



The Terms *Ghulām* and *Walad* in the Stories of Zakariā and Maryam: A Semantic Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Arabic is the Qur'anic language used by all Muslims to worship. Arabic is superior to other languages not only because it is the language of the Qur'an but Arabic has characteristics that make it unique compared to other languages worldwide. One of its uniqueness is the number of synonyms owned by one vocabulary. These synonyms are also found in the Qur'an with various interpretations. Synonyms are not merely different vocabulary and the same meaning, but each vocabulary with the same meaning has a unique meaning not owned by other vocabularies. This study aims to analyze the differences in the use of a child's vocabulary based on the context of the story contained in Surah Ali Imran verses 40 and 47 relating to the story of Prophet Zakariā and Maryam. In this study, the researcher used descriptive qualitative methods and documentation techniques. The result of this research is that *ghulām* and *walad* have differences in four aspects: the origin of creation, the process of being born, the relationship with parents, and the wishes of parents.

KEYWORDS: Differences; *Ghulām*; *Walad*; Zakariā; Maryam

مستخلص البحث

اللغة العربية هي لغة القرآن التي يستخدمها جميع المسلمين للعبادة. تتفوق اللغة العربية على اللغات الأخرى ليس فقط لأنها لغة القرآن، ولكن اللغة العربية لها خصائص تجعلها فريدة مقارنة بغيرها من اللغات في العالم. من الأشياء الفريدة في اللغة العربية هو العدد الكبير من المرادفات التي تحتوي عليها المفردات الواحدة. وكثيراً ما يوجد هذا المرادف في القرآن بتفسيرات مختلفة. المرادفات ليست مجرد نطق مختلف ونفس المعنى، ولكن كل كلمة في المفردات لها نفس المعنى لها في الواقع معنى فريد خاص بها لا تملكه كلمات المفردات الأخرى. يهدف هذا البحث إلى تحليل الفروق في استخدام الأطفال للمفردات بناء على سياق القصص الواردة في سورة آل عمران الآيتين 40 و 47 والتي تتعلق بقصة النبي زكريا ومريم. استخدم الباحثون في هذا البحث الأساليب الوصفية النوعية وتقنيات التوثيق. ونتيجة هذا البحث أن الغلام والولد بينهما اختلاف في أربعة جوانب، وهي أصل الخلق، وعملية الولادة، والعلاقة بالوالدين، وإرادة الوالدين.

الكلمات الرئيسية: الاختلافات، غلام، ولد، زكريا، مريم

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Introduction

Arabic is the language of a pivotal civilization in the world, bearing extraordinary significance as it is the language of the Qur'an. It is widely studied due to its integral role in Muslim worship, where Arabic is used for reading the Qur'an globally (Al-Shaqailī et al., 1998:5). The language shares an inseparable bond with the Qur'an. The Qur'an, in turn, serves as the guardian of Arabic, ensuring its continued vitality; without the Qur'an, the existence of Arabic would be at risk (Al-Shaikh, 2019).

Moreover, Arabic is distinct from other languages due to its many characteristics. Phonology, derivation, Arabization, word meaning, word and sentence summary, and grammar are distinctive to Arabic (Al-Salīm, 2016:4–10). Arabic is distinct in that it has many synonyms. While their vocabularies differ, synonyms have the same meaning. Arabic synonyms are distinct in that a single meaning can have multiple vocabularies. Water, for instance, contains 170 syllables, a snake 200, and a sword 1000 (Dardīr, 1985).

In Arabic, one meaning might have multiple vocabularies, yet each vocabulary has its own significance, according to previous linguists like Ibn Faris. They form a relationship and are interchangeable in a *kalam* when needed. Every vocabulary has characteristics that other vocabularies do not have. For instance, although both *جلس* and *قعد* mean "sitting," they each have their own meaning (Mutahharī, 2017).

