Analysis of Polysemy in Modal Structures of the Holy Quran Based on Force Schema: A Case Study of *Jaʿala,* *ʿAsā,* and *Laʿalla*

Fathiyeh Fattahizadeh[1] / Fatemeh Abadi[2]

Abstract

Research Article

In the classical view of grammar, modal structures are merely combinations of logical and homonymous operators with their root theme; however, the cognitive view considers the modal meaning of verbs an extension of their root-physical meaning. This research is a case study of three grammatical categories of "*jaʿala*," "*ʿasā*," and "*laʿalla*" in the Quran to explain the relationship between the root meaning and the modal meaning of these grammatical categories based on the force schema. The examination showed that the modal meaning of "*jaʿala*" is derived from the metaphorical extension of the root meaning of to build and to place; concerning God, it means the presence of sufficient force, and in relation to agents other than God, it refers to the lack of enough power. "*ʿasā*" and "*laʿalla*" have similar meanings and functions, and their modal meaning is derived from the root meaning of to do to the components of removal or absence of restraints and the presence of sufficient force (which, in human physical experience, is essential to acting) in a graded manner. Reference to the removal or absence of restraints approximates the meaning of "*ʿasā*" and "*laʿalla*" to possibility, and reference to the presence of sufficient force approximates their meaning to certainty.

1. Professor in the Department of Quranic Studies and Hadith, Faculty of Theology, Alzahra University, Tehran, Iran, f_fattahizadeh@alzahra.ac.ir.

2. Postdoctoral Researcher in the Department of Quranic Studies and Hadith, Faculty of Theology, Alzahra University, Tehran, Iran & member of the Quranic and hadith interdisciplinary studies research group, f.abadi@alzahra.ac.ir (Corresponding author).

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Introduction

Since the revelation of the Quran, Quranic researchers have analyzed the precise meaning of Quranic words and structures to achieve a correct understanding of Quranic concepts. Various books have been written on the interpretation, vocabulary, morphology, syntax, and rhetoric of Arabic; exclusively or with other topics, each book has examined the meaning of words or grammatical structures in Arabic in general and in the Quran in particular.

The modal verbs used in the Quran are no exception; due to their significant use in Arabic and the Quran, they have been studied in the context of different sciences. However, the problem is that experts in the mentioned fields have analyzed modal verbs as if there is no connection between their root meaning and modal meaning. In most cases, they have only mentioned the different and, sometimes, conflicting meanings of each modal.

In the classical view, modal themes are logical operators that have nothing to do with their root meanings; rather, they are homonymous with their root meanings. However, in the epistemic approach to modal themes they are meaning structures that convey the modal meaning through the root and Gestalt meaning of force derived from the human physical experience of physical force (Johnson 1987, 51).

As noted, this classical approach is also adopted by Arabic philologists, exegetes, and translators of the Quran. Consequently, modal themes such as "'asā" (possibly), "laʿalla" (perhaps), and "jaʿala" (with different functions that will be mentioned later) are considered as if they have no specific meaning, and depending on the context, different and even opposite meanings are attributed to them. For example, "'asā" and

"laʿalla" are regarded to denote uncertainty in one case and certainty in another case, without any explanation.

This study seeks to explain the relationship between the root and the modal meanings of the three modal structures *jaʿala*, *ʿasā*, and *laʿalla* in the Quran by using the epistemic perspective in the analysis of diachronic and synchronic semantic evolutions of a word. Since these modal verbs carry force, as will be discussed further, the force schema will play a pivotal role in analyzing meanings.

Background

Following Sweetser's study on modal verbs, Johnson (1987) investigated some modal themes (may, must, can) from an epistemic perspective. In his book The Body in the Mind, he explains that the function of modal themes is the result of the metaphorical expansion of their root meanings, and they carry force in reasoning and other usage (Johnson 1987, 48-51).

Sweetser categorizes force-carrying modals into two categories: root and epistemic themes. Epistemic modal themes deal with the realm of reasoning, which forces us to move from the premise to the conclusion. On the other hand, root themes deal with ability, possibility, obligation, or commitment in the physical-social world. According to her, in many languages from different language families, some verbs carry epistemic modal meanings besides the root meaning, e.g., modal verbs in English; these verbs bridge the physical world and the mental domain. She believes that the modal meaning of these verbs has developed over time from their non-modal meaning (e.g., physical force) through the structure of conceptual metaphors, and the physical meanings of these verbs do not differ from their meaning when used in the realm of reasoning. Contrary to the traditional view that the epistemic meaning of these concepts is merely a combination of logical operators, which are homonymous with their root meaning, there is potent historical, social, linguistic, and

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psychological evidence that the epistemic meanings of these verbs are the result of expanding their root-physical meaning (Johnson 1987, 122; Sweetser 1991, 49-50).

