

## **PAUCITY AND MULTIPLICITY IN THE GLORIOUS QURAN: A MORPHOPRAGMATIC ANALYSIS**

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### **Abstract**

*In this study, a morpho-pragmatic analysis of broken plural in the Glorious Quran is tackled to answer the question whether the types of broken plural can be replaced without affecting the meaning, and to achieve the aim that these various forms are utilized thoughtfully and creatively and are never used randomly. Accordingly, it is hypothesized in the present study that the broken plural multi forms in the Glorious Quran are selected sensibly and they function in a way that leads the reader to a scene of wider conceptual view and consideration. The value of this study lies in the endeavor to widen the horizon of the reader that the variety of broken plural forms in the Glorious Quran are much more meaningful than they look. This paves the way to consider many items in the Holly Quran as significant, worthwhile, and telling. To prove the hypothesis and achieve the aim, this paper adopts Dressler and Merlini-Barbaresi's (1994) model in analyzing the chosen excerpts where language choices can be conceived at the level of pragmatics in relation to morphology. Eight Quranic texts are selected, analyzed, discussed, and conclusions are finally derived to assert that the various forms of broken plural in the Glorious Quran are manipulated exquisitely in an effective way.*

**Keywords:** *Broken Plural; Paucity; Multiplicity; Ultimate Plural*

### **Abstrak**

*Dalam studi ini, analisis tentang morfo-pragmatis jamak taksir dalam Alquran untuk menjawab pertanyaan apakah jenis jamak taksir dapat diganti tanpa mempengaruhi makna, dan untuk mencapai tujuan bahwa berbagai bentuk ini digunakan secara bijaksana dan kreatif serta tidak pernah digunakan secara acak. Oleh karena itu, dalam penelitian ini dihipotesiskan bahwa multi bentuk jamak taksir dalam Alquran dipilih dengan bijaksana dan berfungsi membawa pembaca kepada pandangan dan pertimbangan konseptual yang lebih luas. Nilai kajian ini terletak pada upaya untuk memperluas wawasan pembaca bahwa keragaman bentuk jamak taksir dalam Alquran jauh lebih bermakna daripada yang terlihat. Ini membuka jalan untuk mempertimbangkan banyak item di dalam Alquran sebagai sesuatu yang penting, berharga, dan kaya. Untuk membuktikan hipotesis dan mencapai tujuan yang*

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*dimaksud, artikel ini mengadopsi model Dressler dan Merlini-Barbaresi (1994) saat menganalisis kutipan yang dipilih di mana pilihan bahasa dapat dipahami pada tingkat pragmatik dalam kaitannya dengan morfologi. Delapan teks Alquran dipilih, dianalisis dan dibahas. Kesimpulan akhirnya diperoleh untuk menegaskan bahwa berbagai bentuk jamak taksir dalam Alquran dimanipulasi dengan indah dengan cara yang efektif.*

**Kata kunci:** Jamak taksir; Kekurangan; Beragam; Jamak Tertinggi.

### مستخلص

تتناول هذه الدراسة التحليل الصرفي التداولي لجمع التكسير في القرآن الكريم لمعرفة امكانية استبدال تلك صيغ دون التأثير على المعنى ، ولتحقيق هدف الدراسة تم الاعتماد على النصوص المختارة في القرآن الكريم بطريقة منطقية تقود القارئ الى مشهد أوسع من النظرة المفاهيمية والتي من خلالها تكمن قيمة هذه الدراسة لتوسيع افق القارئ بأن صيغ جمع التكسير أكثر جدوى مما تبدو عليه. حيث يمهّد الطريق لإثبات أهمية وحقائق النصوص في القرآن الكريم مهمة. ولإثبات الفرضية وتحقيق الهدف ، تبني هذه الدراسة نموذج الاعتماد على بعض النصوص القرآنية وتحليلها ومناقشتها واستخلاص الاستنتاجات منها. توصلت الدراسة بان جموع التكسير في القرآن الكريم تأتي على اوزان قياسية وغير قياسية وفقا للسياق الكلمات الرئيسية: جمع تكسير؛ القلة؛ الكثرة؛ جمع المطلق

### A. INTRODUCTION

Arabic is the main language of Islamic religion; it is spoken by Muslims in their everyday prayers<sup>1</sup>. Pluralization in the Arabic language refers to a set of objects of three or more in number. These plurals must be learned as they are since one cannot be certain about how these plurals will appear only via being familiar with the original word.

Accordingly, plurals in Arabic are classified into two major types: Regular plural and broken plural. Furthermore, regular plurals are subdivided into: Sound feminine plural, sound masculine plural (<http://understand-arabic.com>).

