

# DISPUTING THE NARRATIONS OF THE COMPANIONS: A Speech Acts Analysis of ‘Ā’isyah RA’s Corrective Responses in Prophetic *Hadîts*

Ubaidillah

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga  
Jl. Laksda Adisutjipto Yogyakarta, 55281, Indonesia  
e-mail: ubaidillah@uin-suka.ac.id

Elvusal Mammadov

Azerbaijan Institute of Theology  
Mahammad Nakchivani 29, Baku, Azerbaijan AZ1065  
e-mail: elvusalmammadov@ait.edu.az

**Abstract:** This article investigates ‘Ā’isyah RA’s corrective interventions toward the narrations of other Companions within the corpus of Prophetic *hadîts*. While classical and contemporary scholarship has long acknowledged ‘Ā’isyah’s role in correcting transmitted reports, existing studies have largely approached this phenomenon descriptively and have rarely examined the linguistic and pragmatic structure of her corrective discourse. Employing a qualitative pragmatic approach, this study analyzes a selected corpus of *hadîts* from *Shahîh al-Bukhârî* and *Shahîh Muslim* in which ‘Ā’isyah RA explicitly disputes or clarifies reported narrations. The analysis draws on speech act theory as an analytical framework to identify patterns of corrective discourse, focusing on assertive, directive, and expressive acts and the linguistic markers through which they are realized, such as negation structures, evaluative verbs, and expressive formulas. Rather than treating these interventions solely as juridical or theological statements, the study interprets them as context-bound communicative acts within early *hadîts* transmission. The findings suggest that ‘Ā’isyah’s corrective responses function as discursive mechanisms for negotiating epistemic authority at the level of narration, grounded in proximity to the Prophet and experiential knowledge. By integrating pragmatic speech act analysis with the conventions of *hadîts* scholarship, this study proposes a linguistic framework for examining corrective discourse in early *hadîts* transmission. It contributes to a more systematic understanding of how epistemic authority was negotiated within early narrational interaction.

**Keywords:** ‘Ā’isyah RA, speech act theory, Prophetic *Hadîts*, corrective discourse, epistemic authority.

Corresponding Author	Ubaidillah			
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## Introduction

The *hadîts* of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH is not only a religious text but also a product of the social interaction of the companions who narrate it. The process of narrating *hadîts* involves complex communication, in which the social and cultural context of the companions influences the understanding and delivery of the Prophet's message. Therefore, the *hadîts* reflects the social narrative that contains the values and dynamics of society at that time.<sup>1</sup> The study of *hadîts* now emphasizes the importance of analyzing the communication situation behind each narration, including the behavior and social relations of the companions that affect the form and meaning of the *hadîts*.<sup>2</sup> In this context, 'Â'isyah RA appears as an important figure who not only narrates but also criticizes and clarifies *hadîts*, reflecting the existence of dialogue, debate, and verification among the companions.<sup>3</sup>

'Â'isyah RA's corrective responses reflect the social dynamics of early Muslim communities. Her interpretations emphasize that *hadîts* emerges not only from the Prophet's utterances but also from the companions' reasoning and lived experience within their social and ethical contexts.<sup>4</sup> 'Â'isyah's corrective actions unfold as narratives and function as speech acts rich in sociolinguistic and pragmatic meaning. He relays information and shapes discourse through commentary, criticism, and clarification, reflecting responses to social dynamics and religious policies.<sup>5</sup> Studying *hadîts* through a pragmatic interactional approach is important because it helps us understand it as a form of communication between epistemic subjects rather than merely as a normative text. Many previous studies have tended to ignore this sociolinguistic dimension. In contrast, 'Â'isyah's and other companions' participation in narrating and discussing *hadîts* has created a space for collective interpretation, criticism, and validation.<sup>6</sup> This analysis shows that *hadîts* functions as a social practice that reinforces Islamic values, where pragmatic analysis reveals how communicative strategies such as response, criticism, and clarification convey meaning within the social and ethical contexts of early Islam.

The corrective practice 'Â'isyah RA employed in narrating *hadîts* demonstrates that this process is a critical activity that affirms women's epistemic authority in religious discourse. As the wife of the Prophet Muhammad, 'Â'isyah not only narrated *hadîts* but also actively corrected and interpreted the Prophet's teachings, reflecting her deep understanding and courage in assessing the validity of circulating narratives.<sup>7</sup> Her actions demonstrate that women participated meaningfully in the negotiation of religious knowledge within early Islamic discourse. This participation should be understood not in terms of modern gender binaries, but in relation to the male-dominated structures of *hadîts* transmission, within which 'Â'isyah RA exercised recognized epistemic authority through corrective discourse. Furthermore, 'Â'isyah's response to the *hadîts* reflects the social context of early Islamic language, in which narration served as a space for dialogue, criticism, and the exchange of ideas, not merely the transmission of information.<sup>8</sup>

Recognizing ‘Ā’isyah’s active role contributes to rethinking gender and authority in the Islamic tradition and challenges historical narratives that have marginalized women’s contributions.

