work psychologically as symbolic stimuli that may elicit an interest, humility, reflection, and mental perceptiveness. Osborne (2019) noted that the Glorious Qur'an is more likely to use affective cues to affect the inner space of the reader. The disjointed letters are in this broader sense symbolic openings that get the mind ready to revelation by interfering with normal linguistic anticipations and plunging the receiver into an exaggerated state of consciousness.

At the cognition level, al-huruf al-muqatta'ah elicit complex thinking processes that can be related to curiosity, hypothesis construction, and concept formation (Zhang & Hudson, 2018). In a place where a reader encounters these combinations of letters as Alif Lām Mīm (آلَمْ) or Kāf Hā Yā 'Ayn Šād (كَيْعَص), the absence of explicit meaning of the text allows seeking an interpretative meaning. Itkonen (2016) and Lin (2019) indicate that this mental activity is in accordance with the principles of CS, according to which meaning is actively formed by mental representation and, not only by the form of speech. Meanwhile, Fried (2010) and Liu (2013) argued that the interpretive complexity of al-huruf al-muqatta'ah makes it more cognitively stimulated to an even greater degree, providing a reader with a challenging task of conjecturing relations between linguistic form and conceptual meaning. Throughout this, such symbolic letters are cognitive catalysts that lead the reader beyond a literal reading and to reflective reading of the text in its underlying meaning, as elaborated by Boldyrev (2020).

Moreover, as research in psychology of religion demonstrates, symbolic language impacts perception by establishing so-called cognitive pause points, points where the

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stream of interpretation of the reader is intentionally disrupted, as believed by Osborne (2019). Such disruptions provide room to think and look inward, in particular with a non-referential or enigmatic symbol. Al-Huruf al-muqatta'ah carry out just such a role. Their sudden and inexplicable character breaks the chronological flow of speech and leads to a momentary depreciation of perceptual habit and proclaims the transition between the normal lexis and the theological. This pause, as also other scholars have indicated, belongs to the special sound effects of the Glorious Qur'an, and increases spiritual responsiveness. In this regard, the discontinuous letters are employed as the psychological cues that reframe the attention of the reader and emotional calibration, and they give the start of a divine communicative phenomenon (Kermani, 2015; Osborne, 2019).

Symbolic forms are thought-provoking because they are cognitively stimulating through the means of stimulating an inferential thinking and memory. Several studies concerning Qur'anic symbolism of semantic approach indicate that symbols invite the reader to marshal the previous religious knowledge, cultural affiliations and embodied experience in generating meaning. Hence, rather than present an obstacle to interpretation, the disjointed letters trigger meaning-making as it prompts the believer to go beyond the text to derive a theological meaning. Among the cognitive outcomes is a semantic deepening: the letters fail to disclose definite meaning; rather, they trigger a stratified interpretive activity which revolves around the notion of reflection, humility and recognition of the limits of human knowledge (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

In addition to this, the emotive influence of al-huruf al-muqatta'ah has been called to light in the writing of Glorious Qur'anic aesthetic. The letters reflect the psychological and spiritual effects of Qur'anic discourse on the reader, evoking sentiments of wonder, interest, and devotion. Their ambiguity encourages a more

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focused and reflective interaction with the divine word (Kermani, 2015). These feelings are not just incidental: they may shape the epistemic position of the reader, arousing the disposition of openness and spiritual receptivity. In a sense, therefore, the symbolic power of the interrupted letters is not simply a question of linguistic form, but because it is about affective catalysts that guide the faithful toward an additional process of the message voiced by the divine (Osborne, 2019).

Izutsu (2002) demonstrated the extent to which the interpretive flexibility of the symbolic signs should affect the interpretation by way of its psychological influence. The absence of a predetermined lexical meaning that determines al-huruf al-muqatta'ah, allows a range of theological, mystical and semantic possibilities that some scholars call polysemy or semantic openness. The reasons are that the reader is steered through a participatory thinking process in seeking to understand rather than passively imbibe knowledge. Here, the symbolic letters form a hermeneutic experience that is a fusion of emotion, cognition and spiritual intuition to experience the text of the Glorious Qur'an in a holistic manner (Neuwirth, 2010; Rahman, 2009).

From the perspective of embodied cognition (Matlock et al., 2005), al-huruf al-muqatta'ah may be understood as reconfiguring the face of understanding since they are redefining the meaning of comprehending a scripture text. They are symbolically ambiguous and they can be seen by readers to be confronting the boundaries of human knowledge and the expansiveness of divine meaning. As Rahman (2009) indicated the Qur'anic symbols invite the believers to go beyond analysing overt features and to experience them, where the understanding is achieved through analysis, emotional involvement and the spiritual receptiveness.

### 2.5 Cognitive Semantics Approach

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### 2.5.1 Cognitive Semantics

Cognitive semantics (CS) began in the 1970s as a reaction against the objectivist world-view assumed by the Anglo-American tradition in philosophy and the related approach, truth-conditional semantics, developed within formal linguistics. Eve Sweetser, a leading cognitive linguist, described the truth-conditional approach in the following terms: 'By viewing meaning as the relationship between words and the world, truth-conditional semantics eliminates cognitive organisation from the linguistic system' (Sweetser, 1990, p. 4). In contrast to this view, CS views linguistic meaning as a manifestation of conceptual structure: the nature and organisation of mental representation in all its richness and diversity, and this is what makes it a distinctive approach to linguistic meaning. Talmy, (2000) one of the original pioneers of cognitive linguistics in the 1970s, describes CS as follows: "Research on cognitive semantics is research on conceptual content and its organisation in language" (p. 4). CS, like the larger enterprise of cognitive linguistics of which it is a part, is not a single unified framework. Those researchers who identify themselves as cognitive semanticists typically have a diverse set of foci and interests.

Cognitive Semantics is seen as part of Cognitive Linguistics (CL) movement. The study of linguistic meaning is known as semantics; CS refers to an approach to linguistics that deals with the way the mind processes language in relation to its meaning or conceptual content within a given context. Contrary to the traditional approaches, CS views all branches of linguistics, such as phonetics, syntax, and other linguistic domains, as interrelated to meaning. Therefore, linguistic processing cannot be separated from other mental processes (Langacker, 1987). CS is a scientific linguistic theory that attempts to conceptualise meaning and understand its mental experience. It

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aims to study human cognitive ability and describe the world as people conceive it (Crystal, 2008).

In this regard, Evans (2007) stated CS is an area concerned the relationship between experience, the conceptual system, and the semantic structure encoded by language. CS differs from other approaches of semantics by viewing meaning as a cognitive process rooted in conceptualisation. Rather than directly recoding meaning, language guides the construction of meaning based on context, cultural models, and cognitive resources like categorisation, frames, and image schemas. From CS perspective meaning is not universal; instead, it reflects the social and cultural systems of specific groups. Thus, meaning is grounded in shared human experiences, shaped by our perceptions and embodied experiences (Fillmore, 1977).

Cognitive Semantics is one of the major contemporary approaches within CL, which is concerned with the mental aspect, mental processes, and cognitive abilities that help the process of analysing speech and understanding its content (Lemmens, 2015). CL is related to psycholinguistics, mental linguistics, cognitive skills, philosophy of mind, artificial intelligence, and cognitive psychology, and it has been investigated in many cognitive and mental phenomena (Sinha, 2010).

Cognitive theories are usually based on the idea meaning of lexical is conceptual which means meaning of a word is not a reference to the "real world" or relationship, but a concept in the mind depends on one's experiences. This means semantic is not objective and semantic knowledge is not insulated from encyclopedic knowledge. Understanding lexical meaning is not stable is a matter of building information and traditionalisation are features of CS (Jackendoff, 1989). The theory states that individuals are part of human cognitive capacities more generally and can only

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understand the world as people realise it. According to Vyvyan and Melanie (2006) CS views representation of knowledge, and meaning formation which is based on the fact that grammar shows a view of the world contained in a culture, language knowledge and contextual knowledge is acquired.

Meena (2019) and Speaks (2012) argued that classical semantic theories explain meaning by necessity and adequacy of conditions as truth and the composition of propositional functions. Due to these previous theories, the significance of an utterance can be understood as terms under which the statement transmitted the utterance is true for example, if and only if, snow is white, then the sentence "snow is white." is true. The meaning of lexical units can be understood either by the basis of certain things they are capable of applying to (called "extension" of the word). CS theories, on the other hand, are often based on the idea that lexical meaning is conceptual, that is, meaning does not always refer to an object or relationship in the actual world instead meaning corresponds to a mental idea based on personal knowledge. Consequently, semantic facts such as "All bachelors are unmarried males" are not viewed as a fact about our language, but rather as part of the knowledge of every day (Meena, 2012).

Cognitive semanticists claim that the meaning of the whole sentence is not limited by truth-conditional semantics, while they are not completely opposed to truth-conditional semantics, but rather, it has limited explanatory ability. Namely, it is limited to suggestive utterances and disappears to provide a simple or natural manner of dealing with expression or command. Through using the concepts of framing and mental spaces, CS captures the whole range of grammatical moods and indicates that meaning is not fixed but is constructive (Iten, 2000). CS views that words do not carry fixed lexical meaning: they at best have "default builds," which are truly the only means of

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using the words. Schmid (2012) argued that only pragmatic elements, such as context and intent, are taken into account can make meaning understandable. Traditional theories have been challenged by CS for the following reasons: via supplying a sentence-meaning explanation that goes beyond the truth-conditional explanation and, by trying going beyond word accounts that are useful and necessary. Both are achieved through a study of the concept's structure.

Cognitive Semantics is fundamentally dedicated to explaining how meaning arises from the interaction between embodied experience, conceptual structure, and linguistic representation. It focuses on the ways in which language reflects the human capacity to organise and interpret reality through recurring image patterns and conceptual metaphors. As Lakoff and Johnson (1999) explained, abstract notions such as generosity, love, truth, and morality are not independent of experience, rather, they are structured by conceptual metaphors that draw from basic, recurrent bodily interactions with the world. For instance, experiences of spatial orientation, (up/down) movement, and containment often provide the conceptual foundations for understanding emotional or moral states (Johnson, 1987; Lakoff, 1987). These cognitive mappings enable humans to conceptualise the abstract in terms of the concrete, making intangible realities accessible and meaningful.

Moreover, cognitive semanticists argue that meaning is encyclopaedic, not dictionary-like: understanding a concept involves activating a wide network of knowledge, experience, and cultural context (Evans, 2009). This encyclopaedic perspective assigns meaning as a dynamic, interconnected system that is influenced by both personal thought and general conceptual frameworks. Linguistic meaning, therefore, is inseparable from the mental imagery, emotional resonance, and social knowledge that surround it (Geeraerts & Cuyckens, 2007). In this sense, language can

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serve as a window into human thought, how people internally organise and make sense of their experiences of the physical and metaphysical world.

### 2.5.2 Guiding Principles

In this section and according to (Evans & Green, 2006) four central assumptions of cognitive semantics. These are listed below:

١-Conceptual structure is embodied (the 'embodied cognition thesis').

٢-Semantic structure is conceptual structure.

٣-Meaning representation is encyclopaedic.

4-Meaning construction is conceptualisation.

#### 1- Conceptual Structure is Embodied

One of the foundational assumptions of CS is that conceptual structure is embodied to say, human understanding and linguistic meaning are grounded in the body's sensory and motor experiences. Cognitive semanticists argue that the human mind does not interpret meaning in a way that is independent of the physical world; instead, it interprets and structures knowledge by means of a constant interaction with bodily perception and environmental experience (Evans & Green, 2006; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). This principle is known as the Embodied Cognition Thesis, which states that human cognition reflects the structure of physical experience and that these experiences provide the foundation for abstract and metaphorical thought.

This view, as proposed by Gibbs (2006) and Johnson (1987) states that concepts are not arbitrary mental representations, but are constructed by the manner in which the body perceives, moves and interacts with the environment. For instance, spatial orientation, balance, motion, and containment all serve as image schemas-recurring

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mental structures derived from embodied experience. These image schemas allow individuals to organise sensory input into meaningful conceptual patterns that later extend to abstract domains of thought.

A classical illustration of this process is the CONTAINER schema, derived from the physical experience of objects or bodies existing within bounded spaces. A room, for example, has sides, an interior, and a boundary that limits physical movement. Because the human body cannot pass through solid boundaries, the concept of containment becomes experientially meaningful. This embodied concept is then projected metaphorically onto abstract experiences, resulting in metaphorical expressions such as the following: examples from Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. 32):

1. He's in love.
2. We're out of trouble now.
3. He's coming out of the coma.
4. I'm slowly getting into shape.
5. He entered a state of euphoria.
6. He fell into a depression.

Through such mappings, concrete physical experience gives rise to abstract conceptualisation a process termed metaphorical projection. Accordingly, this process is supported by Coëgnarts and Kravanja (2012) and Louwerse (2011). This principle is crucial for analysing symbolic language, because symbols do not communicate meaning through direct reference, but by activating embodied patterns of understanding that already exist in the mind of the reader. Thus, meaning is not retrieved from the

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word itself, but constructed through the interaction between linguistic form and the embodied conceptual system of the interpreter (Bach, 2012; Lynott & Connell, 2010).

### 2- Semantic Structure as Conceptual Structure

The second foundational principle of CS is that semantic structure reflects conceptual structure. In other words, Evans and Green (2006) and Langacker (1987) observed that meaning in language is not a direct mapping of external objects but represents the mental concepts that speakers associate with those objects or phenomena. From this perspective, linguistic expressions function as access points to conceptual categories stored in the mind, and meaning arises through the activation of these mental representations rather than through reference alone.

Cognitive semanticists claim that linguistic meaning is only a part of the much broader conceptual system since human beings have a wealth of conceptual materials that cannot be encoded in language. A typical example of this difference is shown by Langacker (1987) when he cited facial anatomy: though speakers have a concept for “the area between the nose and upper lip,” there is no conventional lexical item in English that encodes this concept. This shows that language only partially reflects the full structure of human conceptual knowledge. One of the main implications of this principle is that not only lexical items, but grammatical constructions carry conceptual meaning. As an example, a larger conventional pattern, such as the structure of an active sentence or a passive sentence:

1- William Shakespeare wrote Romeo and Juliet. [active]

2- Romeo and Juliet was written by William Shakespeare. [passive]

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It was mentioned that the dissimilarity between the active construction and the passive one does not only depend on syntactic rearrangement but on a shift in conceptual viewpoint (Langacker, 1991). The passive puts the focus on the affected entity, and the active puts the focus on the agent, demonstrating that grammatical choices reflect underlying conceptual patterns. This argument was also supported by the work of Talmy (2000) which proved that such closed-class grammatical elements as tense or aspect encode schematic conceptual organisation, as opposed to neutral structural form. According to Sinha (1999) what matters in this principle does not claim that meaning lies exclusively within the mind in a subjective vacuum. CS rejects both radical subjectivism and objectivist truth-conditional semantics, and instead, it is maintained that conceptual systems are grounded in shared human experience, cultural knowledge, and perceptual interaction with the world. Meaning is therefore found at the intersection of cognition, embodiment, and lived experience.

### 3- Meaning Representation is Encyclopedic

The third principle of CS is that meaning is encyclopedic rather than dictionary-like. Cognitive semanticists do not believe that words include fixed, minimal definitions; they may be viewed as gateways to a broader network of conceptual knowledge. In this case, the meaning of a term is not located in a narrow definitional core, it is generated by the activation of cultural knowledge, contextual interpretation, prior experience, and conceptual associations (Evans & Green, 2006; Langacker, 1987). One can illustrate this opinion by such a concept as BACHELOR. A dictionary definition may present it as “an unmarried adult male,” but in cognitive interpretation,

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it is clear that the definition is not applicable in all cultural or pragmatic contexts. An example, Lakoff (1987) gave it, that was one would think it odd to call the Pope or some other monastic person a bachelor, although this is what they are supposed to be by the definition. This interpretation is shaped not by definition alone but by cultural expectations, social scripts, and contextual appropriateness. In this way, linguistic meaning is flexible, gradable, and influenced by pragmatic reasoning.

The encyclopedic nature of meaning also manifests itself in the interpretation of words in context (Evans, 2009). The presence of one lexical element can have various, context-dependent meanings since the mind appeals to broader knowledge structures in the process of constructing meaning. In one instance, the adjective 'safe' is not attached to one fixed property. Rather, its meaning would vary depending on whether it is applied to a child, a beach, or a tool. The interpretation requires background knowledge of what would count as harm or risk in each situation and illustrates why meaning is generated through contextual reasoning rather than retrieved mechanically.

### **4- Meaning Construction is Conceptualisation**

According to Sweetser (1999), the fourth principle of CS is that meaning is not inherently encoded in language, but rather it is constructed by the mind of the interpreter as a result of a process known as conceptualisation. Words used in language in this view do not possess fixed meanings but serve as prompts that trigger complex cognitive operations that require background knowledge, cultural experience, and inferential reasoning. Based on this, meaning is not a static property of linguistic form but a dynamic and active mental process that occurs during the course of interpretation (Evans & Green, 2006).

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The dynamic quality of meaning construction has been most extensively modelled by Gilles Fauconnier (e.g. 1994, 1997), who emphasises the role of mappings: local connections between distinct mental spaces, conceptual ‘packets’ of information, which are built up during the ‘on-line’ process of meaning construction. Meaning is thus produced through conceptual integration rather than direct retrieval. An example of this process that is frequently cited by Taylor (2002, p. 530) is as follows:

- “In France, Bill Clinton wouldn’t have been harmed by his relationship with Monica Lewinsky.”

This statement invites the reader to construct several mental spaces:

1-Input Space 1: Bill Clinton in the United States, serving as President, involved in a political scandal.

2-Input Space 2: Knowledge of French political culture, where private relationships of politicians are generally regarded as personal and not grounds for public scandal.

3-Blended Space: A hypothetical reality where Clinton is President of France rather than the United States.

By using CBT, the interpreter maps cultural assumptions, political norms, and moral judgments across these spaces and concludes with a meaning that is not explicitly stated, that political scandal is culturally dependent and socially constructed rather than universal. This example illustrates three key issues about meaning construction:

- 1- Meaning emerges from inference, not solely from linguistic form
- 2- Context and world knowledge are essential for interpretation
- 3- New meanings can be constructed through conceptual integration mechanisms

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Thus, this principle supports the notion that the meaning in symbolic language is constructed rather than given and that interpretation depends on the interaction between linguistic form, cognitive capacity, and context-based reasoning (Evans & Green, 2006).

### 2.5.3 Symbolism and Meaning-Making

Language functions as a symbolic system in which forms are conventionally paired with meanings. According to Langacker (1987), a linguistic expression is a symbolic assembly composed of a perceptible form and an associated conceptual content. The meaning of a word does not reside in the external object itself but in the mental representation or concept that speakers construct from their sensory and perceptual experiences. These concepts are integrated into a coherent mental image that reflects the individual's cognitive understanding of the world. Because our conceptual capacity is far broader than our linguistic system, language becomes a limited medium for expressing the full range of human thought. Meaning, therefore, is not merely retrieved from linguistic forms but is actively constructed in the mind through processes of conceptualisation and interpretation. This view supports the CS approach to symbolism and meaning-making, in which symbols guide the mind to generate meaning, rather than delivering meaning directly (Jackendoff, 1983).

Gibbs (2006) explained that symbolism occupies a central place in CS because it demonstrates how language can communicate meaning that is not directly stated but is instead evoked, activated, or constructed in the mind of the interpreter. Cognitively, a symbol is not a mere sign that has a fixed meaning, but a linguistic cue that induces the reader to tap into broader conceptual structures, associations, emotions, and experiential memories. Meaning is therefore not the result of the symbol itself, but it is

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the mental operations that the symbol evokes. Evans and Green (2006) demonstrated that perspective, that meaning-making is a constructive cognitive process. When symbolic language is present, the mind makes use of its internal cognitive resources, such as memory, cultural knowledge, prior experiences, states of emotion, and categories of concepts to generate meaning. This is also in accordance with the cognitive semantic principle that meaning is conceptually grounded rather than inherently stored within linguistic forms. Symbols hence provide a point of departure for interpretation that leads the reader into a network of conceptual possibilities rather than one fixed meaning.

Lakoff and Johnson (1999) also stated that symbolism is an important factor in the process of mediating between abstract thought and embodied experience. Metaphoric and symbolic mapping is one of the ways the human mind can perceive abstract concepts such as spirituality, morality, time, or identity in more concrete and embodied domains such as movement, light, or spatial orientation. This means that symbolic expressions may be powerful tools of arriving at the emotional and intuitive aspects of meaning. Their ability to appeal to the imaginative and emotional, as well as the rational or literal, aspects of cognition is what can make symbols generate wonder, reflection, longing, or humility.

In addition, symbolic meaning is open-ended and layered. A single symbol might have a number of different meanings, depending on the interpretive context and the conceptual background of the reader. Rather than a weakness, this interpretive openness is a strength, as it enables symbolism to accommodate different minds, experiences, and epistemic positions. Symbolic meaning-making is inherently dynamic in nature, i.e., as engagement increases, reflections and contextual re-evaluation intensify, leading to a more elaborated interpretation, as noted by Turner (1996).

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Lastly, symbolism motivates the participation of the reader or listener. The person does not passively receive the meaning but also participates in the construction of meaning. This engagement builds cognitive awareness, emotional resonance, and interpretive insight, and symbolic language is an incredibly potent instrument of a text that is destined to encourage reflection, contemplation, and inner transformation.

### 2.6 Semiotics and the Study of Religious and Signs

A wide definition of semiotics is the study of signs, sign systems and the manner in which meaning is generated, transmitted, and interpreted. The field has emerged as a foundational framework for understanding how meaning works in language, culture, and religious discourse. Although development of the discipline has been done by many scholars, two major figures, who worked separately during the same time frame, are believed to have contributed to the development: Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce (Danesi, 2004; Ragheb, 2003). Semiotics is “a science that studies the life of signs within society” as described by Saussure, who is considered to be the father of European structural linguistics (Saussure, as cited in Hawkes, 2003, p. 100). In a different formulation, he claimed that semiotics “studies the role of signs as part of social life” (Saussure, 1983, pp. 15–16, as cited in Chandler, 2007, p. 2). In the view of Saussure, language is a larger semiotic systems that also comprise gestures, images, bodily postures, and symbolic cultural patterns. This makes semiotics more expansive than linguistics, with linguistic form as a subset of more extensive meaning-making practices entrenched in social experience (Hawkes, 2003).

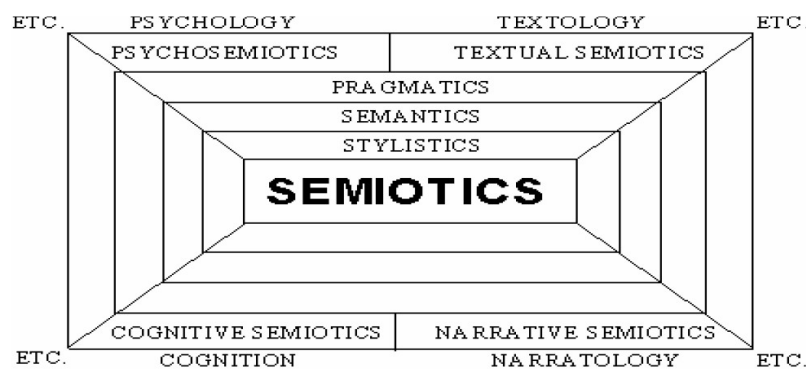
Peirce, on the contrary, approached semiotics as a tradition of philosophy and logic. His definition of the field was “the quasi-necessary, or formal doctrine of signs” (Peirce, as cited in Hawkes, 2003, p. 100). This definition was subsequently extended by Peirce

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to semiotics (or semiosis) as “an action, or influence, which involves a cooperation of three subjects: a sign (representamen), its object, and its interpretant; this tri-relative influence not being in any way resolvable into actions between pairs” (CP 5.584). This triadic formulation was a radical departure from the dyadic model of Saussure, accentuating that meaning is actively formed in the process of interpretation, and is not predetermined or intrinsic, as demonstrated in Figure 2.1

**Figure 2.1**

*The Scope of Semiotics and Its Interdisciplinary Relations (Adapted from Semiotics: The Basics by D. Chandler, 2007)*



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A number of theorists in the present time have gone on to refine these initial definitions. Chandler (2007) and Finch (2005) offer a terse definition and describe semiotics simply as “the study of signs.” Chandler (2007, p. 2) continues to explain that a sign encompasses “anything which stands for something else,” and therefore semiotic analysis does not only involve analysis of linguistic signs but also analysis of visual, auditory, behavioral, and symbolic forms. Examples of this are found in everyday life, such as smoke as an indicator of fire, a gesture signaling approval, or a sacred symbol mediating access to spiritual meaning.

According to Yelle (2021), semiotics, which is the science of signs and sign-processes, has now been a strong methodological instrument in the study of religion, and scholars can apply it to the analysis of how religious phenomena are systems of meaning and communication. In religious studies, semiotics studies the operations of texts, symbols, rituals, images and sacred space not merely as representations, but as signs that encode, evoke and circulate spiritual significance. The semiotic approach acknowledges that religious signs both point outward (to divine or transcendent referents) and inward (to patterns of cognition, community identity and interpretive engagement). Yelle (2021) placed semiotics in the group of methodological tools in the Handbook, where it was defined broadly as a “science of signs,” and demonstrated its descent in Peirce’s semiotic, Saussurean structuralism, Barthes’ mythic discourse, and more contemporary anthropological approaches to the study of semiotic ideologies. This methodological direction underlines that religious language and symbolism are not self-evident; they have to be unpacked, recognised as structural units of meaning in their material, ritual, and textual contexts, and understood as signification. Semiotic inquiry, in the context of religious texts and practices, is concerned with the mediations between signifiers (words, sounds, images, objects) and signified (concepts, beliefs,

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relations to the sacred) in culturally and cognitively mediated ways. It also acknowledges that religious signs can function iconically (by resemblance), indexically (by pointing), or symbolically (by convention and interpretive tradition), in line with the typology invented by Peirce and used in religious contexts. In this way, semiotics provides a systematic approach to analysing the construction, circulation, contestation, and experience of meaning in religious traditions, as Yelle (2021) observed.