Most of pluralization processes in Arabic can be fulfilled by two methods: The first is through the adjunction of several letters at the end of the singular word as suffixes- similar to (-s) or (-en) in English. While the second way of pluralization can be made via dividing the original word and changing its order with using the original letters of the word (as infixes). This kind

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<sup>1</sup>Hamdelsayed, Mohamed Adany, and E. S. Atwell. "Using Arabic numbers (singular, dual, and plurals) patterns to enhance question answering system results." In *IMAN'2016 4th International Conference on Islamic Applications in Computer Science and Technologies*. Leeds, 2016.

of pluralization is known as ‘broken’ plural. Contrary to the former type which is identified as ‘sound’ plural.<sup>2</sup>

The current study aims to answer the following two questions: (1) is broken plural used in the Glorious Quran? (2) Can the types of broken plural be replaced without affecting the meaning? Accordingly, it is hypothesized in the present study that the broken plural multi forms in the Glorious Quran are selected sensibly and they function in a way that leads the reader to a scene of wider conceptual view and consideration. To prove the hypothesis and achieve the aim, the authors adopts Dressler and Merlini-Barbaresi’s (1994)<sup>3</sup> model in analyzing the chosen excerpts where language choices can be conceived at the level of pragmatics in relation to morphology. Eight Quranic texts are selected, analyzed, discussed, and conclusions are finally derived to assert that the various forms of broken plural in the Glorious Quran are manipulated exquisitely in an effective way

## **B. DISCUSSION**

The nominal constructions, types and patterns of Arabic have been studied clearly by.<sup>4</sup> However, As far as numbers are concerned, Arabic numbers are divided into three types: Singular, dual and Plural

### ***1. Pluralization on Arabic***

There are many studies that have been conducted on Arabic plural.<sup>5</sup> The paucity plural has not been studied in detail. This study tries to investigate more about the paucity plural. Plurals in Arabic are divided into the following types:

#### ***a) The Sound Masculine Plural***

It is the type that indicates the plural which is related to male nouns. It is called sound for it has consistent closings at the end of the singular word. Masculine plural has the suffix ( ) /-u:n/ as a default which is used in nominative cases. However, it changes into (ين-) /-i:n/ in accusative and dative cases, as shown in the table below.

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<sup>2</sup>Wickens, George Michael. *Arabic grammar: A first workbook*. Cambridge University Press, 1980.

<sup>3</sup>Dressler, Wolfgang U., and Lavinia M. Barbaresi. "Morphopragmatics." In *Morphopragmatics*. De Gruyter Mouton, 1994.

<sup>4</sup>Hazem, Ali Hussein, and Waleed Younus Meteab. "Nominal Constructions in Modern Standard Arabic With Reference to English." *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature* 8, no. 2 (2019): 97-101.

<sup>5</sup>Plunkett, Kim, and Ramin Charles Nakisa. "A connectionist model of the Arabic plural system." *Language and Cognitive processes* 12, no. 5-6 (1997): 807-836.

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Table 1. The Sound Masculine Plural

Singular	Plural (Masculine)	Suffix
/mu allim/ 'teacher'	/mu allimuun/ 'teachers' معلمين /mu allimi:n/ 'teachers'	( - ) /-u:n/ '-s' (ين-) /-i:n/ '-s'
/muslim/ 'Muslim'	/muslimuun/ 'Muslims' مسلمين /muslimi:n/ 'Muslims'	( - ) /-u:n/ '-s' (ين-) /-i:n/ '-s'

*The transliterations of Arabic are given between the slashes*

### b) The Sound Feminine Plural

It is the type that indicates the plural which is connected with female nouns. Feminine plural includes the supplementing of the suffix ( - ) /a:t/ at the end of singular words. The following table illustrates:

Table 2. The Sound Feminine Plural

Singular	Plural (Masculine)	Suffix
/mu allim/ 'teacher'	/mu allimuun/ 'teachers' معلمين /mu allimi:n/ 'teachers'	( - ) /-u:n/ '-s' (ين-) /-i:n/ '-s'
/muslim/ 'Muslim'	/muslimuun/ 'Muslims' مسلمين /muslimi:n/ 'Muslims'	( - ) /-u:n/ '-s' (ين-) /-i:n/ '-s'

### c) The Broken Plural

It is the only kind of plurals that does not belong to any sound classification. Thus, it differs from the sound (feminine and masculine) plurals. This kind of plural undergoes an alternation inside the original word (infix), preserving its letters (see for more details).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Dawdy-Hesterberg, Lisa Garnand, and Janet Breckenridge Pierrehumbert. "Learnability and generalisation of Arabic broken plural nouns." *Language, cognition and neuroscience* 29, no. 10 (2014): 1268-1282.

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Broken plurals can be used with most of the Arabic singular words and it can be studied in the same way as studying nouns<sup>7</sup>. Moreover, it consists of a change of a vowel inside the original word, e.g., ‘كريم-كريم-كريم’ *kariim-kuramaa* ‘generous-generous-PL’ and ‘نجيب-نجيب-نجيب’ *nad iib-nud abaa* ‘nice-nice-PL’ in the same way as the English words ‘woman-women’ or ‘mouse-mice’ in which the irregular plural occurs. In addition, it could consist of the addition of more consonants to the original word, such as ‘hamza’ and ‘waw’ /w/, as in:

-	<i>qalb – quluub</i>	‘heart-hearts’
	ليوث - ليوث / <i>lay – liyuu</i>	‘lion-lions’
-	aalim - ulamaa	‘scientist-scientists’
	قريب - <i>qariib - aqribaa</i>	‘relative-relatives’ <sup>8</sup>



Figure 1: Types of Broken Plural

***Types of Broken Plural***

***Paucity***

This type denotes a minimum number of objects from three to ten. Paucity has four morphological forms, they are: *af ila* أفعله, *af ul* , *af aal* , and *fi la* فله. These forms are shown in the table below with an example for each:

<sup>7</sup>Ratcliffe, Robert. "Arabic broken plurals: Arguments for a two-fold classification of morphology." In *Eid, M., McCarthy, J. Perspectives on Arabic Linguistics II 2nd annual symposium on Arabic*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. 94-119. 1990.