Tarāduf (synonym) is found in the Qur'an. Scholars claim and express opinions about synonyms in the Qur'an, highlighting that each term has a unique meaning. This shows that the Qur'anic lexicon has distinct nuances that make each term incomparable to others, even if they have similar meanings. Classifying synonyms in the Qur'an involves several categories, including "*ta'kid bi al-murādif*," a term denoting the affirmation of meaning through synonyms, such as *فجاجا سبلا*, *athful murādif* such as *وترى الأرض هامدة \ أنك ترى*, *al-mutarādifāt fī al-mutasyābihāt* such as *اليوم أكملت لكم دينكم وأتممت عليكم*, *tarāduful asmā'* such as *القرآن والفرقان*, and *ikhtilāful maqāmāt* such as *السنة* which has several synonyms namely *العام والحوال والحجة* (Dardīr, 1985).

This study aims to clarify the meaning discrepancies between the terms "غلام" and "ولد," which appear in Surah Ali Imran (3):40–47 and refer to the narrative of

Prophet Zakariā and Maryam. According to these two verses, Prophet Zakariā and Maryam were taken aback when they learned that Allah had sent a child as good news. When Prophet Zakariā was aged, and his wife was barren, he was blessed with a son, Yahya. Meanwhile, despite being a virgin and never having been touched by a man, Maryam was blessed with a son named Isa. These two passages explain Allah's gift of a son using two separate vocabulary words. The vocabulary employed in Q.S. 3: 40, which tells the narrative of Prophet Zakariā, is *ghulām*: قَالَ رَبِّ اِنَّ يَكُوْنُ لِي غُلْمٌ وَقَدْ بَلَغَتِ الْكِبَرَ وَاْمْرًا تِي: عَاقِرٌ. In contrast, *Walad* is used in Q.S. 3:47, which tells the narrative of Maryam: قَالَتْ رَبِّ اِنَّ يَكُوْنُ لِي وُلْدٌ وَاَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِي بَشْرٌ.

According to Mustaqim (2015), the Qur'an has eight terms pertaining to children. Based on the results of his research, *walad*, *ghulām*, *al-ṭifl*, *al-shabiyy*, *hafadah*, *dzurriyyah*, *al-bint*, and *al-ibn* have different specific meanings and can be classified based on age. The different ages of children in each of these terms mean differences in how to educate and treat them. For instance, treatment to *al-ṭifl* who still very young, under two years, is different from treatment to *walad* and other terms that probably older than *al-ṭifl*. According to Khusni (2018), *al-ṭifl* and *al-shabiyy* have same meaning. A child called as *al-ṭifl* until age 14.

According to Jamaluddin (2018) the Qur'an mentions the pronunciation of *walad* around 56 times, including as a rebuttal to accusations that Allah SWT has children, about breastfeeding children and so on. The Qur'an mentions the pronunciation of *walad* nine times in cases of inheritance, namely in Surah an-Nisa' verses 11, 12, 176.

Sari & Rusmana's research (2022) shows eleven verses about children and education. Their research concluded that all children, regardless of age classification or terminology, must receive their education from their parents. In his study, similar to the research of Mustaqim (2015), Nurdianto (2013) categorized children's vocabulary according to age. He concluded that religion forbids using violence to educate children regardless of their age.

Based on these investigations, the researchers concluded that earlier studies concentrated on the original meaning of the term "children," which refers to young, undeveloped beings who require instruction and shouldn't be treated harshly. In this study, the scholars attempt to explain Prophet Zakariā's use of the word "Ghulām" to examine the context of Maryam and Zakariā's stories in Surah Ali Imran and Surah

Maryam. On the other hand, Maryam employed the word *Walad* in Surah Ali Imran according to the verses' context.

Method

Researchers used descriptive qualitative and documentation techniques to collect data in this study. The qualitative method is a research method that emphasizes aspects of understanding and analyzing data in depth. The documentation technique is a data collection technique with documents as its source, such as books, magazines, radios, and the like (Siyoto & Sodik, 2015).

In this study, researchers sought to describe and analyze the research results in depth. The primary data source in this research is the Qur'an, as Q.S. 3:40, Q.S. 3:47, Q.S. 19:8, and Q.S. 19:20 are the research objects. Secondary sources in this study include *tafsīr* of the Qur'an, dictionaries, previous research, and related books.