Although many *ḥadīths* record ‘Ā’isyah RA’s corrective interventions toward prominent Companions, existing studies remain primarily descriptive and have not examined how these corrections function pragmatically as speech acts within dialogical *ḥadīths* discourse. Consequently, the relationship between authority, meaning, and socio-cultural context in ‘Ā’isyah’s corrective speech, as well as her role as an active agent in *ḥadīths* transmission, remains underexplored, necessitating a focused pragmatic study. This study analyzes ‘Ā’isyah RA’s corrective actions in *ḥadīths* narration through a pragmatic approach, particularly speech acts theory, to examine the form, function, and social context of her interventions. It further explores the epistemic and cultural meanings embedded in these corrections, thereby contributing to the study of *ḥadīths* and Islamic linguistics based on classical texts.

*Ḥadīths* studies have generally focused on the critique of *sanad* (chain of transmission) and *matn* (*ḥadīths* text), but have ignored the dimensions of interactive discourse and social dynamics among narrators, which are important for understanding how *ḥadīths* was formed, disseminated, and debated in early Islamic societies. Communication between narrators such as ‘Ā’isyah RA, Ibn ‘Umar, and Ibn ‘Abbas is not just the transmission of information. However, it reflects a dialogue interaction full of criticism, negotiation of meaning, and reflection on religious authority. When this aspect of the social context is ignored, the study of *ḥadīths* loses the opportunity to uncover the influence of social structures, including gender and power, in constructing religious meaning. With a pragmatic approach, especially in the framework of speech acts, this research aims to fill this analytical void while challenging the patriarchal narrative that dominates the *ḥadīths* tradition.<sup>9</sup>

Studies of women narrators, particularly ‘Ā’isyah RA, have primarily focused on biographical and quantitative aspects, overlooking the argumentative and corrective practices through which she actively negotiated the meaning of Islamic teachings.<sup>10</sup> This gap calls for a pragmatic approach to examine ‘Ā’isyah’s communicative strategies as expressions of women’s epistemic authority within early Islamic socio-religious contexts, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of women’s roles in Islamic intellectual history.<sup>11</sup>

Existing scholarship on ‘Ā’isyah RA’s role in *ḥadīths* transmission can broadly be grouped into three clusters. First, biographical-historical studies focus on documenting her narrational contributions and legal influence, emphasizing her prominence among female transmitters but rarely analyzing the linguistic structure of her corrective discourse. Second, gender-oriented studies reinterpret her authority within feminist or egalitarian frameworks, highlighting her epistemic agency but often treating corrective narrations

as thematic illustrations rather than communicative acts. Third, methodological studies in *hadîts* criticism focus on evaluating *sanad* and *matn*, with limited attention to dialogical interaction among narrators. While these approaches have significantly enriched our understanding of ‘Ā’isyah’s intellectual authority, they tend to remain descriptive, thematic, or normatively evaluative. The communicative mechanics of her corrective interventions, specifically their illocutionary force, pragmatic strategies, and discursive positioning, have not been systematically analyzed using a linguistic framework. Consequently, the interactional dimension of *hadîts* correction remains theoretically underdeveloped.

Previous discussions of ‘Ā’isyah’s corrective narrations frequently assume their epistemic authority as a given, without examining how such authority is linguistically performed within interactional settings. The absence of pragmatic analysis results in a methodological gap: corrective acts are treated as theological positions rather than as situated communicative events. Moreover, little attention has been paid to how corrective speech operates differently across assertive, directive, and expressive forms, or how these variations shape epistemic negotiation among narrators.

Classical *hadîts* scholarship has long documented ‘Ā’isyah’s role in correcting narrations among the companions, as reflected in major commentaries such as *Fatḥ al-Bārī* and *Syarḥ Shahīḥ Muslim*. However, these discussions largely remain within theological and historical frameworks and rarely analyze the linguistic mechanisms through which such corrections are articulated.

Integrating speech acts theory with *hadîts* studies enables a pragmatic reading of ‘Ā’isyah RA’s corrective interactions that highlights illocutionary force, communicative purpose, and epistemic authority within narrational discourse, thereby extending *hadîts* analysis beyond *sanad* and *matn* toward its dialogical and performative dimensions.<sup>12</sup>

By analyzing such corrective actions through a pragmatic lens, the researcher can identify how communication between narrators and the social and linguistic context in which the conversation occurs affects how the *hadîts* is delivered and received. For example, ‘Ā’isyah’s role in correcting the narratives of other companions provides a sense of how women, through their knowledge and authority, helped shape religious understanding.<sup>13</sup> Thus, this approach not only enriches the study of *hadîts* but also challenges the patriarchal narratives that often dominate historical studies of Islam, opening up space for a more inclusive and equitable study of understanding women’s contributions in the tradition of religious discourse.<sup>14</sup>