<sup>8</sup>Soudi, Abdelhadi, Günter Neumann, and Antal van den Bosch. "Arabic computational morphology: knowledge-based and empirical methods." In *Arabic computational morphology*, pp. 3-14. Springer, Dordrecht, 2007.

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Table 3. Paucity Forms

Morphological Form	Singular	Plural
af ila    أفعله	t a aam    'food'	at imah    'feed'
af ul	nahr    نهر 'river'	anhur    أنهر 'rivers'
af aal	awb    'cloth'	a waab    'clothes'
fi la    فعله	fataa    'boy'	fityah    فتيان 'boys'

See for more details about broke plural<sup>9</sup>

### *Multiplicity*

This type denotes a limitless number of objects from three to endless numbers. Multiplicity has twenty-three morphological forms and the most popular are shown in the table below.

Table 4. Multiplicity Forms

Morphological Form	Singular	Plural
fu aal	raamii    'archer'	rumaat    'archers'
fu aal	t aalib    'student'	tullab    'students'
fa alaa	faqiir    فقير 'poor'	fuqaraa    'poor'
af ilaa	s adiiq    صديق 'friend'	as diqaa    'friends'
fu uul	nad im    'star'	nud uum    'stars'
fi aal	d abal    'mountain'	d ibaal    'mountains'
fi laan	fataa    'boy'	fityaan    فتيان 'boys'
fi al	ni ma    'blessing'	ni am    'blessings'

These different forms of broken plural in paucity and multiplicity show the accuracy of the Arabic language and support the idea that this language is not vague, rather it is precise in usage. However, one of these types might be used more than the other or sometimes instead of the other according to the intention of the speaker.

### *Ultimate Plural*

This type denotes the case in which the plural word consists of two letters followed by the Arabic letter ( ) , then it is annexed to another two or three letters. This type of plural has numerous morphological forms and the most common of them are shown in table (5) below:

<sup>9</sup>Al-Dobaian, Abdullah. "Towards a morphological theory: The case of Arabic broken and sound plurals." *Journal of Arts* 26, no. 3 (2014): 19-36.

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Table 5. Ultimate Plural Forms

Morphological Form	Singular	Plural
fa aaliil    فعالييل	us fuur    ‘bird’	as aafiir    عصافير    ‘birds’
mafa iil    مفاعيل	mis baa    ‘light’	mas aabii    مصابيح    ‘lights’
fa aalil    فعالييل	Dirham    درهم    ‘Dirham’	daraahim    دراهم    ‘Dirhams’
afaa il	is bi    ‘finger’	as aabi    ‘fingers’
fawaa il	Xatam    ‘ring’	xawaatim    ‘rings’
fa aa il	sa aabah    سحابه    ‘cloud’	Sa aa’ib    ‘clouds’
mafaa il	masd id    ‘mosque’	masaad id    ‘mosques’

This type is known as the ultimate plural because it cannot be pluralized any more, and this is what makes it different from other types of broken plural.<sup>10</sup>

## 2. *An Introduction to Morphology*

In an abundant number of languages, words are collected together to make many types of sentences. These words vary in sound and meaning; for example: door and car are referring to various kinds of objects and they also differ from each other in the letters that are used at the beginning and the end of these words; therefore, when we use these two words in sentences, these sentences will also be different in sound and meaning; for instance, *the door is broken* is different from *the car is broken* in the function of the two words. Even it studies the structure or construction of words<sup>11,12</sup>. If the construction of the sentences is different, this will affect the words that suit the sentence, for example, because the words (door, car) are in singular form, we use an auxiliary (is). So, the construction requires that the words must be in a specific form rather than another. Hence, morphology studies all these changes that affect the words and how the words are used in the sentences.<sup>13</sup>

Morphology as a term has many definitions. The first one could be that morphology is a subdivision of grammar that copes with the inner construction of words (ibid). Moreover, it is the branch of linguistics that studies the structure of words and how they are organized into several elements in a sentence. Accordingly, the morphological construction of words affects

<sup>10</sup> Khan, Nouman Ali. *Plurals in the Quran*, 1999. Also, see Al-Hilali, Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din, and Muhammad Muhsin Khan. *Translation of the Meanings of The Noble Quran in the English Language*. King Fahad Complex for the Printing of the Holy Quran, Madinah, K.S.A.

<sup>11</sup>Watson, J. C. (2007). *The phonology and morphology of Arabic*. OUP Oxford.

<sup>12</sup>Shamsan, Muayad Abdul-Halim Ahmad, and Abdul-majeed Attayib. "Inflectional morphology in Arabic and English: a contrastive study." *International Journal of English Linguistics* 5, no. 2 (2015): 139.

