Pragmatics in Religion: Speech Acts in Ibn Kathir's Interpretation of Environmental Ethics

Devi Suci Windariyah [1*]
[1]UIN Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember; Indonesia

*correspondence e-mail: devisuciwindariyah@uinkhas.ac.id

Abstract	This is a study of speech act analysis as part of pragmatic studies contained in the interpretation of the Qur'an by Ibn Kathir. In the Qur'an Surah Al-Rum verse 41 contains about the seeming corruption on earth. The purpose of this study is to analyse the speech acts of Ibn Kathir's interpretation of natural damage, the factors that cause natural damage on earth, and the implications of speech acts (pragmatic) in Qur'anic studies. The results showed that the illocution contained in the interpretation of Ibn Kathir is assertive and directive. From the classification of speech acts, it is found that the factors that can cause natural damage are human sin, and the loss of one's belief in God's supernatural power. The Pragmatic Implications of Ibn Kathir's interpretation are: affirmation of logical pragmatics, rejection of dualism, context and variability, interaction and negotiation, and implications for Comparative Ethics.

Introduction

The study of pragmatics in religious discourse offers valuable insights into how sacred texts function not only as theological doctrine but also as performative speech that carries ethical, social, and ecological implications. In particular, the Qur'an has long been regarded as a source of guidance for addressing complex human challenges, including moral decay, social injustice, and environmental degradation. Interpreting Qur'anic discourse, therefore, requires more than textual analysis; it necessitates attention to the context, function, and impact of language as used by exegetes such as Ibn Kathir.[1][2]

Pragmatic approaches in religious studies have evolved through several key trends: first, pragmatics in the context of religious translation[3]; second, pragmatics as a framework

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[1] Chad Danyluck and Elizabeth Page-Gould, "Social and Physiological Context Can Affect the Meaning of Physiological Synchrony," *Scientific Reports* 9, no. 1 (2019): 1–13, https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-019-44667-5.

[2] Ibrahim Kalantari, "Quran Objective Solutions to Meet the Needs of Modern Man," *Review of European Studies* 9, no. 2 (2017): 286, https://doi.org/10.5539/res.v9n2p286; Edi Tri Sulistyo, *Pragmatik Suatu Kajian Awal* (Semarang: Universitas Sebelas Maret, 2003); Danyluck and Page-Gould, "Social and Physiological Context Can Affect the Meaning of Physiological Synchrony."

[3] Nesaem Mehdi Al-Aadili, "A Pragmatic Approach to Translating Speech Acts in Religious Discourse," *Al Ameed Journal* 12, no. 46 (2023): 273–94, https://doi.org/10.55568/amd.v12i46.273-294; Maha

for argumentation in theological debates[4]; and third, pragmatics as an interdisciplinary tool bridging linguistics, ethics, and theology[5]. While these approaches have contributed to the development of pragmatic religious studies, the application of speech act theory, as formulated by Austin and Searle, to classical tafsir literature remains underexplored. In particular, speech act theory provides a lens to examine how language not only conveys meaning but also performs actions, such as warning, commanding, or promising, all of which are relevant in interpreting Qur'anic verses on ecological concerns.

This study focuses on the interpretation of *Surah al-Rūm: 41* in Ibn Kathir's tafsir, which discusses the theme of corruption and destruction on earth (ẓuhara al-fasād fī al-barr wa al-baḥr). This verse has often been cited in modern ecological discourse, yet few studies have analyzed it from a pragmatic perspective. Ibn Kathir's exegesis offers rich speech acts embedded within the interpretive narrative—acts that warn, instruct, and implicate human behavior in environmental decline. These performative dimensions make speech act theory an appropriate tool to uncover how divine speech is mediated, contextualized, and given ethical force in classical Qur'anic commentary.

Accordingly, this study aims to explore the types of speech acts in Ibn Kathir's interpretation of *Surah al-Rūm: 41* concerning environmental degradation, identify the causes of natural destruction as constructed in the tafsir, and examine the ethical and pragmatic implications of these speech acts. Through this lens, the study argues that pragmatic analysis enhances our understanding of Qur'anic interpretation by highlighting the communicative and ethical functions of language, especially in relation to human responsibility toward nature.

Result and Discussion
Contextual Discourse in Pragmatic Interpretation of Qur'anic Exegesis

The pragmatic approach is used to examine the meaning intended by the speaker in a text. Context in pragmatic studies determines the speaker's intention with the interlocutor. To achieve interpretation of the concrete situation of the speaker's intention, external language is needed in the form of other utterances in the background of a text. *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Aẓīm* is a seminal exegetical work by Ibn Kathir, a prominent 14th-century classical Islamic scholar renowned for his contributions to Qur'anic interpretation and Islamic jurisprudence. As a medieval exegete, Ibn Kathir's commentary is characterized by a strong reliance on prophetic traditions (ḥadīth), reports from early generations (athār), and intertextual references to other parts of the Qur'an. Interpreting the meanings conveyed in his tafsir thus requires attention not only to the linguistic structure of the text but also to its contextual layers including theological, legal, and socio-historical elements.

