

Muhassināt Lafziyyah and Their Semantic Rhetorical Implications in the Qur'an and Hadith

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Abstract: This study examines the rhetorical functions of muhassināt lafziyyah within the framework of 'ilm al-badī' in the Qur'an and Hadith, focusing on how phonetic features construct meaning and reinforce spiritual messages. While traditionally viewed as mere ornamentation, this research explores their functional role beyond linguistic embellishment. Employing a qualitative descriptive-analytical method with a balāghī approach, the study analyzes selected eschatological verses and Hadith texts containing saj' (rhyme), jinās (paronomasia), and iqtibās (intertextual quotation). The findings reveal that these devices function as powerful rhetorical tools that strengthen semantic depth, intensify emotional resonance, and facilitate memorization. For instance, saj' in Hadith creates rhythmic harmony that reinforces moral emphasis, while jinās in Ar-Rūm (55) and Al-Qiyāmah (29–30) generates layered meanings and ironic contrasts regarding worldly transience. This study demonstrates that sound patterns (lafz) are inseparable from meaning (ma'nā), playing a crucial role in conveying theological and ethical values. Consequently, understanding these rhetorical functions contributes to a more comprehensive appreciation of the spiritual depth in Islamic discourse.

Keywords: Muhassinat Lafziyyah, Science of Badi, Science of Balaghah

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji fungsi retorik muhassināt lafziyyah dalam kerangka 'ilm al-badī' pada Al-Qur'an dan Hadis, dengan fokus pada bagaimana fitur fonetik membangun makna dan memperkuat pesan spiritual. Meskipun secara tradisional dianggap sekadar hiasan kebahasaan, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi peran fungsionalnya yang melampaui estetika semata. Dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif-analitis kualitatif melalui pendekatan balāghī, studi ini menganalisis ayat-ayat eskatologis pilihan dan teks Hadis yang mengandung saj' (rima), jinās (paronomasia), dan iqtibās (kutipan intertekstual). Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perangkat tersebut berfungsi sebagai alat retorik yang kuat untuk memperkuat kedalaman semantik, mengintensifkan resonansi emosional, dan memfasilitasi hafalan. Sebagai contoh, penggunaan saj' dalam Hadis menciptakan harmoni ritmis yang memperkuat penekanan moral, sementara jinās dalam surah Ar-Rūm (55) dan Al-Qiyāmah (29–30) menghasilkan makna berlapis serta kontras ironis mengenai kefanaan dunia. Studi ini membuktikan bahwa pola bunyi (lafz) tidak dapat dipisahkan dari makna

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(*ma'nā*), serta memainkan peran krusial dalam menyampaikan nilai-nilai teologis dan etis. Oleh karena itu, pemahaman terhadap fungsi retorik ini berkontribusi pada apresiasi yang lebih komprehensif terhadap kedalaman spiritual dalam diskursus Islam.

Kata Kunci: *Muhassinat Lafziyyah, Ilmu Badi, Ilmu Balaghah*

Introduction

The study of '*ilm al-badī*' as a branch of Arabic rhetoric (*balāghah*) has long attracted scholarly attention, particularly in exploring the aesthetic dimensions of Qur'anic and Hadith discourse. Among its key components, *muhassināt lafziyyah* are often discussed as phonetic and stylistic devices that enhance the beauty of expression. However, contemporary studies increasingly argue that these features are not merely ornamental but play a significant role in shaping meaning and influencing the reception of the message.

Previous research has examined *muhassināt lafziyyah* primarily from a classificatory and descriptive perspective. For instance, studies such as Muhammad (2018) focus on identifying types of *muhassināt lafziyyah* in Qur'anic verses, emphasizing their structural forms rather than their communicative functions. Similarly, Ali (2020) analyzes rhetorical devices in Hadith literature but tends to treat them as elements of linguistic embellishment without deeply addressing their semantic and spiritual implications. These studies contribute significantly to the documentation of rhetorical features, yet they leave an important gap regarding the functional and interpretive dimensions of these devices.