Data analysis was carried out by identifying the meaning of *ghulām* and *walad* contained in the verses based on the interpretation of the scholars. Apart from identifying the meaning of two terms from the verses used as primary data, the researcher also added other verses that use similar terms to strengthen the argument.

Results and Discussion

A. Distinctions in Linguistic Significance between *Ghulām* and *Walad*

Ghulām refers to the phase of a child from the time he is born until he reaches adolescence. In fiqh terms, *Ghulām* is a child between the age of puberty and the age of 19. *Ghulām* can also mean enslaved person or servant. Meanwhile, *Walad* implies something that is born. *Walad* can refer to male, female, singular, or plural (Al-Ma'any).

Nurdiyanto (2013) concludes that *walad* refers to children who are born biologically, namely through the process of intercourse between men and women and indicates the status of the relationship between children and parents. In comparison, *ghulām* means children and youth. *Walad* used in verse *فَلْإِنْ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ وَلَدٌ* refers to if The God has a child, indicates the relationship between a kid and parent. *Ghulām* used in verse *يَا بُشْرَى هَذَا غُلَامٌ* means a young man.

A similar conclusion was stated by Mustaqim (2015), who said that *walad* is a child born from the womb of a woman. *In the Qur'an*, *walad* describes the blood

relationship between children and their parents. While *Ghulām* has two contexts, the first is a child or baby, and the second is a young person.

B. Prophet Zakariā's Narrative in Surah Ali Imran: The Prophet's Desire for Offspring

Q.S. 3:40 is related to the previous verse, which tells that Allah gave good news to Zakariā that he would be blessed with a son named Yahya. Prophet Zakariā wanted to have children after seeing Maryam, his niece, who always worshipped Allah and was blessed with abundant sustenance. Prophet Zakariā prayed to Allah that he would be blessed with a righteous son (Al-Zuhailī, 2003).

In Surah Ali Imran verse 38, it is told that the Prophet Zakariā asked Allah for a child after the Prophet Zakariā saw fruits that were not in season. Hence, the Prophet Zakariā knew that Allah could grant his request, which traditionally did not make sense. However, Prophet Zakariā remained confident that he could have a child even though he was elderly and his wife was barren because Allah does whatever He wants (Al-Baidawī, 1984).

Prophet Zakariā specifically requested to be given a son to comfort him in his old age and not to leave him alone. Prophet Zakariā had experienced hardship and fatigue during his preaching to the Children of Israel. The existence of offspring will give him an heir from the Imran family. Prophet Zakariā prayed to Allah, revealing his weakness and great hope. The goal is not only for worldly affairs but also so that the Prophet's legacy is preserved and for the benefit of religion (Qeshta, 2022).

C. Prophet Zakariā's Story in Surah Maryam: The Fulfillment of Prophet Zakariā's Prayers

In Surah Maryam (19):7, Allah answers Zakariā's prayer with the words *يُزَكِّرُنَا إِنَّا* *نُبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلَامٍ اسْمُهُ يَحْيَى*. Allah granted his prayer to be given a son, and Allah gave him the name Yahya, which no one with the name Yahya had ever had before. In this verse, the word for son is *ghulām* (Zainuddīn, 2018:29).

In *Tafsir Ar-Razī* explained that the words of Prophet Zakariā *رَبِّ أُنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ* have several interpretations. The question phrase "from where" said by Prophet Zakariā shows the amazement and happiness he felt, not doubting the possibility of him having a child because he was elderly, and his wife was barren. It is like a person who asks his master for something he wants and then gets an answer, so he feels delighted. Another interpretation says that the question indicates Prophet Zakariā's uncertainty about

whether the child would come through him or his wife. Sufyan bin Uyainah said that the Prophet Zakariā had been begging for a child for 60 years before he was given the good news. In the end, he had forgotten about his request to have a child, so he felt amazed when he heard the good news from Allah about a son in his old age (Al-Rāzī, 1981:37). Al-Baghawī, (1989:35) says that when Prophet Zakariā heard Jibrīl's call and the good news of a son, Satan came to him and said, "O Zakariā, the voice you hear is not from Allah, but it is the voice of Satan. If it were from Allah, He would have revealed it to you like the previous revelations". Then Prophet Zakariā said رَبِّ اِنَّيْ يَكُوْنُ لِىْ عُلْمٌ to remove the anxiety. Another opinion says that Prophet Zakariā asked this question not because he doubted Allah's promise but because he doubted how he would get a child. Al-Lahimi (2019:179) says that verse 40 is Prophet Zakariā's gratitude for Allah's granting his prayer.