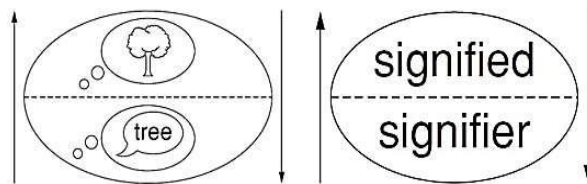
One of the first systematic formulations of semiotics, especially of linguistic meaning, can be found in the work of Ferdinand de Saussure, whose lectures published posthumously as *Course in General Linguistics* were the basis of structuralist views on the interpretation of signs. Semiotics is defined by Saussure as “a science that studies the life of signs within society,” but he focuses on it not only as a form in language but also as any form of communication inherent in culture (Saussure, 1916/1983, pp. 15–16, as cited in Chandler, 2007, p. 2). Here, Saussure proposes that the sign is never a single object but a relational entity and that it comprises two inseparable parts: the signifier and the signified. The signifier refers to the material or perceptible part of the sign such as a spoken sound, written form, or acoustic image and the signified refers to the conceptual meaning or mental image evoked by the form. Their relationship, which Saussure refers to as signification, “is the meaningful role of the sign as a communicative unit” (Sebeok, 2001, p. 5). A common example can be used to illustrate this dynamic: the English word tree is a signifier, and the culturally shared concept of “treeness” is the signified, that is, the mental representation of a plant with a trunk and branches. Notably, Saussure emphasised that these two dimensions are “as inseparable as the two sides of a sheet of paper,” that is, it is impossible that one of them can be a sign without the other (Saussure, 1983, p.111, as cited in Chandler, 2007, p. 17). This interdependence was supported by Deledalle (2000), who stated that neither of the two

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elements has meaning on its own, but only when they are related to each other does a sign become semantically functional. As illustrated in Figure 2.2.

**Figure 2.2**

*Saussure's Model of the Sign (Adopted from Course in General Linguistics (1959), as cited by D. Chandler, 2007)*



More importantly, Saussure believed that meaning is not a result of an inherent relationship between signifier and signified, but of conventions created by society and shared by a speech community. This tenet makes the Saussurean model a paradigm where language is a system of arbitrary, culturally determined relations, instead of being a direct reflection of external reality. The dyadic design therefore theorises meaning as a product of collective cognition rather than innate representation as observed by Ragheb (2003, p. 365).

Chandler (2007) claimed that this dyadic bond implies linguistic forms in religious discourse, such as divine names, ritual formulae, or mysterious letters, are not independent units of text but culturally encoded signifiers related to deeply embedded conceptual worlds. Words are devoid of intrinsic meaning and become signs only when society invests them with meaning. When Saussure approached signs as dynamic relational entities and not just labels of things, he offered a theoretical approach that still informs linguistic, cultural, and religious symbolic analysis, such as modern analyses of sacred texts, where signification frequently works beyond denotational

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meaning to produce multiple theological and conceptual associations. In this way, a sacred sign has no pre-determined meaning but is influenced by interpretative tradition, doctrine, and communal memory within religious systems.

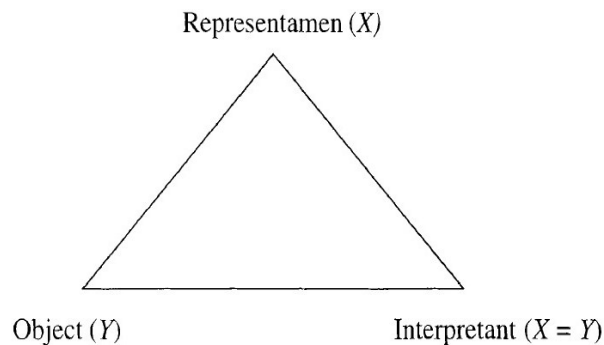
Unlike Saussure's dyadic system, Charles Sanders Peirce expanded the structure of the sign into a triadic model consisting of the representamen (the form), the object, and the interpretant, the latter referring to the meaning generated in the mind of the interpreter. Peirce insisted that "the sign operates within a fundamentally triadic structure (Danesi, 2004). Short (2007, p. 18) noted that Peirce developed a fundamentally different structure by defining the sign as part of a triadic relationship. In Peirce's system, the sign cannot be reduced to a mere duality of form and meaning; rather, it operates within a three-way relation. Building on this, Danesi (2004, p. 16) and Chandler (2007, p. 29) emphasised that Peirce's model consists of: (1) The representamen, which is the form or medium taken by the sign; (2) The object, which is the referent or entity to which the sign directs attention; and (3) The interpretant, which signifies the meaning that arises from interpreting the sign.

Peirce further supported this formulation by asserting that the sign operates exclusively within a triadic structure and cannot be reduced to any simpler relational form (Danesi, 2004). Short (2007, p. 18) also made it clear that the three components are mutually dependent: none of them can be understood in isolation from the other two, since each of them gains its identity only in relation to the remaining two elements. Danesi (2004) restated this model in practical terms by explaining that the Peircean sign entails a representational form (X), the object or referent (Y) that it signifies, and the interpretant, which encompasses potential meanings derived from connecting X and Y. This structure illustrated in figure 2.3

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**Figure 2.3**

*The Peircean Triadic Sign Model (Adopted from Semiotics: The Basics, by D. Chandler, 2007, Routledge)*



Deledalle (2000, p. 108) explained Peirce's theory by explaining that the triadic sign can be analysed across three layers of relational function: with respect to the representamen, the sign may appear as a qualisign, sinsign, or legisign; with respect to the object, the sign may function as an icon, index, or symbol; and with respect to the interpretant, it may manifest as a rhema, dicisign, or argument. These distinctions allow Peirce's semiotic model to be understood as an extensive analytical framework that categorises nine distinct sub-types of signs. The three foundational trichotomies of Peirce's model are therefore organised across representamen, object, and interpretant classifications. The following table shows the three main trichotomies of Peirce:

**Table 2.1.** *The Three main Trichotomies of Peirce*

| Sign in Reference to Itself<br>(Representamen) | Sign in Reference to its<br>Object | Sign in Reference to its<br>Interpretant |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Qualisign                                      | Icon                               | Rhema                                    |
| Sinsign                                        | Index                              | Dicisign                                 |
| Legisign                                       | Symbol                             | Argument                                 |

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**Note.** Adapted from Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce (Vols. 1–8), by C. S. Peirce, 1931–1958, Harvard University Press; see also Chandler (2007).

More importantly, Peirce categorised signs into icons, indexes, and symbols. Icons signify through resemblance, such as sacred imagery; indexes signify through causal or contextual linkage, such as smoke indicating fire or footprints indicating the presence of a person; and symbols signify through arbitrary convention, a category under which most Glorious Qur'anic vocabulary and especially al-huruf al-muqatta'ah may be analysed in the present study.

A symbol, though, is based on communal convention and interpretive tradition, and is especially pertinent to sacred texts and ritual practices where meaning depends on shared doctrinal frameworks rather than physical resemblance. According to this perspective, Peircean semiotics reveals that religious language is inherently layered: one and the same form, be it a Glorious Qur'anic letter, a sacred utterance, or a prophetic gesture, may at once resemble, indicate, and symbolise meaning, depending on the interpretive stance of the believer, and according to the cultural context in which it is encountered (Peirce, 1998).

These models, applied to religious language, illuminate at once the functioning of sacred signs on linguistic, cultural, and metaphysical levels. Peirce's interpretant introduces the possibility of ongoing meaning-generation, and the sign becomes a site of theological interpretation as opposed to a static linguistic artifact. Similarly, the cultural dependence emphasised by Saussure highlights the reason why religious signs can be so difficult to translate fully into secular interpretive frameworks: they are not merely signs in linguistic form but in ritual, belief, cosmology, and inherited symbolism. Together, these perceptions suggested, religious signs, especially the

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mysterious ones beckon interpretation, reflection, and spiritual engagement, and transform the elements of language into vessels of transcendence (Yelle, 2012).

### 2.6.1 Structuralist and Narrative Approaches

Structuralist and narrative approaches have become a prominent theoretical trend in the twentieth century, with the view that meaning in texts is produced not through author intention, or by isolated content, but through the underlying structures and relational patterns. According to J. Dudley Andrew, in *The Structuralist Study of Narrative: Its History, Use, and Limits*, structuralism attempts to discover the deep grammar of narrative its patterns, oppositions, functions, and recurrence as opposed to describing the story at the surface level. Andrew claimed that structuralist analysis treats texts as systems of signs rather than expressions of personal experience, and instead of interpreting, it focuses on the rules that govern meaning (Andrew, 1984). Based on the work of Ferdinand de Saussure, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Vladimir Propp, and Roland Barthes, Andrew (1984) argued that structuralists apply narrative analysis to bring out universal patterns: binary oppositions (sacred/profane, guidance/wandering), repeated motifs, symbolic sequences, and narrative logic. Symbols in this model do not exist in isolation, but rather acquire meaning through their location in a system. The value of a symbol emerges not from its essence, but from its relational function within the narrative structure. This facilitates structuralism especially in the analysis of religious and literary works in which symbolic language acts within a broader rhetorical and conceptual framework.

### 2.6.2 Structuralist and Narrative Approaches to the Qur'an

Recent scholarship particularly (Farrin, 2014) has been inclined towards structuralist and narrative approaches to the Glorious Qur'an, in which the text is seen

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as governed by deliberate patterns of coherence, rather than as a collection of isolated revelations. Raymond Farrin, in his *Structure and Qur'anic Interpretation*, showed the symmetrical and ring-composition structures of numerous surahs in which the themes, symbols and rhetorical devices are reflected in each other throughout the verse, so as to create a narrative architecture guiding the interpretation. This systematic arrangement, he asserts, is neither accidental, nor purposeful and significant: “the Qur'an is highly structured, with many chapters displaying a complex architecture of parallelism, symmetry, and conceptual interdependence” (Farrin, 2014, p. 5).

In this framework, rhetorical devices, metaphors, key repeated lexemes, even marked openings like al-huruf al-muqatta'ah (disjointed letters), may be analysed as narrative signals that mark thematic transitions, foreground central concepts, or activate intertextual resonance throughout the text. Structuralist approaches proposed by Kennedy (2012) and Taghizadeh (2013) regarded the Glorious Qur'anic symbols not as standalone objects but rather as a part of a cohesive discourse system, in which meaning emerges through the relationship between textual units, narrative progression, and rhetorical organisation. This point of view enhances the reading of the Glorious Qur'anic text with an understanding of the situationality of symbolic expressions in a larger literary logic, providing a unified reading of the Glorious Qur'an as a text whose structure contributes to its semantic depth.

### 2.6.3 The Function of Symbols in Verse Discourse

Symbolic meaning in religious discourse is not confined to individual lexical items but functions within a structured communicative system that shapes the interpretation of sacred texts. as clarified by Chandler (2007) and Eco, (1976). The language of religion text is also identified not by the content of its semantic meaning

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alone but also in its role in a larger ethical and theological framework. Such religious symbols as lexical archaisms (e.g., thou, goeth), doctrinal terminology, and prosodic or phonological markers play a role in the formation of a layered discourse possessing spiritual authority and interpretive depth. In this respect, Crystal and Davy (1969) assumed that religious discourse relies on linguistic originality, appropriateness, and intelligibility i.e. that is, symbols must be familiar and meaningful to the believers yet should remain sacred simultaneously.

In *Coherence in the Glorious Qur'ān*, Mir (1986) suggested that the Glorious Qur'an evinces an intentional structural unity instead of a loose or episodic arrangement of verses. The Glorious Qur'an exhibits a system of *nazm* (structural cohesion) where linguistic forms, whether rhetorical devices, thematic repetition, or symbolic markers, serve as parts of a larger discourse system. Symbols, in this context, are not separate components of the text, but contribute to the thematic continuity and interpretive direction in the verse as a whole. Mir (1986) stated that "a sura is an organic whole, with its topics connected in a meaningful sequence" (p. 13). In this structural perspective, symbolic forms in the Glorious Qur'an be they narrative motifs, key terms or unique textual markers, are present as discourse signals, helping to affect a transition, to reinforce meaning and to guide interpretation. The repetitive symbolic features in this scheme, become what Mir (1986) referred to as "linking devices", creating cohesion at the single surah level, at the surah-surah, and surah-group levels (pp. 18–19). In such a way, symbols of the Glorious Qur'an do not merely work at the lexical level, but form a part of the compositional architecture of the text, and help to create the rhetorical and semantic unity of revelation.

When this kind of framework is suggested to be applied to the Glorious Qur'an, as Neuwirth (2010) did, symbolic units like repeated motifs, formulaic expressions or

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even disjointed letters such as the huruf al-muqatta'ah have a part to play beyond their outward linguistic structure; may contribute to thematic cohesion thematic cohesion, spiritual emphasis, and rhetorical texture to the structure of each verse. Qur'anic symbols are produced in a complicated rhetorical architecture in the context of which the elements of language can obtain meaning in terms of the way they are positioned in the greater discursive flow. Similarly, Mir (1986) demonstrate how structural devices like symbolic markers are anchors of coherence which enable one to interpret across verses as compared to being isolated signs. The symbols in the discourse of the Glorious Qur'an, thus, act as structural anchors that direct meaning, mark transitions and frame theological focus as a subset of the overall narrative design of the text Mir (1986).

### **2.7 Cognitive Semantics of Religious Language**

Evans & Green (2006) asserted that CS offers an effective framework for the study of how religious language carries meaning, not merely at the lexical level but as an expression of conceptual structures grounded in embodied experience. Under this paradigm, meaning is regarded as a product of human cognition, rather than inherent to linguistic structure; conceptual metaphors, image schemas, and categorisation processes are the processes that can be examined in religious texts to form how believers interpret and comprehend (Evans & Green, 2006). Applying CS to religious discourse, abstract theological concepts such as divine guidance, revelation, mercy, or the unseen are often conceptualised through metaphorical mappings rooted in sensory and experiential domains. The foundational work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) demonstrated that metaphor is not ornamental but cognitive, from the perspective of Conceptual Metaphor Theory, expressions such as, "God guides whom He wills" or

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“the light of faith” can be interpreted as conceptual metaphors rooted in embodied schema (e.g., KNOWLEDGE IS LIGHT, MORALITY IS STRAIGHTNESS). Likewise, Gibbs (2006) stated that religious meaning is constructed through embodied cognitive processes in which believers activate cultural knowledge, emotional experience, and symbolic associations in reading sacred texts.

Sharapkova (2024) showed how cognitive meaning-making processes are central to the interpretation of religious expressions. She demonstrated that Glorious Qur’anic expressions often rely on indirect semantic structuring, metaphorical construals, and evaluative meaning. Her discussion shows that Glorious Qur’anic language is not limited to the literal level, but encourages readers to adopt conceptual inferences grounded in moral cognition and cultural-religious frameworks. This indirectness helps to support the view that sacred discourse activates not only linguistic knowledge but also cognitive, moral, and doctrinal schemas shared by believers. This observation aligns with the cognitive semantic notion that meaning is constructed rather than stored, and that conceptual metaphors and imagery provide access to higher-order spiritual reasoning.

In this context, religious language is a site of cognitive meaning-making through the application of linguistic expressions as prompts for conceptual interpretation and not containers of fixed semantic content. Meaning unfolds dynamically because it emerges through inferencing, conceptual mapping, and the activation of encyclopedic knowledge processes most salient in scripture in which symbolic language prompts reflection, interpretation, and spiritual inference consistent with Sweetser (1999). In this way, the analysis of religious language through CS allows for a deeper understanding how religious symbols, ritual expressions, and doctrinal terminology are involved in shaping religious cognition and experience. This framework is especially

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applicable in the analysis of Islamic scripture, where such a term as verse (“sign,” “proof,” or “symbol”) has layered semantic and conceptual significance which extends beyond dictionary definitions to cognitive, theological, and experiential dimensions. Thus, CS helps to shed light on how sacred texts encode meaning, how believers derive meaning and how symbolic expressions work as cognitive and interpretive triggers rather than literal descriptors as suggested by Gibbs (2006).

### 2.8 Previous Studies

Some previous studies have dealt with the Qur’anic symbols, al-huruf al-muqatta’ah or disjointed letters and are, in some way related to the current study, but none of them has dealt with these letters in CS analysis.

In his article *Investigation on the Mystery of the Glorious Qur’an’s Disjointed Letters*, published in *QURANICA: International Journal of Qur’anic Research* (Vol. 5, Issue 2), Halim Sayoud (2013) set out to revisit the ancient puzzle of al-huruf al-muqatta’ah through an empirical and interdisciplinary lens. Leaving exegetical speculation, the research was meant to find out the possibility of using modern analytical tools to uncover new information about these opening letters, the meanings of which have been elusive to agreement both in classical and modern scholarship. In this regard, Sayoud utilised computational analysis and through text-mining, combining quantitative linguistic analysis with philosophical reflection and Qur’an-based interpretation. The study used seven complementary analyses, including size-based analysis of verses, character-frequency analysis, lexical examination of verses following the disjointed letters, philosophical (logical) reasoning, character n-gram analysis, Qur’an-internal interpretive analysis, and arithmetic analysis inspired by numerical patterns, notably the number 19. The dataset comprises the complete text of

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the Glorious Qur'an, and more specifically the 29 surahs which start with disjointed letters. The findings led to certain key conclusions: first, that these letters are structurally and textually significant, often with explicit allusion to the Glorious Qur'an or "the Book"; two, that the distribution and numerical regularities of al- Muqatta'at indicate purposeful design, not chance; and three, that the function of al- muqatta'at may be symbolic and epistemic. Sayoud ultimately came to the conclusion that, despite the fact that their precise meanings may not be accessible, al- muqatta'at are a meaningful part of Glorious Qur'anic discourse, and invite further reflection rather than closure.

Another significant contribution is Sinai's (2017) analysis of Glorious Qur'anic disjointed letters is the work of Nicolai Sinai, called *Key Terms of the Glorious Qur'an*. Sinai's main objective intention in his work was, as it relates to the disjointed letters, of placing them in the internal discourse structure of the Glorious Qur'an, and not determining their meaning by speculative exegesis. He treated the disjointed letters as textual markers whose function should be determined by their placement, distribution, and co-textual environment throughout the Qur'anic corpus. Sinai methodologically followed a historical-philological and discourse-analytic approach, grounded in close reading of the text of the Qur'an and the early exegetical traditions. His data are a set of Qur'anic passages prefaced by al-huruf al-muqatta'ah, analysed comparatively in terms of thematic continuity, stylistic shifts, and rhetorical framing. Sinai came to the conclusion that the main purpose of al-huruf al-muqatta'ah is their discourse-structuring and rhetorical role, not a recoverable lexical meaning. He tried to argue that these letters are markers of textual transition and heightened attention, setting the audience up to take some passages which anticipate the Glorious Qur'an's revelatory status and linguistic uniqueness.

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In 2020, Khoirun Niat published a paper titled *The Relations of huruf al-muqatta'at and the Integration of Understanding on the Surah in the Qur'an: A Case Study of Surat al-Baqarah in Şuḥuf: Journal of Qur'anic Studies* (Vol. 13, No. 2). The given paper was oriented to examine the structural and symbolic relationship between the prefaced letters Alif-Lām-Mīm and the thematic unity of Surat al-Baqarah in order to challenge the traditional tendency to regard the ḥurūf muqatta'at as peripheral or disjointed units. The study employed a qualitative library-based approach wherein the primary data were to be gathered with the help of the verses of the Glorious Qur'an in Surat al-Baqarah which are preceded by Alif-Lām-Mīm ألم. The analytical approach is grounded on the structuralism of Claude Lévi-Strauss that is focused on the determination of relational patterns, oppositions, and transformations of textual elements. The author did not see the letters as separate cryptic exceptions, but as components of a greater discourse system. The paper concluded that the symbols of Alif-Lām-Mīm ألم are a symbolic structural key to the dominant thematic triad belief (īmān), hypocrisy (nifāq), and disbelief (kufr) in the verse. In particular, one can speak about Alif, the symbol of openness and faith, Lām, a symbol of partial openness which is related to hypocrisy, and Mīm as the symbol of closure which is linked to disbelief. The author mentioned that a reader can understand the unity of the verse in a deeper holistic sense by acknowledging such a symbolic correspondence and placing the disjointed letters as an interpretive gateway, instead of a mystery that cannot be resolved.

The other study that is relevant to the discussed phenomenon of al-huruf al-muqatta'ah or disjointed letters is introduced by Rachid Ghmari (2021) in his article titled *The Mysterious Disjointed Letters in the Glorious Qur'ān: Evidence of Divine Authorship*. The study aimed to re-evaluate the old issue of the huruf al-muqatta'ah by offering a novel interpretive framework that does not rely on traditional symbolic,

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mystical, or purely exegetical explanations. The purpose of the study was to research the structural and textual role of the disjointed letters in the Glorious Qur'an as a whole, instead of trying to find lexical meanings for them. It methodologically involved qualitative textual analysis of the verses following the disjointed letters together with quantitative analysis of the size, position, and distribution of the prefixed verses in the corpus of the Glorious Qur'an. The information includes the complete text of the Glorious Qur'an, and especially the 29 surahs that are introduced by disjointed letters, their main key terms (Qur'an, kitāb, verses), as well as their proportional placement within the overall structure of the scripture. This paper found that the disjointed letters are not haphazard or only symbolic in an abstract sense; they serve as structural markers which divide the Glorious Qur'an into coherent fractions and thematic groupings. The most significant discovery is that the complex correspondence between the disjointed letters and the global structure of the Glorious Qur'an is in the eyes of the author strong evidence of deliberate design and finally the divine authorship.

In 2022, Nazarpour published an article entitled "Ibn Barrajan on Disjointed Letters (al-ḥurūf al-muqatta'a) in the Qur'an: A New Perspective and Interpretation" in the *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding* (Volume 9, Issue 5, pp. 108–120), a peer-reviewed journal affiliated with the University of Isfahan, Iran. The principal aim of the study was to examine Ibn Barrajan's (d. 536/1141) distinctive interpretive perspective on the disjointed letters, with a view to situating his contribution within and differentiating it from the broader classical Islamic exegetical tradition. Methodologically, the study adopted a library-based descriptive-analytic approach. The data comprised primary Qur'anic texts alongside classical exegetical works by al-Ṭabarī (1992 al-Zamakhsharī, al-Suyūṭī, and al-Rāzī, in addition to Ibn Barrajan's own exegetical writings. The analysis focused specifically on Ibn Barrajan's

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theological framework concerning the hierarchy of Divine Revelation. The study concluded that Ibn Barrajān's interpretation of al-huruf al-muqatta'ah is fundamentally distinct from that of his predecessors. He argued that the disjointed letters function as a medium between the Clear Book (al-kitāb al-mubīn) and the revealed Qur'ān, representing the manifested form of the Divine Names and Attributes within the hierarchy of divine disclosure.

The primary differences between the current study, which seeks a Cognitive Semantic analysis of al-huruf al-muqatta'ah, and the literature of the past are the theoretical orientation, analytical focus, and research purpose. The present study discusses al-huruf al-muqatta'ah as meaning-bearing symbolic prompts within the human cognitive system in contrast to earlier works which have been mainly preoccupied with al-huruf al-muqatta'ah through classical tafsīr, philological inquiry, numerological speculation, theological symbolism or textual-historical explanation. Moreover, the current research has a different research aim and contribution. Though much of the previous literature has been more preoccupied with what al-huruf al-muqatta'ah can signify, be it divine names, abbreviations, or markers of revelation, this work fills an apparent gap in the literature by moving the discourse out of interpretive closure toward cognitive semantic dynamics, which is a novel perspective that has not been addressed methodically in previous literature on al-huruf al-muqatta'ah. The data that utilised in this study directly derive out of the Glorious Qur'ānic text, specifically the 29 surahs where al-huruf al-muqatta'ah occur. These are contextually analysed in their immediate textual settings, and across thematic patterns to establish recurring cognitive semantic functions.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3. Introduction

This Chapter provides a detailed description of the methodology employed in this study. Methodology is conceptualised as a systematic plan to guide the researcher in designing and describing a research project (Howell, 2013). The methodology of the current study has been stated in this chapter by clarifying the nature of the present study, the methods of data collection, the sampling criteria and the procedures applied in analysing data. It also holds the theoretical framework of the analytical elements employed in this thesis to attain the objectives of the study.

#### 3.1 The Nature of the Study

Research in linguistics and the humanities is generally conducted through three main methodological approaches: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. The current research is a qualitative research design since this method is the most

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appropriate to study meaning and analyse linguistic phenomena in their natural context. Qualitative research has been considered as “a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning”(Shank, 2002, p. 5), which explains its main focus on the development and interpretation of meaning. The qualitative approach is especially suitable for the research designed to investigate the way ideas and propositions are represented in discourse. As Krippendorff (2019) observed, qualitative analysis allows the researcher to pay attention to the processes of communication of meanings, but not their numerical counterparts. In this respect, qualitative research is interested in the study of patterns of meaning, not focusing on contextual depth rather than statistical measurement and generalisation. In addition, qualitative research aims at addressing questions that concern the “what,” “how,” and “why” of some given phenomenon, and not quantitative questions (Green & Thorogood, 2004, p. 5). This renders it particularly appropriate to research that would explore the nature and the role of linguistic elements in certain contexts. Therefore the focus falls under the comprehension of the internal organisation and the importance of the phenomenon under study. Besides, qualitative research enables a context-sensitive and in-depth analysis of data. As explained by Johnson and Christensen (2014), the qualitative methods offer an insightful view of the meaning-making processes, whereas Denzin and Lincoln (2011) pointed out that the qualitative researchers observe the phenomena in their natural environments so that they could make sense of them. In this framework, data are analysed in their natural occurrence without manipulation and experimental intervention.