This study addresses the gap by applying a pragmatic approach to ‘Ā’isyah RA’s corrective speech acts, highlighting women’s active participation in the transmission and interpretation of religious knowledge within Islamic discourse.<sup>15</sup> ‘Ā’isyah’s corrective engagement with *hadîts*, when examined through pragmatic analysis, highlights women’s meaningful participation in early Islamic religious discourse and contributes to the methodological development of *hadîts* and religious pragmatic studies.<sup>16</sup>

In a pragmatic context, the concept of *speech acts* is an important tool for understanding how language functions in social interaction. Searle proposed a classification of speech acts into locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. Leech refined it to fall under the illocutionary acts, which refer to the speaker's intended function in communication.<sup>17</sup> These categories, directive, assertive, commissive, expressive, and declarative, represent different ways speakers use language to perform actions, depending on the social and cultural context in which the utterances occur.<sup>18</sup> From a pragmatic perspective, 'Ā'isyah's response to the *ḥadīths* narrated by the companions can be seen as a speech act that conveys multiple meanings and implications beyond its literal meaning. Pragmatics allows for analyzing how speech functions in the context of its interactions. At times, using implicit strategies to assert their interpretation without directly confronting the dominant narrative amounts to indirect criticism, aligning with a pragmatic understanding of speech.<sup>19</sup>

This study is guided by the following research questions: How can 'Ā'isyah RA's corrective interventions in *ḥadīths* be analytically classified within speech act theory? What pragmatic strategies are employed by 'Ā'isyah RA in performing corrective speech acts? What do these pragmatic strategies reveal about the negotiation of authority and meaning in early Islamic *ḥadīths* transmission? These questions frame the qualitative and pragmatic analysis of selected *ḥadīths* and guide the interpretation of 'Ā'isyah RA's corrective discourse as epistemic negotiation rather than juridical legislation.

This study offers a distinct contribution by repositioning 'Ā'isyah's corrective narrations not merely as theological rebuttals or gendered assertions of authority, but as structured speech acts embedded in dialogical transmission. By integrating speech act theory with classical *ḥadīths* contextualization, this research introduces a pragmatic metalanguage for analyzing corrective discourse in early Islamic texts. Rather than extending existing descriptive themes, it provides an analytical framework that explains how epistemic authority is linguistically enacted, negotiated, and reinforced within narrational interaction.

Accordingly, this study does not merely revisit existing debates but proposes a methodological reframing of corrective discourse within *ḥadīths* studies.

## Method

This study adopts a qualitative pragmatic approach grounded in speech act theory, drawing on Searle's illocutionary classification and Leech's politeness framework. These theories are employed as analytical tools, not as historically descriptive models of seventh-century discourse. This positioning follows established approaches in historical pragmatics, which treat modern pragmatic theory as a metalanguage for analysing classical texts.<sup>20</sup>

The data consist of selected Prophetic *ḥadīths* in which 'Ā'isyah RA performs explicit corrective measures regarding narrations transmitted by other Companions, drawn from *Shahīh al-Bukhārī* and *Shahīh Muslim*, published on the online website [www.dorar.net](http://www.dorar.net).

Only narrations with clear dialogical and corrective structures are included. The researchers chose these two *hadîts* books because *hadîts* experts have validated them, so the researchers do not need to validate every piece of data presented.<sup>21</sup>

A total of six narrational cases were selected for close analysis. The selection followed a purposive sampling strategy appropriate for qualitative case-based research. The corpus was identified through a systematic keyword search in the digital databases of *Shahîh al-Bukhârî* and *Shahîh Muslim* via dorar.net, using terms such as “‘Â’isyah said,” “she said,” and expressions of rebuttal or clarification (e.g., *mâ qâla*, *laisa ka-dzâlik*, *man za’ama*).

Narrations were included if they met three criteria:

(1) ‘Â’isyah RA explicitly responded to or corrected a report attributed to another Companion or circulating claim; (2) the narration contained identifiable dialogical structure; (3) the corrective utterance included clear linguistic markers allowing pragmatic classification.

Narrations were excluded if they merely transmitted information without a corrective function, lacked a dialogical context, or did not contain sufficient textual clarity for speech act analysis.

The unit of analysis is the corrective utterance itself, rather than the entire *hadîts* chain, with contextual reference to surrounding narrative structure and classical commentary for interpretive validation. Given the qualitative and interpretive nature of this study, the aim is analytical depth rather than quantitative representativeness.

To address the historical time gap, pragmatic interpretation is anchored in classical *hadîts* commentaries and contextual information (*asbâb al-wurûd*), with illocutionary force identified through explicit linguistic markers rather than inferred modern implicatures. Analytically, the study identifies corrective utterances, classifies their illocutionary force, and examines their pragmatic strategies. Interpretations are cross-validated with classical scholarship to ensure methodological and historical consistency.