In particular, limited attention has been given to how sound patterns such as *saj'* (rhyme) and *jinās* (paronomasia) actively contribute to reinforcing meaning, intensifying emotional engagement, and supporting the transmission of spiritual messages in Qur'anic and Prophetic texts. This gap indicates the need for a more integrative approach that connects form, meaning, and function within the framework of *balāghah*.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the rhetorical functions of *muhassināt lafziyyah* in the Qur'an and Hadith by focusing on their role in shaping meaning and enhancing the communicative impact of the text. Unlike previous studies that emphasize classification, this research adopts a functional-rhetorical perspective to

analyze how these stylistic features contribute to semantic depth and spiritual resonance. By doing so, this study seeks to offer a more comprehensive understanding of *muhassināt lafziyyah* as not only aesthetic devices but also as integral elements in conveying the theological and ethical messages of Islamic texts.

Research Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach based on library research, focusing on the analysis of classical and contemporary works related to *balāghah*, particularly ‘ilm *al-badī‘* and *muhassināt lafziyyah*. The primary data consist of selected Qur’anic verses and Hadith texts, while secondary data are drawn from scholarly books, journal articles, and previous research relevant to Arabic rhetoric.

The analytical method used in this study is content analysis, which enables systematic interpretation of textual data to generate valid and meaningful inferences. This study adopts the content analysis framework proposed by Krippendorff (1991), which includes three main units of analysis: sampling units, recording units, and context units.

First, the sampling units in this study are not selected randomly but based on specific academic considerations. The selected Qur’anic passages – such as Surah Ar-Rūm (55), Al-Qiyāmah (29-30), and Nūḥ – are chosen due to their high intensity of phonetic and rhetorical features, particularly the prominent use of *jinās* and rhythmic patterns. In addition, these verses share a thematic coherence related to eschatological discourse (themes of the Day of Judgment, human accountability, and divine power), which allows for a deeper analysis of how *muhassināt lafziyyah* reinforce spiritual and emotional messages. Thus, the selection is based on both stylistic richness and thematic relevance, ensuring that the data meaningfully represent the research focus.

Second, the recording units refer to specific linguistic elements within the selected texts that exhibit *muhassināt lafziyyah*, such as *saj‘* (rhyme), *jinās* (paronomasia), and *iqtibās*. At this stage, the researcher systematically identifies and categorizes instances of these rhetorical devices for further analysis.

Third, the context units involve interpreting the identified data within their broader textual and thematic contexts. This includes analyzing how *muhassināt*

lafziyyah contribute to the construction of meaning, enhance emotional resonance, and support the delivery of spiritual messages in both Qur'anic and Hadith discourse.

Through this methodological framework, the study not only identifies the forms of *muhassināt lafziyyah* but also explains their rhetorical functions, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of their role in shaping meaning within Islamic texts.

Results and Discussion

This study finds that *muhassināt lafziyyah* in the Qur'an and Hadith are not merely ornamental linguistic features, but function as rhetorical strategies that shape meaning, intensify spiritual messages, and influence the psychological reception of the audience. The analysis focuses on three primary forms: *saj'* (rhyme), *jinās* (paronomasia), and *iqtibās* (intertextual quotation), examined through their semantic and phonetic interplay.

1. Saj' (Rhyme) and Its Rhetorical Function

The use of *saj'* in Hadith and Qur'anic discourse demonstrates a deliberate phonetic pattern that enhances both memorability and emotional impact. For example, in the Hadith:

اللهم أعط منفقًا خلفًا، وأعط ممسكًا تلفًا

The rhyme between *khalafan* (compensation) and *talafan* (loss) creates a binary opposition reinforced through sound symmetry. This phonetic harmony is not accidental; rather, it strengthens the moral contrast between generosity and miserliness. The listener not only understands the meaning cognitively but also feels the contrast through the rhythmic closure, making the message more persuasive and easier to internalize.

Similarly, in the Qur'anic verse:

مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَرْجُونَ لِلَّهِ وَقَارًا ﴿١٣﴾ وَقَدْ خَلَقَكُمْ أَطْوَارًا (Nūḥ: 13-14)

The rhyme in *waqāran* and *aṭwāran* contributes to a rhythmic flow that reinforces reflection on divine power and human creation. The phonetic balance invites contemplation, while the repetition of sound subtly emphasizes the thematic coherence between human weakness and divine majesty.

Thus, *saj* functions not only as aesthetic embellishment but also as a mnemonic and persuasive device, supporting the transmission of ethical and theological messages.