Qualitative research is usually conducted using smaller and well-chosen samples, which can be analysed in detail and systematically (Suter, 2011). The researcher is highly involved in the organisation, selection, and analysis of the data through well-defined methodological principles. According to Schreier (2012), the analysis done by

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qualitative method necessitates an organised and thoughtful interaction of the data, ensuring that the interpretations are similar and based on the research process. It is further known that qualitative types of analysis provide “rich and detailed perspective on the data” (McEnery & Wilson, 1996, p. 76). The qualitative research design will allow the researcher to analyse the chosen data thoroughly and developing a subtle perception of the phenomenon will be studied. This research design best fits the research objective, which is to identify the cognitive mechanisms behind the use of symbolic meaning in Qur’anic discourse.

### 3.2 Data Collection and Description

The data used in the current study has been chosen cautiously so that they fit with the objectives of the research and offer a focused and systematic basis of the study. The Glorious Qur’an provides the sole source of data collection because the study is focused on investigating the selected structural features appear at the beginning of the chosen surahs. In qualitative studies, the researcher acts as the primary data collection and selection instrument whose role is to identify, categorising and demarcating the dataset according to the purpose of the study (Maxwell, 2005).

The qualitative content analysis (QCA) is a method that is popular in the analysis of textual information in many fields such as linguistics and cognitive research (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Mayring, 2000). It can be described as a technique of the systematic categorisation and interpretation of textual content by finding patterns and themes (Krippendorff, 2004). QCA in this study offers a systematic framework of structuring and studying the chosen Qur’anic texts that allowing the researcher to investigate the role and allocation of the chosen forms in the textual background. The analysis is a planned process that is divided into three primary steps. To begin with, the appropriate

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textual units are selected with the help of the disjointed letters at the beginning of the surahs. Second, the data are categorised based on the structural form of these openings, which would enable systematic comparison of the data across the dataset. Third, the chosen samples receive a detailed analysis to examine the patterns and make conclusions concerning their role in the text. In general, the data selection procedure in the current study is informed by the well-articulated qualitative criteria that will guarantee the quality of the dataset in terms of its representativeness, adequacy and the absence of redundancy. Such a prudent choice gives a solid background to the further analysis steps and justifies the validity of the research findings. Table 3.1 below summarises the data gathered.

**Table 3.1** *The Selected Samples of The Study.*

| No. | Name of Surahs       | Number of Verse | AL-Huruf AL-Muqatta'ah           |
|-----|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| 1-  | Sād (ص)              | 1, 2            | Sād (S, ص)                       |
| 2-  | Qāf (ق)              | 1,2             | Qāf (Q, ق)                       |
| 3-  | Al-Qalam (القلم)     | 1,2             | Nūn (N, ن)                       |
| 4-  | Tā Hā (طه)           | 1,2             | Tā Hā (T.H, طه)                  |
| 5-  | Al-Naml (النمل)      | 1,2             | Tā Sīn (T.S, طس)                 |
| 6-  | Yā Sīn (يس)          | 1,2,3,4         | Yā Sīn (Y.S, يس)                 |
| 7-  | Al-Dukhan (الدخان)   | 1,2,3           | Hā Mīm (H.M, حم)                 |
| 8-  | Al-Baqara (البقرة)   | 1,2,3           | Alif Lām Mīm (A.L.M, الم)        |
| 9-  | Hūd (هود)            | 1,2             | Alif Lām Rā (A.L.R, الر)         |
| 10- | Al A'raf (الاعراف)   | 1,2             | Tā Sīn Mīm (T.S.M, طسم)          |
| 11- | Al-Ra'ad (الرعد)     | 1,2,            | Ailf Lām Mīm Rā(A.L.M.R, المر)   |
| 12- | Al-Shu'arā (الشعراء) | 1,2,3           | Alif Lām Mīm Sād (A.L.M.S, المص) |

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|     |                    |       |                                        |
|-----|--------------------|-------|----------------------------------------|
| 13- | Marym (مريم)       | 1,2,3 | Kāf Hā Yā Aīn Sād (K.H.Y.A.S, كهيعص)   |
| 14- | Al-Shuraa (الشورى) | 1,2,3 | Hā Mīm Aīn Sīn Qāf (H.M.A.S.Q, حم عسق) |

### 3.3 Criteria for Data Selection

The following criteria were used in data collection. The selection of qualitative data involves taking into account a number of important points so that the suitability and applicability of the dataset can be guaranteed. According to Maxwell (2005), there are three critical requirements, including sufficiency, saturation, and representativeness. Representativeness is the degree to which a chosen sample is representative of the wider phenomenon being studied and as such the results can be adequately extrapolated. In the current research, representativeness is realised through the selection of Qur'anic surahs showing various types of disjointed letters so that the various structural patterns where the phenomenon is manifested are covered.

The concept of saturation is also important especially in informing the choice process. Given (2008, p. 195) describes saturation as the stage where no additional or new information can be obtained from the information. Equally, Faulkner and Trotter (2017) described the concept of saturation as one that ensures that redundancy is avoided by avoiding unnecessary repetition in the dataset. The given principle is the main focus of the present research because the phenomenon under study, namely the

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disjointed letters, reappears in several surahs of the Glorious Qur'an, and in most cases, they are in the same or very similar forms. This would yield data redundancy, thereby failing to contribute novel insights past the point of conceptual saturation.

This is why not all 29 surahs where disjointed letters are mentioned in the study. Rather, 14 surahs have been selected purposively and each of them is a different arrangement of disjointed letters without repetition. This sampling technique makes sure that every sample brings new structural and contextual data, which would prevent duplication and keep the analysis rich. The criterion of saturation is also used in addition to the criterion of sufficiency. Sufficiency can be described as the presence of sufficient data to cover the research objectives (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The 14 textual units chosen are considered sufficient to represent the key patterns and variations of the phenomenon, but it is also possible to conduct a detailed and systematic analysis.

### **3.4 The Model of the Study**

The current research is based on two complementary cognitive frameworks, which are the Conceptual Blending Theory and the Schema Theory, in a methodological way. The analytical modal employed in this study hence is a blend of these two approaches that combine to offer a structured foundation for analysing meaning construction in the chosen data. The Conceptual Blending Theory, developed by Fauconnier and Turner (2002) and Schema Theory, which was proposed by Bartlett (1932), were further developed in the area of cognitive psychology, specifically by Rumelhart (1980) and Anderson (1984). Based on this, the analytical model that has been employed in this research incorporates these two frameworks so as to offer a systematic explanation of how the meaning is organised and processed in the selected texts.

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### 3.4.1 Conceptual Blending Theory

Blending Theory, likewise referred to as Conceptual Integration Theory, or the Many-Space Model, was established by Fauconnier and Turner (2002). This theory originates from two frameworks in CS: Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Mental Spaces Theory (CMT & MST). According to Blending Theory, a structure might consist of a combination of structures that together initiate in excess of the total of its components. The process that makes this possible, denoted as "blending" or conceptual integration, is thought to be a fundamental cognitive function that is essential to thought processes. Because Blending Theory makes extensive use of mental spaces and mental spaces creation as a fundamental component of its building, it is most closely aligned with MST in terms of both its basic concerns and architectural design. However, MST and even CMT are unable to sufficiently explain certain facts, leading to the development of Blending Theory as an independent theory. Furthermore, Blending Theory enhances an important hypothetical complexity of its own.

Language has a significant function in the creation of meaning, mainly creative features of meaning structure such as counterfactuals and metaphors. Blending Theory was initially established to explain that part. Recently, however, research indicates that conceptual blending is crucial to human creativity and imagination a phenomenon evidenced not only in linguistic, but in a variety of further activities as well. Fauconnier and Turner (2002) specifically contend that the emergence of sophisticated human behaviors that depend on intricate symbolic capacities may have been facilitated by the capacity for conceptual integration or blending. These include the creation and use of tools, rituals, and the advancement of language and art.

### 3.4.2 Conceptual Blending Theory: Historical Background

## A COGNITIVE SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF HURUF MUQATTA'AH

According to Dancygier (2014), CBT is a relatively new theory, having been appeared in the 1990s and fully articulated by Fauconnier and Turner (2002, p. 299). It was based on CMT cases in its most formal structure. It did, however, satisfy the requirement that not all expressions, such as representational ones, are totally unintentional and that mental spaces activated can contribute to the meaning construction. The source and the target are the two spaces that make up CMT as a whole. This allows for the unidirectional visualisation of conceptual creation from the source into the target. Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner's research initiatives are where CBT got its start. Turner focused on the direction of improving meaning based on his analyses of metaphor in fictional language. Their research plans combined a variety of language characteristics that seemed to exhibit striking commonalities that both of their systems could not directly explain. Generally speaking, both of them observed that meaning progress seems to originate from construction that is not explicitly in the language or theoretical construction that serves as the procedure's involvement. Their attempts to depict this impression gave rise to Blending Theory (Evans & Green, 2006, p. 401).

According to Turner (2007, p. 377), the development of conceptual integration can be traced back to 1993 through the work of Fauconnier and Turner. One of the most recent additions to the field of Cognitive Linguistics is the blending hypothesis. Additionally, CBT builds on CMT and MST (Whiteley, 2018, p. 214), it views areas as information-theoretic mental spaces that are arranged according to Idealised Cognitive Models. As it naturally suspects and converses, the mental spaces are created on the web, and draws upon them to construct meaning. CBT is a genuinely flexible system that can depict intricate conceptual planning across multiple mental spaces and provides an alternative picture of how humans interact in representations.

### 3.4.3 Principles and Fundamental Concepts

According to Dancygier (2014, p. 297), conceptual blending provides a framework for explaining how conceptual structures are integrated in the construction of meaning. Rather than treating meaning as a fixed property of individual linguistic units, Conceptual Blending Theory views meaning as emerging through the integration of information from different conceptual spaces. These spaces include two or more input spaces, a generic space that captures their shared abstract structure, and a blended space in which selected elements from the input spaces are integrated to produce emergent structure. The theory therefore provides a dynamic account of meaning construction by explaining how information distributed across mental spaces can be selectively integrated into a new conceptual structure.

The central assumption of Conceptual Blending Theory is that meaning construction can produce an emergent structure that is not reducible to the individual contributions of the input spaces. Conceptual integration involves the selective combination of information from different mental spaces and the development of structure within the blend. In this process, the elements of the input spaces are integrated through a series of blending operations. These operations include composition, through which elements from the input spaces are combined and new relations may be established; completion, through which background knowledge and existing cognitive frames contribute additional structure to the developing blend; and elaboration, through which the blend is further developed through its emergent logic. Together, these operations contribute to the construction of an emergent structure within the blended space. The goal of the combination network is regularity (Evans & Green, 2006, p. 400).

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CBT provides a dynamic account of meaning construction in which the integration of information from different mental spaces can produce a coherent emergent structure. The resulting structure is not simply a repetition of the information contained in the individual input spaces; rather, it develops through their integration and the processes operating within the blend. This emergent structure enables the analyst to account for meanings that arise from the interaction between formally distinct inputs and their contextual information (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002, p. 44).

Conceptual Blending Theory offers a useful theory to study meaning production as a changing, context-sensitive and fluid process. CBT incorporates the creative, integrative nature of mind as opposed to paradigms that rely on fixed metaphorical mappings. It shows how the cognitive processes that happen in dynamic brain enable us to form novel and significant conceptual fusions, as opposed to unchangeable rules, influence our understanding of language, vision, and, imagination (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002).

### 3.4.4 The Typical Integration Conceptual Blending Theory

Conceptual blending involves four mental spaces involved in blending integration, and they are as follows:

**1- The input spaces:** are separate mental spaces. They are comparable to the source and target fields in CMT in some respects. They encompass components are mapped in the generic space.

**2- Cross-space mapping:** It establishes correspondences between counterpart elements in the input spaces. Through these correspondences, related elements and structures are connected across the inputs. This process also involves *selective*

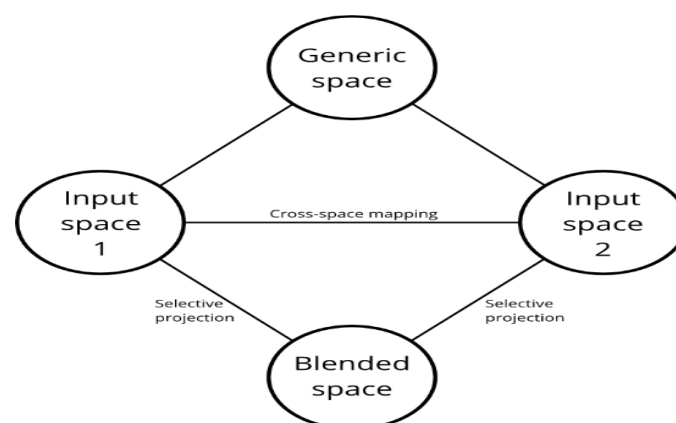
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*projection*, whereby only relevant elements or aspects of the input spaces are projected into the blended space rather than the entirety of the available information. Selective projection therefore determines which elements participate in the construction of the blend and contributes to the development of its emerging structure.

3- **Generic space:** It comprises the data that is shared the abstract structure of two input spaces.

4- **The blended space:** This involves the features from the input spaces that are projected into the blended space since which the increasing structure is shaped. It contains the features projected from the primary involvement. Blended Spaces as well as emergent inferences arising from the entire sensible integration system (Whiteley, 2018, pp. 215-216). These inputs are diagrammed in the figure below.

**Figure (1):** A typical Conceptual Integration Network (Whiteley, 2018, p. 216)



### 3.4.5 Types of Blending Network

Fauconnier and Turner (2002, p.120) proposed a four-types continuum of distinct forms of integration networks that can differ in complexity. These networks include simplex networks, mirror networks, single-scope networks, and double-scope networks and they illustrate as follows:

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### 1- Simplex Networks

A simplex network combines a role structure from one input with specific values from another input. The role-value relation is projected into the blend, allowing an individual to be identified through a particular role within a conceptual frame (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002).

### 2- Mirror Network

A mirror network involves input spaces that share the same organising frame. The spaces may contain different elements, but the overall topology or organisational structure remains comparable across the inputs (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002, pp. 122–123).

### 3-Single-Scope Network

It is most commonly stated by means of metaphorical, with the prediction to the integrated space unequal. This demonstrates that one of the inputs, identified as the source input, provides a shaping frame and a frame correspondent. The target frame will offer parts in a similar manner, but these components will be assigned to the specific rank or related topology. Thus, the source arrives the regulating frame to place the blend only, not the further involvement's frame. Once again, Fauconnier and Turner (2002) provide an excellent example of a solitary scope network: the part of two men boxing serves as input space1 as proposed onto the notion of two top executives belligerent in a commercial struggle, being the input space 2. There exist topologies between the two inputs.

### 4- Double-Scope Network

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Here, two inputs are included in a clear frame. However, the arrangement derived from each frame corresponds with the blend, and this is why the term “double-scope” is used instead of “single-scope”. As a result, the blend might contain construction of inputs that incorporate contrasting or contradictory elements. This is why this part of double networks has a significant role. These networks are highly creative and can lead to novel and unconventional conclusions. In addition, these networks involve multiple inputs with various formatting structures in addition to an arranging frame that combines portions of all these frames and has its own unique construction. In double networks, both organising frames make essential contributions to the blend and their intense alterations facilitate rich collisions. Although these collisions might lead to several challenges in the development of network, the outcome can be highly creative (Evans & Green, 2006, p. 429).

The Computer Desktop blending network is a twofold extent network. The two main inputs consume several spacing frames: " the frame of office work with file, trashcans, and folders from one viewpoint, and the frame of conventional processer instructions, on the other" (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002, p. 131). The frame in the combination magnets from the covering of office work-clearance trash, initiating credentials in addition to the frame of habitual PC instructions "supplant, "find," "save," "print." Portion of the creative achievement currently is trailing disconsolate frames that can equally join to the blended space in compartments that are feasible. "Tossing things in the waste" in addition to "printing" do not struggle, despite the fact that they do not consume a residence with a comparable covering.

### 3.4.6 Blending Elements Conceptual Blending Theory

Fauconnier and Turner (2002) identify several processes involved in conceptual blending. In the present study, the analysis focuses on, composition, completion, and

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elaboration, which contribute to the development of emergent structure in the blended space

**1- Composition:** This process involves combining elements from the input spaces to establish relationships that do not exist independently in either space. This is called cross-space mappings of counterpart elements from each input space onto one another. Composition creates new connections and structures while relations become apparent in the blend.

**2- Completion:** In this process, and building upon the structures formed in the previous stage, the reader recruits background knowledge and diffuses contextual patterns into the blend. This process uses existing cognitive frames to enrich the blend with inferred information and fit the blend to wider knowledge.

**3- Elaboration:** Also called “running the blend” through its emergent logic. This stage involves developing the blend further through imaginative mental simulation. Elaboration permits exploring the implications of the blend, running mental scenarios to see how the new concept operates within various contexts.

**4- Emergent Structure:** The interaction of these processes contributes to the emergence of a new conceptual structure in the blended space. This structure is not simply copied from either input space; rather, it emerges from the integration of selected elements and the development of their relationships within the blend. Emergent structure therefore represents the resulting conceptual organisation produced through the blending process (Fauconnier, 2005).

### 3.5 Schema Theory

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Schema Theory has been widely recognised as a central framework in cognitive psychology for explaining how individuals organise knowledge and construct meaning during comprehension. It was originally introduced by Bartlett (1932) defined a schema as “an active organisation of past reactions or experiences” (p. 201), thereby emphasising the role of prior knowledge in shaping human understanding. Instead of perceiving memory as a storage system that is passive, Bartlett showed that knowledge is dynamically organised and is restructured.

Rumelhart (1980), who described a schema as “a data structure for representing the generic concepts stored in memory” (p. 34). On the same note, Anderson and Pearson (1984) defined schemas as abstract knowledge structures that guide comprehension whereas Medin and Ross (1992) defined them in a broader context as general knowledge systems that are applied in understanding. This set of developments made Schema Theory an important explanatory theory of the processing and interpretation of textual information by individuals.

One of the assumptions of Schema Theory is the fact that meaning is not in the text but it is constructed by the interaction between the reader's knowledge and the textual input (Rumelhart, 1980). In this regard, texts are seen as prompts that guide the readers to apply the corresponding background knowledge, which is often known as prior knowledge. Such knowledge structures or schemata are organised hierarchically whereby the general structures are the most general and the specific ones are the most specific (Adams & Collins, 1979; Bartlett, 1932).

Moreover, Schema Theory implied that the schemas are important in various cognitive activities, such as perception, attention, memory, and decision-making. It was discovered that schemas guided attention, which directed people to be focused on the

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relevant information, they influenced memory by shaping encoding and retrieval processes, and facilitated efficient decision-making through providing structured expectations. Nevertheless, it was also accepted that schemas can give rise to cognitive biases, including confirmation bias whereby people are biased in the way they interpret information to support pre-existing beliefs.

In general, Schema Theory provides a detailed explanation of the way knowledge is structured and applied to human cognition. It showed that understanding is not a direct manifestation of what is put in the text, but a constructive process that is influenced by prior knowledge, expectations, and cognitive structures. This view has rendered Schema Theory as a paradigm of language, discourse, and meaning construction research.

### **3.5.1 Historical and Developmental Perspective of Schema Theory**

Schema Theory said to have its roots in the philosophical writings of Immanuel Kant in the eighteenth century when he wrote about the organisation of human experience in higher-order conceptual structures (Kant, 1998). Even though the concept of schema was given a more solid theoretical foundation by philosophy, it was within psychology that the concept of schema took root and evolved to become one of the main theories used to explain the process of cognition and organisation of knowledge (Rumelhart, 1980). The first signs of schema-based thinking could also be traced in the works of Gestalt psychologists who stressed the importance of context in perception and interpretation (Wertheimer, 1938). The contributions of major scholars that took place in the twentieth century further developed the theory. Bartlett (1932) was one of the earliest to develop the concept of schema in the context of the study of memory as he proved the active and reconstructive nature of the process of recall, which

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is influenced by previous experience. On the same note, Piaget (1952) also included the concept of schemas in his theory of cognitive development and stated that new information is incorporated into already existing structures of knowledge or results in their modification through accommodation. These contributions formed the basis of making Schema Theory one of the key models in cognitive psychology.

The theory was later developed to a further extent. According to Rumelhart (1975, 1980), schemas are structured representations of knowledge which could be used to comprehend new information, including narrative structures. The concept was further developed by Schank and Abelson (1977) who came up with the idea of scripts whereby people have a structured expectation of what to expect in everyday events. The role of schemas in memory and perception was also proved by empirical research as illustrated in Brewer and Treyens (1981) study whereby the subjects remembered objects that were in line with their pre-existing schemas even when they were not there. Alba and Hasher (1983) also expounded on the role of schemas in guiding attention, encoding, as well as assisting in the reconstruction of memory.

Subsequently, more formalised schema processing models were proposed in cognitive science. Anderson (1984) also suggested the ACT-R model which explained the functionality of the schemas in cognitive systems especially in problem-solving and knowledge representation. These trends indicated a transition to the incorporation of Schema Theory with the progress in cognitive psychology, artificial intelligence, and neuroscience.

Outside of psychology, there has been an extensive application of Schema Theory in linguistics, sociology, and communication studies (Cook, 1994; Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Neuroscience has also studied it as a system of knowledge structure

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formation and storage in the brain (Ghosh & Gilboa, 2014). Applied to organisational studies, marketing, and intercultural communication, schema-based approaches have been applied to explain how individuals interpret information and react in different social and professional contexts (DiMaggio, 1997; Solomon, 2018). In general, Schema Theory has developed out of its philosophical roots to become a multidisciplinary and extensive theory that elucidates the way in which knowledge is organised, activated, and applied in human cognition. This historical and developmental trend underlines the importance of the theory when it comes to meaning construction in a wide range of contexts.

### **3.5.2 Characteristics of Schema Theory**

The concept of Schema Theory conceptualises schemas as organised knowledge structures that direct the processing and interpretation of information. These schemas are not fixed and can be considered as dynamic systems of storing knowledge and also of constructing meaning (Rumelhart, 1980; Anderson & Pearson, 1984). To comprehend the functioning of schemas, their characteristics may be crudely divided into two broad categories, namely, structural characteristics, which involve the internal organisation of knowledge structures, and cognitive processing characteristics, which involve the role of schemas in the processes of comprehension as a result of activation and interpretation (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983).

#### **1- Cognitive Processing Characteristics**

The focus of Schema Theory is not only on the structural organisation of knowledge, but also on the dynamic processes in which meaning was created in the process of comprehension. Schema activation was one of the key mechanisms that were found in this framework and this process was described as the process through which textual

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stimuli activated the relevant background knowledge in the memory of the reader. According to the literature, certain lexical items or contextual cues might provide an indication of certain schemas and, therefore, lead the reader to a proper interpretive framework (Rumelhart, 1980; Anderson & Pearson, 1984). After activation, the schemas offered a systematic foundation to the interpretation of the new information received and to the organisation of these interpretations into coherent meaning.

Very much connected to activation was the schema instantiation process whereby abstract schemas were instantiated in particular situations. Here, the reader inserted context-specific information into slots of a schema, some of which were given in the text directly and others were provided out of prior knowledge. The construction of meaning was thus reliant on the effective alignment of the textual input and internal knowledge structures. These elements were resolved to a coherent expression of meaning, as shown in schema-based reading models, and this was what allowed comprehension to take place (Anderson et al., 1977).

Moreover, there was the processing of schema that entailed top-down and bottom-up processes. Linguistic input in the form of words and syntactic structures inspired the bottom-up processing whereas the top-down processing used the already acquired knowledge to create expectations and follow-up the interpretation. These were interactive processes that took place simultaneously and the reader was able to keep on changing his/her perception in relation to the new information (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983).

Also of importance, interpretation was considered an important part of schema processing, which was perceived to be a constructive and dynamic process as opposed to a straight forward extraction of meaning off the text. According to the description of

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memory given by Bartlett (1932), comprehension was seen as a reconstructive process where prior experience was of key importance in interpreting it. Readers did not passively decode textual information but rather they actively created meaning by combining the new information with their already existing knowledge structures.

Combined, the features of cognitive processing proved that schemas were active in meaning construction. The activation, instantiation, and interaction between the top-down and bottom-up processes by means of schemas helped the readers to process texts in an efficient way and constantly adjust their comprehension to the contextual needs.

### **2- Structural Characteristics**

The concept of cognitive plasticity implies that schemas are dynamic cognitive representations, which grow and evolve depending on the new information and experience (Rumelhart, 1980). They are also important in the process of interpretation since they determine how people process and interpret new information (Brewer & Treyners, 1981). Besides, schemas serve as systems of organised knowledge which hold both declarative (“what”) and procedural (“how”) knowledge (Hampson & Morris, 1996). Schemas are organised structurally which can be discussed as slots and values. These slots are the categories or attributes whereas values are the particular instances that are related to the slots. As an example, a “house” schema can contain slots like materials and parts, and value of the slot like wood and rooms. These slots can also have default values but as flexible as they can be changed according to the situation (Anderson, 1948).

In addition, the schemas are arranged in a hierarchy, in which more general (parent) schemas have more specific (child) schemas such that knowledge can be inherited and arranged in a systematic manner (Rumelhart, 1980). The other significant

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structural characteristic is the categorisation function of schemas that is usually depicted by the so-called "is-a" relationships according to which a given schema is connected to a larger category. This relational and hierarchical organisation helps schemas organise knowledge in memory effectively and access the relevant information at the time of comprehension (Anderson, 2000). Also, schemas facilitate the use of shared knowledge assumptions in that the speakers and writers can count on the knowledge they have in common with the audience, thus facilitating effective communication.

### 3.5.3 Types of Schemata

Based on the character of the contents, there are various types of schemata proposed: 1. formal schemata, which refer to the rhetorical structure of the text; 2. content schemata, concerning the content of a text read; and 3. cultural schemata, more general aspects of cultural knowledge shared by larger sections of a cultural population, 4. linguistic schemata was also incorporated by Carrell (1988) (Urquhart and Weir, 1998, p. 71).