Moreover, al-Tha'labī (2002) in *al-Kasyfu wa al-Bayān* explains that according to Ad-Dahhāk, Prophet Zakariā was blessed with a son when he was 120 years old and his wife was 98 years old. The words of Prophet Zakariā, questioning how he would have a child, did not arise from doubt in Allah's promise. Instead, his inquiry focused on understanding the process: whether he and his wife would be rejuvenated or if they would be granted children in their old age.

In this context, al-Marāghī (1946) says that Prophet Zakariā wanted a child after seeing Maryam given a favor by Allah because of her perfect faith. Prophet Zakariā prayed devoutly; he separated himself from the world and directed his heart to Allah while pleading earnestly. When he had returned from the realm of contemplation to the realm of reality, he was visited by Jibrīl and given the good news that his prayer was granted.

As mentioned earlier, at the beginning of Surah Maryam, the Qur'ān narrates the story of Prophet Zakariā, who desired a waliy, a child from his own lineage. His hair had turned white in his old age, and he felt weary and disheartened, believing that his prayer might go unanswered. In Q.S. 19:4-5, Prophet Zakariā highlighted three aspects deserving Allah's mercy and compassion before requesting a child.

The first thing Zakariā mentioned was his weakness, both physically and mentally. His bones had weakened, so the rest of his body was weaker because the bones supported the body. Then, his greying hair showed his old age. The second thing he mentioned was that he was never disappointed in praying to Allah. Allah always answered his prayers, and this shows His compassion and power. His weak state made

his prayers more deserving of being responded to. The third thing is to mention his fear that the people after him will deviate from religion and leave what is obligatory. If he is blessed with a child, that child will continue the da'wah, so granting his prayer benefits the religion.

The term "*ghulām*" appears in Surah Maryam (Q.S. 19:8), signifying Zakaria's perplexity regarding the prospect of having children due to his advanced age and his wife's infertility. Al-Maraghi argued that the idea of Zakaria having children seemed unrealistic, considering his advanced age and their physical limitations. Then he wondered if Allah would restore his strength and that of his wife or if he would marry another woman (Al-Marāghī, 1946).

Additionally, al-Razī (1981:188) interprets this verse, suggesting that "*ghulām*" signifies the stage of a male entering puberty, where he experiences the initial phase of his desire for intercourse. Then the word "*ghulām*" refers to *tilmīdz*, which means student, as in the example "*ghulāmu tha'lab*," which means *tha'lab*'s student. Al-Razī also interpreted that Zakariā's sentence رَبِّ اِنَّ يَكُوْنُ لِي غُلَامٌ is not a question whether the *ghulām* referred to in this verse is *walad*. So the *walad*, which al-Razi refers to in his commentary as the male child born and created through Zakariā's relationship with his wife, differs from the meaning of *ghulām*. If Zakariā were indeed blessed with a *walad*, he would be his biological son, creating a blood relationship between parent and child. But if he was blessed with a *ghulām*, then it is possible that the child was not born through Zakariā's relationship with his wife and did not indicate kinship between them.

‘Ashura (1984) says that Zakariā's amazement was a recognition that it was a great and unusual gift. He had thought that Allah would give him a child by allowing him to marry another woman who was not barren.

Zakariā and his wife, despite initially being confirmed as barren, were the first to be blessed with a child. It differed from the story of Prophet Ibrahim and Sarah; they were amazed at the good news of Ishaq's birth, not because they were barren but because they were elderly. While Zakariā and his wife, Isha', were both elderly and infertile. Allah answers their amazement in Q.S. 19:9:

قَالَ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ عَلَيَّ هَيِّئْ وَقَدْ خَلَقْتُكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَمْ تَكُ شَيْئًا

Az-Zuhaili (d. 2015) stated that Allah has the power to create something from nothing, and, as is generally the case, creating children directly or through birth is easy for Him. Allah restored the ability to conceive in Zakariā's wife (Az-Zuhaili).