A pragmatic approach, particularly through the framework of speech act theory, can assist researchers in analyzing how Ibn Kathir constructs meaning within specific discursive contexts. Rather than treating the text as a static doctrinal explanation, this approach allows

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Hani, Zaidan Hashim, and Aliwy Mohammed, "A Pragmatic Approach to Translating Speech Acts in Religious Discourse," *Education College Journal*, 2019; I. M. Shuliak, "PRAGMATIC TRANSPOSITION OF SPEECH ACTS IN ENGLISH DISCOURSE," *Lviv Philological Journal*, no. 6 (2019).

[4] Al-Aadili, "A Pragmatic Approach to Translating Speech Acts in Religious Discourse"; Hani, Hashim, and Mohammed, "A Pragmatic Approach to Translating Speech Acts in Religious Discourse"; Shuliak, "PRAGMATIC TRANSPOSITION OF SPEECH ACTS IN ENGLISH DISCOURSE."

[5] Thomas A. Tweed, "The Interdisciplinary Study of Geography and Religion: A Pragmatic Approach," *Revista Relegens Thréskeia* 3, no. 2 (2014): 01, https://doi.org/10.5380/rt.v3i2.39093; Jacob A. Belzen, "A Hermeneutical, Interdisciplinary Approach to the Study of Religion," in *Towards Cultural Psychology of Religion*, 2010, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-90-481-3491-5_2; Eric Racine, "Interdisciplinary Approaches for a Pragmatic Neuroethics," *American Journal of Bioethics* 8, no. 1 (2008).

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for a dynamic reading that considers the intentionality, function, and communicative force of Ibn Kathir's interpretations as situated within the interpretive conventions of his time.

Speech act theory is part of pragmatic studies, which is in the form of utterances from social interactions in analyzing Ibn Kasir's interpretation contextually. The meaning that is communicated can not only be understood based on the use of language in speech but also determined by comprehensive aspects of communication, including situational aspects of communication. To reveal the meaning of the act intended by the speaker is largely determined by the speaker's language ability to deal with certain situations. Exploring the acts of locution and illocution in the language of the speaker *Tafsir al Qur'an al 'Aḍīm* makes it easier for researchers to analyse aspects of communication comprehensively. In contrast to perlocutionary acts that reveal the impact of speech, it can understand the language skills of speakers in certain situations.[6]

These results are directly relevant to the focus or research question and are meticulously written in 10-15 lines. They encapsulate three key points, each instrumental in explaining the issue or phenomenon under investigation. Firstly, the result describes the issues or phenomena being researched or studied in detail. Secondly, the result explains the factors influencing the emergence of the issue or phenomenon being researched or studied critically. Thirdly, the results show the implications of the issue or phenomenon being researched or studied in a transformative way.

Pragmatic Study in Religion

Pragmatics in religious studies is defined as an approach that emphasizes social context, interaction, and local practices in understanding ethics and religion. [7]. Pragmatics in the Qur'ān has developed significantly, reflecting the intricate relationship between language, meaning and context. This development is evident through various linguistic analyses that highlight the Qur'ān's unique stylistic and pragmatic features. [8].

Pragmatic studies in the interpretation of the Qur'an aim to uncover the various forms of utterance, layers of meaning, speaker intentions, and communicative contexts embedded in the sacred text. One of the most influential frameworks in this field is John Searle's speech act theory, which classifies utterances based on their communicative function and the relationship between form and force. According to Searle, speech acts can be divided into five categories[9]:

1. Assertives: statements that convey beliefs or describe states of affairs (e.g., "Truly, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful". [Q.2:173]).
2. Directives: utterances intended to get the listener to do something (e.g., "And perform *As-Salat (Iqamat-asSalat),* and give *Zakat"* [Q.2:43]).
3. Commissives: expressions of commitment or promises (e.g., "that for them there is forgiveness and a great reward (i.e. Paradise)." [Q.5:9]).

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[6] Sulistyo, *Pragmatik Suatu Kajian Awal.*

[7] G. Scott Davis, "The Pragmatic Turn in the Study of Religion," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 33, no. 4 (2005): 659–68, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9795.2005.00243.x.

[8] Hassan Badr Hassan, "A Pragmatic Analysis: Implications of Lexical Choices in Translating Quranic Rhetoric," *Advances in Language and Literary Studies* 11, no. 3 (2020): 1, https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.alls.v.11n.3p.1; Dr. Sami Al-Heeh, "Revisiting What Is Termed as Anomalous Formulaic Expressions in the Qur'anic Discourse: A Cognitive Study from a Pragma-Stylistic Perspective," *Middle East Research Journal of Linguistics and Literature* 1, no. 1 (2021): 18–32, https://doi.org/10.36348/merjll.2021.v01i01.004.

[9] Hekmat Abed Daifallah Khazaleh, Ahmad Arifin Sapar, and Jariah Mohd Jan, "A Pragmatic Analysis of the Speech Act of Supplication in the Holy Quran," *Al-Dad Journal* 7, no. 1 (2023): 40–53.