**1- A formal schema:** is "background knowledge of the formal, rhetorical organizational structures of different types of texts" (Carrell and Eisterhold, 1983, p.79). That is, formal schema is knowledge of how various genres are displayed with reference to Richards et al. (2000, p. 405), they indicate that schema or macro- structure means the file underlying structure which explains the arrangement of a text or discourse. Various types of texts and discourse (e.g. stories, description, letters, reports, poems) are differentiated by the means by which the topic, propositions, and other information are connected to make a unit. This schematic building is called formal schemata. In one instance, the schema of a lot of stories is story = setting (state + state)

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+ episodes (events) + reaction. Namely, the stories include an environment where the time, location, and characters are referenced and then the events proceeding to a response. The structure of different genres is different. Deficiency in such a knowledge is also a significant contributor of the issues in reading comprehension.

**2- Content schema:** "background knowledge of the content area of the text" (Carrell and Eisterhold, 1983, p. 80). It holds some conceptual knowledge or information about what typically occurs in a specific subject, and how these occurrences are connected to one another in such a way as to create a complete whole. It is an unstructured list of common events and objects of a certain occasion. As an illustration, the schema of visiting a restaurant would contain details on services, menu, placing orders and paying the bill (leaving a tip), etc. The content schema are very culture-dependent. As such, cultural schema is commonly known as content schema.

**3- Richard et al. (2000, p.117)** defines culture as refers to "the total set of beliefs, attitudes, customs, behavior, social habits, etc., of the members of a particular society". According to Rivers and Temperley (1978, p. 202), the cultural knowledge is known as "socio-cultural meaning" which is defined as "meaning which springs from shared experiences, values and attitudes". Johnson (1981), and Carrell (1981) studies have demonstrated that the implicit cultural knowledge assumed by a text does interact with the readers own cultural background knowledge of content making texts whose content is founded on his or her own culture easier to read and comprehend than syntactically and rhetorically identical texts which is founded on a less familiar, more distant culture.

**4- Linguistic schema:** this entails the vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. It has a fundamental role in a full comprehension of the text. According to Eskey (1988, p. 94), "good readers are both decoders and interpreters of texts; their decoding skills

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becoming more automatic but no less important as their reading skill develops". This is because that "Language is major problem in second language reading, and that even educated guessing at meaning is no substitute for accurate decoding" (Eskey, 1988, p. 97). In other words, successful comprehension of any text is impossible without effective decoding skills

### 3.6 Procedures for Analysing Data

The researcher uses several procedures after collecting the data in order to analyse and interpret the selected Qur'anic texts as follows:

- 1- Identifying the occurrences of disjointed letters (al-ḥuruf al-muqatta'ah) in the selected Glorious Qur'anic openings and classifying them according to their structural patterns (single-letter, two-letter, and sequence-letter combinations).
- 2- Analysing the cognitive semantic function of the disjointed letters as discourse-opening cues, with a focus on their role in guiding interpretation rather than functioning as independent lexical units.
- 3- Applying CBT to examine how meaning is constructed through the interaction between the disjointed letters and their immediate co-text, including the identification of input spaces, generic space, and the blended space (Fauconnier & Turners 2002).
- 4- Analysing the selected texts in terms of Schema Theory in order to explain how the reader's background knowledge is activated and how interpretive expectations are formed when encountering the disjointed letters.
- 5- Examining the processes of schema activation, instantiation, and the interaction between top-down and bottom-up processing in order to account for how meaning

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is dynamically constructed during comprehension (Rumelhart, 1980; Anderson, 1984).

6- Interpreting the findings across the analysed samples to identify recurring patterns and variations in the cognitive semantic role of the disjointed letters and their contribution to discourse organisation.

### 3.7 Theoretical Framework

The current research is rooted in the broader framework of Cognitive Semantics that offers the overall theoretical orientation to the analysis of meaning construction in Qur'anic discourse. This is a dynamic and conceptual approach to meaning which is created in the interaction of linguistic form and cognitive structures, as opposed to a fixed property of isolated lexical items.

In this context, two complementary analytical models are used, which are Conceptual Blending Theory and Schema Theory. The CBT is employed to explain the meaning construction at the discourse level by means of integrating several mental spaces, especially in the process of explaining the connection between the disjointed letters and their immediate co-text. Parallel to this, the Schema Theory is also embraced to justify the activation of the background knowledge of the reader and the formation of interpretive expectations when faced with the disjointed letters in the openings of Qur'anic surahs.

These two models are not considered as separate levels of analysis; instead they serve as the integrated analytical tools in the cognitive semantic framework. Whereas Conceptual Blending Theory emphasises the construction of meaning, the Schema Theory explains the cognitive mechanisms involved in the interpretation of meaning,

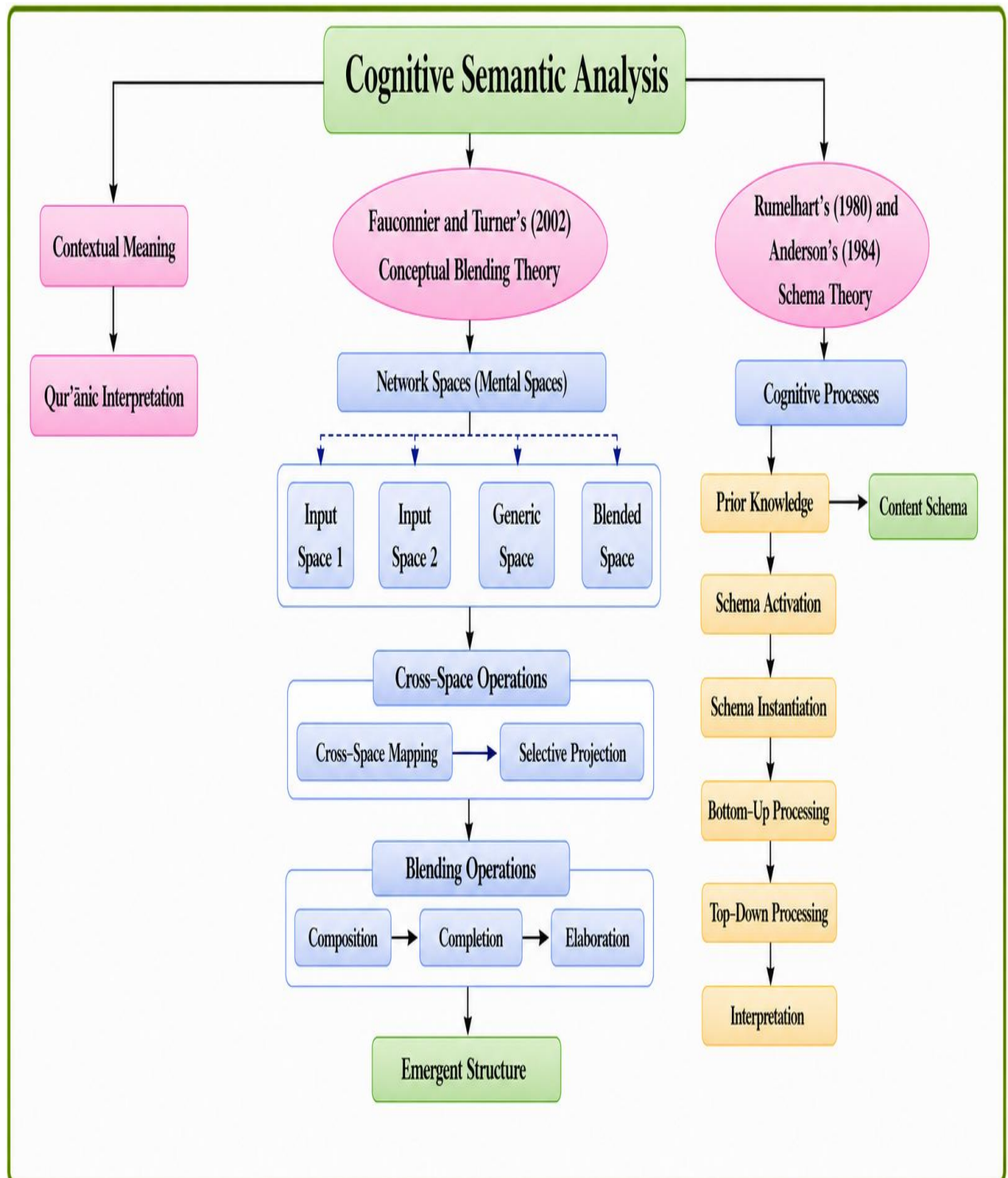
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such as schema activation, instantiation, as well as the interaction between top-down and bottom-up processing. The combination of these gives a coherent and comprehensive framework of how the disjointed letters were cognitive semantic role in the organisation of the discourse. Figure 3.2 below indicates the above-mentioned levels of analysis adopted to analyse the selected data of the study.

**Figure 3.2**

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*Theoretical Framework of the Study adapted from Fauconnier & Turner 2002) and Rumelhart's (1980) and Anderson's (2000)*



## CHAPTER FOUR

## A COGNITIVE SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF HURUF MUQATTA'AH

### DATA ANALYSIS

#### 4. Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the interpretation of 14 selected surahs from the Glorious Qur'an. The chosen passages of the Glorious Qur'an are analysed from a Cognitive Semantic perspective, with references to relevant explanatory models. The analysis adopts an eclectic models that was introduced in Chapter Three, which draws primarily on Fauconnier and Turner's (2002) Conceptual Blending Theory as the main model of analysis, while also incorporating insights from Schema Theory in its updated form as developed by Rumelhart (1980) and Anderson (1984). Although multiple cognitive frameworks are available, this paper intentionally restricts its analytic focus to the Conceptual Blending Theory is employed to explain conceptual integration and emergent meaning whereas Schema Theory is used to account for cognitive activation, expectation formation, and discourses processing. For analytical purposes, the data are categorised into three groups, (1) al-huruf al-muqatta'ah which will be made up of one letter, (2) al-muqatta'at comprising two-letter combinations, (3) al-muqatta'at consisting of combinations of three to five letters.

#### 4.1 Analysis of Single Letters

The first analysis focuses on al muqatta'at that composed of one letter, including: Sād, Qāf, Nun (S. Q. N) ص, ق, ن.

##### 4.1.1 Analysis of Qur'anic Text (1) Surat Ṣād (S) (38: 1-2)

"ص و القرآن ذي الذكر ﴿١﴾ بل الذين كفروا في عزة و شقاق ﴿٢﴾" (سورة ص- {١-٢})

Sād By the Qur'an, Full of Admonition (1) But the Unbelievers (are steeped) in Self

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and Separatism (2) [Surat Sād (S) (38:1-2)) (Ali, 2004, p.1161)]

*Contextual Meaning of Text (1)* Al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī understands the first letter Ṣād (S) ص in Surat “Ṣād”. By the Qur'an full of remembrance, *و القرآن ذي الذكر*, as one of the disjointed letters where the exact meaning is also intentionally withheld, which serves a preparatory and rhetorical function rather conveying lexical meaning. It is primarily functions to attract the listener's attention, and to introduce with seriousness the divine oath, which comes next. The phrase, "the Qur'an full of remembrance, *و القرآن ذي الذكر*", is taken to mean the Qur'an as a guide, a reminder of morality, and godly truth including the fundamental principles of faith. The actual meaning of the oath as per this interpretation is not to acknowledge the fact that the Qur'an is true, but to reveal the actual cause of the rejection of the nonbelievers. The reason behind their denial is not being clear or evidence-based but rather the arrogance and the resistance that they experience within themselves as clearly stated in the next verse. Therefore, the disjointed letter Ṣād (S, ص) serves as a figurative rhetorical gateway that prepares the reader to the subject matter of the text: the glorified position of the Glorious Qur'an and the psychological attitude of those who deny it regardless of its self-evident truth (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1996).

*From the Conceptual Blending Theory perspective*, the introductory line of Surat Ṣād (S, ص) having the single letter with the mark Ṣād discussed as a cognitively marked structure. In this, the meaning is not based on lexical reference but it is formed as a result of the interplay between several mental spaces. The formal presence and semantic underdetermination characterises the evocation of Input Space 1 by the disjointed letter Ṣād (S, ص) in itself, which is a salient graphemic/phonological cue, but is not syntactically integrated, Ṣād (S, ص) stands alone as a single recited unit. This phonological independence interrupts the expected countinuity of the surrounding

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reading flow. Visually, the letter appears in its disjointed graphic form, occupying an entire verse position independently, which creates a stark graphemic contrast with the connected script of the surrounding text, as it triggers the evocation of the Input Space 1. Input Space 2 is evoked by the oath-formula, By the Glorious Qur'an (wa-l-Qur'āni dhī l-dhikr, والقرآن ذي الذكر) which activates an attestation configuration in which an authoritative text functions as an evidential anchor and relevance-establisher. This activates two closely related frames: the Glorious Qur'an as a self-referential authoritative witness, and the oath as a rhetorical device that demands the reader's cognitive and moral alignment before the message is delivered. Both inputs are connected by a Generic Space in which instances of a discourse-opening configuration are set up where an initial cue determines interpretive stance and authorises the subsequent discourse prior to the development of its propositions. In the cross-space mapping, the salient yet semantically underdetermined letter in the text in Input 1 is aligned with the opening act of textual signalling in the text in Input 2 and the oath-formula is aligned with the grounding of authority and epistemic force in the same configuration of opening in the text. In both spaces, the opening does not simply begin the discourse but conditions how the discourse is to be received.

Conceptual blending allows the two input spaces to become a blended space whereby the disjointed letter gains countextual and rhetorical value as opposed to lexical value. The blended field provides an emergent structure in which Ṣād (S, ص) is construed as an initiating signal which conditions the oath as the authoritative attestation producing a sequence of 'marked entry → evidential anchoring' which does not have any input on either side. The absence of an explicit lexical meaning in Ṣād (S, ص) acts as a mind stimulator that leads to focus on the subsequent discourse hence the strengthening of the epistemic value of the Qur'anic message. The blend suggests a

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discourse-organising function for the letter which marks the passage of linguistic form to authoritative content. The given blending process is further elaborated with the following mentioning of disbelief and human resistance to the divine message, which brings an opposing cognitive frame. The resulting conceptual integration creates a conceptual contrast between the divine discourse and the human opposition to it and it is in this way that the reader can develop a meaning through an indirect approach as opposed to explicating it directly. Through this, the letter Šād (S, ص) is involved in the meaning organisation process by contributing to the development of expectations, direction of interpretation, and by framing the act of communicative activity at a mental level.

Accordingly, this network can be considered this network as the single-scope blend, structured according to the discourse-opening/attestation frame, and the disjointed letter can be understood as a conceptual cue, but not as a unit containing some lexical content. The combination generates a significant framework which is absent in any of the inputs. The letter Šād (S, ص) is a conceptual prompt of the blending network instead of a symbolic unit that has an invariable semantic meaning. It serves to create a mental space, where meaning is created by integration, projection, and contrast.

The disjointed letter Šād (S, ص) at the beginning of Surat Šād (S, ص) would be a cognitively marked entry in the context of *the Schema Theory* which would provide the reader with an orientation of interpretation before the propositional content is evaluated. The letter does not act like a lexical unit with a predetermined semantic meaning, but is like a textual marker, which triggers a stored pattern of scriptural discourse in the background knowledge of the reader. Such marked openings in schema-theoretical terms cause schema activation, which instructs the reader to refer to already formed interpretive schemata that is related to the opening of Qur'anic surahs that start with al-

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huruf al-muqatta'ah. The fact that the element that appears at the entry of the verse is not an ordinary word or clause means that regular syntactic anticipations are put on hold. This interference stimulates a top-down processing plan where the interpretation process is carried out via higher-level knowledge representations instead of sequential decoding of lexical representations. The reader, thus, does not go to the opening with the aim of extracting the meaning of the letter itself, but the reader sees it as a signifier of a unique mode of discourse. The disjointed letter is the beginning of what can be termed a scriptural-opening schema which is a stored cognitive pattern where the strange initial forms precondition the reader for a discourse of greater authority and thematic concentration.

As soon as this schema triggered, the reader is expecting that the following text will provide information that stabilises the interpretive orientation that triggered by the marked cue. The reader would find this expectation more evident in the subsequent line, *wa-l-Qur'āni dhī l-dhikr*, By the Qur'an, possessor of the Reminder, *و القرآن ذي الذكر*, that offers context discursive that is required to fill out the schema-based anticipation. At this point, the procedure can be termed as schema instantiation, according to which the general interpretive framework produced by the singled-out letter is occupied by the material provided by the co-text. The oath to the Qur'an confirms the impression that the initial letter is not a unit of semantic meaning but an attentional and formal indicator directing the reader pointing them to the thematic power of the revelation.

In this view, *Ṣād* (S, ص) carries out a significant thought process in the discourse. It prefigures the shape, disrupts automatic linguistic processing and re-centers the reader into a wider interpretive scheme whereby the power and meaning of the Qur'anic message is put to the foreground. It follows that the letter plays a role in the organisation of the opening discourse by setting the expectation in order and the way the further

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verses should be approached to provide an example of how separated letters in Qur'anic openings can be schema-activating cues in the cognitive processing of the text.

### 4.1.2 Analysis of Qur'anic Text (2) Surat Qaf (Q) (50: 1-2)

ق وَالْقُرْآنِ الْمَجِيدِ ﴿١﴾ بَلْ عَجِبُوا أَنْ جَاءَهُمْ مُنْذِرٌ مِنْهُمْ فَقَالَ الْكَافِرُونَ هَذَا شَيْءٌ عَجِيبٌ ﴿٢﴾ (سورة ق {٢-١})

Qāf By the Glorious Qur'an (1) But they wonder that there has come to them a Warner from among themselves. So the Unbelievers say: "This is a wonderful thing! (2) [Surat Qāf (Q) (50:1-2) ] (Ali, 2004, p.1346)]

*Contextual Meaning of Text (2)* The interpretive possibilities promoted over the disjointed letter Qāf (Q, ق) is that it serves as a mark of implicit oath, but is not a semantically independent mark. The lexical meaning is not borne by the letter itself, but functions as the Qur'anic tradition of oaths where the object of the oath **oath** can be either stated or implied. The syntactic continuation immediately succeeding the interpretation is upheld: By the Glorious Qur'an (wa-l-Qur'āni al-majīd, وَالْقُرْآنِ الْمَجِيدِ). Here, Qāf (Q, ق) is in a syntactic continuation, and, therefore, can be interpreted as a part of the structure of an oath-expression. Thus, the oath opens with Qāf (Q, ق), which means solemnity and prepares the listener with the statement of high doctrinal weight. The Qur'an is used as a testament of the truth of what is to come that is, the truth of resurrection and divine responsibility. The letter Qāf (Q, ق) as such, is a discursive marker, a marker of address that is based upon some degree of certainty, authority and divine witnessing. The purpose of it is to intensify the power of the oath and to indicate the shift to a discourse of eschatological truth. This interpretation also justifies the fact that the next verse is a direct reference to denial and surprise by the unbelievers. This oath determines the truth-value of the message, and the response of the nonbelievers points to the cognitive resistance to the truth. In this regard, Qāf (Q, ق) is involved in

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organising the argument of the verse and it is a formal indication that what is being said is assertive and is evidence-based (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1996).

*In the light of Conceptual Blending Theory* the opening of Surat Qāf (Q, ق) starts with the disjointed letter Qāf (Q, ق) and then the oath, By the Glorious Qur'an (wa-l-Qur'āni al-majīd, وَالْقُرْآنَ الْمَجِيدِ). This opening may be interpreted as a meaning-creating form instead of a symbolic puzzle or a phonetic component. On the lower level of processing, the reader comes across Qāf (Q, ق) as a single and free letter. This has a linguistic effect of causing an instant disruption of reading norms, as the letter does not make up a word nor offer a lexical meaning. Like Ṣād (S, ص) in Surat Ṣād, Qāf (Q, ق) stands as a single recited unit with no adjacent letter to form even a minimal phonological grouping, however, unlike Ṣād, the following oath formula (wa-l-Qur'āni al-majīd, وَالْقُرْآنَ الْمَجِيدِ) creates an immediate acoustic contrast between the stark isolation of the letter and the richness of the divine attribute that follows. Graphically, Qāf (Q, ق) occupies its verse position in complete graphic isolation, its non-joined form creating a stark contrast with the connected and flowing script of the oath formula that immediately follows. Conceptually, this activates Input Space 1 which contains the notion of a minimal linguistic form a sound unit blending to the Arabic alphabet that lacks autonomous semantic meaning. This contribution triggers cognition of language itself and not meaning. The next clause is what triggers the Input Space 2, By the Glorious Qur'an (wa-l-Qur'āni al-majīd, وَالْقُرْآنَ الْمَجِيدِ). This space brings out an enriched conceptual framework that is connected to divine revelation, authority, truth, and sacred discourse. The Qur'an in this case is not given as a text; it is a source of absolute meaning and guidance. The word majīd (glorious, الْمَجِيدِ) further supports the elevated position of the discourse and makes it something to swear and contemplate. This activates two closely related frames: the Glourious Qur'an as a self-referential sacred

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witness whose glory is itself the grounds for the oath, and the reader as a recipient who is being positioned to receive a message whose authority has already been established before any proposition is stated. The concept of language as a carrier of meaning is the Generic Space that is shared by both inputs. Both the detached letter and the Qur'an are part of the same communicative system, yet they are the two extremes the smallest possible on one unit of language on one end, and the most comprehensive divine message on the other. In both spaces, the opening does not simply begin the discourse but conditions how the discourse is to be received.

Through conceptual blending, the two inputs interact to create a blended space whereby the reader is guided to witness a meaningful contrast in which a single meaningless letter creates the most significant and authoritative speech. It is this combination that forms an implicit cognitive message functioning by the same linguistic material that humans have at their disposal, but which has an impact and meaning beyond that of human. This emergent configuration prepares the reader for the next verse, (But they wonder that there has come to them a warner from among themselves, *بَلْ عَجِبُوا أَنْ جَاءَهُمْ مُنْذِرٌ مِنْهُمْ فَقَالَ الْكَافِرُونَ هَذَا شَيْءٌ عَجِيبٌ*). The astonishment response is cognitively constructed as an unwarranted one as the discourse has already constructed the Qur'an as both linguistically available and divinely authoritative.

Through composition, the disjointed letter and the oath are linked within a single discourse frame. The completion, background knowledge concerning Qur'anic openings and divine authority is recruited whereas during elaboration, the reader develops the inference that the subsequent message processes exceptional authority. In this regard, Qāf (Q, ق) acts as a conceptual cue that begins a blending relates the linguistic form, the divine authority, and the human reception. It functions simultaneously as a cognitive and rhetorical effect, the reader is encouraged to think

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about how meaning is created out of language, and why rejection of revelation cannot be blamed on the inability to understand it but rather an earlier cognitive position. This emergent meaning that rejection of revelation reflects a cognitive stance rather than a linguistic barrier belongs to neither input alone but arises entirely from their integration.

*In the Schema-theoretical model of comprehension*, interpretation is achieved through a series of cognitive processes whereby the readers retrieve knowledge structures that are stored in their minds to arrange their experience with the text. This is applied to the introduction of Surat Qāf (Q, ق), the disjointed letter Qāf (Q, ق) which opens a unique interpretive path, which starts even before the lexical expression itself is presented to the reader. The initial impact that the letter brings could be said to be the perceptual interruption. In the usual reading, words and letters are read at a fast pace by automatic decoding processes. The emergence of one detached letter breaks this automatic flow, as it is not able to be incorporated in a normal lexical unit. The reader then stops briefly acknowledging that the stimulus is not part of the syntactic pattern that is supposed to happen. Such disruption attracts the reader to the textual form per se and indicates that the discourse needs to be interpreted in another way.

After this instance of interruption, the reader is involved in what can be referred to as schema retrieval. Faced with an aspect that cannot be decoded by the conventional means, the cognitive system searches through stored knowledge structures in search of a framework that can fit the stimulus. To those who are conversant with the Qur'anic discourse, this search results in the understanding that the letter falls under the category of huruf muqatta'at. Such recognition changes the interpretive scenario: the letter is no longer viewed as a strange mark but as a familiar structural element of the organisation of Qur'anic texts. After this schema is accessed, it starts influencing the reader in terms of expectations of the discourse that is about to occur. The knowledge structure that

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associated with such openings contains implicit assumptions regarding the kind of message that is normally carried along. The reader thus comes to the following text with some expectation that in the text the reader will encounter a statement of thematic weight, or rhetorical emphasis.

The following utterance of oath (wa-l-Qur'āni al-majīd, By the Glorious Qur'an, (و القرآن المجيد) gives the discursive background that proves this anticipation. The interpretive framework that was launched by the letter is stabilised at this stage by the emergence of textual content. The mention of the Glorious Qur'an itself strengthens the orientation that the first form has already created and generates what can be called schema consolidation, in which the interpretative position of the reader is solidly grounded within the position of authority of the discourse. In this sense, Qāf (Q, ق) does not serve a lexical purpose, but a structural role in shaping the reader's interpretation of the text. The letter initiates a sequence of four stages; interruption, schema retrieval, expectation formation, and consolidation during which the direction of the reader towards the discourse is gradually organised. In that respect, the separated letter helps to create the general structure of the introduction of the chapter as it helps to define the way in which the reader is ready to accept the thematic message offered in the following verses.

