Negative Communication on The Perspective of Indonesian Religion Ministry in *Tafsir Tematik Departemen Agama*: An Effort to Build Positive Attitudes and Words

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**Abstract**

Many people miss understanding more deeply that Koran only talks about the lawful and unlawful, the reward for sin, and heaven and hell. The Koran is a holy book that presents various general descriptions of issues in human life. In the present context, the Quran can always adapt itself, its understanding is not only limited to 1500 years ago, and the sentences in it are so rich in messages. The wealth of Quranic sentences are strung together in many existing commentary books. One of the thematic studies of the Koran is about communication and information in the Koran. Overall, the Quran is the book of God's communication with his creatures, in which it contains the creator's “talk” to humans to listen, respond, and carry out orders, human understanding of this form of Quranic communication will lead to many positive actions. One thing that may be overlooked is that positive actions do not always come from positive sentences, there are passages in the Quran which in their communications present negative sentences to turn them into positive actions. This research is a qualitative study using a text analysis approach, the main source obtained in this study comes from the thematic interpretations written by the team of the Republic of Indonesia's Department of Religion. The conclusion of this study found several verses with negative nuances mentioned in the Quran so that humans remember and stay away from them.

**Keywords:** Islamic Communication, Thematic Interpretation, Quran and Communication

**Introduction**

The ability to speak is one of the innate potentials (*fitrah*) given by Allah SWT to humans. The ability to speak allows humans to build social relationships. In the reality of life, the ability to communicate well that a person often makes him a role
model for society because of his ability to communicate well. However, miscommunication can also be fatal.

In the Qur'an Allah SWT turns out to give considerable attention to the problem of communication. Even good words are seen as better than alms that are accompanied by hurting the recipient’s heart, as the Word of Allah SWT in surah al-Baqarah: 263,

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\text{قَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّن صَدَقَةٍ يَتُبُعُهَا أَذًى وَٱللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكَيمٌ}
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Kind words and forgiveness are better than alms accompanied by something painful (the recipient’s feelings). Allah is Rich, Most Forbearing.

The Qur'an as a holy book contains various problems faced by humans, including the concept of effective da'wah communication. In the Al-Quran and Hadith, various guidelines are found so that communication runs well and effectively. We can term it as rules, principles, or ethics of communicating from an Islamic perspective. The Qur'an mentions communication as one of human nature. To find out how humans should communicate the Qur'an provides key concepts related to it. The Qur'an states that speaking the truth and conveying the right message is a prerequisite for greatness, goodness, benefit, and charity. If you want to be successful in your career, if you want to improve society, then you have to spread the right message.

The form of communication in the Koran is not only in the form of aqwal (sayings), such as Qaulan Syadida, Qaulan Layyinan, Qaulan Maysuran, Qaulan Kariman, and so on but the Qur'an also keeps other communication styles in which there is no element of lies, straight, not convoluted, according to the criteria of truth and "straight to the point". And other forms of this communication have value to call

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1 Muhadirsyah, "Etika Dalam Komunikasi Islam", Jurnal Peurawi 1, no. 1 (2017): 2-20
on good deeds, and stay away from bad ones, changing society from a bad state to a good one.

Even though the above is mentioned in the Interpretation of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia that in the Qur’an there is a negative form of communication, it is meaningless if the Qur’an commands and asks people to do bad things. Because the Qur’an asks humans to speak the truth because it is a prerequisite for truth, goodness, and benefit. But precisely this form of communication (negative communication) is a unique form of communication referred to by the Quran which of course contains special messages. So what are the forms of negative communication mentioned in the Qur’an from the perspective of interpretation of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia and what message is to be conveyed in this form of communication?

**Method**

This study is qualitative research with a text analysis approach by observing written sources. The main source of this study is the thematic interpretation of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia (Depag). This study attempts to describe descriptively the form of negative communication referred to in this Ministry of Religion interpretation. Other sources that are also used as references in this study are scientific works in the form of journals, books, and websites that are relevant to the study.