<sup>13</sup>Matthews, Peter H. *Morphology*. Cambridge university press, 1991.

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and reflects its semantic construction. So, morphology tries to show and manage the structures of words in a certain language.<sup>14</sup>

Furthermore, morphology can be defined as the study of word's forms that studies all the elements that are used in a language, and these elements are known as 'Morphemes'.<sup>15</sup>

### 3. *An Introduction to Pragmatics*

Sometimes individuals do not express or reveal what they intend to say in a direct way. These individuals seldom say words or utterances that have immeasurable meanings. For instance, one may perhaps say: "It's cold here!" yet he intends to say something different like: "Please, close the door"; or, "Light the chimney!". Hence, they could say one sentence but it has various meanings or sometimes it has the contrary meaning.<sup>16</sup>

If people frequently intend to say something that is different from what they want to say, in what way could the listeners cope with or comprehend what the speakers mean? Therefore, the answer to all queries can be found in one branch of linguistics which is identified as pragmatics, a subdivision of linguistics that deals with such features of meaning that could not be comprehended semantically<sup>17</sup>.

To sum up, pragmatics studies the ways in which people's usage of language is unpredictable and cannot be understood through familiarity with linguistics only.<sup>18</sup> Pragmatics has various definitions, one of which is that it is the analysis of the causes which justify why a specific group of sentences are unusual or impossible statements.<sup>19</sup>

Moreover, Crystal (cited in<sup>20</sup>) suggests that pragmatics is the analysis of language from the attitude of the speakers, particularly of the choices they make, the restrictions they

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<sup>14</sup>Hamawand, Zeki. *Morphology in English: Word formation in cognitive grammar*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2011.

<sup>15</sup>Yule, George. "The study of language 4 th edition." *Cambridge: Cambri Carlisle, JF (2010). Effects of Instruction in Morphological Awareness on Literacy Achievement: An Integrative Review. Reading Research Quarterly* 45, no. 4 (2010): 464-487.

<sup>16</sup> Thomas, Jenny. "Meaning in interaction." *An introduction to pragmatics* (1995).

<sup>17</sup> Thomas, Jenny. "Meaning in interaction." *An introduction to pragmatics* (1995).

<sup>18</sup> Aitchison, Jean. "An introduction to cognitive linguistics: Friedrich Ungerer and Hans-Jörg Schmid, London: Longman, 1996, xiv+ 306 pp." (1999): 139-142.

<sup>19</sup> Levinson, Stephen C., Stephen C. Levinson, and S. Levinson. *Pragmatics*. Cambridge university press, 1983.

<sup>20</sup> O'Keefe, Anne, Brian Clancy, and Svenja Adolphs. *Introducing pragmatics in use*. Routledge, 2011.



face when they communicate with others and how their usage of language influences the other members in the process of interactions (see among others).<sup>21</sup>

In addition to that, pragmatics is defined as the field that copes with the using of words and sentences by speakers. In order to decide the meaning that the speaker intends to convey, the listener must realise if the utterance is a kind of threat, promise, annoyance, etc. Finally, According to the argument of Verschueren's (1999) model of pragmatics, "all levels of language, from the sound level to the level of text and ideology, can be safely handled within pragmatics"<sup>22</sup>.

#### ***4. The Morphology-Pragmatics Interface: Morphopragmatics***

Morphopragmatics can be defined as "the study of the interrelationship between morphology and pragmatics" minimal.<sup>23</sup> "Morphology is relevant pragmatically in so far as word structure (affixes, clitics) can be taken as an indication of the speech situation and/or of the speech event". "Morphopragmatics has to be distinguished from lexical pragmatics, on the one hand, and syntactic pragmatics, on the other. Morphologically complex forms which are lexicalized. In general, pragmatic aspects come into play whenever we have to do with competing realizations of morphological rules, or with morphological rules which do not affect denotative meaning or whose semantic contribution is minimal" (ibid).

The current model<sup>24</sup> is the only systematic work on morphopragmatics to date. It presents the idea that pragmatics relates linguistic structure to contextual phenomena. In other words, pragmatics can be defined as the functional perspective on language. "Pragmatics can be conceived of as the study of the mechanisms and motivations behind any of the choices made when using language (at the level of, morphology, whether they are variety-internal options or whether they involve regionally, socially, or functionally distributed types of variation". This model is adopted in this paper.

#### ***5. The Analysis***

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<sup>21</sup> Najjar, Manal. "Teaching Arabic Syntax for Non-Speakers: A Pragmatic Approach." *International Journal of Learning and Teaching* 6, no. 4 (2020): 252-256.

<sup>22</sup> Verschueren, Jef. *Understanding Pragmatics*. London: Arnold, 1999 cited in Hazem, Ali Hussein, and Muhammad Hamzah Kanaan. "Domain Adverbs in Legal English Texts: Problems and Strategies." *IUP Journal of English Studies* 15, no. 4 (2020): 130-141.

<sup>23</sup> Dressler, Wolfgang U., and Lavinia M. Barbaresi. "Morphopragmatics." In *Morphopragmatics*. De Gruyter Mouton, 1994.