With an epistemic approach, David Lee (2001) also explained the relationship between the root meaning and the practical meaning of these structures by examining grammatical operators such as soon, still, may, can, etc., and in so doing, has paid attention to the semantic changes of these words over time and its effect on their current practical meaning (cf. Lee 2001, 93-180).

This study investigates the relationship between the verbs' root and modal meanings and is innovative and unprecedented in terms of explaining these modal themes with an epidemic approach in the Arabic language and the Quran.

1. Theoretical foundation

Language originates from the cognitive system of the human mind and is one of the most prominent cognitive activities of humans (Sweetser 1991, 1; Lakoff 1987, 113). The human mind acts corporeally based on the sensory-motor system of the body. The perception of any concept is made through the brain, and the brain has to categorize due to its neuronal structure. The manner of categorization by different organisms depends on their sensing apparatus and their ability to move themselves and manipulate objects. Therefore, categorization is the outcome of our physicality; it is not the result of conscious reasoning but the outcome of our interaction with the environment through our minds and bodies (Franks 2010, 205; Lakoff & Johnson 1999, 18). This feature is also the foundation of the process of producing and understanding linguistic concepts (Ungerer & Schmid 2006, 41).

The boundaries in epistemic categories are fuzzy, and the members in each category do not have the same value Instead, each category includes prototypical members, good members, bad members, and members whose belonging to the category is doubtful. The prototypical member is the central member of a category that shares the most features with the members of its category and the least features with the members of other categories (cf. Littlemore and Taylor 2014, 27; Ungerer & Schmid 2006, 41).

The corporeal basis of the mind makes the mental conceptualization system metaphorical. Based on metaphor, many abstract concepts we do not clearly understand are perceived by clearer concepts defined in our experience. A conceptual metaphor is an organized mapping from the source domain to the target domain, which is formulated as [The target domain is the source domain]. The source domain is more concrete and experiential, while the target domain is more abstract. Some metaphors result from repetitive patterns resulting from humans' perceptual and sensory-motor interaction with their environment (schemata). A schema is the result of categorizing these iterative patterns, which helps to understand abstract concepts based on experiential concepts (cf. Ungerer & Schmid 2006, 118).

The important point in this paper is that since corporeality is a feature of the human mind's conceptualization structure, it has influenced the process of conceptualization throughout history; therefore, changes in meaning over time have also been formed based on the cognitive structure of the human mind. In this way, various meanings created as polysemy for a word have been obtained from the metaphorical expansion of the central concepts. A diachronic study of a group of languages conducted by Sweetser confirms that a large part of historical changes in meaning can explained only through metaphorical mapping within the human conceptual system, activated through experience; the polysemantic phenomenon that occurs in the process of diachronic changes in concepts

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is the result of expanding the central theme (prototypical theme) of the
word, through elements such as metaphor and metonymy, for less central
themes (Johnson 1987, xii).

In general, Various meanings of a lexical unit arise due to polysemy
and homonymy. In polysemy, we deal with a word with different
meanings; in homonymy, we deal with several words with the same form.
In general, the polysemous explanation of homonymy is based on
etymology; if it is determined that similar forms have the same roots, they
belong to the category of polysemy, and if the roots are different, they
belong to homonymy, and lexicographers usually place these meanings
under several entries (Palmer 1987, 133-134).

Homonymy in a language occurs due to borrowing or phonetic changes.
Borrowing is a process whereby a language takes linguistic elements from
another language and subsumes them under its system (Campbell & Mixco
2007, 25). As mentioned earlier, polysemy follows the mechanism of
categorization. Accordingly, different meanings for a word arise over time
from the metaphorical or metonymical expansion of the prototypical
concept (cf. Lakoff 1987, 334).

Etymology

As mentioned, it is possible to provide a polysemic explanation of
homonymy and elucidate the type of relationship between different
meanings of a word through etymological studies. Thus, using etymology,
we investigate the root meanings of the categories *jaʿala, ʿasā*, and *laʿalla*
to determine the relationship between the different meanings of them.

Arabic is a branch of the Semitic language, along with Hebrew,
Aramaic, Akkadian, Phoenician, and its Ethiopian branches, including
Amharic, Ge'ez, and so forth (Campbell & Mixco 2007, 183). The Semitic

language is a branch of Afroasiatic languages, along with Egyptian, Berber, and so forth (Campbell & Mixco 2007, 5).