D. Story of Maryam in Surah Ali Imran

In the commentary on Q.S. 3:47, al-Marāghī explained that Allah took Maryam under His care, purified her, and instructed her to worship and remain grateful. Following this, God conveyed the joyful news of a righteous son through the Angel Jibrīl (al-Marāghī, 1946). Maryam separated herself from her family and dedicated herself to Allah. She prayed, fasted, dhikr, and focused herself on worshipping Allah. During her worship, Jibrīl came to her as a handsome man. Then Maryam said that she asked Allah for protection, thinking that he would disturb her. Jibrīl said he was Allah's messenger, bringing her the good news that she would be blessed with a righteous child. Maryam was surprised and said رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِي بَشَرٌ (Abbas, 2010).

Moreover, al-Rāzī (1981:58) contends that Maryam's words express her astonishment at the power of Allah, who granted her a child despite her lack of a husband and her untouched status by a man. Meanwhile, according to Al-Marāghī (1946), Maryam's words were a sense of indecision that questioned how Allah would give her a child, whether she would get married, or whether Allah immediately gave her without going through marriage. It differs from the story of Prophet Zakariā, who was blessed with a child through the human process. Prophet Yahya was born because of his parents, as usual. Still, Prophet Isa was born because Allah created him without going through the process of marriage and going through phases like other babies. Allah created Prophet Isa as He created the heavens and the earth, using the word *khalq*, not *fi'l*. According to Al-Lahimi (2019:208), Prophet Isa was a "sentence" from Allah because Allah created him with "*Kun*", he was born without a father, which shows signs of Allah's greatness.

Prophet Isa was a prophet who was born without a father and sent by Allah to the descendants of Israel. Prophet Isa was given revelation to spread the sharia, get the book and wisdom, and is among the *Ulul Azmi* Messengers (Al-Zuhailī, 2003).

E. Story of Maryam in Surah Maryam

Beyond the earlier verses, the term "*ghulām*" is also featured in Q.S. 19:19. This verse elucidates the angel's visit to Maryam, announcing the good news of a "*ghulām*" who was pure and free from all defects. The "*ghulām*" destined for Maryam was a creation of Allah, requiring no tools or intermediaries for its occurrence. Despite Maryam's lack of a husband, Allah is all-powerful (al-Marāghī, 1946).

The word طَهِير that describes *ghulām* in this verse contains three meanings; namely, pure from sin, growing in purity without committing sins, and the holy nature that must exist to make it valid to be sent as a prophet. *Ghulām*, in this verse, is given the attribute of purity despite not having any wealth in the world. Usually, the trait of "*zakī*" is attributed to people with abundant wealth. But this *ghulām* was given the attribute "*zakī*" because he was poor and enriched with wisdom and the book. Thus indicating that the *ghulām* referred to in this verse is a Prophet sent to spread knowledge and scripture (Al-Rāzī, 1981).

Moreover, Q.S. 19:20 elaborates that Maryam was amazed at the prospect of having a child, given that she did not have a husband, and she certainly was not involved in any illicit activities, as no man had touched her (al-Lahimī, 2019). Jibrīl blew the spirit into her womb, leading to her conception of Isa. Subsequently, she distanced herself from her family and secluded herself behind a hill. Ibn Abbas mentioned that Maryam conceived and gave birth immediately because Allah did not specify any separation in this process. Muqātil ibn Sulaimān explained that Maryam's conception lasted for one hour, the formation of Isa took another hour, and the birthing process was one hour, resulting in a total duration of three hours (al-Tha'labī, 2002). From this extraordinary process, Maryam gave birth to a son, referred to by the term "*ghulām*" in this verse. "*Walad*" typically denotes a child conceived and born through a normal process, arriving after nine months in the womb. However, "*ghulām*" doesn't always follow the same pattern as "*walad*," as illustrated in the story of Maryam and Isa.