<sup>24</sup> Dressler, Wolfgang U., and Lavinia M. Barbaresi. "Morphopragmatics." In *Morphopragmatics*. De Gruyter Mouton, 1994.

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The analysis adopts the following procedures: introducing the Quranic text, its meaning, its transliteration, extracting the plural, showing its morphological form, its plural type, and finally discussing the reason behind using this type rather than the other in relation to the model adopted.

### a) Text One

﴿وَقَالَ لِفَتْنِهِ اجْعَلُوا بَضْعَتَهُمْ فِي رِحَالِهِمْ﴾ (يوسف 62)

(And [Joseph] said to his servants, “Put their merchandise into their saddlebags”).

- The broken plural: (فتيان) servants *fitiaan*
- Morphological form: *fi laan*
- Broken Plural type: Multiplicity

This word is mentioned only once in the glorious Quran. The Prophet Yusuf has ordered his servants (who were the workers in Al-Aziz’s palace) to put the money in his brothers’ saddlebags. The number of these workers is surely more than ten because of his political position (as a leader) and his social status (as a rich man). Therefore, multiplicity plural is used here.

﴿إِذْ أَوَى الْفِتْيَةُ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا آتِنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً وَهَيِّئْ لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَشَدًا﴾ (الكهف 10)

(Remember) when the young men fled for refuge (from their disbelieving folk) to the cave. They said: “Our Lord! Bestow on us mercy from Yourself, and facilitate for us our affair in the right way!”

- The broken plural: (الفتية) ‘the men’ *lfityah*
- Morphological form: *fi la*
- Broken Plural type: Paucity

The word (فتية) is used in this Aya to refer to a few number of men between three to eight. Therefore, they can easily be counted if compared with text (1/a).

### b) Text Two

﴿وَجَاءَ إِخْوَةُ يُوسُفَ فَدَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ فَعَرَفَهُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُ مُنْكَرُونَ﴾ (يوسف 58)

(And Joseph’s brethren came and they entered unto him, and he recognized them, but they recognized him not)

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- The broken plural: (إِخْوَةٌ) ‘brethren’ *ixwah*
- Morphological form: *fi la*
- Broken Plural type: Paucity

The word (إِخْوَةٌ) is of paucity type since it refers to Josef’s brothers who came to Egypt to ask for more food. Josef has eleven brothers, but his youngest brother did not come so they were ten only. That is why it is translated to brethren (less in number) rather than brothers (more in number). In addition to that, the word (إِخْوَةٌ), which reflects the kinship among Joseph’s brothers.

﴿وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِنْ غَلٍّ إِخْوَانًا عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مُتَقَابِلِينَ﴾ (الحجر 47)

(And We shall move from their breasts any deep feeling of bitterness (that they may have). (So, they will be like) brothers facing each other on thrones)

- The broken plural: (إِخْوَانٌ) ‘brothers’ *ixwaan*
- Morphological form: *fi laan*
- Broken Plural type: Multiplicity

The word (إِخْوَانٌ) is translated as brothers referring to the believers and the relationship among them in Paradise and how they love each other (as if they were real brothers and Islam is their father). The number of the believers is uncountable, that is why multiplicity type of broken plural is chosen here to fit the scene.

c) *Text Three*

﴿رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا فِي نُفُوسِكُمْ إِنَّ تَكُونُوا صَاحِبِينَ فَإِنَّهُ كَانَ لِلْأَوَّابِينَ غَفُورًا﴾ { (الاسراء 25)

“Your Lord is most knowing of what is within yourselves. If you should be righteous [in intention] - then indeed He is ever, to the often returning [to Him], Forgiving”.

- The broken plural: (نُفُوسٍ) ‘inner-selves’ *nufuus*
- Morphological form: *fu uul*
- Broken Plural type: Multiplicity

Inner-selves is used to address the people in general without specifying any gender or category, i.e., it includes the whole people in the world. This is the reason why multiplicity type of plural is used.

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﴿وَلَا أَقُولُ لِلَّذِينَ تَزْدَرِي أَعْيُنُكُمْ لَنْ يُؤْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ خَيْرًا اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ إِنِّي إِذًا لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾ (هود: 31)

(And I do not say of those whom your eyes look down upon that Allah will not bestow any good on them. Allah knows what is there in their inner-selves (as regards, beliefs, etc.). In that case I should indeed be one of the *Zalimun* (wrong-doers, oppressors))

- The broken plural: (أنفُس) ‘inner-selves’ *nfus*
- Morphological form: *f ul*
- Broken Plural type: Paucity

The word ‘inner-selves’ here is of paucity type because it refers to a limited number of people, those who believed in the message of the Prophet ‘H d’. Those people were part of Aad’s People (an ancient Arab tribe) and they are referred to as ‘Aadites’; they insisted on their blasphemy and rejected what their Prophet asked them to. The group mentioned in this Aya is an exception from the tribe, they obeyed the Prophet ‘H d’ and they were few in number.