**Discussion and Result**

**Thematic Exegesis of the Ministry of Religion of Indonesia**

One of the important parts mentioned in the Qur’an in its verses is morals, in fact, the entire content of the Qur’anic verses is concerned with maintaining behavior. We can see one of them when a good utterance is seen as better than *sadaqah*

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accompanied by bad words (al-Baqarah 263). These moral values, especially in communicating today, are very low, and lots of hoaxes, and unclear information is widely spread on social media. So because of that one of the themes discussed in the thematic interpretation of the Department of Religion is related to communication and information. This thematic interpretation of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia is prepared based on the dynamics of society and developments in science and technology because society requires interpretation that is practical and easy to understand. This can be seen from the selection of themes discussed in this thematic interpretation of the Koran, communication being a part of it.

Interpretation of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia is compiled in a systematic format by raising certain themes that are actual in the eyes of the public so that it is expected to be the answer to all problems that occur in society. This interpretation comes with a thematic approach, the team of writers of this interpretation seeks to provide answers to all the problems of society that depart from the text of the Qur'an toward social reality.

The themes chosen for the Thematic Al-Qur'an Interpretation are related to actual problems currently being faced by the Indonesian nation today, including those concerning communication and information. The presence of the Thematic Al-Qur'an Interpretation of the Ministry of Religion in its various models of approach is the realization of a government program to meet the need for the availability of holy books for religious people. The Ministry of Religion hopes that Muslim communities

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can improve the quality of understanding, appreciation, and practice of religious teachings in the life of society, nation, and state\textsuperscript{15}.

**Negative Sentences in the Quran**

What is meant by negative sentences in the Koran does not mean that the Koran contains negative things in its verses that must be followed, but what is meant here is that in some of its verses the Koran mentions these negative sentences to serve as a reminder for humans to avoid saying -these words because of their bad impact, some of the negative sentences are:

1. Qaul Zuur

The word Zuur comes from \textit{fi’il zara-yazuru-zuran}, which means lying, or false testimony, for example, \textit{rajul zur} (liar man). According to Ibn Manzur, zur can mean \textit{muhaassan}, to be exalted, as in the words of 'Umar, \textit{muzawwartu kalaman iaqulahu illa sabaqana bihi Abu Bakr} (I do not improve a word unless Abu Bakr has preceded me [with that word])\textsuperscript{16}. The pronunciation of tazwir has the original meaning \textit{islahus-syaiil} (to fix or repair something), and according to Ibn al-'Arabi, \textit{kullu islahi min khairin au syarr} (every improvement made to something that is good or bad). In its development, it is used for the meaning of beautifying a lie (tazynul-kizb). According to Abu Bakr, there are four opinions regarding the meaning of tazwir, namely: First, committing lies with falsehood; Second, equating, third, decorating and beautifying, and fourth, preparing and thinking From the first meaning then comes the term \textit{shahiduz-zur} (false witness)\textsuperscript{17}. The ugliness of false testimony, (syahadatuz-zur) is classified as one of the major sins, \textit{al-kaba’ir}. God’s Word in surah al-Hajj: 30,

\[ذٰلِكَ وَمَنْ يُعَظِِّمْ حُرُمٰتِ اللَِِّٰ فَٗهُوَ خَيٌْْلَهُ عِنْدَ رَبِِّهِۗۗ وَاُحِلَّتْ لَكُمُ الَْْن ْعَامُ اِلَّْ مَا يُتْلٰى عَلَيْكُمْ فَاجْتَنِبُوا الرِِّجْسَ مِنَ الَْْوْثََنِ وَاجْتَنِبُوا قَوْلَ الزُّوْرِ ۙٗ\]

\textit{Thus (God’s command). and whoever exalts that which is honorable in the sight of Allah[989] then that is better for him in the sight of his Lord. and all cattle have been}


\textsuperscript{16} Ibn Al-Manzur, \textit{Lisan ‘Arab}. (Beirut: Daar Ashodir, 2010).

\textsuperscript{17} Sihabudin. \textit{Ensiklopedia al-Quran}. (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2007).
made lawful for you, except for those whose uncleanness has been explained to you, so stay away from these unclean idols and keep away from lying words.