In this case, al-Zuhaili (2003) argues that Maryam's words describe her questioning feelings in the verse. Maryam knew that children could only be born through relationships with men. But her circumstances made this sound impossible. She asked through what means Allah would grant her a holy *ghulām*, whether like Adam, who had no father and mother, or through marriage, and she would marry in the future. Jibrīl then answers his question in the next verse, who explains that Allah will give him a *ghulām* from her womb, even though she has no husband, and not through adultery. The birth of Isa became evidence of Allah's power to create Adam without a man and a woman; Eve was created only through a man, Isa only through a woman, and other humans through the relationship between a man and a woman.

F. The Use of the Term "*Ghulām*" in Other Qur'anic Verses

1. *Ghulām* in Q.S. Yusuf (12):19

In Q.S. 12:19, the narrative unfolds as the Prophet Yusuf is discovered by a group of Madyan travelers embarking on their journey towards Egypt. Using a bucket to draw water from a well, Malik bin Dzar was shocked to see Prophet Yusuf holding onto the rope. Described as a gorgeous "*ghulām*", Prophet Yusuf was exposed in this surprising meeting. Then Malik said "يَا بُشْرَى هَذَا غَلَامٌ". Malik and his friends hid the Prophet Yusuf from the other traders, fearing they would take it (al-Tha'labī, 2002).

Malik's words express his satisfaction at discovering a young man from the well, who, by becoming a *luqatah* or a found item, subsequently became a slave to the one who found him. The term *Ghulām* refers to a boy between the ages of 10 and 20; in the case of Prophet Yusuf, he was 17 years old at the time of this event (‘Ashura, 1984).

2. *Ghulām* in Q.S. At-Tur (52):24

Differing slightly from the connotation of *Ghulām* in Q.S. 12:19, in Q.S. 52:24, the term *Ghulām* (plural: *ghilmān*) refers to servants exclusively reserved for the residents of heaven. These servants are described as young men who dutifully serve their masters by providing beverages and food (Al-Zuhailī, 2003). ‘Ashura argues that *ghulām* is a young servant who has no difficulty in moving to serve his master because he can still move nimbly (‘Ashura, 1984). Al-Rāzī asserts that Allah highlights the superiority of *ghulām* in the hereafter compared to *ghulām* in the world (al-Rāzī, 1981). In the worldly context, *ghulām* is a servant who serves kings to acquire benefits and seek forgiveness. However, in the hereafter, *ghulām* is a servant who serves his master solely for the pleasure of his master, without any intention of seeking personal benefits. It is even mentioned that the *ghulām* in the afterlife can attain the level of *walad*, implying that while the *ghulām* serves for wages, the *walad* serves like a child who loves his biological parents without expecting anything in return.

Terminology	Verse	Interpreter	Meaning
<i>Ghulām</i>	Q.S. Yusuf (12):19	Al-Tha'labī	Young man
		‘Ashura	Young man
	Q.S. At-Tur (52):24	Al-Zuhailī	Young male servant

		‘Ashura	Young male servant
		Al-Rāzī	Young male servant

G. The Use of the Term “*Walad*” in Other Qur’anic Verses

1. *Walad* in Q.S. Al-Baqarah (2):233

This verse elucidates that when a divorced woman has a child with the man who divorced her—whether the child was born before or after the divorce—the biological mother should breastfeed the child. The mother holds a stronger claim to breastfeeding the child than any other woman (Al-Tha‘labī, 2002). The encouragement of breastfeeding is because a biological mother's milk is the best of other milk, and a mother's love for her child is the most perfect compared to the love of others (Al-Rāzī, 1981). According to this interpretation, in this verse, *walad* (plural: *awlād*) signifies the familial connection between the child and their biological parents. *Walad* refers to the child who is born, while *wālidah* denotes the woman who gave birth to the child.

2. *Walad* in Q.S. Hud (11): 72

Enhancing the understanding of *walad*, as explained earlier, the meaning of *walad* in Q.S. 11:72 specifically denotes a biological child. This verse narrates Sarah's reaction, Ibrahim's wife, upon receiving the angel's announcement of her blessed conception with a child named Ishāq, who later became a prophet with numerous descendants who also assumed prophethood. Sarah's astonishment and joy are evident as she grapples with the extraordinary occurrence of giving birth at the age of 99, considering her husband's advanced age, which typically precluded the possibility of having offspring (Al-Zuhailī, 2003).