4. Expressives: statements that convey psychological states (e.g., "Say (0 Muhammad SAW): "I am only a man like you." [Q.18:110]).
5. Declarations: utterances that bring about a change in status or reality, often associated with divine judgment (e.g., "and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another." [Q.49:13]).

In the context of Qur'anic interpretation, especially in Ibn Kathir's tafsir, these categories help reveal the illocutionary force that is, what the Qur'anic utterance is doing rather than merely saying. For example, a command ("And do not do mischief on the earth" [Q.7:56]) is not merely a prohibition but a directive speech act that positions the speaker (God) with authoritative intent toward ethical action. Identifying these speech acts allows for a deeper understanding of the performative dimensions of divine discourse, and how exegetes like Ibn Kathir mediate such acts for their interpretive communities.

Variations in word derivation and syntactic structure significantly affect the pragmatic implications of Qur'ānic texts, particularly in how meaning is conveyed through speech acts. However, several studies have shown that many English translations fail to capture these pragmatic nuances, resulting in a loss or distortion of the intended illocutionary force. [10] For instance, Abdul-Raof (2001) highlights how the phrase "lā rayba fīh" in *Surah al-Baqarah: 2*, often translated as "there is no doubt in it," fails to reflect the assertive and performative force embedded in the original Arabic, which not only conveys certainty but also functions rhetorically as a challenge to skeptics.[11] This loss of force reduces the verse's persuasive impact, which in the Arabic functions as both divine affirmation and epistemological positioning.

Therefore, the study of pragmatics in the Qur'an is not limited to linguistic form, but rather constitutes an investigation into human action as it is motivated by and reflected in divine speech. It begins with belief in the Qur'anic message, proceeds through processes of interpretation and intention attribution, and culminates in the conscious enactment of behavior that responds to the speech acts embedded in the divine text. This approach underscores that Qur'anic communication is not merely descriptive or doctrinal, but also performative—shaping ethical attitudes and guiding actions in response to its pragmatic force.

Speech Acts from the Interpretation of Apparent Damage on Land and Sea

One of the functions of the study of pragmatics in the Qur'an is to distinguish the Qur'anic text contained in a person's work. Because in one's work must have undergone pragmatic transformation. The Qur'an is pragmatically a collection of writings compiled as a guide to human life. human life runs dynamically and changes according to the times. In every interpretation of the Qur'an, sometimes there are differences in the meaning presented by the interpreters, adjusted to the existing context. Therefore, pragmatics is used by researchers to be the theoretical framework in this article, because pragmatics is one of the linguistics that connects language with its context. Speech act theory is one of the pragmatic theories that will be used to analyse Surah Al-Rum verse 41 in the Qur'an.

The Locution of ibn Kathir's Interpretation of Damage on earth

Locution is a speech act in the form of words, phrases and sentences whose meaning is in accordance with what is meant in the dictionary, namely this speech act functions to

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[10] Abed Shahooth Khalaf et al., "Morphopragmatic Analysis of Word Derivation Variations in the Holy Quran and Their Translations into English," *Dirasat: Human and Social Sciences* 50, no. 6 (2023): 45–60, https://doi.org/10.35516/hum.v50i6.7034.

[11] H. Abdul-Raof, *Qur'an Translation: Discourse, Texture and Exegesis* (London: Routledge, 2001).

state and inform something to speech partners.

$$ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ$$

Evil (sins and disobedience to Allah) has appeared on land and sea because of what the hands of men have earned (by oppression and evil deeds), that He (Allah) may make them taste a part of that which they have done, in order that they may return (by repenting to Allah, and begging His Pardon)[12]

There are two meanings of the word الْبَرُّ in Ibn Kathir's interpretation الْفَيَافِي which

means the the sahara and الْبَرُّ الْمَعْرُوفُ which means land as we know it. While the meaning

of the word الْبَحْرُ namely الْأَمْصَارُ وَالْقُرَى meaning the big cities and towns and الْبَحْرُ الْمَعْرُوفُ

which means ocean as we know it.

Interpretation of the verse ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ i.e.:

1. The interruption of rain that does not water the earth, resulting in famine on earth and extinction of animals on earth.
2. The killing of many people and the robbing of many boats (ships).

In Ibn Kathir interpretation it is explained that the first opinion is the stronger opinion and is supported by the scholars, which is reinforced by the words of Muhammad Ibn Ishak in his book Sirah, namely:

$$أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ صَالَحَ مَلِكَ أَيْلَةَ، وَكَتَبَ إِلَيْهِ بِبَحْرِهِ، يَعْنِي بِبَلَدِهِ.$$

That the Messenger of Allah once made a peace treaty with the king of Ailah, and set jizyah on his bahr, namely his country.

The story above shows that what is meant by the word al bahr above is not the sea but the State.