This verse mentions two kinds of commands of Allah, namely:

First, An order to stay away from worshiping statues or idols, because that action is an act that causes dirtiness in the person and heart of someone who does it and that action comes from the devil’s work. Satan always tries to pollute the human soul and self.

Second, The command to stay away from lying and the prohibition of giving false testimony. In this verse, false testimony and idol worship are mentioned together, because the two actions are essentially the same, they are all lying and denying the truth. From this verse, it can also be understood that how big a sin it is to give false testimony because it is mentioned after the prohibition against associating partners with Allah. False testimony is as serious as associating partners with Allah. It is mentioned in the hadith of the Prophet that during the dawn prayer after greeting, he stood up and said: False testimony is as serious as associating with Allah, false testimony is as serious as associating with Allah, false testimony is as serious as associating with Allah. (Narrated by Abu Dawud from Khuraim bin Fatik)

In the interpretation of Hamka Qaul Zuur it is useless and utter nonsense. Qurais Shihab added that humans should stay away from lying to God, especially when slaughtering such animals, they must also avoid telling lies to fellow human beings. According to Imam al-Ghazali, the person who gave false testimony had committed several major sins, namely:

First, Speaking lies and false accusations, Allah says: Guides to transgressors and liars. (Gafir: 28). Second, He wronged those who were his opponents, so that with his testimony that person suffered a loss of property, honor, and maybe his life. Third, he wronged the person he gave testimony, by taking illegitimate wealth as a result of

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his testimony so that he earned Allah’s wrath. with Allah, while Allah was angry with him. (Al-Bukhari narration from Abī Bakrah)21.

2. Tajassus and Ghibah (Backbiting)

The word tajassus are the root word of "al-jassu" which means to touch with the hand, to detect a person's pulse to determine his health, and to check by feeling. From this word comes other meanings such as investigating, researching, examining, observing, and spying. The espionage in charge of spying on the enemy is called "Jasus." The word al-jass is more widely used in ugliness, seeking news for others by researching or investigating. The secret owner of the crime is called al-jasus From this word

Then it also developed into the word tajassus which means finding fault with others. Looking for other people’s faults usually starts with bad prejudice. From there, backbiting arose by gossiping about the bad results and allegations from the tajassus earlier. The word backbiting is taken from the root of the word occult which means that something is closed from sight. Therefore, when the sun sets or someone who is not there is also said to be magical.

Backbiting also means backbiting, namely mentioning the disgrace of others behind it. Backbiting in this sense will be discussed in this paper. This problem is very dangerous and can lead to slander. Imam al-Gazali said, that a person who is unable to keep his tongue and talk a lot, will talk about other people's bad things (ghibah). With regard to tajassus and backbiting Allah says: O you who believe! Stay away from prejudice, in fact, some prejudice is a sin do not find fault with others, and do not let any of you backbite some of the others. Does any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Of course, you feel disgusted. And fear Allah, verily Allah is Most Accepting of repentance, Most Merciful. (al-Hujurat: 12)

In the interpretation of the Department of Religion, it is stated that this verse forbids believers from finding faults, faults, and faults in other people. The verse also prohibits backbiting or swearing at other people. What is called ghibah (backbiting) is mentioning the ugliness of another person whom he does not like, while he is not in

that place, either by speech or gesture, because doing so hurts the person being cursed at. Swearing that hurts is related to bodily defects, character, property, children, wife, siblings, or anything that has to do with him. There is no difference of opinion among the scholars, that finding fault with others and backbiting is a grave sin and it is obligatory to immediately repent to Allah and apologize to the person concerned regarding these two matters, find fault, and backbite him\(^{22}\).

Regarding the prohibition to find fault or disgrace in others and backbite them, the Prophet said: "Avoid prejudice by you, because prejudice is one of the most lying words. And don’t look for other people’s faults, don’t be prejudiced, don’t stimulate offers of goods, don’t hate to hate, don’t envy, don’t turn your back and be servants of God, brothers, and sisters." (Muslim history from Abū Hurairah)\(^{23}\).