The language of each Semitic ethnicity underwent evolutions throughout history after they migrated from their original homeland. Some words were semantically expanded or narrowed; others were forgotten; and new words were formed in a new geographical, cultural, and temporal context. These linguistic changes were also accompanied by morphological, syntactic, and phonetic evolutions to the extent that the language of each ethnic group was formed as an independent language, but there are still clear commonalities between these languages (cf. Wolfensohn 1929, 19). Following these historical developments in the realm of vocabulary affects achieving the focal meaning, understanding the semantic evolution, and the relationship between different meanings.

Force schema

In 1987, the term image schema was introduced in Johnson's book The Body in the Mind. He explains that this term emphasizes the corporeal and sensorimotor nature of different structures of conceptualization and reasoning. He believes that what we call mind and body are not separate; rather, we use these terms to conceive different aspects of the stream of our self-perceived experience (Johnson 2005, 18).

Johnson defines the image schema as follows: a dynamic and iterative pattern of our perceptual and sensorimotor interaction in the environment that gives coherence and structure to the experience. According to him, a schema is not an image, but a means of structuring certain experiences. He believes the force schema is one of the most important conceptual schemas; Because the survival of a living creature relies on its interaction with the environment, and all causal interactions require the use of force (Johnson 1987, 42). This human physical experience, derived from interactions with the environment, is the basis for the conceptualization of

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abstract domains; for example, social rules and obligations are conceptualized as a compulsion or restraint (Johnson 1987, 42; Kovecses 2010, 37).

Johnson introduces seven types of force schemas and explains how each is understood in our physical experience (Johnson 1987, 106-109):

1. Compulsion, as displacement due to external forces such as wind, water, and foreign objects

2. Blockage, as encountering restraints

3. Counterforce, as the experience of a head-on collision between two cars

4. Deviation, as a change of direction due to the impact of two or more forces on an object

5. Removal of restraint, meaning that nothing is a barrier to the application of force, as an open door and the absence of physical restraints in the path

6. Enablement, as a human sense of ability or inability to move light or heavy objects

7. Attraction, as the feeling of the Earth's gravity on the object and the attraction of iron shavings by the magnet

2. Method

This study seeks to explain the relationship between the root and modal meanings of modal themes *jaʿala, ʿasā*, and *laʿalla*. So a corpus of 505 Quranic verses, in which one of the above modal themes is used, is formed. The goal was to elucidate the central meaning of each modal verb and the

relationship between the central meaning and the modal meanings and provide a correct understanding of these Quranic structures.

The metaphorical structure of the body instead of the mind guides both the process of semantic evolution throughout history and establishes a link between the different meanings of a word at a given time (Johnson 1987; 50); thus, to explain the precise root meaning of these modal themes, we adopted the etymological approach to determine the diachronic changes and synchronical links between the meanings of these modal verbs in the next steps. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, since the given modal themes carry force, the force schema plays an effective role in helping us answer the research questions.

After obtaining the root meaning of each modal with the etymological approach, the Quranic usage of these structures was investigated, and the link between the root and the modal meanings of these themes was analyzed based on the force schema.

The English translation of the Quran is based on Ali Quli Qarai's translation, but the original text of the Quran is used in extracting the meanings of the verses and studies.

3. Modal force-carrying structures in the Quran

In Arabic, the modal function of verbs can be found in "imperfect verbs" (*afʿāl-i nāqiṣih*) such as "kāna" (كان), "laysa" (ليس), "māzāla" (مازال), "ṣāra" (صار), "kāda" (كاد) and its sisters (*kāda, awshaka, jaʿala and ʿasā*), "inna" (إنّ) and its sisters (*inna, anna, layta, and laʿalla*), and "afʿāl-i qulūb" (the verbs of the heart such as *ẓanna, ḥasaba, ra'ā, ṣayyara,* and *jaʿala*). Among these, the current paper examines the three modal force-carrying structures "jaʿala," "ʿasā" and "laʿalla."

3.1. *Jaʿala*

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The root "j-ʿ-l" (جعل) is used 346 times in the Quran in nominal structures (agent noun *jāʿil* جاعِل), and simple verb *jaʿala* (in the active voice, and only one case in the passive case) (ʿAbdul Bāqī 1944, 170-174). Arabic grammarians have stated different meanings and functions for it:

1. In non-modal and physical usage, it means placing something on top of another. In this structure, "jaʿala" means "waḍaʿa" (وَضَـــعَ) (cf. Ibn Sayyidah 2000, 1:327; Ibn Manẓūr 1993, 11:110).

2. In non-modal/modal usage, it means to create and bring into being. In this structure, "jaʿala" is synonymous with "awjada" (أوجَـدَ) and "khalaqa" (خَلَقَ) (Imīl Badīʿ 1988, 298; Al-Ghalāyīnī 1985, 36).