For the meaning of بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ meaningful:

1. Abu 'Aliyah said that whoever disobeys Allah on earth has indeed damaged the earth, because the good of the earth and the sky depends on one's obedience.
2. A hadith narrated by Imam Abu Daud which reads:

$$لَحَدٌّ يُقَامُ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ أَهْلِهَا$$

Verily, a hadd punishment inflicted on the earth is preferred to its inhabitants than rain for forty days.

The meaning of the above Hadīth is that when the hadd punishment is enforced on earth, many people refrain from committing acts forbidden by Allah. And when people refrain from committing sinful acts, it causes blessings to descend from the heavens and the earth. This is because it is mentioned in the Saheeh books.

$$إِنَّ الْفَاجِرَ إِذَا مَاتَ تَسْتَرِيْحُ مِنْهُ الْعِبَادُ وَالْبِلَادُ، وَالشَّجَرُ وَالدَّوَابُّ$$

When an evildoer dies, all the servants of the land, the trees and the animals rejoice in his death.

3. Malik has narrated from Zaid ibn Aslam, namely:

$$أَنَّ الْمُرَادَ بِالْفَسَادِ هَا هُنَا الشِّرْكُ. وَفِيْهِ نَظَرٌ$$

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[12] Taqi-ud-Din AI-Hilali and Muhammad Muhsin Khan, *Translation of the Meanings of The Noble Qur'an In The English Language* (Madinah: KING FAHD COMPLEX FOR THE PRINTING OF THE HOLY QUR'AN, 1984).

That is meant by corruption in this verse is polytheism.
For this reason, there is a need for further research.

Then for the meaning of لِيُذِيْقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِيْ عَمِلُوْا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُوْنَ is by testing them with a shortage of wealth, souls and fruit so that it becomes a lesson and retribution for the sinful deeds they have committed, so that they return to the path of Allah. This is related to QS. *Al A'raf* verse 168 which reads:

وَبَلَوْنَاهُمْ بِالْحَسَنَاتِ وَالسَّيِّئَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُوْنَ.

And We tried them with good (blessings) and evil (calamities) in order that they might turn (to Allah's Obedience).

The aforementioned statement demonstrates that the utterance constitutes an exegetical account by Ibn Kathir concerning Surah *al-Rūm* verse 41. Such utterances may be classified as locutionary acts, insofar as the meaning expressed corresponds directly to the intended message without implying any hidden connotations. This classification accords with the perspective of Chaer and Leonie, who contend that a locutionary act refers to a speech act in the sense of "saying," namely an utterance in the form of a meaningful and intelligible sentence comprehensible to the interlocutor.[13]

Assertive and Directive Illocution of Nature Damage Verse

Illocution is an utterance in the form of an explicit performative sentence that is intended to do something and is usually related to giving permission, saying thank you, ordering, offering and promising. And the function of this speech act is that the speech conveyed to the speech partner has the intention to perform an action desired by the speaker during the interaction. Searle [14] reveals that illocution is divided into five, namely: a) assertive: explaining that the proposition expressed is true, b) directive: the intended action requires the listener or reader to carry out an action, c) expressive: the action performed expresses the speaker's psychological feelings according to certain circumstances, d) commissive: the action that requires the speaker to perform the action contained in the utterance, e) declarative: the action that relates the content of the proposition to the actual reality.

The following illocution is found in Ibn Kathir's interpretation of the destruction of nature.

1. Assertive Illocution

Assertive Illocution is an explanation that shows that the expression expressed is true. In Tafsir Ibn Kathir, there are several assertive illocutions.

The first is an expression about the meaning of the word ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ, which begins with the existence of differences of opinion about the meaning of الْفَسَادُ فِي وَالْقَوْلُ الْأَوَّلُ أَظْهَرُ، وَعَلَيْهِ الْأَكْثَرُ، وَيُؤَيِّدُهُ مَا then continued with the assertion that الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ ذِكْرُهُ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ اِسْحَاقٌ فِي السِّيْرَةِ which means that the first opinion is the stronger opinion and is supported by the scholars, which is reinforced by the words of Muhammad Ibn Ishak in his book Sirah.

Second, the meaning of بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ which is corroborated by the hadith narrated by Imam Abu Daud which reads:

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13 Abdul Chaer and Leonie Agustina, *Sosiolinguistik Perkenalan Awal* (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2010). 53
14 R. Kunjana Rahardi, *Pragmatik: Kesantunan Imperatif Bahasa Indonesia* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2005).

لحدٌّ يُقامُ في الأرضِ أحبُّ إلى أَهْلِهَا

Verily, a hadd punishment inflicted on the earth is preferred to its inhabitants than rain for forty days.

The meaning of the above Hadīth is that when the hadd punishment is enforced on earth, many people refrain from committing acts forbidden by Allah. The Hadīth confirms that if people on earth refrain from committing sins, they will avoid the destruction of the earth.

Third, the meaning of لِيُذِيْقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِيْ عَمِلُوْا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُوْنَ This is by testing them with a shortage of wealth, souls and fruit so that it becomes a lesson and retribution for the sinful deeds they have committed, so that they return to the path of Allah. Reinforced by QS. Al A'raf verse 168 which reads:

وَبَلَوْنَاهُمْ بِالْحَسَنَاتِ وَالسَّيِّئَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُوْنَ.