The research procedure began with identifying and classifying ‘Â’isyah’s corrective *hadîts*, which were then analyzed using the Searle and Leech speech act model to determine the type, function, and strength of the illocution of each intervention. Data collection is conducted through documentation, with *hadîts* manuscripts read and selected manually or digitally. Data analysis was carried out in a descriptive-analytical and interpretive manner, integrating pragmatic and intersectional approaches to explore power relations, gender identity, and epistemic authority in communication between narrators.<sup>22</sup>

To maintain data validity, theoretical triangulation was conducted by comparing the findings with the literature on gender studies in *hadîts* and with critical sociolinguistic approaches at three levels.<sup>23</sup>

First, interpretive triangulation was applied by cross-referencing each corrective narration with classical *hadîts* commentaries, particularly *Fath al-Bârî* of Ibn Hajar and

*Syarh Shahîh Muslim* of al-Nawawi, to ensure that pragmatic interpretations did not contradict established exegetical understandings. Second, theoretical triangulation involved comparing speech act classification results with alternative pragmatic readings in historical pragmatics literature to prevent overextension of modern categories onto classical discourse. Illocutionary classification was restricted to cases with explicit linguistic markers, thereby minimizing the need for speculative inference. Third, intra-corpus consistency was checked by re-examining all selected cases using the same analytical coding framework to ensure stable categorization of assertive, directive, and expressive acts. The analysis was also cross-checked with classical *hadîts* commentaries to ensure interpretive consistency with the traditional scholarly understanding of the narrations.

Rather than seeking statistical reliability, the study prioritizes interpretive coherence and methodological transparency consistent with qualitative research standards.

## Results and Discussion

Before presenting the findings, it is important to clarify that this study adopts a qualitative, case-based approach, with the aim not of statistical generalization but of analytical depth. In accordance with qualitative research methodology, speech act theory is employed as an analytical metalanguage to interpret communicative actions in classical texts, rather than as a historically descriptive model. The selected *hadîts* are therefore treated as analytically illustrative cases, chosen for their pragmatic richness and relevance to the research questions. Accordingly, the following table provides an overview of the selected cases to contextualize the subsequent close analysis, rather than to suggest quantitative representativeness.

No.	Source	Subject Matter	Companion Corrected	Mode of Corrective Act	Representative <i>Matn</i> (Excerpt)
1	<i>Shahîh al-Bukhârî</i>	Eschatology/ Responsibility of sin	Ibn Abbâs/ Umar	Explicit assertive correction	وَاللَّهِ مَا حَدَّثَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ « يُعَذِّبُ الْمُؤْمِنَ بِبُكَاءِ أَهْلِهِ عَلَيْهِ
2	<i>Shahîh Muslim</i>	Theology ( <i>ru yat Allâh</i> )	Masrûq (via companions)	Directive prohibition with evidential grounding	مَنْ زَعَمَ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَأَى رَبَّهُ فَقَدْ « «أَعْظَمَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْفِرْيَةَ
3	<i>Shahîh Muslim</i>	Qur'anic interpretation	Circulating narration	Clarificatory reinterpretation	إِنَّمَا هُوَ جِبْرِيلُ، لَمْ أَرَهُ عَلَى صُورَتِهِ « «إِلَّا مَرَّتَيْنِ
4	<i>Shahîh al-Bukhârî</i>	Ritual practice (Umrah)	Ibn Umar	Mitigated assertive correction	مَا اعْتَمَرَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَّا وَهُوَ مَعَهُ، « «وَمَا اعْتَمَرَ فِي رَجَبٍ قَطُّ

5	<i>Shahîh Muslim</i>	Fasting & <i>janâbah</i>	Abû Hurayrah	Corrective experiential assertion	«كَانَ النَّبِيُّ يُصْبِحُ جُنُبًا ثُمَّ يَصُومُ»
6	<i>Shahîh Muslim</i>	Theological deviation (expressive)	Masrûq	Expressive shock-based correction	«سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ، لَقَدْ قَفَّ شَعْرِي بِمَا « «قَلْتُ»

Note: Only representative excerpts of the matan are presented to illustrate the corrective function. Full narrations are analysed qualitatively in the Results and Discussion section.

This matrix functions as a methodological grounding for the subsequent analysis, which focuses on close pragmatic reading of selected cases rather than exhaustive quantitative enumeration.

### Assertive Acts: Epistemic Claims to Truth

The most dominant type of illocutionary speech act in ‘Â’isyah RA’s correction is assertive, which conveys belief in a proposition’s accuracy.<sup>24</sup> The most explicit example appears in his rebuttal to the following *hadîts* text quotes.