3. In modal usage, as a sister of "kāda," it means to start something. In this structure, "jaʿala" is synonymous with "bada'a" (بَدَأَ) (Imīl Badīʿ 1988, 297; Al-Ghalāyīnī 1985, 371).

4. In modal usage as a verb of the heart, it means assumption and certainty. In this structure, "jaʿala" is synonymous with "ẓanna" (ظنَّ) or "iʿtaqada" (إعتَقَدَ) (Imīl Badīʿ 1988, 297; Al-Ghalāyīnī 1985, 33).

5. In modal usage, it is one of the derivatives of the verbs of hearts and means to make something out of something else or to change something from one state into another. In this structure, "jaʿala" is synonymous with "ṣayyara" (صيَّرَ) (Imīl Badīʿ 1988, 297; Al-Ghalāyīnī 1985, 35).

To discover the connection between the modal and the root meanings, it is necessary to examine the root meaning of jaʿala. Classical Arabic lexicographers have mentioned different meanings for this root: making, transforming, creating, naming, placing, giving (*a ʾṭā* أعطى), dropping, and assuming (Farāhīdī 1989, 1:229; Azharī 2001, 1:240; Jawharī 1956, 4:1656; Rāghib Iṣfahānī 1991, 196; Zamakhsharī 1979, 95; Ibn Manẓūr

1993, 11:110). The meaning of making (*ṣunʿ* صُنع) is the oldest meaning given by Farāhīdī and is repeated in later lexical sources.

Some historical lexicographers have listed its meanings as "to put, to make, to appoint, to impose," and they believe that this root has not entered other Semitic languages, except for Syriac (Mashkūr 1978, 1:144; Zammit 2002, 123). In Syriac, this root appears as ܓܥܠ meaning creating, entrusting, delivering, and committing (Brun 1895, 79). but there is no trace of this root in other Semitic languages.

This root is used in the Quran in both physical and modal-non-physical forms. In non-modal usage, it means placing (examples 1-6) and creating and making (examples 7-8).

1. (يَجْعَلُونَ أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِم): *"they put their fingers in their ears"* (Quran 2:19).

2. (ثُمَّ اجْعَلْ عَلَى كُلِّ جَبَلٍ مِّنْهُنَّ جُزْءًا): *"place a part of them on every mountain"* (Quran 2:260).

3. (وَ لِكُلٍّ جَعَلْنا مَوالِيَ): *"For everyone We have appointed heirs"* (Quran 4:33).

4. (إِنَّما جُعِلَ السَّبْتُ عَلَى الَّذينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فيه): *"The Sabbath was only prescribed for those who differed about it"* (Quran 16:124).

5. (لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنا مَنْسَكا): *"For every nation We have appointed a rite"* (Quran 22:67).

6. (وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكافِرينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنينَ سَبيلاً): *"Allah will never provide the faithless any way [to prevail] over the faithful"* (Quran 4:141).

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In examples 1 and 2 "jaʿala" is used in the sense of physically placing an object on/in another object. Humans perceive this force in their physical experience of interaction with the environment as the necessity of sufficient and effective force to transfer objects from one place to another. Based on these examples, the agent in these usages is a human.

Through the metaphorical extension of physical placement to abstract and non-physical placement, this root is used in the sense of enacting social (example 3), doctrinal (example 4), or formative laws (example 5). The agent for this use of "jaʿala" is God. This semantic transfer has been based on the human physical experience of the necessity of force in the physical placement of objects, based on the maps [the law is an object] and [the state is a location]. In this way, God is conceptualized as a lawmaker in the form of a person who has the effective and sufficient power to enact a law (in human physical experience, equivalent of placing an object) in a specific state (in human physical experience, the equivalent of a location). This abstract force of the lawmaker is of the enablement schematic type. It is perceived based on physical forces and is necessary for enacting social and doctrinal laws in a binding state.

"Jaʿala" of formative law involves creation and making, in addition to the meaning of placing and accompaniment of force with this action; formative laws are defined as the principles based on which the formation system was created and, therefore, it is impossible to violate them (Javādī Āmulī 2009, 3:326).

As mentioned before, this root is used in its non-modal usage in the sense of creating (Example 7) as God's action and, in one case, in the sense of physical construction (Example 8). In the latter use, the verb "banā" (بَنَى) meaning making in a similar register, has replaced the root "jaʿala" (Example 9). The metaphorical expansion of this concept can also be observed in the modal usages of jaʿala, which will be examined below.