And We tried them with good (blessings) and evil (calamities) in order that they might turn (to Allah's Obedience).

2. Directive illocution

Directive illocution is an action that is intended to require the listener or reader to carry out an action. In the Tafsir Ibn Kathir QS. Al Rum verse 41 there is only one directive illocution, namely in the explanation of the damage referred to in the verse is polytheism.

أَنَّ الْمُرَادَ بِالْفَسَادِ هَا هُنَا الشِّرْكُ. وَفِيْهِ نَظَرٌ

What is meant by damage in this verse is polytheism. For this reason, there is a need for further research.

The underlined word is a directive illocution. Because it requires the listener or reader to carry out further research related to the truth of the explanation of the damage.

To prove that there is a connection between damage and shirk then, researchers do munasabah with the verse before and after Surah Al Rum verse 40. When viewed from the *munasabah* verse, namely by connecting with the previous verse and the verse after it, namely Surah Al-Rum verse 42 which reads:

قُل سيروا في الأرض فانظروْا كيف كان عاقبة الذين من قبل

The meaning: Say (0 Muhammad) "Travel in the land and see what was the end of those before (you)! (Ar-Rum:42)[15]

In the interpretation of Ibn Kathir, it is stated that what is meant by the ancients here is the ancients before you.

كان أكثرهم مشركين

Most of them were (polytheists, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah)[16]

In verse 42, it introduces clear direction through performative verbs قُل ("Say ") which is followed by the imperative سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ ("Travel through the earth") and فَانْظُرُوا("then observe"). This is a classic direct speech act with directive illocutionary force, which urged

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[15] AI-Hilali and Khan, *Translation of the Meanings of The Noble Qur'an In The English Language*.
[16] AI-Hilali and Khan.

listeners to examine the historical consequences as a basis for repentance and alignment with divine truth.

When associated with the previous verse, namely Surah Ar-Rum verse 40 which reads:

<div dir="rtl">ثم يميتكم</div>

then will cause you to die (Ar-Rum:40)[17]

Based on the interpretation of Ibn Kathir explained that what is meant by the verse is after this life

<div dir="rtl">ثم يحييكم</div>

then (again) He will give you life (on the Day of Resurrection) (Ar-Rum:40)[18]

<div dir="rtl">هل من شركائكم</div>

Is there any ofyour (so-called) partners (of Allah) (Ar-Rum:40)[19]

That is, those worshippers whom you worship besides Allah.

<div dir="rtl">مَن يفعلُ مِنْ ذلكم مِن شيء</div>

That do anything of that ? (Ar-Rum:40)[20]

Rather, it is Allah who creates, who provides, who gives life and death. Then He resurrects all creatures back to life on the Day of Judgment. That is why it is mentioned in the next verse:

<div dir="rtl">سبحانه وتعالى عما يشركون</div>

Glory be to Him! And Exalted be He above all that (evil) they associate (with Him) (Ar-Rum:40)[21]

Most high, most holy, most great is Allah SWT from having a partner, counterpart or equal to Him, or begotten or begotten. Rather, He is the One and Only, and everything depends on Him, and He is neither begotten nor born, and there is no one who is equal to Him.

After analysing the verses before and after Surah Ar-Rum verse 41, both verses before and after both explain about the polytheists. One of the causes of damage is the polytheists.

In verse 40, the statement that only Allah creates, gives, kills and gives life is framed in a declarative structure, which functions as assertive illocution. It aims to establish the truth of divine unity and disprove the efficacy of false gods. Rhetorical question هَلْ مِن شُرَكَائِكُم

(مَّن يَفْعَلُ مِن ذُلِكُم مِّن شَيْءٍ"Is there any of your (so-called) partners who can do any of that?") reinforces this point through the negative interrogative structure, which further emphasizes God's exclusive divinity.

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[17] AI-Hilali and Khan.
[18] AI-Hilali and Khan.
[19] AI-Hilali and Khan.
[20] AI-Hilali and Khan.
[21] AI-Hilali and Khan.