فَقَالَ عُمَرُ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ يَا صُهِيبُ أَتَبْكِي عَلَيَّ وَقَدْ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِنَّ النَّيْتِ يُعَذَّبُ بِبَعْضِ بَيْكَاءِ أَهْلِهِ عَلَيْهِ قَالَ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا فَلَمَّا مَاتَ عُمَرُ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ ذَكَرْتُ ذَلِكَ لِعَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا فَقَالَتْ رَحِمَ اللَّهُ عُمَرَ وَاللَّهِ مَا حَدَّثَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لِيُعَذِّبُ الْمُؤْمِنَ بِبَيْكَاءِ أَهْلِهِ عَلَيْهِ وَلَكِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَيَزِيدُ الْكَافِرَ عَذَابًا بِبَيْكَاءِ أَهْلِهِ عَلَيْهِ

So ‘Umar said: “O Shuhaib, why do you cry for me when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: ‘Indeed, the dead body will surely be tortured because of some of the cries of his family.’” Ibn’ Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: “When ‘Umar was dead, I asked ‘Â’isyah (may Allah be pleased with him) about this matter, and he said: ‘May Allah bless ‘Umar. *By Allah, the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon Him) did not say, ‘that Allah will surely torture the believers because of the cry of his family for him.’* However, the truth is that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Indeed, Allah will surely increase the torment of the disbelievers because of the cry of his family towards him. “....<sup>25</sup>

‘Â’isyah corrected the *hadîts* by quoting the Qur’anic verse وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَى  
“And no one bears the sins of others” (Q.S. Al-An’am/6: 164) as a normative foundation.

Linguistically, the utterance contains two strong assertive markers: the oath particle *wa-Allâh* and the negation structure *mâ haddatsa*. The oath functions as an epistemic

intensifier, strengthening commitment to the propositional content, while the explicit negation directly rejects the reported attribution.

Structurally, this utterance constitutes an assertive speech act in Searle's classification, as it commits the speaker to the truth of a counter-proposition. The presence of oath-taking elevates the illocutionary force from mere clarification to epistemic verification.

Pragmatically, the correction operates through evidential grounding. 'Ā'isyah invokes both personal proximity to the Prophet and Qur'anic intertextuality (Q 6:164) to reinforce the claim. This dual strategy, experiential authority combined with scriptural anchoring, transforms the utterance into a discursive act of epistemic recalibration rather than simple disagreement.

Classical *hadīts* commentators also discussed 'Ā'isyah's interpretation of the narration on punishment for the deceased due to his family's lamentation. Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalânî, in *Fatḥh al-Bârî*, explains that 'Ā'isyah contextualized the report, arguing that the punishment applied to specific circumstances involving disbelievers rather than as a general rule affecting all deceased persons.<sup>26</sup>

Thus, the corrective act does not merely negate a transmitted report but linguistically repositions authority within narrational discourse.

### Directive Acts: Implicit Correction through Discourse Straightening

In some *hadīts*, 'Ā'isyah's correction appears as *indirect directive acts*, which are utterances that aim to affect the communicative or cognitive behaviour of the interlocutors.<sup>27</sup> This directive is seen in a *hadīts* quote about a narration circulating

قَالَتْ مَنْ زَعَمَ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ رَأَى رَبَّهُ فَقَدْ أَغْطَمَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْفِرْيَةَ قَالَ وَكُنْتُ مُسَكِّمًا فَبَجَلَسْتُ فَقُلْتُ يَا أُمَّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ  
 أَنْظِرِينِي وَلَا تَعْجَلِينِي أَلَمْ يَقُلِ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ ﴿ وَلَقَدْ رَأَاهُ بِالْأَفُقِ الْمُبِينِ ﴾ ﴿ وَلَقَدْ رَأَاهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَى ﴾ فَقَالَتْ أَنَا أَوَّلُ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ  
 سَأَلْتُ عَنْ ذَلِكَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ إِنَّمَا هُوَ جِبْرِيلُ لَمْ أَرَهُ عَلَى صُورَتِهِ

'Ā'isyah said, "Whoever claims that Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) saw his Lord, then he has indeed magnified his lie against Allah." I (Masrûq), leaning back from earlier, began to sit down well, and then I said, 'O Ummul Believers! Give me time, and do not make me hasty, has not Allah said: '(And indeed Muhammad saw Gabriel [in his original form] at another time)' (Q.S. Al Takwir/81: 23). And Allah says again: '(And indeed Muhammad has seen 'him' in his original form again)' (Q.S. An Najm/53: 13). So 'Ā'isyah replied, 'I was the first to ask the Messenger of Allah about this matter from among this people. He replied: "What is meant by 'he' in the verse is Jibril (not Allah); I have never seen Jibril in its original form..."<sup>28</sup>

This utterance does not directly command but has a strong directive function: ‘Ā’isyah forbids theological claims she considers deviant. The prohibition is framed with the rhetoric of warnings supported by the verses of the Qur’an in the series of *hadīts* narrated by Masrūq above:

قَالَتْ أَوْ لَمْ تَسْمَعُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَقُولُ ﴿ لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ ﴾ أَوْ لَمْ تَسْمَعُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَقُولُ ﴿ وَمَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَنْ يُكَلِّمَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا وَحْيًا أَوْ مِنْ وَرَاءِ حِجَابٍ أَوْ يُرْسِلَ رَسُولًا فَيُوحِيَ بِإِذْنِهِ مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّهُ عَلِيُّ حَكِيمٌ ﴾

Then ‘Ā’isyah said, ‘Have you never heard that Allah said: ‘(The sight of the eye cannot see him, whereas He can see and know the essence of all the sights of the eye, and He is the Most Meek and the Most Profound in His Knowledge)’ (Q.S. Al An‘ām/6: 103). Alternatively, have you never heard the words of Allah: ‘(And it is not fitting for a man that Allah should speak except in the form of a revelation (by being given a dream) or from behind a wall (by hearing a voice only) or by sending a messenger (angel), and then the messenger conveys a revelation to him with the permission of Allah what He wills. Indeed, Allah is Exalted, All-Wise. (Q.S. Asy-Syûrâ/42: 51).<sup>29</sup>

Linguistically, the utterance is structured as a conditional construction (*Man za‘ama anna Muhammadan ra‘â rabbahu*). The relative particle *man* generalizes the referent (“whoever claims”), thereby extending the scope of correction beyond a single interlocutor to any potential claimant. The verb *za‘ama* carries a skeptical connotation in Arabic usage, often implying an unfounded or weak claim. The apodosis clause (*faqad a‘zhama ‘alâ Allâh al-firyah*) intensifies the evaluative force by framing the claim as a grave theological falsehood.

Although not formulated as an imperative, the utterance functions pragmatically as a prohibitive directive. In Searle’s classification, directive acts aim to influence the hearer’s cognitive or behavioral stance. Here, the structure indirectly commands the cessation of a theological assertion by associating it with severe doctrinal consequences.

Pragmatically, the correction is reinforced through intertextual evidentiality. ‘Ā’isyah subsequently cites Qur’anic verses (Q.S. Al An‘ām/6: 103; Q.S. Asy-Syûrâ/42: 51), embedding her directive within scriptural authority. This strategy combines conditional generalization, evaluative intensification, and scriptural anchoring to produce a high illocutionary force without resorting to explicit imperative forms.

Classical *hadīts* commentators also interpreted this narration as a doctrinal correction. For instance, Al-Nawawî, in his commentary on *Syarh Shahîh Muslim*, explains that ‘Ā’isyah rejected the claim because it contradicts Qur’anic evidence on the impossibility of direct vision of God in worldly life.<sup>30</sup>

The directive thus operates as epistemic boundary-setting: it linguistically delineates acceptable theological discourse and reasserts interpretive authority within narrational interaction.

This directive function is also seen when ‘Ā’isyah ra corrected the circulating narration that the Prophet performed Umrah in the month of Rajab,

فَقَالَ عُرْوَةُ أَلَا تَسْمَعِينَ يَا أُمَّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِلَى مَا يَقُولُ أَبُو عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ فَقَالَتْ وَمَا يَقُولُ قَالَ يَقُولُ اعْتَمَرَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَرْبَعَ عُمَرٍ إِحْدَاهُنَّ فِي رَجَبٍ فَقَالَتْ يَرْحَمُ اللَّهُ أَبَا عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ مَا اعْتَمَرَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِلَّا وَهُوَ مَعَهُ وَمَا اعْتَمَرَ فِي رَجَبٍ قَطُّ

... Urwah asked, “Did you not hear what Abu Abdurrahman (Ibn Umar) said, O Ummul Believers?” ‘Ā’isyah asked, “What did she say?” Urwah said, “He said that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) performed ‘Umrah four times, one of which was in the month of Rajab.” ‘Ā’isyah said, “May Allah bless Abu Abdurrahman, the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not perform ‘Umrah unless I was with him, and he never did ‘Umrah in the month of Rajab.”<sup>31</sup>

Linguistically, the utterance opens with a supplicatory formula (*yarḥamullâh Abâ ‘Abd al-Raḥmân*), which functions as a mitigation device. The corrective content is then delivered through a categorical negation structure (*mâ... qaththu*), where *qaththu* intensifies the temporal absolutism of the denial (“never at all”).

Structurally, the utterance constitutes an assertive act; however, its pragmatic force extends toward directive correction. By combining prayerful mitigation with emphatic negation, ‘Ā’isyah avoids confrontation while still invalidating the circulated claim.

This strategy exemplifies mitigated epistemic correction: authority is linguistically enacted through experiential proximity (unless I was with him) while preserving social harmony. The coexistence of supplication and categorical negation reveals pragmatic sensitivity to hierarchical and relational dynamics in early narrational discourse.