7. (وَهُوَ الَّذي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ النُّجومَ لِتَهْتَدُوا بِها): *"It is He who made the stars for you, so that you may be guided by them" (Quran 6:97).*

8. (فَاجْعَلْ لی صَرْحاً): *"and build me a tower" (Quran 28:38).*

9. (ابنِ لی صَرْحا): *"Build me a tower" (Quran 40:36).*

The main high-frequency modal-non-physical usage of this root is used in two general ways in the Quran:

a) "Jaʿala" as an action attributed to God (examples 10-11) or an action whose realization is requested from God (example 12)

In these modal usages, the meaning of "jaʿala" is a metaphorical extension of both "waḍaʿa" (putting in a place) and "ṣanaʿa" (to create and make); based on the maps [position is a location] and [creating a state is making], conferring a position or sanctifying a location is conceptualized based on placing in a location (examples 10-11), and creating a state is conceptualized based on making (examples12-13). According to grammarians and lexicographers, this modal usage means to "transform from one mode to another" (*taṣyīr* تصییر); however, as already noted, this modal meaning is not separate from the root meaning of this root.

In all the mentioned actions, based on the human physical experience of the need to apply force in moving and building objects, i.e., enablement schema, God is conceptualized as a person who has effective and sufficient force.

10. (قالَ إِنِّي جاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِماماً): *"I am making you the Imam of mankind" (Quran 2:124).*

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11. (وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنا): *"when We made the House a place of reward for mankind and a sanctuary"* (Quran 2:125).

12. (رَبَّنا لا تَجْعَلْنا فِتْنَةً لِلْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ): *"Do not make us a [means of] test for the wrongdoing lot"* (Quran 10:85).

13. (قَدْ جَعَلَها رَبِّى حَقًّا): *"my Lord has made come true"* (Quran 12:100).

In addition to the mentioned cases, the verb "jaʿala" in the sense of creating is also used in the modal state and means to create something in a special state or with special characteristics (Example 14). In this usage, the metaphorical expansion of both "waḍaʿa" and "ṣanaʿa" from physical to abstract is evident.

14. (وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ لِباساً وَالنَّوْمَ سُباتاً وَجَعَلَ النَّهارَ نُشُورا): *"It is He who made for you the night as a covering and sleep for rest and He made the day a recall to life"* (Quran 25:47).

The noteworthy point in this usage of "jaʿala" is that it is attributed to God in almost all cases and to prophets in very few cases (see Quran 3:61), as prophets are connected to the power of God. With this conceptualization model, God is introduced as the source of effective force in all formative and legislative systems and is conceptualized as a powerful being; God is the only effective force in the enactment and establishment of formative laws governing the system of creation, as well as legislative laws governing the system of social life, granting social status to people or sanctity to some locations, and dominion, even over Satan (the origin of evil in the world) (see Quran 7:27).

b) "Jaʿala" as an action whose agent is someone other than God

In almost all the cases where "jaʿala" is attributed to agents other than God, this root is used in the sense of fake and forge. These include false

attributes such as the existence of other gods besides Allah (example15 - 16), claiming the existence of a child for God (see Quran 16:57), changing and distorting the Holy Book (example17), distortion of laws inconsistent with the Divine law (see Quran 10:59), and other cases (see Quran 7:138; Quran 9:19; Quran 24:63).

15. (الَّذينَ يَجْعَلُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلهاً آخَر): *"those who set up another deity besides Allah" (Quran 15:96).*

16. (فَلا تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أَنْدادا): *"do not set up equals to Allah" (Quran 2:22).*

17. (تَجْعَلُونَهُ قَرَاطِيسَ): *"which you make into parchments" (Quran 6:91).*

That "jaʿala" is used for agents other than God in the sense of a false state completes the point mentioned above; God is not only the source of necessary and sufficient power in the formative and legislative system, but also the only effective force in these systems, and no one but him or someone who depends on this source of his power (such as prophets) has enough power to create or change these systems, and if this is claimed, it is a lie.

According to grammarians, this modalic use of *jaʿala* means conjecture and suspicion, and the modal meaning is assumed to be unrelated to the root meaning; meanwhile, in all the above cases, there is a link between the root meaning and the modal meaning.

Transferring, which means physically placing and making (enacting a law, creating a state, or putting something in a state) is not specific to this root or the Arabic language. It has also occurred in other languages unrelated to Arabic. For example, in English as an Indo-European language, make in the original meaning means to establish and enact

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(example a), in the modal usage, it means to cause to be or become (example b), appointing or placing in a position (example c), and so forth.

a: The Senate wants to make a law, they start by writing a bill.

b: It makes them happy.

c: Made him the first bishop of York.

The origin of this common semantic transformation over time is not linguistic kinship; rather, there is a similarity in the way people think about a concept. Over time, corporeality, as a common feature of all human beings has affected the process of concept formation, and different meanings that have been created in the form of polysemy, have been achieved from the metaphorical expansion of central concepts (Johnson 1987, xii).