Table 1. Type of Illocution on Surah al-Rūm verses 40-42

Verse	Arabic Excerpt / IFID	Speaker	Type of Speech Act (Searle)	Illocutionary Force / Function
40	اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ رَزَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ...	Allah	Assertive	Establishes theological truth about divine attributes (creation, provision, life, death)
40	هَلْ مِن شُرَكَائِكُم مَّن يَفْعَلُ مِن ذَٰلِكُم...؟	Allah	Assertive via Rhetorical Question	Refutes efficacy of polytheistic deities through contrastive reasoning
Tafsir ibnu katsir ayat 41	وَالْقَوْلُ الْأَوَّلُ أَظْهَرُ، وَعَلَيْهِ الْأَكْثَرُ، وَيُؤَيِّدُهُ مَا ذِكْرُهُ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ إِسْحَاقٌ فِي السِّيْرَةِ	Ibnu Kasir	Assertive	An affirmation against damage on earth and land
Tafsir ibnu katsir ayat 41	لحدٌّ يُقامُ في الأرضِ أحبُّ إلى أَهْلِهَا	Nabi Muhammad SAW	Assertive	The Hadith emphasizes the cause of the damage done by humans
Tafsir ibnu katsir ayat 41	وَبَلَوْنَاهُمْ بِالْحَسَنَاتِ وَالسَّيِّئَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ	Allah	Assertive	Surah Al A'raf verse 168 emphasizes the explanation of the verse about the reward for human actions
Tafsir ibnu katsir ayat 41	أَنَّ الْمُرَادَ بِالْفَسَادِ هَا هُنَا الشِّرْكُ. وَفِيهِ نَظَرٌ	Ibnu Kasir	Directive	The underlined word requires the listener or reader to carry out further research regarding the truth of the

				explanation of damage is shirk.
42	قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانْظُرُوا...	Allah to Prophet	Directive	Commands empirical observation as a basis for reflection and repentance

Perlokusi (Effect) on the Reader of Ibn Kathir's interpretation

Perlocution is a speech act that directly or indirectly affects speech partners. It can also be said that perlocution is the effect or result that occurs to speech partners after hearing or reading an utterance. After knowing the Assertive Illocution which is an explanation that shows that the expression expressed is true that the speech partner is not the one who has to listen to it.

1. When knowing that "The interruption of the rain that does not water the earth, resulting in famine on the earth and the extinction of the animals of the earth" is the most correct expression of the meaning of ظهر الفساد في البر والبحر, then one will avoid everything that can cause the interruption of the rain that does not water the earth.

2. Knowing that "Verily a hadd punishment inflicted on the earth is preferable to its inhabitants than rain for forty days", is a confirmation of the explanation of the verse بما كسبت أيدي الناس , then a person will leave and stay away from. everything that can cause someone to get punished. This is in line with the explanation in Ibn Kasir's interpretation of the following hadith " لحدٌّ يُقامُ في الأرضِ أحبُّ إلى أَهْلِهَا" (Verily, a hadd punishment inflicted on the earth is preferred to its inhabitants than rain for forty days), to emphasize the explanation of the verse.

3. Understanding that the verse "And We tried them with good (blessings) and evil (calamities) in order that they might turn (to Allah's Obedience)." (Qur'an, al-Aʿrāf: 168) corresponds closely to "li-yudhīqahum baʿda alladhī ʿamilū laʿallahum yarjiʿūn" (Qur'an, ar-Rūm: 41), reveals a consistent Qur'anic paradigm of divine trial and moral correction. Both verses emphasize that divine afflictions, whether through abundance or hardship, are communicative acts designed to provoke reflection, spiritual awakening, and a return to ethical conduct.

   This thematic linkage underscores the Qur'anic principle that trials (balāʾ) are not merely punitive but serve a pedagogical and ethical function, encouraging believers to engage in self-examination (muḥāsabah) and sincere repentance (tawbah). As Al-Ghazālī affirms, true repentance involves awareness of sin, remorse, and a resolute commitment to ethical improvement. In this light, understanding the performative force of these verses inspires the believer to continually reassess their actions, seek forgiveness, and embody the Qur'anic ethos of moral self-discipline (*riyāḍah nafsiyyah*).[22] Thus, Qur'anic speech acts such as these are not static declarations but dynamic calls to ethical transformation. By recognizing divine trials as speech acts with directive and commissive force, the believer is drawn into an interactive process of moral growth and theological responsibility.

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[22] Abdul Hamid Al-Ghazali, *Ihya' Ulum Al-Din* (Damaskus: Dar al Fikri, 2007).

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The effect that occurs after knowing the intended directive illocution requires the listener or reader to carry out an action, that what is meant by damage in the Qur'an Surah al Rum verse 41 is idolatry, according to Ibn Kathir <u>needs to be researched again</u>, then the speech partner must immediately conduct an in-depth analysis related to the truth of this matter.

Factors causing damage on Earth from a religious perspective

Ibn Kathir interpreted the verse about the seeming damage on land and in the sea with a pragmatic approach. He interpreted the verse based on the context of the verse. Ibn Kathir used several opinions of scholars during the tabi'in period who directly met and studied with the Companions and even met the Prophet Muhammad. In the explanation of Ibn Kathir's interpretation, it is explained that the damage referred to in the verse is natural damage. The interruption of rain that does not water the earth that causes famine on earth and the extinction of animals on earth is one of the natural damaged mentioned in the interpretation of Ibn Kasir. Drought is one of the most complex environmental disasters worldwide, categorized as meteorological, hydrological, agricultural and socio-economic disasters. [23].

There is a fundamental difference in the factors that cause the decrease in the amount of rainfall on earth in the view of science and religion. In the view of science, the main cause of this drought is the effect of El Nino, which is a hot period of irregular and periodic variations in wind and sea surface temperature in the tropical region of the eastern hemisphere of the Pacific Ocean. [24]. In the view of religion, the occurrence of drought on earth is caused by sinful acts committed by humans against God. As expressed in the following Ibn Kathir's interpretation.