### d) Text Four

\_\_\_\_\_ الْمَدِينَةِ امْرَأَةُ الْعَزِيزِ تَرَاوَدُ فَتَاهَا عَنْ نَفْسِهِ قَدْ شَغَفَهَا حُبًّا (يوسف: 30)

(And women in the city said: “the wife of Al-‘Aziz is seeking to seduce her slave boy; he has impassioned her with love”.)

- The broken plural: (نِسْوَةً) ‘women’ *niswah*
- Morphological form: *fi la*
- Broken Plural type: Paucity

The word (نِسْوَةً) (women) here refers to some women in the town who are close to Al-Aziz’s wife ‘Zulaikha’. They are close in the sense that they work or live in the palace as servants. What emphasizes that the number of these women is not more than ten is that ‘Zulaikha’ gathered them at one table and asked them to peel some fruit.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً﴾ (النساء: 1)

(O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from one soul, and from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women)

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- The broken plural: (نِسَاءً) 'Women' *nisaa*
- Morphological form: *fi aal*
- Broken Plural type: Multiplicity

(نِسَاءً) (Women) here is used to denote all women in the world, i.e. not to signify a group or a limited number. That is why multiplicity type of plural is used.

e) Text Five

﴿شَاكِرًا لِّأَنْعَمِهِ اجْتَبَاهُ وَهَدَاهُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ﴾ (النحل 121)

((He was) thankful for His (Allah's) Favors. He (Allah) chose him (as an intimate friend) and guided him to a Straight path)

- The broken plural: (أَنْعَمٌ) 'Favors' *n um*
- Morphological form: *f ul*
- Broken Plural type: Paucity

In this Aya Allah is describing the Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) by saying that Ibrahim was thankful for Allah's (Favors) (أَنْعَمٌ). Favors here is a plural noun of paucity type. This type is used to assure that no man is able to count Allah's favors because they are everywhere, therefore, it is impossible to limit them or to measure them. Paucity is used here to state that the human's ability.

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَأَسْبَغَ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَهُ ظَهْرَةَ وَبَاطِنَةً﴾ (لقمان 20)

(See you not (oh men) that Allah has subjected for you whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth, and has completed and perfected His Graces upon you apparent and hidden)

- The broken plural: (نِعَمٌ) 'Graces' *ni am*
- Morphological form: *fi al*
- Broken Plural type: Multiplicity

Graces (نِعَمٌ) is an inclusive term that includes all the graces, favors, gifts, and blessings of Allah for the human beings. These graces are everywhere on earth and heavens and what is between them, some of them we know and feel (apparent), and others we don't (hidden).

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No one can imagine or predict the number of these graces, and this is the reason why multiplicity is used.

### f) Text Six

﴿وَلَوْ أَنَّ فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ أَقْلَامٌ وَالْبَحْرُ يَمُدُّهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ سَبْعَةُ أَبْحُرٍ مَا نَفِدَتْ كَلِمَاتُ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾ (لقمان 27)

(“And if all the trees on the earth were pens and the sea (were ink wherewith to write), with seven seas behind it to add to its (supply), yet the words of Allah would not be exhausted. Verily, Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise”)

- The broken plural: (أَبْحُرٍ) ‘seas’ *b ur*
- Morphological form: *f ul*
- Broken Plural type: Paucity

The word (أَبْحُرٍ) (seas) has the paucity type to degrade these seas which can never cover or to be equal to Allah’s words. The proof is the glorious Quran itself where each Sura presents new terminology. However, paucity is used here because of the number seven (seven seas).

﴿وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ فَجُرتُ﴾ (الانفطار 3)

(And when the seas are burst forth)

- The broken plural: ( ) ‘the seas’ *lbi aar*
- Morphological form: *fi aal*
- Broken Plural type: Multiplicity

The word (البحار) (seas) is of multiplicity type because in the Doomsday all the seas in the universe will be burst forth and the number of these seas is not few, it is quite large.

### g) Text Seven

﴿إِذْ تَقُولُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَلَنْ يَكْفِيَكُمْ أَنْ يُمدِّكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِثَلَاثَةِ آلافٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُنزَلِينَ﴾ (ال عمران 124)

((Remember) when you (Muhammed PBUH) said to the believers, “Is it not enough for that your Lord (Allah) should help you with three thousand angels sent down?”)

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- The broken plural: (آلَافٍ) ‘thousands’ *aalaaf*
- Morphological form: *af aal*
- Broken Plural type: Paucity

In this Aya Allah uses (آلَافٍ) (thousands) in the paucity form to denote a minimum number of angels that Allah has supported the believers with in the battle of Badr. Also, the word thousand is preceded by the number three to indicate paucity.

﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَهُمْ أُلُوفٌ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ﴾ (البقرة 243)

(Did you (O Muhammed PBUH) not think of those who went forth from their homes in thousands, fearing death?)

- The broken plural: (أُلُوفٌ) ‘thousands’ *uluuf*
- Morphological form: *fu uul*
- Broken Plural type: Multiplicity

The word (أُلُوفٌ) (thousands) in this Aya refers to the people who left their homes in order to save their lives maybe because plague was spread there.