3.2. *ʿAsā*

This root is used 30 times in 28 verses of the Quran, 28 times in the form of "ʿasā" (عسى), and twice in the form of "ʿasaytum (عسيتُم)" (ʿAbdul Bāqī 1944, pp. 461-462); in all cases, it is used with the infinitive marker an. For the non-modal sense, lexicographers have expressed the meanings of intensifying, thickening, hardening, and gaining strength, and the use of this verb in its modal sense is to express doubt, hope, and certainty (Farāhīdī 1989, 2: 201-202; Ibn Durayd 1988, 2:845; Rāghib Iṣfahānī 1991, 566; Zubaydī 1993, 19:574). ʿAllāma Muṣṭafavī believes that the sense of power exists in this root; hope, conjecture, and certainty are the effects of this main meaning because sufficient power can realize something (Muṣṭafavī 1982, 8:162).

This verb is not used in a non-modal way in the Quran, but many linguists and exegetes believe that "ʿasā," when used in connection with God, does not mean doubt or possibility; rather, it means certainty and

belief in the occurrence of an action (Farāhīdī 1989, 2: 200-201; Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī 2000, 5:294; Qurṭubī 1985, 5:294; Ibn ʿAṭiyyah 2001, 2: 442). Some exegetes have explained that the word "ʿasā" concerning God, signifies not only certainty, but also means to give hope in a way that motivates the audience to take action (Zamakhsharī 1987, 3:427).

To access the root meaning of this term, one should refer to the Arabic language family, the Proto-Semitic language, and the Proto-Afro-Asiatic language. In a Comparative Lexical Study of Arabic, Martin R. Zammit stated the meaning of "perhaps" and "it may be" for "ʿasā" and believes that this root has no equivalent in other Semitic languages (Zammit 2002, 288). Meanwhile, further examination shows that this root is related to the root עשי In Hebrew and Aramaic, and has also existed in Afro-Asiatic and Semitic languages. In the Afro-Asiatic, ʿiĉ meaning do, make in the form of a reconstructed root ʿVŝVy entered the Semitic and is equivalent of ʿŝy in Hebrew and ʿšy in South Arabic while preserving the Afro-Asiatic sense. Zammit did not mention the transfer of this root from the Semitic to the Arabic (Orel & Stolbova 1995, 246).

In Aramaic Targum, עשה (the verb form of the root עשי) means to do, work, prepare in the stem האשע; it means to be done, made, to become and in the stem העשה ; to cause, to do, to order in the stem pi'el ; it means to force and, in the nominal structure of עשייה , means doing, action (Jastrow 1903, vol. 2, 1124-1125). In Hebrew, this verb appears in the form of עשה from the root עשי meaning to work, to do, to make, to create, construct, build, to prepare, to offer or sacrifice, to appoint or constitute; in the stem of niphal it has the same meaning as its Aramaic equivalent; and in the nominal structure, it means deed, work (Gesenius 1939, 793-795; Feyerabend n.d., 261).

The verb עשה in Hebrew in the non-modal structure means to make, do and create (example d) and in the modal structure, it means to cause to be (example e); as נעש, it means become (example f), and as עשוי, it means

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may, could (example g) (Glinert 2004, 194; Coffin & Bolozky 2005, 301–302).

d: הוא עשה את מה שהוטל עליו - He did what he was assigned.

e: עשה את הלבן לשחור – Make the white black.

f: עם הדמן הוא נעשה ליד ימיני של המושל - Over time, he became the Governor's right-hand man.

g: דנה עשויה להתקבל לעבודה – Dana may/is likely to be hired here.

In Arabic, the root ʿasā is not included in the stem of "infiʿāl" (انفعال) (equivalent to the niphal in Hebrew and Aramaic) and, therefore, the use of the second modal in the sense of becoming is not observed for this root in the Quran, while the first and third meanings appear in the Quran. In addition to the semantic similarity of עשה and עשה in the modal state with "ʿasā" in Arabic, the form of their usage in sentences is also similar, and all are used with the infinitive markerל in Hebrew and its equivalent " an" (أن) in Arabic, and this supports the existence of a link between these two roots in Hebrew and Arabic.