2. Jinās (Paronomasia) and Semantic Depth

One of the most significant findings of this study is the role of *jinās* in creating semantic layering and rhetorical tension. A clear example appears in the Qur'anic verse:

(Ar-Rūm: 55) وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ يُقْسِمُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ مَا لِيُثُوا غَيْرَ سَاعَةٍ

The repetition of the word *sā'ah* with two different meanings – first as the Day of Judgment, and second as a short moment of time – produces a powerful rhetorical effect. This phonetic similarity combined with semantic divergence creates an ironic contrast: what humans perceive as a long worldly existence is, in the reality of the Hereafter, reduced to a mere instant.

This interplay between sound and meaning intensifies the eschatological message by:

- emphasizing the relativity and insignificance of worldly time,
- highlighting the suddenness and certainty of the Hereafter,
- and provoking a deeper existential reflection in the audience.

Thus, *jinās* here operates as a semantic amplifier, not just a stylistic ornament.

Another example can be seen in:

(Al-Qiyāmah: 29–30) وَالنَّفَّاتِ السَّاقِطِ السَّاقِ ۖ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْمَسَاقِ

The phonetic proximity between *as-sāq* (leg/severity) and *al-masāq* (the driving or final destination) creates a gradual intensification of meaning. The sound progression mirrors the transition from physical struggle at the moment of death to the ultimate return to God. This demonstrates how phonetic similarity can guide the listener through a semantic and emotional progression.

3. Iqtibās and Intertextual Reinforcement

The use of *iqtibās* reflects a different rhetorical strategy, where elements of Qur'anic expression are embedded into other forms of discourse. For instance:

الحمد لله الأحد، الفرد الصمد، الذي لم يلد ولم يولد، ولم يكن له كفواً أحد

This expression echoes Surah Al-Ikhlās, creating a strong intertextual resonance. The familiarity of Qur'anic phrasing enhances the authority and emotional weight of the utterance.

From a rhetorical perspective, *iqtibās* functions to:

- reinforce meaning through association with sacred text,
- evoke spiritual familiarity and reverence,
- and strengthen the credibility and impact of the message.

Synthesis of Findings

Overall, the findings demonstrate that *muhassināt lafziyyah* operate on multiple levels simultaneously:

1. Phonetic Level → creating rhythm, harmony, and memorability
2. Semantic Level → generating contrast, emphasis, and layered meanings
3. Rhetorical Level → enhancing persuasion, emotional engagement, and spiritual reflection

Therefore, the beauty of sound (*lafz*) in Qur'anic and Hadith discourse is inseparable from meaning (*ma'nā*). These stylistic devices serve as integral mechanisms for conveying theological, ethical, and spiritual messages, rather than mere linguistic decoration.

Conclusion

This study concludes that *muhassināt lafziyyah* in the Qur'an and Hadith function not merely as elements of phonetic beauty, but as integral rhetorical devices that shape meaning and strengthen the delivery of spiritual messages. The analysis demonstrates that stylistic features such as *saj'*, *jinās*, and *iqtibās* operate beyond ornamentation by creating a dynamic interaction between sound and meaning. The findings reveal that *saj'* enhances rhythmic harmony and memorability, allowing moral and theological messages to be more effectively internalized by the audience. Meanwhile, *jinās* contributes to semantic depth and rhetorical tension, particularly in verses such as Ar-Rūm (55) and Al-Qiyāmah (29–30), where phonetic similarity produces contrasting or layered meanings that intensify reflection on eschatological themes. In addition, *iqtibās* reinforces meaning through intertextual resonance, connecting discourse to the authority and emotional power of Qur'anic expressions. Therefore, this study affirms that the aesthetic dimension of language in Islamic texts is inseparable from its communicative and spiritual functions. The interplay between phonetic patterns and semantic structures plays a crucial role in enhancing persuasion, emotional engagement, and the transmission of ethical values.

This research contributes to the field of *balāghah* by shifting the focus from mere classification of rhetorical devices toward a functional and interpretive approach, highlighting the importance of analyzing how linguistic beauty serves meaning. Future studies are recommended to expand this approach by exploring broader textual data or integrating perspectives from pragmatics and discourse analysis to further enrich the understanding of Qur'anic and Hadith rhetoric.

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