*h) Text Eight*

﴿الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَاتٌ﴾ (البقرة 197)

(The Hajj (Pilgrimage) is (in) the well-known (lunar year) months (i.e. the 10<sup>th</sup> month, the 11<sup>th</sup> month and the first ten days of the 12<sup>th</sup> month of the Islamic calendar, i.e. two months and ten days))

- The broken plural: (أَشْهُرٌ) ‘months’ *hur*
- Morphological form: *af ul*
- Broken Plural type: Paucity

The plural of paucity is used here to include the limited months of Hajj (Pilgrimage) to Mecca. These months are the 10<sup>th</sup> month (Shawwal), the 11<sup>th</sup> month /*ḍul-qi ida*/ and the first ten days of the 12<sup>th</sup> month /*ḍul- id a*/ of the Islamic calendar

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﴿إِنَّ عِدَّةَ الشُّهُورِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ شَهْرًا﴾ (التوبة 36)

(Verily, the number of months with Allah is twelve months (in a year))

- The broken plural: (الشُّهُور) 'the months' *uhuur*
- Morphological form: *fu uul*
- Broken Plural type: Multiplicity

In this Aya, the word (الشُّهُور) (months) is used having the multiplicity form since it refers to the number of the months of the lunar year which has twelve months.

### 6. Results and Discussion of Analysis

All the data chosen in the analysis are taken from the Glorious Quran; therefore, each has its own unique situation in which a certain type of plural is workable. Accordingly, the situation in which the plural of paucity is used will be incorrect if the plural of multiplicity is used. Below is the discussion of results of each text.

#### a) Text (1)

In text one (a) the word (فَتِيَان) (servants) is used; and in (b) (فَتِيَةٌ) (men) is used. The two forms cannot be interchangeably because it will distort the situational demands. The situation in (1/a) requires multiplicity form since (فَتِيَان) (servants) refers to the servants working in 'Al-Aaziz' palace. 'Al-Aaziz' ('The Great One' or 'The Nobleman') is the title of a job given to the person who has the position of the captain of Pharaoh's guard or the chief minister. Because of this official position, Al-Aaziz owns a very big palace with many servants as slaves who live in separate houses within the palace. This justifies why the multiplicity plural is used here.

The situation in (1/b) requires paucity form since this text is about the story of a group of some men (فَتِيَةٌ) (الكهف a aab al kahf, 'People of the Cave') who hid inside a cave outside the city of 'Ephesus' (a Greek city) around 250 CE to escape religious oppression and appeared some 300 years later. The cave they slept in is big enough to include not more than ten; accordingly, it is illogical to use multiplicity plural here.

#### b) Text (2)

In text two (a) the word ( ) (brethren) is used; and in (b) ( ) (men) is used. The two forms cannot be substituted because they will not meet the situational needs.



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The situation in (2/a) requires paucity form since ( ) (brethren) refers to the persons in relation to each other in the sense that they are descendants of one father, i.e. the relationship among them is that of a family, and Yosuf's brothers were 10 in that scene. The situation in (2/b) requires multiplicity since it tells about the situation of men in Heaven who are described metaphorically as ( ) (men like brothers) and the relationship among them is not that of blood, rather they are brothers in religion. Accordingly, it is a more general and comprehensive term and fits more with multiplicity reference of plural.

*c) Text (3)*

In text three (a) the word ( ) (inner-selves) is used; and in (b) ( ) (inner-selves) is used. The two forms cannot be used interchangeably because they will not fit the Quranic scene.

The situation in (3/a) requires multiplicity form since ( ) (inner-selves) addresses the inner-selves of the human beings in general, that is why multiplicity is used in this situation and other similar ones.

The situation in (3/b) requires paucity since ( ) (inner-selves) refers to a specific group of people and even if this group is great in number, yet it is specified not like (3/a) which is general.

*d) Text (4)*

In text four (a) the word (نِسْوَةٌ) (women) is used; and in (b) (نِسَاءً) (Women) is used. The two forms cannot be substituted for each other because they will not fit the Quranic scene.

The situation in (4/a) requires paucity form since (نِسْوَةٌ) (women) refers to a specific group of women, i.e. those women who are of the same social status in society at that time and they were few, that is why paucity is used in this situation.

The situation in (4/b) requires multiplicity since (نِسَاءً) (Women) refers to women in general, i.e. there is no specification.

*e) Text (5)*

In text five (a) the word (أَنْعَمَ) (Favors) is used; and in (b) (نِعْمَ) (Graces) is used. The two forms cannot be replaced with each other because each one serves the Quranic scene with an accurate particular meaning.

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The situation in (5/a) shows paucity form. It is well known that Allah has gifted the human beings with many gifts and favors to the extent that these blessings are uncountable and unmeasurable; and that is why (أَنْعَمَ) (Favors) is used (referring to a few number of favors) because a human being is not able to thank Allah for all these plentiful favors gifted by Allah. So, paucity plural refers rather to the limited human ability to thank.

Another justification is that, since the Aya is telling about the Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) who has been gifted a lot of gifts to the extent that Allah has described him as 'Ummah =nation':

(إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً) (Al-Nahl: 120) meaning that Ibrahim was a leader having all the good righteous qualities that cannot be found in one man and that's why he is described as an 'Ummah'= nation because he possess so many qualities amounting to a nation). The usage of 'paucity' might be justified as that the Prophet Ibrahim is highly thankful even for the small graces, i.e. he doesn't forget even the minor favors.