This root is used in various verbal (different stems) and nominal structures in Aramaic and Hebrew and is used modally and non-modally in Hebrew. On the other hand, it appears in Quranic Arabic in a completely frozen and non-morphological form (only two forms ʿasā and ʿasaytum) and only in the modal form. This phenomenon expresses two possibilities: 1) This root is a loanword in Arabic from the Eastern branch of Semitic languages (Aramaic and Hebrew), or 2) It existed in Arabic since the Semitic period and declined in the Arabic language, such that in the Quranic Arabic period, it was almost dead; but the existence of this root in post-Quranic Arabic periods shows that it not only did not disappear, but also found more morphological forms and, as a result, was not going

through the process of elimination. As mentioned before, the Etymological Dictionary of Afro-Asian Languages does not mention the entry of this root into Arabic; therefore, the possibility of it being a loanword is stronger.

The analysis of this modal structure in its Quranic usages based on the force schema and the metaphorical expansion of the root meaning from non-modal to modal sense is a way to explain its meaning. Performing a physical task (the non-modal meaning of ʿasā) requires the presence of two components: 1) The presence of sufficient force and 2) The absence of restraints (or removal of restraints). In this way, in the human experience of moving objects, if there are no restraints to performing the task (or the existing restraints are removed), its occurrence becomes possible; then, if sufficient force is present, the physical movement is realized. These two components are observed in a graded form in the modal sense of ʿasā.

18. *''who repents, has faith* (فَأَمَّا مَن تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَعَسَى أَن يَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُفْلِحِين): *and acts righteously, maybe he will be among the felicitous'' (Quran 28:67).*

19. *''Yet it may be* (وَعَسَى أَن تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَى أَن تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ): *that you dislike something, which is good for you, and it may be that you love something, which is bad for you'' (Quran 2:216).*

20. *''He said, 'Maybe your Lord will destroy* (قَالَ عَسَى رَبُّكُمْ أَن يُهْلِكَ عَدُوَّكُم): *your enemy'' (Quran 7:129).*

21. *''Then We made you successors on* (ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ خَلَائِفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ مِن بَعْدِهِمَ): *the earth after them'' (Quran 10:14).*

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22. (وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَّكَ عَسَى أَن يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَّحْمُودًا): ‘‘*And keep vigil for a part of the night, as a supererogatory [devotion] for you. It may be that your Lord will raise you to a praiseworthy station*’’ *(Quran 17:79).*

In example 18, "ʿasā," in the sense of being possible, refers to removing a restraint against doing a task; the effect of repentance and righteous action in achieving salvation - as an abstract concept - is conceptualized based on the human experience of removing a restraint against performing a task, such that if there is no other restraint – for example, doing improper things - then there is possibility and hope of reaching salvation as a goal.

In some cases, "ʿasā" also refers to the absence of restraint; for instance, in example 19, it means the possibility of disliking something beneficial to the person, and vice versa. This possibility, based on human physical experience, is equivalent to the absence of a restraint to perform a task.

In example 20, the word "ʿasā" is attributed to God and it is a cause of dispute among exegetes and linguists in its interpretation as certainty and confidence or probability and hope; the majority of translators still use the sense of possibility (Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī 2000, 14:342; Ṭabrasī 1993, 4:717; Ilāhī Qumshe'ī 2001; Anṣāriyān 2004). In this example, the replacement of this term with "jaʿala" in a similar context (Example 21) and the completion of verses by pointing to the realization of something whose possibility was noted (see Quran 7:137) strengthens the sense of certainty and confidence.

In these cases, the modal meaning of "ʿasā," based on its physical meaning, has been developed by emphasizing the component of the presence of sufficient force along with the component of the absence of any restraint; hence, it has approached the meaning of doing (certainty and confidence). This is contrary to previous cases in which the component of removing the restraint was bolder, and hence, it approached the meaning of possibility and hope.

In some cases, the infinitive of power is mentioned in the modal use of *ʿasā*. For example, in Example 22, night-time prayer to God is conceptualized as a factor that can provide sufficient force to reach certain spiritual levels.

3.3. *Laʿalla*

The word "laʿalla" is used 129 times in the Quran (ʿAbdul Bāqī 1944, pp. 648-349). In the categorization of Arabic words, this word belongs to the category of prepositions, but it is not a good example for it and is considered a verb-like preposition; on the one hand, it has the characteristics of a prototype of prepositions, such as not being conjugatable, and on the other hand, it is similar to the prototype of verbs and creates "naṣb" and "rafʿ" in the words following it.

Most lexicographers of the classical Arabic period considered its origin to be "ʿalla" (عَلَّ), and its beginning (L ل) to be redundant. For this word, they expressed the senses of doubt and hope, while some have also pointed out that "laʿalla" in relation to God means certainty and confidence (Jawharī 1956, 5:1815; Ibn Sayyidih 2000, 1:97; Ibn Manẓūr 1993, 11:607). In some exegetical hadiths, similar to "ʿasā," the meaning of giving hope and encouraging to do something is mentioned for this word (ʿArūsī Ḥuwayzī 1994, 3:380).