> Abu Aliyah said that whoever disobeys Allah on earth has indeed corrupted the earth, because the good of the earth and the sky depends on one's obedience.

Imam Abul Aliyah was a scholar of the tabi'in period who lived during the time of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad. Abul Aliyah's full name was Rafi' bin Mahran ar-Riyahi al-Bashri. He was a famous scholar from Bashrah, Iraq. Imam Shamsuddin Abu Abdilah ad-Dzahabi (d. 748 AH) in one of his works said that Abul 'Aliyah was a scholar who memorized the Qur'an (*ḥafiḍ*), a tafsir expert (*mufassir*), a *fiqh* expert (*fàqîh*), and a hadith expert (*muhaddith*). Therefore, it is no wonder that the companions and scholars of the time respected and respect him so much.[25].

Abu Aliyah explains that someone who commits a sinful act will determine the goodness of the earth and the sky. In the digital age, where people are easy to obtain any information. there is a lot of information provided on gadgets. Starting from information about knowledge that can increase faith in Allah, there is also information about knowledge that can distance themselves from Allah. Modern society must choose and sort out all the facilities provided by gadgets.

In colonial times, avoiding sinful acts could be done by staying at home, because there are many acts that lead to sin outside the home. Starting from physical sin and mental

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[23] Jyothsna Devi Adapa and Keesara Venkatareddy, "Drought Analysis of an Area Using Google Earth Engine," in *Lecture Notes in Civil Engineering*, 2024, 123–41.

[24] Ramla Khan and Hammad Gilani, "Global Drought Monitoring with Big Geospatial Datasets Using Google Earth Engine," *Environmental Science and Pollution Research* 28, no. 14 (2021): 17244–64, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11356-020-12023-0.

[25] Ad-Dzahabi, *Siyaru A'lami An-Nubal, Juz IV*, Dar al Had (Kairo, 2006).

sin. Physical sin, namely: eye sin, ear sin, mouth sin and hand sin. While the inner sin is the sin of the heart. Eye sin is seeing something forbidden by Allah. The sin of the ears and mouth is hearing and talking about the badness of others. The sin of the hands is doing or taking something that is not rightfully theirs. While the sin of the heart is the act of envy, spite, and arrogance when seeing something that happens to someone. And in the colonial era, all of the aforementioned sins can be found and committed when gathering with people when outside the home.

But in this digital era, just by opening a cellphone, one can obtain various information, both real information and HOAX information. And someone is also very easy to commit sin simply by using gadgets in the house. The sin of the eyes is to see content or videos that are prohibited by Allah. The sin of the ears and mouth, which is hearing and talking about the badness of others in the What's App Group. The sin of the hands is typing and writing something that can hurt others.

Therefore, if we really want to control global warming in this world, one of them is by protecting ourselves from all immoral acts that are hated by Allah and the Messenger of Allah. The trick is with determination and a strong belief that wherever and whenever we are always seen and monitored by Allah SWT. So that before committing an offense we feel ashamed of Allah and are afraid not to get Mercy from Allah, not the other way around afraid and ashamed of humans in the world who will also be damaged and die as Allah's creatures.

A hadith narrated by Imam Abu Daud which reads:

$$\text{لحدٌّ يُقامُ في الأرضِ أحبُّ إلي أهلِها}$$

Meaning: Verily, a *hadd* punishment inflicted on the earth is more favorable to its inhabitants than rain for forty days.

Abu Dawud Suleiman ibn Al-Ash'ath ibn Ishaq ibn Bashir ibn Amr ibn Imran Al-Azdi Al-Sijistani, known as Abu Dawud (202 - 275 AH) Imam of the hadith scholars of his time, hadith scholar from Basra, and author of the famous book Sunan Abu Dawud. [26].

The hadith narrated by Imam Abu Daud emphasizes that everything that happens on earth, from drought to rainfall, etc., is based on God's decree. The Hadith reveals that "the punishment of *haddah* that is enforced on earth" as an emphasis that needs to be considered. The word "had" is the retribution for a servant's disobedience to his Lord. Cooperation on public goods relies on the threat of credible punishment to deter cheating. Theory suggests that human cooperation can be enhanced if people believe in supernatural punishment for moral transgressions. The theory is supported by new research in cognitive psychology and anecdotal ethnographic evidence [27]. When a person believes that there will be supernatural punishment given by God in the form of a prolonged drought, then a person will restrain moral transgressions in the world.

After examining the interpretation of Ibn Kathir's interpretation of Surah Al-Rum Verse 41, we can interpret the factors that can cause damage on earth are:

1. Human sinful deeds

    The outward sins (sins of the eyes, sins of the ears, sins of the mouth and sins of the hands) and the inward sins of the heart) are the cause of the drought on earth. So many people in so many different times and places are convinced that their fellow citizens are less moral now than they used to be. One possibility is that morality has been declining around the world for thousands of years-declining so rapidly and sharply that people in every age can observe the decline in a short span of human life. Although in

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[26] Ibnu 'Asakir, "Tarikhu Dimasyqa," in *22* (Dar al Fikri, 1995), 191.