### 4.1.3 Analysis of Qur'anic Text (3) Surat Al-Qalam (The Pen) (68: 1-2)

ن وَالْقَلَمِ وَمَا يَسْطُرُونَ ﴿١﴾ مَا أَنْتَ بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ بِمَجْنُونٍ ﴿٢﴾ سورة القلم (٦٨ { ٢-١ } )

Nūn. By the Pen and the (Record) which (men) write (1) Thou art not, by the Grace of thy Lord, mad or possessed. [Surat Al-Qalam (The Pen) (68:1-2) ] (Ali, 2004, P. 1505)]

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*Contextual Meaning of Text (3)* exegetical versions of the opening of Sūrat al-Qalam (The Pen, القلم) give two mutually complementary versions of the disjointed letter Nūn (N, ن) and the following oath. On the one hand, Nūn (N, ن) is considered to be one of the ḥurūf al-muqatta'āt the meaning of which is not explicitly determined, but the presence of which in the very beginning of the sūrah is aimed to attract attention to the grandeur of the Qur'anic discourse and high rank of the Arabic letters as the direct components of the divine revelation. This reading takes the sequence Nūn (N, ن) (By the Pen and what they write) as a deliberate preface which enhances the power of revelation and preconditions the final statement, which comes next, that is, the divine defence of the Prophet against the charge of insanity.

Furthermore, precise explanations have been transmitted by another classical exegete, according to which Nūn (N, ن) is the “great fish” on which he claims that the creation rests, or the inkwell (dawāh, دواة). In line with this, The Pen (al-qalam) is understood either as the primordial pen that was created by God or the pen that is used by the angels to write down the will of God or the actions of human beings, and what they write (mā yastūrūn, ما يسطرون) is the act of writing itself, whether by angels or by human beings. In this context, the oath of the Pen and writing emphasises the centrality of knowledge, divine decree, and preserved record, which proves the validity and accuracy of the revelation (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1996).

The disjointed letter Nūn (N, ن) that begins Sūrat al-Qalam (The Pen) is a cognitively marked entry and foregrounds form prior to propositional content. Under a *Conceptual Blending Theory*, Nūn (N, ن) serves as a symbolic cue, which begins a certain type of conceptual organisation. The solitary look of it makes the reader standstill in the instant semantic determination and seek to find the harmony at a greater, discourse-related level. Nūn (N, ن) is recited as a single independent phonological unit,

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its isolation absolute there is no adjacent letter to create even a minimal acoustic grouping, rendering the disruption of normal reading at its most concentrated. Graphically, the letter Nūn (N, ن) is particularly distinctive in its disjointed form its characteristic bowl shape and singular dot create a graphemic object that is immediately recognisable yet semantically indeterminate within its verse position. Through this means, Nūn (N, ن) becomes a center of directing attention to the verses that follow to be directed towards the epistemic and communicative framework. As a single-letter sequence, Nūn (N, ن) produces the most concentrated form of semantic suspension the interruption is immediate, absolute, and unextended by any accompanying letter. There are two primary input spaces which are triggered. The Input Space 1 appeals to the knowledge that is culturally entrenched on the topic of writing and inscription that is instantly invoked by the oath. The ideas that are incorporated in this space are recording, permanence, accountability and the preservation of knowledge. The Input Space 2 is the prophetic discourse and revelation, that is, the defense of the Prophet on the accusations of irrationality, (By the Pen and what they inscribe, *Al Qalam wa mā yastūrūn*, القلم وما يسطرون). This activates two closely related frames: the Prophet as a divinely supported messenger whose rationality is validated by revelation itself, and the act of writing as an eternal witness that stands against false accusations. The Generic space that is behind this alignment is the notion of authoritative communication grounded in knowledge. This is an abstract characteristic that is common to both writing and revelation: the two put the message across, maintain a truth and build a credibility. This structural similarity allows the reader to make the two input spaces coherent to one another. These two spaces are not simply glued together and made to fit, but they are rather, matched up with a shared abstract structure. In both spaces, the opening does not simply begin the discourse but conditions how the discourse is to be received.

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The disjointed letter Nūn (N, ن) is very instrumental at this point since it indicates that the conversation is functioning in an environment where meaning is beyond the superficial linguistic comprehension. As a result of selective projection the elements of writing domain that are mapped into the blend are only a few, that is, reliability, order and epistemic authority. Such items as human error or subjectivity are omitted. Subsequently, the blended space makes revelation one of the modes of communication that has the stability and credibility of writing, but is grounded in divinity. In this blended space, the accusation of madness against the Prophet is made cognitively unrealistic, not by refutation of it, but by the reasoning of the conceptual integration. This cognitive neutralisation of the accusation achieved through integration rather than argumentation is the emergent meaning of the blend, one that belongs to neither input alone but arises entirely from their conceptual fusion. The structure that is formed as a result of this blend reinterprets Nūn (N, ن) as a symbolic gateway instead of a sign that has a predetermined meaning. It prepares the reader to take the oath and the following statement as the elements of one epistemic stance: the revelation of God is described as being designed, organized, and based on knowledge. In this respect, Nūn (N, ن) serves a powerful interpretive role of establishing the expectations of the reader and conceptual planning of the verse throughout the initial point of the verse.

*According to the perspective of the Schema Theory*, the disjointed form of the letter Nūn (N, ن) used in the beginning of Surat al-Qalam (The Pen) provides a linguistically strange structure that preconditions the reader with the way of thinking on the discourse. The letter is also a disjointed and extrinsic text that is not subject to the usual syntactic decoding. This interruption makes the reader forget about typical word interpretation and makes him or her dependent on the already existing knowledge structure correlating to text structures of Qur'anic discourse.

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Schema-theoretically speaking, the existence of such form is a triggering event in which disjointed letters are used as indicators of major scriptural beginnings. In this context, the processing of understanding is top-down whereby a reader processes the textual stimulus by relying on some previous knowledge of the openings of the Qur'an instead of trying to come up with meaning of the letter itself. Those who are conversant to the form of the discourse in Qur'an will realise that al-huruf al-muqatta'ah are recurrently found at the onset of chapters that present utterances of rhetorical emphasis or thematic authority. As a result, the letter Nūn is a schema-orienting cue that indicates the reader to read the opening on the discourse organisations level as opposed to the lexical meaning. Rather than posing a question of what the letter really entails, the reader is directed to what the message contained is going to mean.

When this schema is activated, it starts to structure the expectancies of the reader towards the next text. This can be referred to as expectation structuring in which the interpretive scheme that is triggered by the letter anticipates the reader the discourse of higher authority or thematic significance. The peculiar starting thus serves the anticipatory role: it puts the interpretive space within which the next statement will be interpreted into perspective. In this respect, the letter Nūn (N, ن) is not a semantic content in itself but it preconditions the cognitive environment, in which semantics will be incorporated afterward. Such an anticipatory construction is more evident when the oath clause (wa-l-qalam wa mā yastūrūn, By the Pen and what they inscribe, وَالْقَلَمِ وَمَا يَسْطُرُونَ). The schema which has been triggered by the single letter is instantiated at this stage by bringing in lexical content which falls under well-known conceptual domains. Such terms as 'Pen' and inscription bring into action culturally familiar knowledge structures, which are related to writing, preservation of knowledge, and the recording of information. These ideas offer tangible cognitive content that allows interpreting the

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pre-existing abstract expectation that was formed by the first letter and makes it stable. This collaboration between the indicated opening and the oath phrase is what shows the reader as a way of making the original ambiguity of Nūn (N, ن) fit within a logical interpretive framework. The conceptual domain of writing supports the impression that the discourse deals with authoritative record and communication, which further supports the interpretive orientation which has been created by the initial form. This stage in terms of schema theory is schema reinforcement where the interpretive expectations initially evoked by the text are validated and stabilised by the textual context.

In that sense, the role of Nūn (N, ن) is not to present an independent lexical meaning but to put together the cognitive circumstances in terms of which the discourse is discussed. The message gets the reader ready of the thematic orientation of the excerpt by mobilising an interpretative schema that predisposes authoritative communication. The meaning is thus a result of the response of the disjointed letter on the further textual context and not the semantic value of the letter. Through this, the disjointed letter helps in the organisation of the opening of the surah by creating expectations to the reader in the way the surahs should be interpreted and in the manner in which the cognitive processing of the surahs to come is to be interpreted.

### 4.2 Analysis of Two-Letter Combinations

The second analytical category examines al-muqatta'at that are composed of two-letter combinations, as Ta Ha (T.H, طه) Ta Sin (T. S, طس) Ya Sin (Y.S, يس) and Ha Mīm (H.M, حم).

#### 4.2.1 Analysis of Qur'anic Text (1) Surat Ta Ha (T. H) (20: 1-2)

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طه ﴿ مَا أُنزِلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لِتَشْقَى ﴾ سورة طه (٢٠-١) { ٢٠-١ }

Ta-Ha (1) We have not sent down the Qur'an to thee to be for thy distress (2) [(Ta Ha) (20:1-2) ] (Ali, 2004, p.765)]

*Contextual Meaning of Text (1).* The beginning of Sūrat Ṭā Hā (T.H, طه) starts with the disjointed letters Ṭā Hā (T.H, طه) the exact meaning of which remains uncertain, but they are commonly interpreted by the classical exegetes as a respectful and mild exhortation that draws attention to the divine message. Many early authorities believed that Ṭā Hā (T.H, طه) functioned as address to the Prophet, that is, (“O man” or “O Muhammad”) and thus the discourse is introduced in the form of intimacy and honour. The following verse, (We have not sent down the Qur'an to you that you should suffer, ﴿ مَا أُنزِلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لِتَشْقَى ﴾), further explains the reason the Qur'an was not sent to cause suffering. Rather, the verse confirms that revelation is not intended to causes the prophet hardship, but instead, it is an expression of divine mercy, which is supposed to bring guidance, encouragement, and relief. According to the classical commentators like al-Ṭabarī (1992) and Ibn Kathīr (1999) the Qur'an was revealed as a reminder and a means of spiritual elevation and not a burden that drains the Prophet and makes him suffer. Therefore, the two introductory verses establish that the divine message is based on compassion, respecting the Prophet and refuting wrong beliefs about the essence of revelation (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 2021).

The opening of Sūrat Ṭā Hā (T.H, طه) can be interpreted through *Fauconnier and Turner's (2002) Conceptual Blending Theory* as creating a unique cognitive pattern whereby the disjointed letters Ṭā Hā (T.H, طه) precede the declaration of the statement (We have not sent down the Qur'an to you that you should suffer, ﴿ مَا أُنزِلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لِتَشْقَى ﴾). The Input Space 1 is the formal linguistic perception of Ṭā Hā (T.H, طه) as a non-

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lexical isolated sequence. At this stage, the reader is faced with a striking beginning which is not easy to semantically decipher. This input activates the perception of phonological structure and positioning of the text as opposed to referential meaning. Each letter Ṭā and Hā is recited as an independent phonological unit, and their combination produces a minimal yet rhythmically complete acoustic unit, distinct from the longer sequences elsewhere in the Qur'an. The letters act as a salient acoustic and visual cue, which indicates that the discourse is entering into a special communicative mode. Visually, the two letters appear in their non-joined graphic forms, yet their brevity only two letters create a graphemic unit that is starker and more concentrated than the extended sequences, producing an immediate and undiluted visual impact. Notably, this input space does not have any propositional content, yet it arouses expectations related to the Qur'anic beginnings, which talk or refer to the Prophet himself. Input Space 2 is triggered by the following sentence (We have not sent down the Qur'an to you that you should suffer, *مَا أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لِتَشْقَى*).

This is a space that has a clear communicative structure, a divine speaker, an addressee that is directly addressed (the Prophet), and a message that reassures that the revelation is not meant to cause hardship or distress. This input is linguistic, declarative and interpersonal in orientation and defines revelation as a caring act and not a heavy burden. This activates two closely related frames: divine revelation as an act of care and mercy directed personally at the Prophet, and the Prophet as a recipient whose emotional and psychological wellbeing is itself a concern of the divine communicative act. It is the Generic Space that captures these two inputs at a higher level. The shared structure in this case, is that of direct address. Both inputs take part in a schema of direct discourse: the initial call gathers attention and the next sentence brings a personalised message. The Generic Space, then, is the basic pattern of speaker → addressee →

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addressed message, without any further definition of how that address is linguistically achieved. In both spaces, the opening does not simply begin the discourse but conditions how the discourse is to be received.

In the blended space, the elements of the two inputs are selected and projected and integrated. From the initial contribution, the blend carries the attention-giving character of *Ṭā Hā* (T.H, طه) from the second input, it takes the interpersonal and reassuring orientation of the divine message. The letters *Ṭā Hā* (T.H, طه) are selectively projected and treated as a vocative discourse marker which introduces and contextualises the address to the Prophet. The blend therefore provides an emergent framework in which *Ṭā Hā* (T.H, طه) functions pragmatically by acting as an open call, which sets the addressee for a reassurance message. This emergent form is also supported through completion, relying on the background knowledge of the reader on the discourse of Glorious Qur'an and previous interpretive traditions that understand *Tā Hā* (T.H, طه) as a form of address to the Prophet. But in the blend, these traditions should not be considered as semantic definitions but they help to construct the cognitive construal of the letters as carrying an addressing function and communicative force which creates intimacy and focus in the very beginning of the verse. On this account, the position of *Tā Hā* (T.H, طه) in this blending network is neither symbolic nor referential. Its role is interactional and procedural: it opens a line of direct communication, increases attentional readiness, and puts the next statement in the context of a kind-hearted explanation of the intent of revelation. The reader does not decode meaning; rather, the reader assumes a discourse role into the wider conceptual framework created by the next statement. This interactional and procedural role the capacity of a non-lexical sequence to open a line of direct divine communication is the emergent meaning of the

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blend, one that neither the formal properties of the letters nor the reassuring declaration could produce independently.

*Under the Schema Theory*, the understanding process does not start with the lexical meaning but with the arrangement of interpretive orientation. When the reader encounters the initial letters Tā Hā (T.H, طه), the text presents a structural component, which cannot be easily assimilated into a traditional linguistic pattern. Due to the fact that these letters are not a part of a standard lexical unit, the reader does not strive to decode them by means of direct semantics. Rather, the mind shifts into a preparatory interpretive position where the direction and tone of the discourse become primary interpretive concerns. At this point, the letters define what may be referred to as an interpretive frame which guides the reader regarding what to expect of the passage in terms of its communicative nature. The opening form does not announce confrontation, authority, or emphasis on argumentation, instead the opening form directs the reader towards an address-oriented mode of discourse. That is why the reader comes to the following words with the anticipation that the discourse will entail a sort of guided expression and not impersonal proclamation.

This is a process that entails some form of cognitive orientation, where the reader is made to shift the interpretive position in order to accommodate the unusual opening structure. The letters do not provide meaning in and of themselves but rather work as a textual cue that restructures the way the reader is getting ready to receive the message. The fact that the text introduces the minimal linguistic form at the outset of the chapter encourages the reader to look forward to a discourse where the relationship between the speaker and the addressee becomes central to interpretation. After this orientation has been fixed, the comprehension of the reader goes by the anticipatory projection. The interpretive frame that is created by the letters promotes anticipation that there is a

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situation of concern, burden, or emotional reassurance that is to be discussed. Already before the following verse takes its shape, the reader expects the message to touch upon the experiential situation of the addressee as opposed to the situation of simply presenting doctrinal content.

The next sentence, (We have not sent down the Qur'an to you that you should suffer, (ما انزلنا عليك القرآن لِتَشْقَى, gives the textual background in which this anticipated expectation is elucidated. Contextual resolution of the interpretive frame that has been triggered by the opening letters now takes place. The affirmation given in the verse is in line with the communicative orientation already started by the initial form, which proved that the discourse is aimed at the welfare of the addressee, not at the argumentative teaching. According to a schema-theoretical approach, the letters Tā Hā (T.H, طه) thus help to arrange the discourse structure, by determining the way the reader expects the communicative intent of the text. Their role is not to pass lexical meaning but rather to give directions on the conditions of interpretation in which the message that follows is to be understood. The opening letters prepare the reader to understand the rest of the verse as an answer to a supposed state of anxiety, thus illustrating how the structural means at the start of the chapter are involved in guiding the textual processing of the text.

### 4.2.2 Analysis of Qur'anic Text (2) Surat Al-Naml (The Ants) (27: 1-2)

طس تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْقُرْآنِ وَكِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿١﴾ هُدًى وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢﴾ سورة النمل (٢٧ { ٢-١ } )

Tā Sīn. These are verses of the Qur'an,-a book that makes (things) clear(1) A guide: and glad tidings for the believers (2) [(Al-Naml (The Ants) (27:1-2) ) (Ali, 2004, p.937)]

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*Contextual Meaning of Text (2).* The disjointed letters Tā Sīn (T.S, طس) with which Surat al-Naml (The Ants) begins is part of the known Qur'anic phenomenon of al-huruf al-muqatta'ah the exact meaning of which is neither revealed nor disclosed, and is finally known only to Almighty of Allah. The role of Tā Sīn (T.S, طس) does not mean to express an independent lexical meaning, but to act as a serious and a drawing-and-attention prelude which emphasises the inception of the revelation as divine and of a high rank. The fact that it is an immediate companion of the phrase (These are the verses of the Qur'an and a clear Book, تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْقُرْآنِ وَكِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ) shows that the fragmented letters serve as a preliminary warning signifier that makes the reader or listener ready to approach the Qur'an as a revelation, authoritative, and meaningful script. The term mubīn (clear) used to describe the Book further confirms the point that the information that comes after it is not obscure or ambiguous in its guidance, but clear in its message. Consequently, Tā Sīn (T.S, طس) acts as a sign of reverence, a sign of an introduction of the revelation as a sacred text, which directs the focus on the role of the Qur'an as the guide as well as glad tidings for the believers and creates a serious, clear, and intentional tone of the divinity at the very beginning of the chapter (al-Tabāṭabā'ī, 1996).

*Conceptually*, meaning in this case is created by the interplay of more than one conceptual space, that is blended at the discourse organisational level, and not at the word-level semantics level. Input space<sup>1</sup> is the formal and perceptual characteristics of Tā Sīn (T.S, طس) in the form of al-huruf al-muqatta'ah. The letters are handled in this space in the form of linguistically incomplete units. What is salient in them is the fact that when they appear in a verse, they represent that the reader should not expect the continuation of lexical consistency at that moment. This contribution gives the idea of attention, interruption and increased expectancy. Each letter Tā and Sīn is recited as an independent phonological unit, and their pairing produces a compact yet acoustically

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incomplete unit that resists resolution into any recognisable Arabic word. Graphically, the two letters appear in their isolated, non-joined graphic forms, creating a brief but stark graphemic interruption within the flow of the surrounding script. As a two-letter sequence, Tā Sīn is more sustained than the single-letter openings, producing a middle degree of semantic suspension that is both immediate and briefly prolonged. Input space 2 is turned on by the next clause (These are the verses of the Qur'an and a clear Book, a guidance and glad tidings for the believers, تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْقُرْآنِ وَكِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ ٢ هُدًى وَبُشْرَى (لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ)). It is an imaginatively rich and consistent space, which typifies the Qur'an as a communicative object of authority which is clear, instructive and benevolent. It brings a revelatory communication frame, which includes an assumed divine origin, a written medium and an intended believing audience. This activates two closely related frames: the Qur'an as a divinely authorised written text whose clarity and guidance are intrinsic properties, and the believing audience as an intended recipient whose reception of glad tidings is itself part of the communicative design of the revelation. At this level the inputs are combined with the Generic space which, in this case, incorporates the common form of discourse initiation, where attention is won and then licensed to meaning. Tā Sīn (T.S, طس) initiates attention, whereas content and functionality are stipulated in the Qur'anic description. The Generic space does not provide content, instead, it provides the structural alignment that is minimal to allow integration.

At the blended space, there is an emergent structure where Tā Sīn (T.S, طس) is a mode of cognitive gating, which controls the manner of accessing and interpreting the following. With selective projection, the blend is retained as the disjointed letters of the first input have the attentional force, whereas the frame of clarity and guidance are imported in the blend as provided by the second input. Consequently, the blending gives an integrated meaning of the letters where the letters are ready to accept and prepare

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the cognitive ground for the Glorious Qur'an as valuable, authoritative and available. The letters do not elaborate the message, but, instead, they point the message towards the reader. This orientational function the capacity of a non-lexical sequence to direct the reader towards a message without elaborating its content is the emergent meaning of the blend, one that belongs to neither input alone but arises entirely from their integration.

Such blended structure characterised by completion whereby the previous knowledge that the reader has on Qur'anic discourse provides the anticipation that such beginning statements are followed by statements of revelatory value. The reader fulfills the blend by realising that the original obscurity of Tā Sīn (T.S, طس) is dissolved in their fusion with the description of the Qur'an that follows it immediately. In such a way, this completion assumes that the reader should be familiar with the conventions of the discourse about the Qur'an. By doing so, Conceptual Blending Theory explains the role of Tā Sīn (T.S, طس) as an effective element of meaning-making showing how disjointed letters are engaged in cognitive organisation without any obligatory reference to a fixed meaning or interpretive speculation.

*Under the Schema Theory conditions*, a process of comprehension usually starts with the identification of already known textual patterns as opposed to the immediate extraction of a lexical meaning. When the reader comes across the first letters Tā Sīn (T.S, طس) the text contains a structural arrangement, which cannot be interpreted by the normal analysis of lexicon. The fact that the letters are used singly and they do not constitute a traditional linguistic unit makes the reader not attribute them to a semantic value at first. Rather, the mind goes in the schema recognition process and the form is recognised as a known category of Qur'anic chapter openings characterised by disjointed letters. This realisation is what can be described as interpretive suspension,

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a suspension of the effort to get meaning out of the text on its surface. The reader admits that the letters are not semantic expressions but they are a part of a greater textual convention. Consequently, the focus is diverted to the interpretative aspect of lexical meaning and on the structural aspect of the opening per se. The letters thus serve as formal indicator that the discourse is moving into a recognised form of Qur'anic revelation.

After this suspension, the reader is led to pattern alignment where the strange opening is aligned with the patterns of Qur'anic discourse that he or she has seen before. Readers who have read the book of Glorious Qur'an can understand that most of the chapters that start with disjointed letters are introducing a passage that underlines the authority, clarity or significance of the message that has been revealed. This introduction of the letters is therefore an indication that the subsequent verses will probably explain what was the purpose of the revelation. This is supported by the following verses which clearly refer to the text as (These are the verses of the Qur'an and a clear Book, *تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْقُرْآنِ وَكِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ*) and refer to it as (guidance and glad tidings for the believers, *هُدًى وَبُشْرَى لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ*). This is a stage in the interpretive process whereby it is discursively anchored and the conceptual direction foreseen by the beginning takes a strong base in the textual information that follows. The characters Tā Sīn (T.S, طس) are thus not understood as a standalone meaning but does get a meaning only in the interpretive context created by the discursive environment.

In this respect, the disjointed letters help to organise the opening of the chapter by helping the reader to pass through the structural recognition and interpretive stabilisation. They are not aimed at communicating any lexical meaning but at indicating the interpretive framework in terms of which the next statement regarding the Qur'an should be interpreted. With the help of this mechanism, the text passes

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through the formal disruption of the documents separated by individual letters to the explicit statement of the role of the Qur'an as guidance and revelation.

### 4.2.3 Analysis of Qur'anic Text (3) Surat Yā Sīn (Y.S) (36: 1-4)

يس ﴿١﴾ وَالْقُرْآنِ الْحَكِيمِ ﴿٢﴾ إِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٣﴾ عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾ سورة يس (٣٦ {٤-١})

Ya Sin (1) By the Qur'an full of wisdom (2) Thou art indeed one of the messengers (3) On a Straight Way(4) [(Yā Sīn (Y.S) (36:1-4) (Ali, 2004, p.1116)]

*Contextual Meaning of Text (3).* In al-Mīzān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, observes that a great number of the early exegetical traditions interpret Yā Sīn (Y.S, يس) with reference to the Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings be upon him and his Household) , but it is also important to note that the Qur'an does not limit the expression to one lexical interpretation. The first is then followed by an oath (By the Wise Qur'an, و القرآن الحكيم) which, according to the check of truth, authority and divine origin of the revelation. The following verses then shed light on the reason of such an introductory verse to affirm the position of the Prophet as one of the messengers and to make it clear that his mission is going on a straight and divinely guided path. In this sense of interpretation, therefore, Yā Sīn (Y.S, يس) serves as a solemn and dignified opening that makes the reader ready to the statement of prophethood and confirmation of the Qur'an's wisdom (al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1996).

*In the view of Conceptual Blending,* Yā Sīn (Y.S, يس) is a marked semi linguistic cue which creates a disturbance in the regular expectations of a word-based processing and represents the reader in an active “meaning-building” stance. This change is significant, because it makes the reader look at what follows not as a regular narration but rather as a high-commitment discourse. Input Space 1 is a scriptural-opening

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schema, a patterned entry in the Glorious Qur'an with an atypical initial form indicating functioning at a heightened rhetorical register and anticipating an authoritative unfolding on the part of the reader. Here, Yā Sīn (Y.S, يس) furnishes the element of the marked opening which is the activator of this space. Each letter Yā and Sīn is pronounced an independent phonological unit, and their pairing produces a brief yet acoustically marked unit that resists resolution into a recognisable lexical item. Graphically, the two letters appear in their isolated, non-joined graphic forms, creating a compact but stark interruption within the surrounding connected script. As a two-letter sequences Yā Sīn (Y.S, يس) produces a concentrated form of semantic suspension brief in extent yet immediate in its disruptive effect. Input Space 2 is an Oath-and-Validation scene, a traditional cognitive template wherein an authoritative source (the Qur'an) is presented by Allah so as to justify the epistemic status of an utterance by the speaker (the messenger-status of the addressee and the straight-path orientation). This space is anchored in the verses immediately following the letters: "By the Qur'an full of wisdom, Thou art indeed one of the messengers, On a Straight Way, وَالْقُرْآنِ الْحَكِيمِ ﴿١﴾ عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٢﴾ إِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٣﴾". This activates two closely related frames: the Qur'an as a wise and authoritative object invoked to validate the status of the speaker, and the Prophet as a confirmed messenger whose path is divinely affirmed as straight and free from deviation. The Generic Space abstracts what both inputs share, a communicative configuration, which is a speaker–addressee relationship, a salient authoritative sign, which is the authority, and an outcome of stance-management (confirmation, alignment, or validation). Notably, the letters Yā Sīn (Y.S, يس) are not propositional content which fill the generic space, they add formal salience to the latter which the oath frame recruits and finishes the communicative configuration. This activates two closely related frames: the Qur'an as a wise and authoritative object

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invoked to validate the status of the speaker, and the Prophet as a confirmed messenger whose path is divinely affirmed as straight and free from deviation. In both spaces, the opening does not simply begin the discourse but conditions how the discourse is to be received.