Classical commentators also noted this correction. Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani in *Fatḥh al-Bârî* reports that ‘Ā’isyah’s statement was intended to rectify a historical misunderstanding concerning the timing of the Prophet’s ‘umrah.<sup>32</sup>

The correction, therefore, demonstrates how epistemic authority may be asserted without overt discursive aggression.

### Expressive Acts: Emotional Expression as an Ideological Marker

Some of ‘Ā’isyah’s speech acts also have an expressive function, which expresses an emotional or evaluative attitude towards a situation.<sup>33</sup> Still in the continuation of the *haḍîths* about the Prophet Muhammad seeing Allah narrated from Masruq, he said

سَأَلْتُ عَائِشَةَ هَلْ رَأَى مُحَمَّدٌ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ رَبَّهُ فَقَالَتْ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ لَقَدْ قَفَّ شَعْرِي لَمَّا قُلْتُ وَسَاقَ الْحَدِيثَ بِقِصَّتِهِ وَحَدِيثُ دَاوُدَ أَتَمُّ وَأَطْوَلُ

“I asked ‘Ā’isyah, ‘Did Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) see his Lord?’ ‘Ā’isyah replied, ‘Subḥânallâh (Most Holy of Allah), I should have had goosebumps

because of what you said earlier.” Then he brought the *hadîts* with his story. Moreover, the *hadîts* of Dawud is more complete and longer.”<sup>34</sup>

The utterance begins with the exclamatory glorification formula *subhânallâh*, which in Arabic discourse often signals strong rejection or moral astonishment. This is followed by the emphatic particle *laqad*, combined with the perfect verb *qaffa sya’rî*, which describes a physical reaction: ‘my hair stood on end’. The construction intensifies emotional immediacy and signals evaluative disapproval.

In Searle’s taxonomy, this constitutes an expressive act, as it conveys the speaker’s psychological attitude toward the propositional content.<sup>35</sup> However, its pragmatic effect exceeds mere emotion. The embodied metaphor of goosebumps dramatizes theological deviation, transforming personal shock into a discursive sanction.

Rather than immediately presenting a doctrinal refutation, ‘Â’isyah first marks the utterance as normatively dangerous. This strategy may be described as shock-based disapproval: an expressive form that pre-structures the interpretive frame before propositional correction is delivered.

The expressive act thus functions as epistemic delegitimization. By portraying the claim as spiritually unsettling, the utterance reshapes the hierarchy of credibility within the interaction and prepares the ground for subsequent doctrinal clarification.

Al-Nawawi explains in his commentary on *Syarh Shahîh Muslim* that expressions such as *subhânallâh* frequently function as markers of astonishment or rejection in *hadîts* discourse. This observation aligns with the pragmatic interpretation presented here, where the expression serves as an expressive speech act signaling epistemic objection.<sup>36</sup>

The following narration from Abû Bakr illustrates how ‘Â’isyah employs expressive acts in responding to Abu Hurairah’s opinion on fasting while in a state of *janâbah*.

سَمِعْتُ أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ يَقُصُّ يَقُولُ فِي قِصَصِهِ مَنْ أَدْرَكَهُ الْفَجْرُ جُنْبًا فَلَا يَصُومُ فَذَكَرْتُ ذَلِكَ لِعَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ الْحَارِثِ  
لَأَبِيهِ فَأَنْكَرَ ذَلِكَ فَأَنْطَلَقَ عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ وَأَنْطَلَقْتُ مَعَهُ حَتَّى دَخَلْنَا عَلَى عَائِشَةَ وَأُمِّ سَلَمَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا فَسَأَلَهُمَا عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ  
عَنْ ذَلِكَ قَالَ فَكَلَّمَاهُمَا قَالَتْ كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُصْبِحُ جُنْبًا مِنْ غَيْرِ حُلْمٍ ثُمَّ يَصُومُ

I (Abû Bakr) heard Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrate. In his story, he said, “Whoever falls at dawn, let him not fast.” So, I conveyed it to Abdurrahman bin Al Harits, and he denied it. Then he immediately left, and I went with him to meet ‘Â’isyah and Umu Salâmah (may Allah be pleased with him). Then Abdurrahman asked them about it, so ‘Â’isyah replied, “One morning, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not have a dream, and after that, he continued to fast.”<sup>37</sup>

Grammatically, the utterance is structured as a habitual past construction (*kâna... yusybihu*), indicating repeated practice rather than isolated occurrence. The declarative

form lacks overt evaluative language; however, its function within the dialogical context reveals corrective intent.

According to speech act classification, the utterance operates primarily as an assertive act, committing the speaker to the factual truth of the Prophet's practice. However, pragmatically, it performs implicit refutation by presenting counter-evidence grounded in lived proximity.

The absence of explicit negation or reproach constitutes a strategic choice. Correction is achieved through experiential evidentiality rather than argumentative confrontation. This illustrates a pragmatic mode of silent recalibration: replacing a circulating juridical interpretation with embodied prophetic precedent.