The word "ولد" in the verse is a verb derived from ولد-يلد, which is then used as a verb for the first person (me) and means to give birth. At the same time, *walad* is a noun that means child or anything that is born, either singular or plural (Al-Ma'any). *Walad* is the result of the work ولد-يلد. Therefore, Sarah's words in the verse mean that she will give birth to a child from her womb, forming a blood relationship as a child and biological parent.

Terminology	Verse	Interpreter	Meaning
<i>Walad</i>	Q.S. Al-Baqarah (2):233	Al-Tha‘labī	Biological child
		Al-Rāzī	Biological child
	Q.S. Hud (11): 72	Al-Zuhailī	Biological child

Solichah et al. (2021) explained that Q.S. 8:28 shows that the existence of a child can be a slander for his parents. Several prophets also experienced trials from their children, such as Prophet Adam and Qabil and Abil, and Prophet Nuh and Kan'an. in Q.S. 31:14, Allah mentions the word "walidain" which means both parents. This verse contains the concept of educating children who must be grateful to their parents (Zulhizni et al., 2019).

Regarding Q.S. 4:9, al-Maraghi explains that this verse relates to a guardian and people entrusted to orphans. they should treat orphans as they treat their own children (كما يكلمون أولادهم). *Awlad* here is the plural of *walad*, which indicates that a person who cares for an orphan should treat him as if he cared for his own biological child (Tsauri, 2019). The word *walad* in these verses shows the relationship between the children and their biological parents.

In the hadith narrated by Al-Bukhari (550), the Prophet Muhammad said (do you think that women have the heart to throw the baby into the fire?) using the editorial language أترون هذه طارحة ولدها في النار. The word *walad* here indicates that the child is the child born to the woman (Asnawati et al., 2019).

H. *Ghulām* and *Walad* in the Story of Prophet Zakariā and Maryam: A Comparative Semantic Analysis

There are similarities between the stories of Prophet Zakariā and Maryam in the Qur'an. In both cases, Allah granted them a child in a manner that is challenging to comprehend, as the birth defied conventional human norms. Prophet Zakariā was elderly, and his wife was barren, while Maryam never had any contact with a man. Both situations appeared seemingly impossible: a barren woman conceiving a child and a woman giving birth without any physical interaction. Remarkably, both children later became Messengers, delivering Allah's revelations to the Children of Israel.

Although the meanings of *ghulām* and *walad* may appear similar at first glance, there are subtle differences between them. The initial distinction lies in Prophet Zakariā's use of the term *ghulām* in his plea, "O my Lord, how will I have a child when

"I am old, and my wife is barren?" This expression reflects Prophet Zakariā's astonishment and uncertainty as he questioned how he would be granted a child. He pondered whether God would bestow a child through a natural biological process, rejuvenating his vitality to enable conception through intercourse, or if God would grant him a child without adhering to the usual natural course. Ar-Razi (1981:41) asserts that a child (*walad*) is generally created from semen, which can either be generated through human means, resulting in offspring and establishing a lineage between the child and the parents, or created by Allah without involving human processes.

In addition to signifying a child, *ghulām* can also denote an enslaved person or servant. *Ghulām* does not exclusively pertain to the parent-child relationship; it can also characterize the association between an employer and their servant. This relationship between master and servant does not result from the biological processes of male-female intercourse or childbirth. An enslaved person may initially be a stranger without any blood relation but eventually becomes the property of their master. Hence, it can be concluded that one can have a *ghulām* without the necessity of biological processes or blood ties.

In Surah Yusuf (12):19, the term *ghulām* refers to Prophet Yusuf. In this context, *ghulām* signifies both youths, as Prophet Yusuf was 17 years old at that time, and servitude, given that Prophet Yusuf was a missing person who was found and subsequently became the property of the individual who discovered him. Therefore, *ghulām* in this verse does not indicate a blood relationship.