The Blended Space functions as a compression cue, reducing a complicated communicative structure (solemn address + authority + message validation) into a compact cue, at the entrance of the verses. The Blended Space is created in the case where selective projection attracts (a) the marked-entry function of the Input 1 and (b) the authorising oath structure of the Input 2 into one integrative event. In this blend *Yā Sīn* (Y.S, يس) functions as the entry trigger which helps to make the oath and the following statements seem as the “expected completion” of the opening cue. At this point which there is an emergent structure observable, as such the sequencing does provide a coherent mental product, whereby the letters initiate an interpretive posture, the oath furnishes epistemic authority, and the declaratives deliver the validated message. This is technically a type of composition-completion pattern, composition matches up the marked letters with the oath frame as co-operating components of a single discourse act, and completion provides background knowledge, which a solemn oath normally follows decisive affirmation concerning position and course. The outcome is a blend in which the reader is exposed to *Yā Sīn* (Y.S, يس) as a significant “threshold signal.” This threshold functions the capacity of a two-letter sequence to compress an entire communicative act of authorisation into a single entry signal is the emergent meaning of the blend, one that belongs to neither input alone.

Especially in the construction of identity and orientation in the discourse, across-space mapping is particularly evident. The addressee (you) of the declarative (you are among the messengers, *أنتك لمن المرسلين*) is projected onto the addressee-role already

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presupposed by the initial configuration, and (straight path, صراطٍ مستقيم) onto a very well-established cognitive configuration in which correctness, legitimacy and guidance are conceptualised as directed movement along a stable route. The (straight path, صراطٍ مستقيم) phrase in blending does not simply serve as a flourished figure of speech, but acts as a stabiliser in a blended space, after the text has been taken off the marked letters, this phrase serves to give the endorsed status (messenger) a definite orientation schema (on a straight way) which is then becoming a complete rhetorical unit.

*From the Schema Theory perspective*, interpretation can generally start with organising interpretive preparedness as opposed to the extraction of a lexical meaning at the instant. As the reader comes across the first letters Yā Sīn (Y.S, يس), the text adds a structural form which could not be easily analysed by the traditional analysis of linguistics. As the letters are not a standard lexical expression, the reader does not make an effort to infer the meaning of the letters. Rather, the mind becomes engaged in a schema priming state where the atypical textual structure becomes the way of introducing the reader to the discourse in the wider interpretive framework which is linked to the beginning of Qur'anic surahs. It is at this stage where a reader is involved in an interpretive deferral process. The lack of a definite lexical meaning will prompt the reader to put on hold the semantic interpretation and to attend the structuring role of the opening in the meantime. The letters are thus not received as autonomous units of semantic meaning but rather as messages that the discourse is going to make its way along a familiar pattern of the scripture. The reader does not focus on the search of the lexical meaning, but anticipates how the following text will explain the meaning of the first one.

This expectation is evolved to the level of discursive expectation formation, whereby the reader is ready to have a statement presented that has a thematic or rhetoric

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significance. Since single letters are often used in the beginning of the Qur'anic chapters as the introduction of a statement regarding revelation or the authority of the prophet, the reader would expect the discourse that follows to claim the importance of the message he is about to convey. Al-muqatta'ah Yā Sīn (Y.S, يس) therefore determine the interpretive direction of the reader creating anticipation concerning the communicative intent of the passage. These expectations are affirmed with the help of the following clause (By the Qur'an full of wisdom *وَالْقُرْآنَ الْحَكِيمَ*), which gives the context of these expectations. At this level, the schema that is triggered by the initial letters is subjected to schema confirmation because the text is a direct reference to the Qur'an as the authoritative source of the text. The following statement ("Indeed you are among the messengers" *أَنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ*) is another indication of this interpretive inclination, which makes it clear that this is a statement about the legitimacy and authority of prophetic mission.

In a schema-theoretical point of view, the letters Yā Sīn (Y.S, يس) are thus preparatory textual devices that organise the approach that is taken by the reader to the discourse. Instead of having the lexical meaning, the letters arrange the interpretive environment within which the statements that follow are carried out. Through the initiation of a process of cognitive operations priming, interpretive deferral, expectation formation, and confirmation the opening letters help the reader out of textual form that is initially undetermined to a realisable thematic focus on revelation and prophetic authority of a given passage.

### 4.2.4 Analysis of Qur'anic Text (4) Surat Al-Dukhan (The Smoke) (44:1-3)

حم ﴿١﴾ وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ ﴿٢﴾ إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ إِنَّا كُنَّا مُنْذِرِينَ ﴿٣﴾ سورة الدخان (٤٤ {١-٣})

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Hā Mām (1) By the Book that makes things clear (2) In the (Night) is made distinct every affair of wisdom. [Al-Dukhan (The Smoke) (44:1-3) (Ali, 2004, p.1282)]

*Contextual Meaning of Text (4).* In al-Mīzān, al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī does not discuss the disjointed letters, al-huruf al-muqatta'ah Ḥā Mīm (H.M, حم) as empty, semantically speaking, or ornamental. Although he confirms that their entire significance cannot be realised by conventional interpretation, he puts them in the framework of the internal structure of the verse in the context of the mode of revelation of the Qur'an. The fact that they are located at the beginning of Surat al-Dukhān (The Smoke) is closely connected with the latter oath of the Manifest Book (al kitabe al mubin, والكتاب المبين) and revelation announcement during a blessed night. In this context, Ḥā Mīm (H.M, حم) can be described as the introductory aspect that leads to the change of the discourse that deals with the divine revelation, authority, and warning, which creates the revelation structure within which the Qur'an is represented as an authoritative and clarifying message (al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1996).

*In the light of Conceptual Blending Theory*, the opening of Surat al-Dukhān (The Smoke) depicts a cognitively full formation that was triggered by the disjointed letters Ḥā Mīm (H.M, حم). These letters are considered to be a formal cue, which causes a process of meaning-construction in several mental spaces. Input Space 1 is a scriptural opening space which is based on the previously exposed scriptural discourse on the part of the reader. Here, an isolated sequence of letters that is identified at the start of a verse is identified as a salient textual signal that interrupts instant semantic comprehension and increases the attentional priority. The function of Ḥā Mīm (H.M, حم) in this case is to create a cognitive break and to set the reader up to a discussion of increased level of authority and revelation. This space adds the element of formal salience and no propositional content based on regular exposure to Qur'anic verse beginnings in which

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such sequences of letters regularly delay semantic resolution. Input Space 2 is an authoritative disclosure space, aroused by the following clause of the oath ("wa-l-kitābi l-mubīn" By the Clear Book, *و الكتاب المبين*) and the revelation declaration in a blessed night. This is the space where a traditional thinking pattern is present whereby a source of supreme authority presents validated knowledge with grave utterance. The Glorious Qur'an is characterised as a demystifying and systematising textual structure and the process of revelation is contextualised as intentional and conscious communication. This activates two closely related frames: the Qur'an as a clear and divinely authorised text invoked through oath, and revelation as a temporally situated act anchored to a specific and sanctified moment that underscores its deliberate and purposeful nature. The Generic Space abstracts the shard schematic structure of the two inputs. The communicative scheme (1) in a non-neutral address (b) an authoritative source of knowledge and (c) an expectation that what is to be said is decisive epistemic value, exist in both spaces creating an asymmetrical epistemic relation between source and receiver. More importantly the Generic Space gets the meaning of Ḥā Mīm (H.M, *حم*) are typical marks of the regulated knowledge access. In both spaces, the opening does not simply begin the discourse but conditions how the discourse is to be received.

The Blended Space is the result of selective projection of both of the inputs. In the combination, Ḥā Mīm (H.M, *حم*) is given a new meaning, not as something opaque that needs to be explained, but as an indicator that permits the passage into a discourse of elucidated, differentiated knowledge. This creates an emergent form where the letters, the oath and the declaration are merged to the one coherent cognitive event as opposed to the series of disconnected utterances. In this hybrid formation, the letters have their contribution in being procedural in the meaning-construction process. Ḥā Mīm (H.M, *حم*) marks the starting of the blend by indicating the discourse is conducted under special

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epistemic conditions and the oath and revelation clauses finish the blend by stating what kind of knowledge is being revealed and its origin. Accordingly, the opening is constructed as an ordered progression of formal cue to substantiated material guided by the integration of the cross space rather than by lexical explanations. This ordered progression from formal opacity to substantiated, temporally anchored revelation is the emergent meaning of the blend, one that belongs to neither input alone.

Overall, it is possible to say that the disjointed letters Ḥā Mīm in Surat al-Dukhān serve as a cognitively functioning blend-activating prompt. They reduce a complicated communicative scenario of authority, disclosure, and distinction of knowledge into an significant formal sign which is answered by uniting with further textual components. As evidenced in this analysis, the letters arrange meaning at the conceptual structure and discourse processing level, which is in line with a cognitive semantic explanation through the Conceptual Blending Theory.

*Schema-theoretically*, the disjointed letters Ḥā Mīm (H.M, حم) as the first words of the discourse bring a marked textual organisation that instantly alters the way of processing among the reader. Since these letters are not a conventional lexical unit, they put a halt to the normal bottom-up linguistic processing since there is no immediate semantic message to decode. Rather, the reader is steered towards a top-down interpretive path, which relies on already learnt discourse patterns in the Qur'an that have such openings followed by passages of specific rhetorical and thematic importance. In this interpretive system Ḥā Mīm (H.M, حم) triggers a high-level revelatory schema, which preconditions the reader with the discourse that is connected with divine communication. This schema is hierarchically employed and it makes the expectations about the nature and the authority of the message and the propositional content of the following verses is processed to the full extent before the propositional

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content of the subsequent verses are processed. Consequently, the ensuing expressions (By the clear Book, wa-l-kitābi al-mubīn, و القرآن المبين) and ("Indeed, We sent it down on a blessed night" innā anzalnāhu fī laylatin mubārakah, انا انزلناه في ليلة مباركة)

Instead of generating ambiguity or confusion, the lack of lexical meaning on the spot in Ḥā Mīm (H.M, حم) helps in some sort of cognitive stabilisation. The reader learns to know how to interpret such openings not as the half-form units of language but as the organisational markers with which the discourse is organised. This interpretive behaviour is habitual through repetition of the similar patterns throughout the text of the Qur'an. The reader is in a way subjected to that form of cognitive training where he or she slowly comes to realise that those non-lexical forms at the start of some chapters are clues to how the discourse is going to be structured, and not the bearers of independent semantic content. Meanwhile, the opening letters also have a textual positioning role, which is to reorient the reader, in a subtle way to the communicative space of the discourse. By preempting a bare skeleton of a linguistic expression, prior to the emergence of any substantial propositional meaning, the text guides focus on the authority and form of the revelation as such. Therefore, Meaning is not produced by the lexical meaning of the letters but by the interaction between schema activation, top-down processing and subsequent progressive organisation of the ensuing discourse.

### 4.3 Analysis of three to Five letter Combinations

The third category in the present analysis focuses on al-huruf al-muqatta'ah composed of three to five letters, including Alif Lām Mīm (A.L.M, أَلَمْ), Alif Lām Rā (A.L.R, أَلْر), Tā Sīn Mīm (T.S.M, طَسَم), Alif Lām Mīm Rā (A.L.M.R, أَلْمَر), Alif Lām Mīm Sād (A.L.M.S, أَلْمَص), Kāf Hā Yā Aīn Sād (K.H.Y.A.S, كَهْيَعَص) and Hā Mīm Aīn Sīn Qāf (H.M.A.S.Q, حَمْعَسَق).

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### 4.3.1 Analysis of Qur'anic Text (1) Surat Al-Baqarah (The Heifer) (2: 1-3)

الم ﴿ ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿ سورة البقرة (٢) {١-٣}

[A.L.M (1) This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah (2) Who believe in the unseen, are steadfast in prayer, and stand out of what we have provided for them(3). [Surat Al-Baqarq (The Heifer) (2: 1-3) (Ali, 2004, p.16)]

*Contextual Meaning of Text (1).* The disjointed letters Alif Lām Mīm (A.L.M, الم) of Surat Al-Baqara (The Heifer) are verses of the Qur'an that are independent and their full reality is known only to God and cannot be interpreted as speculative and symbolic. These letters are known to be one of the most frequently circulated opinions that are reported to attract attention to the very alphabet which the Glorious Qur'an is written in and to support the divine origin and impossibility of imitation of the Book despite its utilisation of the usual language content. In effect, Alif Lām Mīm (A.L.M, الم) is a pathetic preface that leads the reader to the statement of absolute certainty that is to follow (That is the Book in which there is no doubt *ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ*). The following stanzas explain that this assurance is a guidance that is particular to the God-conscious whose faith is characterised by trusting in the invisible, setting up of prayer and giving out of charity. Through this, the initial letters bring forth a dialogue that focuses on revelation, certainty and moral instruction without necessarily having to decode the letters themselves semantically (al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1996).

*In keeping with the Conceptual Blending Theory*, the disjointed sequence Alif Lām Mīm (A.L.M, الم) is regarded as the triggering stimulus of a conceptual integration process instead of a lexical unit that has a propositional meaning. In this model, the interpretive effect is formed as a result of interaction between two input spaces. The

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input Space 1 is based on the alphabetic knowledge of the reader and the identification of disjointed letter forms that carry no direct semantic reference. The letters are seen in the first place as some textual elements that are seen as formal and which are separated to put emphasis on the structure of the discourse. Each letter Alif, Lām, and Mīm is recited as an independent phonological unit, producing a brief three-part sequence that departs from continuous syllabic flow yet remains the shortest of the three-letter sequences in the Glorious Qur'an. Graphically, the letters appear in their isolated, non-joined graphic forms, producing a compact graphemic interruption that is immediately recognisable yet semantically unresolved. Alif Lām Mīm is among the most frequently recurring disjointed sequences in the Qur'an, appearing at the opening of multiple, surahs which means the reader's recognition of this sequence is shaped by accumulated exposure to its recurrent function as a formal threshold marker. Input Space 2 brings the wider anticipations of the reader of the Qur'anic language of discourse as a structured process of a divine communication that is directed towards the guidance and teaching. In these conceptual realms, the text is treated as a continuous communication where revelation will give a meaning gradually as opposed to immediately. This activates two closely related frames: the Qur'an as an unambiguous source of guidance whose certainty is asserted from the outset, and the reader as a recipient specifically the God-conscious for whom this guidance is intended. The Generic Space determines the mutual structural relation between these inputs by setting the opening as a textual signal symbolic in nature, which prepares the reader to process at the discourse, as opposed to being interpreted at the lexical meaning level. What both inputs share is a common schema in which a formally marked threshold precedes and conditions a process of gradual meaning-disclosure.

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Selective projection in the blended space results in an emergent structure where the letters become a marked opening mechanism reorganising the cognitive processing and framing the uptake of what comes after. The blended space, instead of giving semantic content to the letters, creates an effect of increased focus and interpretive preparedness, in which by the slightest means the human scale version of Alif Lām Mīm (A.L.M, أَلَمْ) is compressed. The apparent conflict between detached letters and a complete guidance discourse of meaning is solved in the blend, which does not diminish any of the two. This resolution is not attained by re-interpreting the letters as such, but by the process of their incorporation into a discourse structure of a higher order. This integration whereby formally opaque letters acquire discourse-organising function without acquiring lexical meaning is the emergent meaning of the blend, one that belongs to neither input alone. On this basis, the cognitive contribution of al-huruf al-muqatta'ah lies not in semantic reference, but rather it is integrative prompts that create an emergent discourse level meaning, which contributes to the cognitively accessed and comprehended opening of the verse.

*According to the conception of Schema-guided comprehension*, the sequence of Alif Lām Mīm (A.L.M, أَلَمْ) is a textual structure that organises the interpretive orientation of the reader at the beginning of the discourse. Since the letters do not form a traditional lexical form, the reader cannot process them with the help of instant linguistic decoding as they are in isolation. Instead, their presence triggers what can be termed as schema initiation, which is a cognitive process when the reader triggers an already learned interpretive framework which is linked to Qur'anic chapter openings that are characterised by disjointed letters. The letters create a form of interpretive delay at this first stage. The fact that the sequence does not provide an explicit semantic reference has the effect of the reader holding back the attempts to provide the lexical

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meaning, but concentrating on the structural role of the opening itself. It is the focus on the reader being made to recognise the letters as a larger textual pattern as opposed to the individual semantic units. This processing change determines the conditions of interpretation on which the subsequent discourse will be tackled. As soon as the reader goes past the first sequence, the activation schema starts to structure expectations regarding the character of message that is to be followed. This step can be seen as an expectation building of the structure whereby the reader expects the following text to explain the meaning of the opening form. When reading Qur'an, it is common to find that the sequences like Alif Lām Mīm (A.L.M, الم) often come before the statements that give details of what the revelation is about, what its power or role is. The reader thus receives the following verses with the anticipation that the text will give conceptual content that forms the interpretive framework that is already developed.

This anticipation is more evident as the discussion goes on to say (That is the Book in which there is no doubt- a guidance for the God-conscious *ذلك الكتاب لا ريب فيه*, هدى للمتقين). This is where the interpretive structure evoked by the initial letters is filled in in schema slot-filling because the next verse provides the conceptual material needed to fill in the interpretive structure. The mention of the Book along with the explanation of its certitude and direction offers the informational material by which the previously indeterminate initial opening is incorporated into a systematic pattern of interpretation. In that regard, the letters Alif Lām Mīm (A.L.M, الم) are not used to convey lexical meaning but as structural cues that structure the way in which the reader perceives the discourse. Their purpose is to trigger an interpretive schema, and to hold off semantic resolution, and to direct the reader to the textual information which in turn fills out the cognitive framework. Meaning then comes as a result of the interplay of the initial form and the explanatory discourse that follows thus showing how the disjointed letters lead

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to the structuring of the Qur'anic discourse at the interpretive structure level as opposed to a lexical reference level.

### 4.3.2 Analysis of Qur'anic Text (2) Surat Hūd (11:1-2)

الر كِتَابٌ أُحْكِمَتْ آيَاتُهُ ثُمَّ فُصِّلَتْ مِنْ لَدُنْ حَكِيمٍ خَبِيرٍ ﴿١﴾ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا اللَّهَ إِنِّي لَكُمْ مِنْهُ نَذِيرٌ وَبَشِيرٌ ﴿٢﴾ سورة هود (١١-٢)

Alif Lam Ra. (This is) a Book, with verse basic or fundamental (of established meaning) further explained in detail, from one who is wise and Well-acquainted (with all thing) (1) (It teacheth) that ye should worship none but Allah (Say)"Verily I am (sent) unto you from Him to warn and to bring glad tidings (2) [Surat Hūd (The prophet Hūd) (11:1-2) (Ali, 2004, p. 510)]

*Contextual Meaning of Text (2).* The initial lines of Surat Hūd as the disjointed letters Alif Lām Rā (A.L.R, أَلر) do not represent the elements of the lexicon, but rather serve as a signal of solemnity with the help of which the discourse is introduced as a divine revelation. Classical exegetes have a tendency not to provide a set semantic value of these letters, believing that the ultimate reality of these letters is only known to Allah. Right after this preface (a Book whose verses have been made definitive and then elaborated, كِتَابٌ أُحْكِمَتْ آيَاتُهُ ثُمَّ فُصِّلَتْ) is an indication that the revelation is not only unitary and clear at the level of its core meanings (iḥkām) (احكام). Such attributes have their source (from One All-Wise, All-Aware, حَكِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ) which asserts that the form, unity, and meaning of the Qur'an are based on the divine wisdom and flawless knowledge. The following verse explains the main purpose of this revelation: total devotion to God only without relationship and mediation. The Prophet has been put

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across as a warner and a news bearer and that the message is a fusion of both moral responsibility and Allah mercy. Combined, these verses make the Qur'an a harmonised, Allah-organised text, in which the first letters of the verses are the indicators of divine authority, whose verses are equal parts of certainty and expansion, and the end of which is to guide human beings to righteous monotheism (al-Tabāṭabā'ī, 1996).

*Conceptually*, the isolated line Alif Lām Rā (A.L.R, الـر) serves as the trigger of a conceptual blending process. Instead of introducing semantic content, the letters create a marked textual entry that preconditions the reader for the discourse that is going to take place. Input Space 1 deals with the perception of the reader about the isolated alphabetic forms presented as independent units instead of the lexical manifestations. This makes the letters to be articulated independently and not forming a traditional word, as it would be normally composed semantically, disrupting the normal process of reading. Each letter Alif Lām Rā (A.L.R, الـر) pronounced as an independent phonological unit, producing a three-part sequence phonologically distinct from Alif Lām Mīm despite their shared length. Graphically, the letters appear in their non-joined graphic forms, producing a compact graphemic interruption that is immediately recognisable yet semantically unresolved. This syntactic emphasis serves to focus the attention to the syntactic start of the argument and creates the message that the interpretation of the piece would rely on the contextual evolution instead of the immediate semantic significance of words.

While Alif Lām Rā (A.L.R, الـر) shares its three-letter length with Alif Lām Mīm (A.L.M, الـم), the substitution of Rā for Mīm produces a distinct phonological pattern, indicating that even among formally similar sequences, each combination carries its own specific acoustic and visual signature. The activation of the conceptual domain of the Qur'anic revelation is mediated through Input Space 2, in this case, discourse is

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comprehensible in terms of authoritative communication that points to the direction of guidance and instruction. Revelation is an intentional divine speech that is communicated through the Prophet. The initial letters thus become conceived in a more generalised communicative context in which the writing has epistemic precedence, as well as, having moral value. This activates two closely related frames: the Qur'an as a 'divine Book' whose verses carry inherent authority and coherence, and revelation as a divinely intentional act of guidance transmitted through prophetic mediation.

The Generic Space is the abstraction of these inputs of a common schematic form where a textual threshold that is marked formally is followed by meaningful disclosure. The initial configuration of the spaces in both cases serves as an invitation to enter into the interpretive process and does not provide any propositional material. The letters Alif Lām Rā (A.L.R, أَلر) therefore set the state of thought whereby the succeeding verses will bring clarity and instructions in the flow of the discourse developed. In both spaces, the opening does not simply begin the discourse but conditions how the discourse is to be received.

The selective projection of both inputs gives an emergent structure in the Blended Space, where Alif Lām Rā (A.L.R, أَلر) acts as a discourse-opening sign which reorients the cognitive uptake into a form of communication that is suitable when communicating with a deity. The letters carry no fixed semantic meanings. Rather, their formal minimalism creates revelatory anticipation and heightens attentiveness. This blended orientation is not limited to the first formula alone. More importantly, the impact of Alif Lām Rā (A.L.R, أَلر) is then extrapolated into the co-text: the following statement about ("a Book whose verses are perfected and then set out in detail" كِتَابٌ أَحْكَمْتُ آيَاتِهِ ثُمَّ فُصِّلَتْ (من لدن حكيمٍ خيرٍ) The next commandment of unique worship of Allah and the threat and good news further serve to run the blend by transforming the textual power into the

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directive power, thus making the connection between the first letters and the communication practicality of the discourse tighter. This transformation from formal opacity, through epistemic authority, to directive force is the emergent meaning of the blend, one that unfolds progressively across the co-text rather than being fixed at the point of the letters themselves.

*Under Schema Theory*, the opening sequence Alif Lām Rā (A.L.R, الر) functions as a textual cue that activates the reader's prior knowledge of Qur'anic surh openings containing disjointed letters. The disjointed form activates a previously established interpretive schema associated with marked Qur'anic openings. This schema provides the reader with an initial interpretive framework and shifts processing toward a top-down mode in which the reader draws on prior knowledge to anticipate the communicative function of the discourse that follows. The activation of this schema generates expectations concerning the subsequent discourse. In particular, the reader anticipates that the marked opening will be followed by authoritative or revelatory content that will help establish its interpretive orientation. These expectations are then tested against the following co-text: "Alif Lām Rā (This is) a Book, with verses basic or fundamental, of established meaning, further explained in detail, from One Who is Wise and Well-acquainted" (الر ۚ كِتَابٌ أُحْكِمَتْ آيَاتُهُ ثُمَّ فُصِّلَتْ مِنْ لَدُنْ حَكِيمٍ خَبِيرٍ). The subsequent reference to the Book, the firmness of its verses, their detailed explanation, and their divine source provides contextual information that instantiates the activated schema. Thus, the general expectation created by the marked opening becomes connected to specific textual information supplied by the following verse.

This process can understand through the interaction of top-down and bottom-up processing. The top-down process is initiated by the reader's prior knowledge of

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Qur'anic openings and provides an interpretive expectation, while the bottom-up processing of the following lexical and syntactic material supplies contextual evidence that confirms and develops this expectation. The reader therefore moves from an initially indeterminate opening toward a more stabilised interpretation as the subsequent discourse becomes available. Accordingly, Alif Lām Rā (A.L.R, الـ) does not function as a lexical unit carrying a fixed meaning. Rather, it activates a relevant interpretive schema, structures expectations, and prepares the reader to process the following description of the Book as authoritative and divinely originated discourse. The meaning effect of the opening therefore emerges through the interaction between prior knowledge and the textual information that follows it.