[27] Dominic D. P. Johnson, "God's Punishment and Public Goods," *Human Nature* 16, no. 4 (2005): 410–46, https://doi.org/10.1007/s12110-005-1017-0.

Mastroianni and Gilbert's research results show that moral decline is an illusion,[28] but one way to control the occurrence of drought on this earth is a change in human morals for the better in the view of religion.

2. Decreased Belief in God's Supernatural Power

The decline of one's belief in the supernatural beyond human power is the cause of the drought in the world. Komarudin Hidayat revealed that modern society has become very progressive and aggressive in pursuing progress. With the help of science and technology, they want to master and conquer the mythical forces of the universe. Modernism is recognized to have brought material wealth, but it is very dry and poor in ethics and morals. Everything tends to be seen in terms of material progress. This is actually dehumanization, degradation and reduction of the quality of human life. As a result, the noble values of humanity, such as compassion, togetherness, solidarity and brotherhood among humans, receive less attention, what stands out from modern society is individualism. [29].

If it is related to this modern society, where people are very eager to pursue progress, and are accustomed to measuring actions with materials. If we look at the belief in man's own power, it dominates the thinking of modern society. So, when what they want is not realized, they will feel very disappointed and stricken with prolonged sadness. And sometimes that is what can cause a person to fall into moral decay. Belief in God's power beyond human power can control one's attitude in the world.

Pragmatics Implications for Religion

Pragmatics in religious studies is defined as an approach that emphasizes social context, interaction, and local practices in understanding ethics and religion. Translation of religious texts is not only a matter of following general linguistic categories such as morphology, syntax, lexis and semantics, but also a matter of pragmatic meaning where the intended meaning in a particular context is an important factor that preserves the actual meaning. [30]. Here are some key points regarding pragmatics in religious studies raised in this article:

1. Logical Pragmatic Assertion: The argumentation structure used by the speaker for the purpose of persuasion is affirmed with various expert views, so as to have an effect on the recipient or passive reader.
2. Rejection of Dualism: The pragmatic approach rejects a strict division between uninterpreted experience and conceptual schema. All parties to a moral or religious discussion are in an equal position to offer reasons and arguments.
3. Context and Variability: Ethics and religion do not have to take a single form. A pragmatic approach recognizes that ethical and religious practices are local and may vary, which helps avoid assumptions of superiority of one tradition over another.
4. Interaction and Negotiation: In the pragmatic tradition, rules and inferences are considered valid if they can be adapted to each other. This creates space for negotiation and dialogue between different views, which is important in the study of religion and ethics.

Implications for Comparative Ethics: A pragmatic understanding can enrich comparative ethics by recognizing that all ethics and norms are local and customary, which

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[28] Adam M Mastroianni and Daniel T Gilbert, "The Illusion of Moral Decline," *Nature* 618, no. June (2023), https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-023-06137-x.

[29] Komarudin Hidayat, *"Agama Dan Kegalauan Masyarakat Modern" Dalam Nurcholish Madjid (Ed), "Kehampaan Spiritual Masyarakat Modern,"* (Jakarta: Mediacita, 2022).

[30] Al-Aadili, "A Pragmatic Approach to Translating Speech Acts in Religious Discourse."

means discussions of human ethics must take into account the broader cultural and social context.

Conclusion

The interpretation of the Qur'an of Surah al Rum verse 41 by Ibn Kasir contains implicit meaning about how to reduce the occurrence of deadly heat that befalls this world, namely: 1) Avoiding sinful acts, namely, by protecting ourselves from all sinful acts that are hated by Allah and the Messenger of Allah. The trick is with determination and a strong belief that wherever and whenever we are always seen and monitored by Allah SWT. 2) Strengthening belief in supernatural powers that come from outside of man. After a person has the belief that behind the greatness possessed by humans there is the power of God, then he will obey all the ethics set by God. That is what can provide blessings in life, and reduce drought on earth.

Pragmatic studies in religion encompass a variety of approaches that emphasize the contextual and practical aspects of religious discourse and belief systems. This perspective enables a nuanced understanding of how religious language and practices function in real-world contexts. The Qur'an as the holy book of Islam will truly function as an ethical guideline and solution to various problems of society in the world, when one interprets it with a pragmatic approach.

This research is only limited to analysing Ibn Kasir's interpretation of the Qur'an letter al Rum verse 41 with a pragmatic approach. Further research needs to be conducted related to the interpretation of the Qur'an from different scientists on verses related to natural damage. By expanding the range of research on other verses, it will add information related to how to reduce the drought that occurs on earth in the view of religion.

Author Contribution Statement

Devi Suci Windariyah as initiator and drafter of the article, to collecting data, data analyzer and interpreter, analysis results, critically revising the article and as validator of data. All authors agree to be accountable for all aspects of this work.

Statement of Interest

Author declare no conflicts of interest.

Funding

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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