

An Analysis of Context Clues and their Effects on Qur'anic Understanding: Looking at Disadvantages¹

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Abstract

The systematic understanding of the Qur'anic ayahs has been a constant concern of the Muslim interpreters and experts. On the other hand, among the context clues, "register" is one of the key clues in understanding the given meaning because every text and proposition, including the Qur'an, is accompanied by contexts. Therefore, the commentators of the Holy Qur'an have interpreted ayahs relying on context clues of the ayahs. It should be said that the use of the context clues dates back to a long time ago. Nevertheless, this usage is faced with obstacles and disadvantages that, in case of negligence, disturb the process of systematic understanding of the Qur'an. In other words, neglecting the disadvantages and obstacles of the use of context clues leads the interpreter from eisegesis to Ijtihad-based exegesis that draws on the Qur'an, tradition, and reasoning based on the text of the Qur'an. It seems that unless the nature and the capacity of the context clues have not become clear, interpreters are likely to make mistakes in using them. On the other hand, considering the origins of the problems that make clues disadvantageous aids interpreters in the systematic application of context clues. This paper seeks to explicate the nature and the capacity of context clues, their disadvantages, as well as the obstacles in using them besides identifying their origins. Through the effort made in the present study, "ten" disadvantages and their origins were identified and discussed.

Keywords: the Qur'an, the nature of register, obstacles and disadvantages, origins

1. Date Received: February 18th, 2018 ; Date Accepted: June 26th, 2018

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