### 4.3.3 Analysis of Qur'nic Text (3) Surat Al-Shu'arā (The Poets) (26: 1-3)

طسم ﴿تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ﴾ لَعَلَّكَ بَاخِعٌ نَفْسَكَ أَلَّا يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿سورة الشعراء (٢٦) {٣-١}﴾

Ta Sin Mim (1) These are verses of the Book that makes (things) clear (2) It may be than frettest thy soul with grief, that they do not become Believers (3). [Surat Al-Shu'arā (The Poets) (26: 1-3) (Ali, 2004, p. 908)]

*Contextual Meaning of Text (3).* Al-huruf al-muqatta'ah Tā Sīn Mīm (Ta Sin Mim, طسم) at the first page of Surat al-Shu'arā (The Poets) begins without any definite meaning attached to them lexically or symbolically. The real meaning of such letters is the domain of the divine knowledge and cannot be approached using the common linguistic interpretation. Their main role is to be a solemn Qur'anic introduction that enables them to transition to the vocabulary of divinity and separates the revelation and human speech. This expression is directly preceded by the expression (These are the verses of the clear Book, tilka āyātu al-kitāb al-mubīn, تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ), in which the demonstrative pronoun tilka, (these, تِلْكَ), which in general contracts signify the distant,

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refers to the high status and sublime position of the Qur'anic verses. The term al-mubīn, (clear, المبين) which is based on the verb abāna (أَبَانَ) (to make clear, to manifest) defines the Qur'an as a Book, the truth of which, and whose origin as the word of Allah, is revealed in itself, and whose verses have the properties of a miracle sent by God, albeit it is denied or distorted by unbelievers. This introductory verse, (Perhaps you will die of grief because they do not believe, لَعَلَّكَ بَاقِعٌ نَفْسُكَ أَلَّا يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ), also puts this first verse in a context of a consolation to the Prophet saying the rejection is serious, and the flow of the revealed message is indeed correct and entirely absolute (al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1996).

*On the basis of the Conceptual Blending Theory*, the disjointed sequence Tā Sīn Mīm (Ṭ.S.M, طسم) found at the beginning of the Surat al-Shu'arā' (The Poets) period is introduced, but not any descriptive or directive statement is introduced. The letter sequence in this context is more of a structural cue, which creates a salient point of access to the discourse and not a semantic one. Input Space 1 relates to the perception on the part of the reader of individual letter forms that are both phonologically and graphically salient, but underdetermined semantically. Each letter Tā, Sīn, Mīm is pronounced as an independent phonological unit, departing from the natural Arabic convention in which letters merge into continuous syllabic flow. Graphically, the letters appear in their non-joined graphic forms, disrupting the graphemic continuity that characterises connected Arabic script. Since the letters are not joined to form a lexical unit, but juxtapose each other, they disrupt normal reading flow and signal a formal structure of the beginning. This state of suspension stimulates the reader to acknowledge the sequence as a textual cue instead of plain linguistic text. As a three-letter sequence, Tā Sīn Mīm (Ṭ.S.M, طسم) produces a more extended state of semantic suspension than binary sequences, intensifying the cognitive preparation for the

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discourse that follows. The activation of Input Space 2 triggers a conceptual space of Qur'anic disclosure, whereby the discourse is an authoritative communication to human audiences. This space is structured by the verse immediately following the letters "These are the verses of the clear Book" (*tilka āyātu al-kitābi al-mubīn*). Revelation is perceived as something that is guiding and the introduction of a theme of warning, instruction and orientation towards morals. This verse activates two closely related frames: revelation as a divinely authorised and clear text, and the discourse as a communicative act directed at human audiences with moral and directive purpose. The reader then takes the opening as an element of a communicative system where divine speech has a directive power. The Generic Space abstracts out of these two contributions a common schematic form, in which there is a formally marked textual threshold before meaningful disclosure. In both texts, the introductory sequence informs the audience that the discourse needs to be tackled as an interpretation process preceding the appearance of the explicit informational content. In both spaces, the opening does not simply begin the discourse but conditions how the discourse is to be received.

In the blended space, *Tā Sīn Mīm* (T.S.M, طسم) serves as a cognitive threshold which restructures the way the subsequent passage is received. The letters are not determined to pre-existing meanings; but they authorise the subsequent statement that the verse is (a clear Book, *al-kitāb al-mubīn*, الْكِتَابُ الْمُبِين) to be accepted as a purposeful response to the divine nature of the opening rather than as a description. Under this arrangement, maximal graphic minimalism is set now to fruitful opposition with a definite introduction of a claim to clarity, producing an interpretive attitude where clarity is introduced as a select feature of revelation and is no longer a self-evident quality. This opposition between graphic minimalism and maximal claim to clarity is the emergent meaning of the blend it belongs to neither input alone but arises from their

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integration. This evolving orientation still plays out as the discourse moves on to the concerns of the Prophet being emotionally affected by disbelief, and in this sense, textual cogency and communicative urgency are processed as an element of one emerging message. The organisation of Ṭā Sīn Mīm (T.S.M, طسم), through this integration comes in an essential organisational aspect: a non-lexical minimum form of expression creates a conformable path of interpretation in which the concepts of authority, clarification and concern towards the belief are made to be cognitively integrated at the very beginning.

From a schema-theoretical perspective, the sequence Ṭā Sīn Mīm (T.S.M, طسم) at the beginning of surat al-Shu‘arā presents the reader with a textual form that does not conform to ordinary lexical and syntactic expectations. Since the sequence does not constitute a conventional lexical unit, the reader cannot rely on immediate bottom-up decoding to assign a lexical meaning to the letters. Instead, the unusual opening functions as a textual cue that activates the reader’s prior knowledge of Qur’anic chapter openings characterised by al-ḥurūf al-muqatta‘ah. This process can be understood as schema activation, whereby the reader recognises the sequence as part of an established pattern of Qur’anic openings rather than attempting to interpret the letters as an ordinary lexical expression. The activated schema then supports top-down processing by providing an initial interpretive framework for anticipating the communicative character of the discourse that follows. Thus, the letters do not provide lexical information in themselves; rather, they activate a previously established interpretive pattern that prepares the reader to process the subsequent discourse within a revelatory context.

Since the opening sequence brings the reader into an interpretive orientation, the mental process is towards the expectations formation. The reader also expects that the

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relevant nature of the marked beginning will be explained in the other verses of the discourse. In Glorious Qur'anic discourse, there are often sequences of the type Tā Sīn Mīm (T.S.M, طسم) before the judgement of statements on the nature or power of the message received. In its turn, this leads the reader to the next verse with the question of whether the text will formulate the nature of the revelation itself. That expectation is further made firm with the subsequent statement (These are the verses of the clear Book, *tilka āyātu al-kitāb al-mubīn*, تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ). It is here that the interpretive model has been triggered by the al-huruf al-muqatta'ah starts gaining more grounds. The mention of the clear Book does not also give an exegesis as to the letters themselves, but has placed them within a discourse whose aim is to establish the clarity and authority of the revelation. The precedent textual anomaly posed by Tā Sīn Mīm (T.S.M, طسم) is therefore fitted into a more extensive interpretive pattern in which reader is conditioned by the highlighted initial to receive a statement on what the Qur'anic message is all about.

In this view, Tā Sīn Mīm (T.S.M, طسم) contributes to the organisation of the reader's entry into the surah. Its minimal and non-lexical form temporarily interrupts automatic semantic processing and redirects attention toward the broader discourse pattern. Through schema activation and expectation formation, the letters prepare the reader to interpret the subsequent statement about the Qur'anic message as part of an authoritative revelatory discourse. The following reference to "the clear Book" (*al-kitāb al-mubīn*, الكتاب المبين) provides contextual information that confirms and stabilises the interpretive orientation initiated by the opening. The letters therefore do not convey a fixed lexical meaning; rather, they function as schema-activating cues that guide the reader from an initially marked textual form toward a more coherent interpretation of the discourse.

#### 4.3.4 Analysis of Qur'anic Text (4) Surat Al A'raf (The Height) (7:1-2)

المص ﴿ كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ فَلَا يَكُنْ فِي صَدْرِكَ حَرَجٌ مِنْهُ لِتُنَذِرَ بِهِ وَتُذَكِّرَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴾ سورة الاعراف (٧) { ١ -  
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Alif Lam Mim Sad (1) A Book revealed unto thee, -so let thy heart be oppressed on more by any difficulty on that account, -that with it thou mightiest warn (the erring and teach the believers) (2). [Surat Al A'raf (The Heights) (7: 1-2) (Ali, 2004, p.345)]

*Contextual Meaning of Text (4).* Surat Al-A'rāf (The Heights) opens with the disjointed letters Alif Lām Mīm Ṣād (A.L.M.S, المص), which belong to the class of Qur'ānic opening letters whose full reality is known only to God. These letters are not discussed as the bearers of the lexical meaning, but as a serious opening mark that preconditions the divine revelation and attracts the attention to the seriousness of the Book that is going to be presented. The fact that they are placed in front of the declaration of the revealed Book is another way of showing how sacred the Book is and in fact what is being said is not human speech but a message being relayed to them through God. Meanwhile, the application of disjointed letters consist of familiar Arabic elements is an implicit indication of the miraculousness of the Qur'ān that is created out of common letters, however, it is impossible to imitate. Through this, Alif Lām Mīm Ṣād (A.L.M.S, المص) serves as a marker at the beginning of the text which enhances the authority and validity of the disclosed Book in addition to assuring the Prophet that there must be no internal restraint when giving the message whose authenticity and truth has been guaranteed by God Himself (al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1996).

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*In keeping with the structure of Conceptual Blending Theory*, the sequence isolated series Alif Lām Mīm Šād (A.L.M.S, المص) is presented at the beginning of Surat al-A‘rāf and then the discussion moves on to the declaration of revelation and the communicative mission of the Prophet. In this model, the cluster of letters is mainly a structural cue that prepares the reader to a consequential message of guidance and warning as opposed to a semantic expression. Input Space 1 represents the formally marked structure of the disjointed sequence Alif Lām Mīm Šād (A.L.M.S, المص). It contains the perceptual and linguistic features associated with the isolated letters, including their independent phonological realisation, non-joined graphic form, and lack of immediate lexical integration. The sequence therefore constitutes a marked textual opening that differs from ordinary continuous linguistic expression. Graphicvally, the letters appear in their non-joined graphic forms, disrupting the graphemic continuity that characterises connected Arabic script. The sequence is a signal of salient text that postpones the interpretive closure and makes one focus on the structural arrangement of the opening. The four-letter length of this sequence is itself significant, as it prolongs the state of semantic suspension beyond that of shorter sequences, strengthening the cognitive preparation for what follows. Input Space 2 is evoked by the subsequent co-text, which presents the Qur’an as a revealed Book addressed to the Prophet and identifies its communicative purposes of warning and reminding the believers. This space contains an organised revelatory structure involving a divine source, a revealed message, an addressee, and a communicative purpose. The co-text therefore provides explicit propositional content that follows the formally marked opening and gives the reader a clearer basis for processing the discourse. The Generic Space captures the abstract organisational structure shared by the two inputs: a formally marked initial element functions as an opening cue that precedes and conditions the reception of

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subsequent meaningful communication. This shared structure allows the marked textual form in Input Space 1 to be related to the communicative and revelatory structure represented in Input Space 2. At this level, the Generic Space does not specify the particular content of the subsequent message; rather, it represents the general relationship between a marked discourse opening and the meaningful communication that follows it.

Of the two inputs, selective projection in the Blended Space results in an emergent set-up in which Alif Lām Mīm Šād (A.L.M.S, ألمص) is a preparatory threshold and not a carrier of explicit meaning. The letters create a momentary shift in semantic closure and a momentary cognitive interruption preceding the text in identifying itself as a reveled Book that was dispatched to the Prophet. This cognitive interruption enacts, at a mental level, the very weight and gravity of prophetic responsibility before it is stated verbally in the co-text the burden is felt before it is explained. This development makes it possible to run the blend through the co-text: the opacity of the opening is not worked out in meanings, but a position of preparedness to the task of warning and teaching. The command which the Prophet must not be anxious about the message is worked out in the same confused orientation, in which the burden of commission has been already anticipated by the significant opening. This is very germane here since the co-text prefigures both the prophecy-responsibility and the affective control. As a result of this integration, there is a unique discourse level effect: a minimal formal sequence structures the approach to revelation as both authoritative and challenging, and stabilises the attitude needed to receive it, namely the emotional one.

The letters do not clarify the message and do not symbolise the message, but they define the circumstances of the message perception. By condensing the gravity of prophetic duty into a small and impenetrable introduction, this blended also enables the

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rest of the verses to develop as the logical extension of a message that has already been established on a cognitive level as being serious.

*In a schema-theoretical Theory*, the opening line of Surat al-A'raf (The Heights), Alif Lām Mīm Šād (A.L.M.S, المص) generates a marked form of textual structure which instantly isolates the opening of the text and the common linguistic patterns. The four letters are not combined to form a typical lexical expression; therefore, they cannot be treated by means of regular semantic interpretation. Rather they change the interpretative orientation of the reader by indicating that the discourse has been written within a known pattern of Qur'anic openings, which is disjointed sequence of letters. The reader at this point redirects attention away from finding the lexical meaning and this is replaced by the structural role that the opening plays in the greater architecture of the Qur'anic discourse. Schematically speaking, this point marks the start of a process of interpretive orientation, during which the reader appeals to the already read patterns of the texts found in the form of similar openings. These trends equip the reader to take the discourse as an area of communication that is connected to revelation and teaching. The letters hence serve as a textual signal that the writing is moving into a specialised form of address where the next message is likely to have some meaning other than that of regular narrative or description.

The interpretation triggered by the initial letters starts gaining more ground as the discourse develops and the text is recognised as a Book revealed to the Prophet. The data presented in the next verse makes the communicative intention of the text clear and puts the initial progression in a larger thematic framework that deals with guidance and duty. This way the reader passes through an early period of orientation where the letters merely define the terms under which the interpretation will be given to the text, to a point where the textual message takes the center stage of understanding. This alter

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is a move in an interpretation away of schematic preparation to interpretive consolidation. The previous signal of structure, Alif Lām Mīm Šād (A.L.M.S, المص) is orienting the reader to perceive the power and the gravity of the discourse and the subject matter is affirmed by the following description of the revelation. The initial letters are therefore not carriers of semantic content; instead, they structure the interaction of the reader with the text creating the space of interpretation in which the motifs of direction, accountability, and revelatory communication are interpreted.

In this respect, the isolated sequence helps to create the structure of the opening of the chapter as it influences the way the reader reacts to the message development. The letters begin an interpretive attitude which prefigures the authority of revelation and enables the following verses to be interpreted in a cognitive context already placed towards being obligatory and guiding. It is the way the letters are organised that creates meaning and not the letters themselves but sets up the anticipation in the reader and prepares the discourse that follows to be read.

### 4.3.5 Analysis of Qur'anic Text (5) Surat Al-R'ad (The Thunder) (13:1-2)

المَر تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ وَالَّذِي أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ الْحَقُّ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١﴾ اللَّهُ الَّذِي رَفَعَ السَّمَاوَاتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي لِأَجَلٍ مُسَمًّى يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ يُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ بِلِقَاءِ رَبِّكُمْ تُوقِنُونَ ﴿٢﴾ سورة الرعد (١٣} ٢-١)

A.L.M.R. These are signs (verses) of the Book; that which hath been revealed unto thee from thy Lord is the Truth; but most men believe not (1) Allah is He who raised the heavens without any pillars that ye can see; is firmly established on the throne (of Authority) He has subjected the sun and the moon (to his low) Each one runs (its course) for a term appointed. He doth regulate all affairs, explaining the signs in detail, that

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may believe with certainty in the meeting with your Lord (2). [Surat Al R'ad (The Thunder) (13:1-2) (Ali, 2004, p.586)]

*Contextual Meaning of Text (5).* Al-huruf al-muqatta'ah Alif Lām Mīm Rā (A.L.M.R, المر) in the introductory part of the chapter named Sūrat al-Ra'd (The Thunder) are introduced as a form of divine form of opening particular chapters of the Qur'an, without having a definite lexical connotation. They do not have any particular idea to communicate, but rather serve as a marker of the Godly nature of the Qur'an, and how God communicates to people through revelation. These letters are followed by verses that discuss how Allha is the lord of the heavens and earth and He controls the cosmic matters and the inevitability of coming back to Him, thus showing that what is to be discussed is based on Godly power instead of a mere guess of a human being. Introducing the discourse in such a manner, the Qur'an guides the listener to reverence, paying attention, and acknowledging the boundaries of human knowledge before getting involved in the revealed truths that are presented in the latter verses (al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1996).

*According to the Conceptual Blending Theory*, the non-lexical sequence of Alif Lām Mīm Rā (A.L.M.R, المر) at the start of Surat al-Ra'd is a formally extended pattern which goes ahead of the powerful affirmation of truth and orderliness. Under blending terms, the language of the Input Space 1 represents the formally marked structure of the disjointed sequence Alif Lām Mīm Rā (A.L.M.R., المر). It contains the graphical and phonological properties of the four disjointed letters, including their independent phonological realisation and their non-joined graphic forms. The sequence constitutes an extended marked textual structure that differs from ordinary continuous linguistic expression. Each letter is realised as an independent phonological unit, while its disjointed graphic form creates a clear contrast with the connected forms of ordinary

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Arabic writing. These formal properties establish the sequence as a distinctive textual opening rather than as an immediately interpretable lexical unit. Input Space 2 is evoked by the subsequent co-text, which presents the Qur'anic message in relation to divine power and the ordered structure of the universe. The text refers to the raising of the heavens, the subjection of the sun and the moon, and the regulation of cosmic order, thereby providing explicit propositional content concerning divine authority and the organisation of creation. This space therefore contains an organised structure in which divine power is manifested through the ordered arrangement of the heavens and celestial bodies. The subsequent co-text provides the conceptual and propositional material that follows the formally marked opening and develops its discourse-level significance. The Generic Space captures the abstract organisational structure shared by the two inputs: a formally marked textual opening precedes and conditions the reception of subsequent meaningful discourse. The structure provides a common relation between the marked form represented in Input Space 1 and the organised revelatory content represented in Input Space 2. At this level, the Generic Space does not specify the particular content of the subsequent message; rather, it represents the general pattern in which a marked textual threshold directs the interpretation of the discourse that follows.

In Blended Space, selective projection provides emergent structure whereby Alif Lām Mīm Rā (A.L.M.R, المر) serves as an enhanced entry signal, one that intensifies rather than trigger the orientation of the reader to truth-claims which cannot be received outright. The extended sequence creates a cognitive slowing effect, preparing the reader for subsequent discourse on divine authority, cosmic order, and responses to revelation. As the discussion proceeds with affirmation of the fact of revelation and appeal to the governing of the heavens, the sun, and the moon, an emergent structure is produced in

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a consistent way of interpreting: the initial letters seem to look backward as an appropriate prelude to a message that connects obscurity with clarity. This connection between obscurity and clarity is the emergent meaning of the blend it belongs to neither input alone but arises from the integration of the formally marked opening with the cosmological truth-claims that follow. The content of the verses, and even the symbolism of their themes, is not, in this ambivalent cognition, made known, but rather prepared by it, which puts the reader in a state of relation where truth is made to appear steadfast, organised, and independent of the people's opinion. The intellectual purpose of the fragmented letters is therefore to reinforce the passage between every day or conversation and statement of cosmic and epistemic confidence.

*Based on the Schema Theory*, comprehension is perceived as a process during which the readers organise the incoming textual cues using the knowledge structures that are already internalised. The interpretive process initiated by the reader is not the semantic decoding, when the reader comes across such a sequence as Alif Lām Mīm Rā (A.L.M.R, المر) at the beginning of Sūrat al-Ra'd (The Thunder), because the letters are not a standard lexical unit. As an alternative, the reader cognitively processes the sequence as a structural cue that is linked to a particular pattern of discourse in the Qur'an. The existence of four detached letters instantly creates a unique textual atmosphere, which informs about the shift of the normal state of narration language to the specialised form of revelatory speech. In this interpretive scheme, the Alif Lām Mīm Rā (A.L.M.R, المر) is going not to convey meaning but to control the circumstances in which meaning will subsequently be obtained. The formally marked structure breaks the reading flow of the reader and helps to make a pause of cognitive adjustment. Instead of trying to solve the letters separately, the reader is aware of them being classified as one of the familiar groups of Qur'anic openings where discrete

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letters come before utterances on revelation. The recognition creates a structured anticipation of the coming discussion to deal with the issues of basic truth and authority.

Th the following verse further stabilises this interpretive orientation by presenting the revelation to the Prophet as truth despite its rejection by som people. It is at this stage that the interpretive framework as determined by the letters starts gaining some sense of direction. The previous textual indication has already made the reader ready to perceive the discourse as a statement and not as an argument. As a result, the confirmation of truth that is revealed is not considered as a statement that needs to be justified but is taken as a principle statement that establishes the reality in which the chapter takes place. Another aspect of the introduction is the connection between the series of letters and the subsequent theme that is developed on the parts of cosmic order and divine authority. The explanation of the heavens, the heavenly bodies and the arrangement of creation enhances the interpretative orientation which was initially caused by Alif Lām Mīm Rā (A.L.M.R, المر). The letters thus play a role of an entry mechanism whereby the reader is put into a worldview where revelation and universe composition are under the same line of divine authority. Through this interpretive stance, which is set at the start of the text, the description of cosmic phenomena in the later discussion is not just the description but it is the confirmation of the truth, which was earlier stated.

A schema-theoretical perspective on Alif Lām Mīm Rā (A.L.M.R, المر) would be a regulating component in the structure of the verse at the beginning. It also triggers a mental correspondence where the reader gets to the discourse with a paradigm of certitude and not contentiousness. The letters guide the reader's expectations and maintain attention as the discourse moves to the following propositions. They also establish an interpretive orientation for understanding revelation, cosmic order, and

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human responses to divine guidance. The appearance of meaning is then a power of arrangement of the starting setup and not the interpretation of the letters.

### 4.3.6 Analysis of Qur'anic Text (6) Surat Maryam (Mary) (19: 1-3)

كهيعص ﴿١٩﴾ سورة مريم ﴿٣-١﴾ ﴿١٩﴾ سورة مريم ﴿٣-١﴾

Kaf. Ha. Ya. Ayn. Sad (1) (This is) a recital of the mercy of thy Lord to his servant Zakariya (2) Behold! He cried to his lord in secret (3) [Surat Maryam (Mary) (19:1-3) (Ali, 2004, p.744]

*Contextual Meaning of Text (6).* Surat Maryam begins with al-huruf al-muqatta'ah Kāf Hā Yā 'Ayn Šād (K.H.Y.A.S, كهيعص) which, as per the accepted opinion of the classical exegetes, fall under the group of Qur'ānic symbols whose true significance is known only to God. These letters serve as a serious preface that brings the sūrah and preconditions the reader with a discussion that is focused on the divine mercy and prophetic history. Some of the views mentioned are that they show thematic connections in the chapter, and have been proposed to refer symbolically to the prophets whose stories are related in the sūrah, such as Zachariah, Yahyā, Maryam, 'Īsā and Ibrāhīm. A commonly known interpretation, which has been transmitted in classical tafsīr, is that the letters are attributes of God; whereby al-Kāfī, al-Hādī, al-'Alīm among others are the attributes of God, each letter representing an attribute of God. The sūrah next continues directly to “a mention of the mercy of your Lord to His servant Zachariah,” which means that what follows is a divinely chosen account that emphasised the mercy of God to His righteous servants, and it was through the humble and silent prayer of Zachariah to his Lord (al-Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1996).

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*Conceptually*, the introduction of the text in Surat Maryam is al-huruf al-muqatta'ah Kāf Hā Yā 'Ayn Sād (K.H.Y.A.S, كهيعص) that is characterised by its length and the presence of a variety of phonemes. In contrast to similar Qur'anic introductions which jump off at once into either a declarative or a doctrinal statement, this structure is followed by a story about the mercy of Allah and personal prayer. Input Space 1 represents the formally marked structure of the disjointed letter sequence. It contains the graphical and phonological properties of the letters, including their isolated written forms and independent phonological realisation. Each letter is pronounced as a separate phonological unit, while its isolated graphic form distinguishes the sequence from ordinary connected linguistic forms. The sequence therefore functions as a marked textual structure rather than an immediately interpretable lexical unit. Input Space 2 is evoked by the subsequent co-text, particularly the statement “(This is) a recital of the mercy of thy Lord to his servant Zakariyyā” (dhikru raḥmati rabbika ‘abdahu Zakariyyā, ذَكَرَ رَحْمَتَ رَبِّكَ عَبْدَهُ زَكَرِيَّا). This space contains an organised structure of divine mercy directed towards Zakariyyā and his personal supplication to Allah. The subsequent verses establish a communicative relationship between Allah and His Prophet Zakariyyā presented as the recipient of divine mercy and as one who addresses Allah through supplication. The co-text therefore provides the propositional and narrative content that follows the formally marked opening. The Generic Space captures the abstract organisational structure shared by the two inputs: a formally marked textual opening precedes and conditions the reception of subsequent meaningful discourse. This structure provides a common relation between the marked form represented in Input Space 1 and the narrative and communicative content represented in Input Space 2. The Generic Space therefore does not specify the particular theme of divine mercy

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or the narrative of Zakariyyā, but represents the general relationship between a marked opening and the discourse that follows.

In the Blended Space, selective projection generates an emergent orientation where Kāf Hā Yā 'Ayn Ṣād (K.H.Y.A.S, كهيعص) functions as a marker of discourse and not a signifier of meaning. Linguistically, the sequence foregrounds created on top of the reference and the reader is shifting from the lexical access to the discourse-level inference before the narrative frame is established. This generates a low-arousal processing mode which is in line with the immediate switch to ("the mention of the mercy of your Lord toward His servant Zakariyya" (ذَكَرَ رَحْمَتِ رَبِّكَ عَبْدَهُ زَكَرِيَّا) and the image of a subdued and secret lamentation. As the discussion progresses the blend is elaborated by the knowledge of the reader of the devotional scripts where mercy is revealed by silent prayer, where the original obscurity of the letters may be retrospectively combined with the emotional tone of the story. This retrospective integration between the formal obscurity of the opening and the intimate emotional tone of Zakariyya's narrative is the emergent meaning of the blend it belongs to neither input alone but arises from their cognitive integration. Kāf Hā Yā 'Ayn Ṣād (K.H.Y.A.S, كهيعص) in such a structure carries out a special cognitive role. In contrast to openings which place the truth-claims or cosmic order in the frame, this sequence organises the reception of the passage around the attentional restraint, humility, and personal appeal. It does not function to explain the narrative which follows it, rather it establishes the conditions of interpretation in which that narrative is handled. Compressing a receptive position to a formally salient but semantically indeterminate opening, the blend orients the reader to be led smoothly into a discourse of mercy and prayer and shows how disjointed letters can work as regulators at the discourse level as opposed to semantic icons.