The correlation between the term *ghulām* in Surah At-Tur (52):24 and *ghulām* Surah Ali Imran (3):40 lies in the fact that *ghulām* is not necessarily brought into existence through conventional human biological processes. A *ghulām* may be directly created by Allah, as exemplified by the ghilman who serve as heavenly servants. This is like the astonishment experienced by Prophet Zakariā and his uncertainties regarding how Allah would grant him a son—whether through the conventional biological process or if Allah would create the son without human involvement. If Allah were to bestow a son without human intervention, the relationship between them would be that of parents and children, albeit not through a biological connection.

In contrast to *ghulām*, *walad* refers to a child resulting from childbirth, even though in the story of Maryam, *walad* was not created through intercourse. However, *walad* implies a blood relationship between the child and his parents, as mentioned by Karim et al., (2023) that *walad* is repeated 65 times in al-Qur'ān with various

derivations, and refers to children born to their parents specifically illustrate the bond between a child and his parents. *Walad* denotes a child who is born, as articulated by Mustaqim (2015), stating that *wālid* and *wālidah* are the biological parents of *walad*. If the child has not been born from the mother's womb, then he cannot be called *al-walad* (Wahab & Mardyawati, 2021). This contrasts *abb* (father) or *umm* (mother), who are not necessarily biological parents and may lack a blood relationship. In the matter of dividing inheritance, there is still debate regarding the meaning of *walad*, whether *walad* only means sons, or both sons and daughters. but what is certain is that the *walad* referred to here is a biological child. In the matter of dividing inheritance, there is still debate regarding the meaning of *walad*, whether *walad* only means sons, or both sons and daughters. But what is certain is that *walad* referred to here is a biological child (Alfitri, 2018).

Prophet Isa holds the status of *walad* as the son of Maryam, born directly from Maryam herself. In Surah Al-Baqarah (2):233, *walad* signifies a blood relationship with *wālidah*. This verse elucidates that a biological mother's milk is the optimal nourishment, and a mother's love is unparalleled. In the account of Sarah's story in Surah Hud (11):72, the term **أَل** indicates the act of giving birth. *Walad* is a noun whose existence is brought about by giving birth. Therefore, it can be concluded that a person possesses *walad* because they are the parent responsible for the child's existence, always denoting the relationship between parents and biological children.

Prophet Zakariā, driven by a strong desire and enduring a prolonged wait, prayed to Allah for a righteous child. Allah answered his heartfelt plea, bringing immense joy to Prophet Zakariā. On the contrary, Maryam, unmarried and had never engaged in relations with a man, did not seek a child. During her worship of Allah, she received the good news through Jibrīl that Prophet Isa would be born, destined to become a messenger of Allah endowed with the book and wisdom. It can be deduced that *ghulām* represents a child whose existence is anticipated, reflecting a deliberate desire. On the other hand, *walad* embodies a divine gift from Allah, not necessarily sought or anticipated beforehand.

<i>Walad</i>	<i>Ghulām</i>
Created biologically	Not always created biologically
Born by a woman	Not always born by a woman

Refers to relationship between parents and biological children	Not always refers to relationship between parents and biological children
Exist by desire	Not always exist by desire

Conclusions

The differences in Arabic vocabulary are unique. Each word has a meaning only found in it and cannot be replaced by another word even though there is a similarity in meaning. In Surah Ali Imran (3):40 and 47, it is told that Allah gave good news to Prophet Zakariā and Maryam in the birth of a son. However, there are differences in the editorial where Prophet Zakariā mentions *ghulām* while Maryam mentions *walad*. In the context of the story of Prophet Zakariā and Maryam, the two terms have four distinctions in meaning. Firstly, *ghulām* is not necessarily brought into existence through a biological process, while *walad* is created conventionally. Secondly, the presence of a *ghulām* does not necessarily depend on being born, whereas a *walad* unquestionably exists because a woman gave birth to it. Thirdly, while *ghulām* does not necessarily signify the relationship between parents and biological children, *walad* indicates the blood relationship between parents and children. Lastly, a person may have a *ghulām* because they desire it, but a *walad* is not necessarily wanted before its existence. Suggestion for future related research is that researchers can describe the meaning of terminologies chronologically based on the oldest to contemporary interpretations so that researchers can observe and compare if there is a development of meaning based on scholars' interpretations.

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