A Muslim is a brother of a Muslim, you cannot wrong him, you cannot belittle him/humiliate him. Whoever fulfills the needs of his Muslim brother, Allah will also fulfill his needs. Who saves a Muslim from trouble, Allah will deliver him from trouble among troubles on the Day of Judgment. (Al-Bukhari and Muslim history from 'Abdullah bin 'Umar)

The hadiths mentioned above explain that it is not permissible to spread gossip, look for or examine people’s faults or faults, then expose them, spread them, or gossip about them. Actions and actions like that are unlawful, except for people who are wronged, or for the sake of upholding justice or requesting a fatwa, then they are permissible, as Allah says in Surah an-Nisa: 148,

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	ext{لا تجَبُ الله الجُنُور بِالسُّوَيَةِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ إِلَّا مِنْ عُمُّهُ وَكَانَ اللهُ مَجِيدًا عَلِيمًا}
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Allah does not like bad speech, (spoken) frankly except by people who are being persecuted. Allah is All-Hearing, All-knowing.

This verse explains that it is not permissible to spread gossip, slander, disgrace, or other people’s ugliness, except for those who are being wronged are allowed to disclose it, such as bringing it up or disclosing it to judges, or authorities in the context of upholding justice and law.

\(^{22}\) L.P.M Quran, Tafsir Tematik Departemen Agama RI: Komunikasi dan Informasi. 3 ed. (Jakarta: Badang Litbang Kementrian Agama, 2011).

\(^{23}\) Ibid
3. Namima

The word *namimah* is taken from the verb *namuma-yanmimu-namimatan* which means bringing false news and pitting one against another, or bringing news from one person to another, or from one group to another by vilifying or slandering them. The perpetrators are called *namim* which means complainers, meaning people who convey speech from one person to another with the aim of causing rifts. From the definition of *namīmah* that has been mentioned, it can be concluded that *namīmah* is provoking or moving, or conveying false news that can pit individuals or groups against each other, or other groups, which causes rifts between them. With regard to *namīmah*, Allah says in Surah al-Qalam: 10-11:

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\text{وَلَّ تُطِعْ كُلَّ حَلََّفٍ مَّهِيٍّۙ هَََّازٍ مَّشَّاْۤ بِنَمِيْمٍۙ}
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*And do not follow anyone who swears a lot and is contemptuous, who criticizes a lot, who scatters slander here and there.*

The purpose of Allah’s prohibition in verse 10 of Surah al-Qalam “And do not follow everyone who swears a lot and is despicable”, according to Ibn Katshir, is that a liar, because of his weakness and humility, will protect himself with false oaths attributed to his names. the name of Allah and use it every time, not in place. Whereas the meaning of verse 11 of Surah al-Qalam, is “those who criticize a lot, who scatter slander to and for”, namely denouncing other people behind, who walk among people with the aim of inciting and rioting. What is meant by “namīmah” itself is dirty and vile words.

While Hamka interprets this verse that those who always multiply the name of Allah in their words, namely by making more oaths to Him, are actually those people who cannot keep what they say, even if they no longer believe in their own words, and have no doubt that he is a liar. Usually, people who like to criticize other people, always see people from the bad side, their heart is full of hatred, and what he says only invites hostility. These people in Misbah’s interpretation are referred to as people who have despicable personalities, have no noble character, like to divide, and often hinder good in society.

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In the Tafsir of the Ministry of Religion it is stated that verses 10-11 of Surah al-Qalam remind and order the Prophet Muhammad to:

1. Do not follow the wishes of people who easily take oaths, because those who like to swear are only liars while lying is the root of evil and the source of all kinds of immoral acts. Because of this, Islam also states that lying is one of the signs of hypocrisy. The Prophet Muhammad said: There are three signs of a hypocrite: when he speaks he lies, when he makes a promise he does not keep his promise, and when he is trusted he betrays. (History of al-Bukhari, Muslim, at-Tirmizi, and an-Nasai from Abu Hurairah)\(^\text{26}\).

2. Do not follow people who think they are contemptible and misleading, such as inviting them to follow their religion in several ways.