This word is related to the reconstructed root ʿVlal in Afro-Asiatic language meaning to do and build which entered the Semitic as ʿVlVl meaning do, act severely, and entered Hebrew as the root ʿll (Orel & Stolbova 1995, 254). In Hebrew, עָלַל is the equivalent of "ʿalla" in Arabic, which means doing forcefully and repeating it (Gesenius 1939, 759; Mashkūr 1978, 2:578). In Syriac, ܥܠܠ means to cause and act forcefully (Costaz 2002, 254).

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The link between the root and modal meanings in "laʿalla" is similar to "ʿasā;" the components of removal or lack of restraint and the presence of sufficient force can be seen in the modal meaning of laʿalla and create the sense of possibility, probability, and certainty.

In most Quranic applications of this term, what has been discussed regarding its occurrence can be categorized into two general groups: the first group includes characteristics and attributes in humans (e.g., example 23), and the second group encompasses the ultimate state and condition that will be achieved by humans (e.g., example 24).

23. (كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ): *"Thus does Allah clarify His signs for mankind so that they may be Godwary"* (Quran 2:187).

24. (وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ): *"be wary of Allah, so that you may be felicitous"* (Quran 2:189).

25. (وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّ السَّاعَةَ قَرِيبٌ): *"What do you know maybe the Hour is near!"* (Quran 42:17)

As for the first category, "laʿalla" refers to the removal of existing restraints, such that the result is achieved in the absence of other restraints. For instance, in Example 23, the interpretation of divine signs is conceptualized as a factor that eliminates an existing restraint to piety and thus increases the hope and probability of its occurrence.

In the second category, it refers to the achievement of the ultimate goal of people, such as salvation, growth, and receiving the mercy of God (see Quran 2:186; Quran 6:155; Quran 5:90); therefore, in addition to the component of the absence or removal of restraints, the component of having sufficient force is also considered. For instance, in example 24, piety is conceptualized as a sufficient force to realize salvation.

In a few cases, "laʿalla" refers to the absence of restraints; example 25 notes that there is no restraint to the imminent realization of the Day of Judgment, and therefore, its occurrence is possible at any time.

Conclusion

In a case study, the present research examined the two verbs "jaʿala" and "ʿasā" and the word "laʿalla" which is placed between the two categories of prepositions and verbs in Arabic from this point of view.

The verb "jaʿala" is used in both modal and non-modal forms. In the non-modal structure, it means making and placing, with the secondary senses of enacting a law and creating. The meaning of enacting a law is the outcome of the metaphorical expansion of the original meaning based on the mappings [the law is an object] and [the state is a location] along with the schematic concept of the existence of sufficient force in enacting a binding law. The meaning of creating is derived from the meaning of establishing a formative law, and in the same way, implies the schematic concept of the existence of sufficient force.

In its modal meaning, this root is attributed to God and others. In cases where "jaʿala" is modally attributed to God or its fulfillment is requested from Him, the modal meaning is derived from the root meaning and is the outcome of the metaphorical expansion of both the meanings of making and placing; God is conceptualized as the source of the effective and sufficient force. In cases where "jaʿala" is modally attributed to non-God, it means false jaʿala, such as attributing a partner or a child to God and enacting laws that are not by Divine laws; in this sense, it refers to the lack of sufficient power in any one but God in the system of creation and legislation. Hence, contrary to the view of considering the modal meanings of this root unrelated to each other and the non-modal meaning, this semantic connection exists in all cases.

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"ʿAsā" is used only modally in the Quran. The results showed that this root is a Hebrew loanword with the original meaning of doing and making, and in this case, the modal meaning is derived from the root meaning. Performing a physical task requires two components: the absence of restraints or the removal of existing restraints, and the presence of sufficient force. These two components exist in the modal meaning of this root in a graded form and create different meanings of "*ʿasā*" in the Quran.

"ʿAsā" in some cases refers to the removal of a restraint to achieving a goal; therefore, based on human physical experience, if there is no other restraint, the outcome can be achieved. In other cases, it refers to the absence of restraint; therefore, based on human physical experience, the outcome is possible. In other cases, often used for God, the component of the existence of sufficient force is also mentioned. Therefore, the outcome will be achieved based on human physical experience. The latter meaning, which is disputed by lexicographers and exegetes and has a different meaning than the previous ones, can be accurately explained through schematic analysis.

"Laʿalla" is used in the Quran only in a modal form and in a similar sense and function to "ʿasā;" the difference is that it is often used in connection with human characteristics and traits or human goals and final states. In connection with human characteristics, it refers to the removal of restraint on the way to realization, in connection with human goals, it also entails the component of the presence of sufficient force.

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