One further justification is that Allah has gifted the Prophet Ibrahim with four favors:

- 1- being a nation, i.e. an ideal person, a model, or an example of a good person to be followed by a nation.
- 2- Being submissive, obedient to Allah.
- 3- Being 'Hanif' meaning to worship none but Allah
- 4- Being a believer and he was not one of those who were polytheists, idolaters, or disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah, and those who attributed partners to Allah.

Therefore, paucity is used here to include these four favors.

The situation in (5/b) requires multiplicity since ( ) (Graces) refers to graces that Allah gifted the human beings in general, i.e. there is no specification. And as mentioned above the gifts of Allah are uncountable and unmeasurable because not all the graces are apparent to be seen by the humans.

### f) Text (6)

In text six (6/a) the word ( ) (seas) is used; and in (b) the word ( ) (seas) is used. The two forms cannot be used interchangeably with each other because they don't express the required semantic and pragmatic function in the Quranic scene.

The situation in (6/a) requires paucity form as in the word ( ) (seas). The use of paucity is determined by the previous number 'seven' which is less than ten. It is worth mentioning here the number seven is used for the sake of exaggeration to glorify and

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maximize the ability of Allah to use many endless words or His ability to create and gift the humans.

The situation in (6/b) requires multiplicity since ( ) (seas) refers to all seas on earth, in general, i.e. there is no specification of a certain category.

*g) Text (7)*

In text seven (7/a) the word ( ) (thousands) is used; and in (b) the word ( ) (thousands) is used. Again, the two forms cannot be substituted for each other because they don't fulfil the required semantic and pragmatic function in the Quranic scene.

The Quranic context in (7/a) requires paucity form since the word ( ) (thousands) is preceded by the number 'three' (less than ten) which determines the type of plural.

The situation in (7/b) requires multiplicity since ( ) (thousands) refers to massive plural in general, i.e. there is no specification of a certain category. However, it is worth mentioning here that in this Quranic context Allah has left everything vague, i.e. no specific information is given about any deixis (time, place, reference). Allah mentions the agent 'those', then He modifies the number of the agent by the word ( ) (thousands).

The intention is to maximize the number of people who went out of their houses because they were afraid of death (even the reason of death is not mentioned whether a disease, an enemy, a natural disaster, ...etc.). This maximization of number reflects the state of horror and panic those people were in.

*h) Text (8)*

In text eight (a) the word (أَشْهُرٌ) (months) is used; and in (b) (الشُّهُور) (months) is used. The two forms cannot be substituted for each other because they will not fit the Quranic context and the pragmatic implications.

The situation in (8/a) requires paucity form since (أَشْهُرٌ) (months) refers to certain months, i.e. those of pilgrimage (Hajj). The months in question are less than ten recommending by that the usage of paucity.

It is well known that the word month (شَهْرٌ) in its singular form (in Arabic) has the meaning of 'fame'. It is indefinite, it merely refers to any sequenced 30 days according to the numerical calculation. Accordingly, it is necessary to be defined, e.g. "the month of Ramadan".

The same as with (أَشْهُرٌ) months in its paucity form which indicates only the numerical value and is not related to the degree or time of occurrence unless a time is specified and

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described as the phrase “sacred months” or “months of Hajj” or “months of winter” etc. in other words, the paucity form of months refers only to an indefinite duration of time which can be modified later by adding a specific month and in this Aya Allah specifies a certain kind of worshipping which lasts for a few months.

The context in (8/b) requires multiplicity since (الشُّهُور) (months) refers to a number which is more than ten. In this context the case is different from paucity. (الشُّهُور) (months) in Arabic in the multiplicity form is definite, i.e. the months are known in time and have constant occurrence. They are twelve months according to the lunar Islamic year. “The Islamic calendar, also known as the Hijri, Lunar Hijri, Muslim or Arabic calendar, is a lunar calendar consisting of 12 lunar months in a year of 354 or 355 days. It is used to determine the proper days of Islamic Holidays and rituals, such as the annual period of fasting and the proper time for the pilgrimage to Mecca”.

### C. CONCLUSION

This paper arrives at the following conclusions:

1. Broken plural in all its types is used in the Glorious Quran.
2. The types of broken plural (specifically paucity and multiplicity) are not used haphazardly in the Glorious Quran.
3. Each type of broken plural serves a specific function and creates a unique context.
4. The situation in which the plural of paucity is used will be incorrect if plural of multiplicity is used.

There are other interdisciplinary studies such as morphophonemes and morphosyntactic can be very interesting and valuable for further research project. Finally, we would like to express our thanks for Professor Ahmed for his valuable remarks during the proofreading of this paper.

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- Understand-Arabic.com – Learn Arabic – The Language of Qur'an Madinah Arabic Use the below resources for studying and mastering the Books 1,2 and 3 of "Lessons in Arabic language" [as taught at the Islaamic University of Madeenah] written by Shaykh Dr. V. 'Abdur-Raheem