3. Do not follow people who always criticize others and mention the bad things of others, either directly or indirectly.

4. Not following people who like to slander is like influencing people to be displeased with someone else, and trying to cause chaos. Allah stated that slander with the meaning of disorder is greater in consequence and sin than murder. As Allah says: Slander is crueler than murder. (Surah al-Baqarah: 191)

Ad-Zahabi said that pitting one against the other (namimah) is illegal according to the Al-Qur'an, as-Sunnah, and ijma' of the Muslims\(^\text{27}\). In Sahih al-Bukhari and Muslim from Huzaifah it is stated that the Prophet said: People who like to pit against each other will not enter heaven. (History of al-Bukhārī and Muslim from Huzaifah)\(^\text{28}\).

According to al-Ghazali, namimah (fighting against each other) includes disclosing someone’s secret that the person himself, or the person he is talking to doesn’t like the secret being disclosed. Either way with speech, writing, gestures, or verbal. Whether the secret is in the form of words, good deeds in the form of disgrace, or something else. The essence of pitting one against the other is to reveal the secrets and disgrace of others\(^\text{29}\).

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\(^{27}\) Muhammad Husein Ad-Zahabi. *Dosa-dosa Besar*. (Jakarta: Ummul Qura, 2014)


4. Sukhriyah

The word “sukhriyah” comes from the root word sakhira-yaskharu which has the basic meaning of humiliating and subduing. This meaning then develops into, among other things: making fun of, because it is demeaning to others; humiliating, because usually that way lowers the social status or degree of the person being humiliated. From the above understanding, it can be concluded that sukhriyah is divided into two, namely first, the basic meaning which means to humiliate and subdue, and second means to make fun of, humiliate, humiliate, or disrespect. With regard to sukhriyah, Allah says in Surah al-Hujurat: 11,

اَي ُّهَا الَّذِينَ اٰمَن ُوْا لَْ يَسْخَرْ ق َوْمٌ مِِّنْ ق َوْمٍ عَسٰٰٓى اَنْ يَّكُوْن ُوْا خَيًْْا مِِّنْهُمْ وَلَْ نِسَاْۤءٌ مِِّنْ

O you who believe, do not let a group of men belittle another group, it may be that those who are laughed at are better than them. and don’t let a group of women demean other groups, maybe it’s better to be humiliated. and do not like to reproach yourself and do not call with titles that contain ridicule. the worst call is a bad (call) after faith and whoever does not repent, then they are the wrongdoers.

In the Interpretation of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, it is said that because the nuzul verse relates to the behavior of the Bani Tamim who had visited the Prophet Muhammad and then made fun of several poor and poor friends such as 'Ammir, Huhaib, Bilal, Khabbib, Salman al-Farisi, and others., because their clothes were very simple, then the verse came down. In this verse Allah reminds the believers not to have people make fun of other people because perhaps those who are ridiculed are far more noble and honorable in the sight of Allah than those who make fun of them, the same goes for the believing women to other believers. Ibn Kathir said the verse shows that God forbids insulting and making fun of fellow human beings. This act is unlawful. Ibn Kathir’s interpretation is almost the same as al-Maragi’s interpretation, but al-Maragi adds that this act is very bad. Whoever does not repent after doing so, then he has done evil to himself and has committed a great sin (al-
Maraghi, 1974). Therefore, humans should guard their tongues against communicating and giving negative information, which pits one against the other, causing slander and unrest among fellow believers, especially fellow Muslims.

**Conclusion**

The study of the interpretation of the Indonesian Republic's Department of Religion regarding the negative sentences referred to by the Koran teaches us to avoid the 4 attitudes in actions and words, including *Qaul Zur, Tajasus, Namimah, and Sukhriyah*. *Qaul Zur* means lying because lying is the root of sin. *Tajasus* deliberately looks for other people’s faults. *Namimah* likes to pit others against each other while *Sukriyah* insults and subordinates others because of her low status. These 4 things must really be held by a Muslim so that there is no slander among fellow believers and used as a theoretical basis for behaving and communicating.

**References**


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