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*According to the Schema Theory*, states that reading occurs according to already structured knowledge frameworks that guide the reader to process some unfamiliar textual cues. In the case of the first instance of the sequence Kāf Hā Yā Ayn Ṣād (K.H.Y.A.S, كهيعص) in the first line of Surat Maryam (Mary), the letters do not have a normal lexical unit. Rather, the cognitive system instantly recognises the sequence to be a Qur'anic pattern of disjointed-letter openings. In this process, any prior information in an open position will be activated thereby enabling the reader to read the passage in terms of a familiar interpretation as opposed to seeking literal meaning in the letter itself. The lengthiness of this sequence is relevant in creation to the experience of the opening. Since the five letters are pronounced independently, the reading pace of the reader is slowed. This disruption restructures the attention and promotes a more contemplative way of reading the text. Rather than rushing towards propositional material, the reader notices that the initial one has a structural role in the discourse.

The interpretive inclination which the initial letters establish starts gaining a firmer focus, as the discussion proceeds and the mention of the mercy of your Lord to His Prophet Zakariya is made. The expectations of the reader that have already been formulated in the first sequence enable the introduction of the narrative to be processed as the start of an important account and not as a typical narrative transition. By so doing, the initial cluster guide the reader to accept the story that is being told with more vigilance. Viewed from this perspective, Kāf Hā Yā 'Ayn Ṣād (K.H.Y.A.S, كهيعص) is not a vehicle of semantic information but rather an organising mechanism that arranges the entry of the reader into the verse. The letters activate prior knowledge and shape expectations for the discourse on divine mercy that follows.

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### 4.3.7 Analysis of Qur'anic Text (7) Surat Al-Shura (Consultation) (42:1-3)

حم عسق ﴿١﴾ كَذَلِكَ يُوحِي إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ اللَّهُ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢﴾ سورة الشورى (٤٢) {١-٣}

Ha Mim (1) Ain. Sin. Qaf (2) Thus doth (He) send inspiration to thee as (He did) to those before thee, Allah, Exalted in Power, Full of Wisdom (3) [Surat Al-Shura (Consultation) (42:1-3) (Ali, 2004, p.1246)]

*Contextual Meaning of Text (7).* The first word of Surat al-Shūrā (Consultation) is the so-called five disjointed letters Hā Mīm ‘Ayn Sīn Qāf (H.M.A.S.Q, حم عسق) which appears at the beginning of a number of Qur’anic surahs, with various explanations given in the exegetical literature. These letters are not meant to have a literal lexical meaning, but rather belong to a category of things whose end reality is concealed only to Allah and therefore comes under the category of mutashābih that are found in the Qur’an. This interpretive orientation is immediately reinforced by the subsequent verse, (Thus does God, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise, reveal to you and to those before you, (كَذَلِكَ يُوحِي إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ اللَّهُ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ) which situates the revelation within a continuous divine practice extending across prophetic history. The reference to the almightiness and wisdom of God also stresses that the revelation is done by the absolute power and the utter righteousness and the next line supports the idea that God has dominion over the heavens and the earth and is transcendent. Through this, the fragmented letters are not anymore isolated puzzles, but a sort of prelude that helps the reader get ready for a discourse that is based in divine power, wisdom, and the cohesion of the source of revelation (al-Ṭabāṭabā’ī, 1996).

*Within the Conceptual Blending structure of Surat al-Shūrā,* is the emergence of al-huruf al-muqatta'ah that are scattered in two verses in a row: Hā Mīm (H.M, حم) followed by ‘Ayn Sīn Qāf (A.S.Q, عسق). Compared to the smaller clusters in the rest of

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the Qur'ān, this structure brings about a staggered textual entry, which occurs in two phases. Such a configuration is explained by the interplay of two cognitive inputs. Input Space 1 expresses what a reader perceives the first as the immediate impression of something out of the merely perceived sequence of letters which appear as independent marked verse units. These letters break the regular flow of reading, attracting attention to the structural aspects of the text and indicating that some marked communicative mode of discourse is underway, and not an initial piece of ordinary lexical text. What makes this sequence particularly distinctive is that the phonological interruption occurs twice across two consecutive verses Ḥā Mīm (H.M, حم) in the first and 'Ayn Sīn Qāf (A.S.Q, عسق) in the second creating a staggered acoustic disruption rather than a single phonological break. Graphically, this two-phase graphic separation five letters distributed across two verse units produces a more prolonged and rhythmically structured disruption of normal script continuity than any single-verse opening sequence. Input Space 2 is based on the broader understanding of the discourse of the Qur'an that the reader has about the revelations being a part of an ongoing divine communication joining the Prophet with the previous messengers. Here, it is more concerned with the conveyance of revelation throughout prophetic history and not on a moment of speech. This space is anchored in the verse immediately following the two opening sequences: "Thus does God, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise, reveal to you and to those before you, *kadhālika yūḥī ilayka wa-ilā alladhīna min qablika* كَذَٰلِكَ يُوحِي إِلَيْكَ", which explicitly frames revelation as a trans-historical divine act. This activates two closely related frames: revelation as a continuous divine process that transcends any single prophetic moment, and the Prophet as one link in an unbroken chain of divine communication stretching across human history. The Generic Space is abstracted a shared organisational schema where a formally marked textual

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opening throws off a staged communicative process within which a meaning emerges progressively as the discourse proceeds instead of being uttered immediately.

Selective projection operates in both directions within the Blended Space, so that when both inputs are selectively integrated an emergent temporal mapping between form and message arises: not a one-time threshold making of the two-part opening, but a slow cognitive adjustment. Revelation is therefore met with as an extended transmission that is reflected in its form. When the discourse proceeds to say that revelation comes (to you and to those before you, *كَذَلِكَ يُوحِي إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ*) the preceding division is retrospectively assimilated to this statement, allowing the reader to experience the segmentation of revelation. This experiential segmentation the sense that revelation itself arrives in stages is the emergent meaning of the blend, one that neither the formal properties of the two-part opening nor the co-textual reference to prophetic history could produce independently. Within this blended intelligence, Ḥā Mīm (H.M, حم) and 'Ayn Sīn Qāf (A.S.Q, عسق) are not semantic carriers, semantic condensed doctrines. Instead, their scattered dispersion structures the way revelation perception is thought of, in such a way that they systematise the reader into an anticipation of systematic delivery as opposed to individual address. In contrast to affectively oriented openings (as in Kāf Hā Yā 'Ayn Ṣād (K.H.Y.A.S, كهيعص) which prime intimacy and devotional inwardness, the continuity and mediated delivery of the two-stage configuration in Sūrat al-Shūrā (Consultation) are pre-empted. The disconnected letters thus assume a linguistic and cognitive role at the level of discourse organisation, which forms the rhythm and orientation of the opening such that the affirmation of continuing revelation is carried out as an extension of an old line of communicating instead of a discontinuous proclamation.

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*From the Schema Theory perspective*, readers encounter unusual textual marks by using the already structured knowledge structures and not through the efforts of immediate lexical interpretation. The opening sequence Hā Mīm (H.M, حم) followed by ‘Ayn Sīn Qāf (‘A.S.Q, عسق) presents a marked textual structure that does not form a conventional lexical expression. The unusual opening activates the reader’s prior knowledge of Qur’anic openings containing disjointed letters and initiates a relevant interpretive schema. This schema shifts processing from immediate lexical decoding toward a top-down orientation in which the reader recognises the opening as part of a recurring Qur’anic pattern. The presence of the second letter sequence, ‘Ayn Sīn Qāf (‘A.S.Q, عسق), extends the marked opening and maintains the activated schema until the subsequent co-text provides more specific information. The two sequences therefore contribute to the formation of an initial interpretive expectation concerning the discourse that follows.

The subsequent verse, “Thus does He reveal to you and to those before you” (كَذَٰلِكَ يُرْجَىٰ إِلَيْكَ وَالَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكَ), provides the contextual information through which the activated schema is further instantiated and confirmed. The reference to revelation and its continuity with earlier recipients supplies the propositional content needed to stabilise the interpretive expectation generated by the marked opening. In this way, the initial schema is not completed through the semantic interpretation of the letters themselves, but through the interaction between the activated prior knowledge and the information provided by the following co-text. Accordingly, Hā Mīm ‘Ayn Sīn Qāf (H.M, حم A.S.Q, عسق) functions as a schema-activating opening cue rather than as a lexical expression with a fixed meaning. The opening activates prior knowledge, directs top-down processing, and structures expectations that are subsequently developed and confirmed by the following discourse on revelation.

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### 4.4 Findings & Discussions

#### 4.1 Introduction

The following section contains the key findings of the above analyses and on the overall trends which were noticed among the data. Rather than analysing each instance separately, the results are summarised to highlight the recurrent cognitive semantic functions of the disjointed letters. The results are arranged in three groups based on their structural form which include single letters, two-letter combinations and clusters of three or more letters.

#### 4.4. 2 Findings and Discussion of One-Letter Openings

**4.1 Table** *Findings and Discussion of On-Letter Disjointed Opening in the Analysed Qur'anic Texts.*

| Category                             | Conceptual Blending<br>Tools                                                                                                                               | Schema Theory<br>Tools                                                                             | Dominant Cognitive<br>Semantic Function                                                                                                                |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| One-Letter openings<br>Sād, Qāf, Nūn | Alignment of Input Space<br>1and Input Space 2, Generic<br>space, Selective projection,<br>Emergent structure through<br>discourse-opening<br>integration. | Schema activation;<br>top-down processing;<br>expectation<br>structuring; schema<br>instantiation. | Marked textual entry;<br>attentional redirection;<br>suspension of immediate<br>lexical interpretation;<br>preparation for<br>authoritative discourse. |

**Note.** Developed by the researcher on the basis of the analytical findings presented in Chapter Four.

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### Discussion of Table 4.1

The results show that One-letter openings, like Sād Qāf Nūn, have similar CS roles in the Qur'anic discourses. In every case that is analysed, the disjointed letter does not function as an independent lexical unit carries its own meaning, but as the marked textual indication that initiates the readers to focus their attention on the meaning of the discourse which is going to follow. In the terms of CBT, the interaction between the letter and the subsequent oath or authoritative lines creates a blended scheme, which epistemically grounds the discourses. These openings according to Schema Theory trigger an already stored scriptural schema which is used to inform interpretation via top-down processing. Consequently, the letters are used as discourse-organising markers, which precondition the authoritative communication, which is commonly linked to the oath organisation, revelation or corrective discourse addressing unbelief.

### 4.4.3 Findings and Discussion of Two-Letter Combinations

**4.2 Table** *Findings and Discussion of Two-letter Combinations Disjointed Opening in The Analysed Qur'anic Texts.*

| Category                                                 | Conceptual Blending<br>Tools                                                                                                            | Schema Theory<br>Tools                                                             | Cognitive Semantic<br>Function                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Two-Letters openings<br>Tā hā, Tā sīn, Yā sīn,<br>Hā Mīm | interaction between marked<br>letters and subsequent<br>authoritative clause;<br>integration through generic<br>discourse-opening frame | Schema priming;<br>interpretive<br>suspension;<br>expectation formation;<br>schema | attention orientation;<br>preparation for revelatory<br>discourse |

**Note.** Developed by the researcher based on the analyses presented in Chapter Four.

### Discussion of Table 4.2

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The results indicate that two letter openings are discourse initial cues which prepare the reader for a meaningful communication as opposed to a lexical meaning. In the available examples, these letters have a cognitive effect, which guides the attention to the subsequent statements, which generally introduce revelation, prophetic speech or oath- validation. Through the application of CBT, the letters create conspicuous point of entry that merge with the next clause to create a discourse-opening structure that establishes interpretive coherence.

According to the Schema Theory, the letters trigger an interpretive schema related with the Qur'anic verse openings and help the reader to follow the process of expectation formation and confirmation. On the whole, the two-letter combinations exhibit a regularity of minimal linguistic structures in order to facilitate the cognitive processing of the discourse and structure the following messages as authoritative and purposeful. Unlike One-Letter Openings, Tow-Letter Combinations tend to produce a more explicit interactional frame, often functioning as abridge toward direct address, prophetic discourses, or revelatory communication.

### **4.4.4 Findings and Discussion of Three-or-more Letter Combinations**

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**4.3 Table:** *Findings and Discussion of Three-or-More Letter Disjointed openings in The Analysed Qur'anic Texts.*

| Category                                                                                                                                     | Conceptual Blending Tools                                                                                                                         | Schema Theory Tools                                                                                  | Cognitive Semantic Function                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Three to Five Letters<br>Alif Lām Mīm, Alif Lām Rā, Tā Sīn Mīm, Alif Lām Mīm Sād, Alif Lām Mīm Rā, Kāf Hā Yā Ayn Sād and Hā Mīm Ayn Sīn Qāf. | Interaction between marked letter-clusters and subsequent revelatory co-text; emergent discourse orientation; integration by selective projection | Schema initiation; expectation building; interpretive stabilisation; schema confirmation by co-text. | extended textual threshold; heightened attentional readiness; delayed semantic closure; preparation for discourse-level meaning |

**Note.** Developed by the researcher based on the analyses presented in Chapter Four.

### Discussion of Table 4.3

## **A COGNITIVE SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF HURUF MUQATTA'AH**

The analysis indicates that the clusters with three or more disjointed letters are likely to create a more extended opening effect as compared to shorter clusters. These clusters extend the first instance of the discourse and form a prominent textual barrier to the first occurrence of explicit propositional discourse. In the analysed passages, the letter patterns serve mostly as structural cues, which arrange the interpretative approach of the reader and maintain the state of alertness until the next verses reveal the thematic subject of the text. Despite the fact that the contextual discourse is raging between proclamation of revelation to narrative presentation or directional counselling, the introductory clusters prepare the reader to hold on to authoritative discourse about revelation, guidance, warning, mercy or continuity of divine communication. Their purpose is thus to structure the reader's reception of the discourses.

The findings reveal a gradual increase in cognitive complexity across the three categories. Single-letter openings primarily function as attentional triggers and markers of discourse authority. Two-letter combinations extend this function by introducing interactional and address-oriented frames. Three-or-more-letter combinations create the most prolonged interpretive threshold, delaying semantic closure and strengthening anticipation before explicit propositional content is introduced. Across all categories, however, the dominant cognitive semantic role of the disjointed letters is not lexical but procedural: they guide discourse reception, activate interpretive schemas, and prepare readers for authoritative Qur'anic communication.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES**

#### **5. Introduction**

## A COGNITIVE SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF HURUF MUQATTA'AH

The three questions raised in Chapter One are addressed in this chapter. This chapter highlights the study's conclusions after the chosen Qur'anic texts were analysed. Additionally, a few recommendations are made for upcoming projects. To facilitate the presentation of the study's conclusions, the research questions are restated below:

- 1- How do the Qur'anic disjointed letters function as cognitive semantic openings cues rather than as lexical units with fixed meaning?
- 2- How can CBT explain the discourse-level meaning constructed through the interaction between the disjointed letters and their immediate co-text?
- 3- How does Schema Theory account for the reader's interpretive orientation, expectation, and processing when encountering the disjointed letters at the openings of Qur'anic surahs?

### 5.1 Conclusions Related to Research Question 1

The first question of the study aims to examine the use of Qur'anic al-huruf al-muqatta'ah as cognitive semantic opening cues instead of lexical units associated with fixed and stable meanings. The analysis developed in Chapter Four consistently demonstrates this point, that these letters do not function as ordinary linguistic units with direct and definite. Instead, they are presented in modalities which disallow instant lexical interpretation as they come through in isolation and have no syntactic coherence in the surrounding structure. This property makes them semantically indeterminate and forbids the reader to deploy classical bottom-up decoding strategies.

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The findings across the analysed data indicate the initial encounter with these letters creates an interruption in perception through which the reader's automatic processing is momentarily interrupted. The disruption here is not seen as failure of comprehension, then, but rather an indication that the text has moved into another interpretative mode. This, therefore, requires the reader to move from bottom-up processing to a top-down strategy whereby higher-level cognitive structures would substitute for lexical decoding. In this way, the disjointed letters serve as signalling textual cues that center attention on the act of reading itself and reorient the reader toward a broader interpretive context.

In light of these findings, al-huruf al-muqatta'ah are cognitive semantic opening signals that shape how readers engage with the text. Their purpose is not to convey specific meaning but to set the stage for how meaning will be created. This role is especially clear since these letters appear consistently at the start of Qur'anic surahs. They are often followed by verses that highlight the authority, clarity, or revelatory nature of the discourse, such as (الم ١ ذَٰلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ) and (ص ١ وَالْقُرْآنُ ذِي الذِّكْرِ). In this structure, the letters serve as thresholds or gateways that mentally prepare readers for authoritative content. As a result, the Qur'anic disjointed letters do not serve as word-like units with fixed meanings. Instead, they act as procedural and discourse-organising elements. They create a state of heightened focus, direct interpretive understanding, and frame the communicative context prior to the emergence of explicit meaning. Through this role, they contribute fundamentally to the cognitive structuring of Qur'anic discourse rather than to its lexical content.

### 5.2 Conclusions Related to Research Question 2

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The second question of this study examines how CBT explains the meaning that emerges from the interaction between al-huruf al-muqatta'ah in the Qur'an and their surrounding text. The analysis in Chapter Four shows that the meaning in these cases does not come from the letters as isolated units. Instead, it comes from the active blending of several mental spaces. act as simple formal inputs that do not have meaning on their own. Meanwhile, the surrounding text brings in rich concepts related to revelation, authority, guidance, and validation of knowledge.

In this framework, al-huruf al-muqatta'ah activate an input space marked by perceptual prominence and unclear meaning. The following verses activate a second input space that holds organised propositional content. These two inputs connect through a shared space that shows a common communication pattern. This pattern involves starting a conversation and then presenting meaningful content. Through cross-space mapping and selective projection, elements from both inputs merge into a blended space, where new meaning develops. This new meaning is not clearly found in either input but is generated through their interaction at the level of discourse.

These findings show that this integration often leads to a repeated pattern. A cognitively marked opening is followed by a clear statement of textual clarity or authority, as in: (طس ٤ تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْقُرْآنِ وَكِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ) and (ق ٤ وَالْقُرْآنُ الْمَجِيدُ). In these cases, the combination creates a strong contrast between minimal linguistic form and maximal semantic content. This contrast improves the interpretive impact of the discourse by orienting the shift from indeterminate form to authoritative meaning. al-huruf al-muqatta'ah act as triggers that start the blending process and help construct meaning at a deeper conceptual level.

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Based on these findings, CBT provides a coherent explanation for how discourse-level meaning is constructed in the presence of the disjointed letters. The letters operate as procedural inputs that activate a process of conceptual integration rather than as symbols requiring direct interpretation. Meaning emerges through the interaction between the formal properties of the letters and the semantic richness of the co-text, resulting in an integrated cognitive structure that organises the discourse. Thus, the role of these letters is to initiate a blending process that links linguistic form with conceptual content, enabling the construction of a coherent and meaningful discourse. In this way, CBT accounts for the ability of these letters to contribute significantly to meaning-making at the discourse level while remaining semantically indeterminate at the lexical level.

### 5.3 Conclusions Related to Research Question 3

The third question of the present study examines how Schema Theory explains the reader's interpretive orientation and cognitive processing when encountering the Qur'anic disjointed letters at the openings of surahs. The analysis in Chapter Four demonstrates that comprehension in such cases does not begin with the extraction of lexical meaning, but with the activation of pre-existing cognitive structures that guide interpretation from the outset. Al-huruf al-muqatta'ah interrupt the reader's automatic decoding process and prevent immediate semantic assignment. This interruption prompts the reader to shift from bottom-up processing to a schema-driven, top-down interpretive strategy. In response to the unfamiliar and non-lexical form of the letters, the cognitive system engages in schema retrieval, identifying them as part of a recognised pattern associated with Qur'anic chapter openings. This recognition allows the reader to situate the text within a

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broader interpretive framework, in which such openings are typically followed by discourse emphasising revelation, authority, or guidance.

Once the schema has been activated, it begins to shape ordering the reader's expectation about what kind of text, and for what function, the text following this schema will be. This stage may be described as expectation formation, in which the reader is expecting meaningful content which will identify and further the formal cue given. The subsequent verses instantiate the schema and provide the semantic material that is necessary for interpretation. This pattern is evident in examples such as: (يسّ وَالْقُرْآنَ الْحَكِيمِ) and (حمّ وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ). Through this progression, the reader's engagement with the text is guided systematically from initial disruption to interpretive coherence.

Given these conclusions, Schema Theory comprehensively explains the mental processes involved in breaking down the disjointed letters. These letters, the present study argues, operate in a manner that activates schemas that guide the reader's interpretative focus. They trigger a series of mental processes, perceptual disruption, schema activation, expectation formation, and confirmation of schemas through which meaning is discerned in relation to the larger discourse. Al-huruf al-muqatta'ah, therefore, concern not only the textual level but also the mental processes involved in reading. They structure and activate suitable interpretative schemas to steer the reader towards an accurate grasp of the discourse, even if the propositional meaning is not yet fully manifest. Thus, Schema Theory elucidates how these letters direct the reading process in a way that enhances comprehension and structures meaning in the Qur'anic text.

### 5.4 Recommendations

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Drawing on the previous analysis, the researcher recommends the following:

- 1- Future research may examine other Qur'anic phenomena from a cognitive-semantic perspective to investigate how contextual and conceptual structures contribute to meaning construction.
- 2- Further research is recommended on al-huruf al-muqatta'ah across different Qur'anic contexts. Such studies may examine whether the cognitive-semantic functions identified in the present study are also applicable to other combinations and contexts in which these letters occur.
- 3- Another studies may employ other cognitive-semantic frameworks to investigate al-huruf al-muqatta'ah. Comparing different analytical perspectives may provide further insight into the cognitive processes involved in interpreting these Qur'anic openings without assuming fixed lexical meanings for the letters.
- 4- Future research may extend the present analysis by examining readers' interpretive responses to al-huruf al-muqatta'ah. Such research could provide empirical evidence concerning how readers process these openings and how their existing knowledge and interpretive schemas influence meaning construction.

### 5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies

- 1- A Pragma-stylistic study of Social Justice in the Old Testament and Quranic.
- 2- Human Rights in the Glorious Qur'an: A Cognitive Pragmatic Analysis
- 3- A Cognitive semantic Analysis of Prophets' Supplications in the Holy Bible and the Glorious Quran.

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4- A study combining cognitive linguistics with traditional tafsīr approaches in order to develop a more integrated understanding of Qur'anic meaning and interpretation.

5- A Pragma-Rhetorical Study of Repentance in Selected Islamic and Christian Texts.

6- A schema-based analysis of Qur'anic interpretation, focusing on how readers from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds activate and employ interpretive schemas when engaging with the text.

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### المستخلص

تبحث الدراسة الحالية الحروف المقطعة في القرآن الكريم (الحروف المقطعة) في ضوء منظور الدلالة المعرفية؛ للكشف عن كيفية عملها داخل الخطاب القرآني بما يتجاوز التعامل التقليدي معها بوصفها وحدات معجمية منعزلة. وتناقش الدراسة إشكالية تفسير الدور الذي تؤديه هذه الحروف في بناء المعنى، على الرغم من ظاهر عدم تحديد الدلالة. وتهدف إلى استكشاف كيفية عمل الحروف المقطعة بوصفها مؤشرات افتتاحية دلالية معرفية، وكيفية بناء المعنى على مستوى الخطاب من خلال تفاعلها مع السياق النصي المباشر، فضلاً

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عن كيفية تشكل التوجه التفسيري للقارئ أثناء عملية الفهم. واعتمدت الدراسة المنهج النوعي التحليلي، واستندت أساساً إلى نظرية المزج المفهومي التي طورها فوكونييه وتيرنر (٢٠٠٢)، إلى جانب النسخة المحدثّة من نظرية المخططات المعرفية التي طورها روملهاارت (١٩٨٠) وأندرسون (١٩٨٤). وتكونت البيانات من أربعة عشر مطلعاً قرآنياً مختاراً يتضمن الحروف المقطعة، ممثلاً أنماط الحرف الواحد، والتراكيب المكونة من حرفين، والتراكيب المكونة من ثلاثة أحرف فأكثر. وكشفت النتائج الرئيسة أن الحروف المقطعة لا تعمل بوصفها وحدات معجمية ذات معانٍ ثابتة، بل تؤدي وظيفة افتتاحيات مميزة معرفياً تنظم عملية التفسير وتوجه القارئ نحو الخطاب اللاحق. كما أظهر التحليل أن المعنى يتولد من خلال التكامل المفهومي بين الحروف المقطعة وسياقها النصي، في حين يسهم تنشيط المخططات المعرفية في توجيه القارئ نحو المعالجة التفسيرية من أعلى إلى أسفل. وبناءً على ذلك، تخلص الدراسة إلى أن الحروف المقطعة تؤدي دوراً مهماً في تنظيم الخطاب القرآني على المستويين المعرفي والتفسيري، بدلاً من اقتصار دورها على مستوى المعنى المعجمي المنعزل.



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## تحليل دلالي معرفي للحروف المقطعة في القرآن الكريم

رسالة مقدمة

الى مجلس كلية التربية للعلوم الانسانية، جامعة واسط

وهي جزء من متطلبات نيل شهادة الماجستير في اللغة الانكليزية وعلم اللغة

الطالبة

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