The act, therefore, exemplifies how epistemic correction can be enacted through descriptive narration, without direct polemical framing.

### **Intersectional: Gender, Authority, and Pragmatic Strategies**

The concept of intersectionality, first systematically formulated by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989), emphasizes the importance of understanding how social identities such as gender, race, class, and status intersect to shape experiences that cannot be reduced to a single category.<sup>38</sup> In the context of the *hadīts*, 'Ā'isyah is in a unique position: as a woman in a patriarchal Arab society of the 7th century, she was also a central scholarly authority in the early Muslim community due to her closeness to the Prophet, the breadth of her memorization, and the clarity of her arguments.<sup>39</sup> 'Ā'isyah's intervention in the *hadīts* discourse cannot be read only as a theological narrative but also as a discursive practice that carries the content of *gendered agency*. When she corrects male companions such as Ibn 'Umar or Abū Hurairah, 'Ā'isyah presents a form of epistemic resistance to the masculine hegemony that dominates the prophetic narrative.

Rather than adopting a confrontational style, 'Ā'isyah employs mitigating, indirect, and rhetorical-expressive strategies that reflect pragmatic awareness of prevailing social structures while sustaining discursive authority. This strategy is in line with findings in critical sociolinguistic studies that women in patriarchal contexts often adopt complex and adaptive forms of communication to maintain authority while minimizing social resistance.<sup>40</sup>

Furthermore, within the framework of Islam, this analysis is closely related to Amina Wadud, who emphasizes the importance of reading religious texts through a participatory and egalitarian lens and of identifying the structural biases that have long marginalized women's voices in Islamic epistemology.<sup>41</sup> By reading 'Ā'isyah's speech acts as an illocution that reshapes the authority structure of religious discourse, this study shows that women are not only "narrators" in the passive sense but also *muḥaddithah*.<sup>42</sup> 'Ā'isyah RA's corrective action addresses not only *hadīts* content but also the authority of interpretation, framing

*hadîts* as a negotiable discursive practice rather than a closed doctrine and enriching pragmatic analysis within Islamic epistemology.

### **Implications of Speech Acts in the Correction of the Prophet's *Hadîts***

This study's results significantly contribute to the development of speech theory in the context of religious texts, especially *hadîts*. By applying the Searle and Leech framework to 'Â'isyah RA's corrective actions, this study shows that the illocution in the *hadîts* is not only linguistic-formal but also operates in social, political, and gender power relations. 'Â'isyah's speech marks an expansion of *assertive*, *directive*, and *expressive* functions in religious contexts, not just conveying the speaker's intentions but also reshaping discursive authority and intervening in established epistemic structures. She shows that speech theory needs to be read interdisciplinarily as a tool for linguistic categorization and for analyzing power and social agency.

Furthermore, this study deconstructs the normative paradigm in *hadîts* studies, which has been overly focused on formal authenticity (*sanad* and *matn*) while ignoring the dynamics of communication between narrators, full of social and identity negotiations. By exploring the performativity of 'Â'isyah's language, this study builds a new framework for understanding *hadîts* as a discourse practice, that is, as an interpretive process involving interests, authority, and resistance. Within this interpretive framework, approaches and gender theory complement each other in developing an Islamic epistemology more responsive to social justice, especially in women's representation and agency.

### **Conclusion**

This study examined corrective narrations attributed to 'Â'isyah RA in *Shahîh al-Bukhârî* and *Shahîh Muslim* using pragmatic speech act theory. The analysis demonstrates that 'Â'isyah's corrections follow identifiable illocutionary patterns, primarily assertive, directive, and expressive acts, signaled by linguistic markers such as negation structures, evaluative verbs, supplicatory formulas, and exclamatory expressions. These features indicate that the corrections function not merely as narrative clarifications but as pragmatic interventions that reconfigure epistemic claims within early Muslim scholarly interaction.

The study contributes to *hadîts* scholarship by reframing corrective narrations as instances of epistemic negotiation rather than isolated reports of disagreement. 'Â'isyah's responses appear as structured communicative acts through which knowledge claims were evaluated and reaffirmed, highlighting the dialogical nature of early *hadîts* transmission.

Methodologically, the article proposes a pragmatic framework for analyzing *hadîts* discourse by identifying explicit linguistic markers, such as negation particles, conditional

constructions, and evaluative verbs like *za'ama*, that signal particular speech acts. This approach provides a systematic, replicable model for examining dialogical contexts in *hadîts*.

The corpus, however, is limited to six narrations in *Shahîh al-Bukhârî* and *Shahîh Muslim*, and the use of modern speech-act theory as a metalanguage introduces the potential for interpretive projection. Despite these limitations, the study demonstrates the value of pragmatic analysis for understanding how epistemic authority was negotiated within early Islamic discourse.

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