An Analysis of Flora Symbols in the Qur'an from the Perspective of Charles Sanders Peirce

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Abstract: Symbols are important elements that are often used in everyday life. The Qur'an contains many messages which are depicted using certain symbols. The current reality is that there are still many who do not know and understand the symbols used in the Koran. This research will explore and discuss the use of flora symbols used in the Qur'an. These symbols are important to know and understand with the aim of understanding the messages contained in the Qur'an. This research uses a qualitative descriptive research type. Data analysis in this research uses the triangle meaning semiotic theory from Carles Sanders Peirce's perspective. After carrying out the analysis, this research found that there are 25 verses in the Qur'an that use flora symbols, which are divided into 2 classifications, namely general and specific symbol mention classifications. Which is divided into 3 general mentions of floral symbols and 7 specific mentions of floral symbols. The symbols mentioned are generally used in the Qur'an to show God's power and mercy in everything that has been created. Meanwhile, the Qur'an uses specific mention of flora symbols to show the benefits of flora in the continuity of human life.

Keywords: Symbols, Flora, Semiotics, Charles Sanders Peirce

Abstrak: Simbol merupakan unsur penting yang sering digunakan dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. Al-Qur'an mengandung banyak pesan yang di gambarkan menggunakan simbol-sembol tertentu. Realita saat ini, masih banyak yang belum mengetahui dan memahami simbol-simbol yang digunakan dalam Al-Qur'an. Penelitian mengeksplorasi dan membahas penggunaan simbol flora yang digunakan dalam Al-Qur'an. Simbol tersebut penting untuk diketahui dan difahami dengan tujuan untuk mengetahui pesan yang terdapat dalam Al-Qur'an. Penelitian ini menggunakan jenis penelitian deskriptif kualitatif. Analisis data dalam penelitian ini menggunakan teori triangle meaning semiotice perspektif Carles Sanders Peirce. Setalah melaknasanakan analisis, penelitian ini menemukan hasil bahwa terdapat 25 ayat dalam al-Qur'an yang menggunakan simbol flora, yang terbagi pada 2 klasifikasi, yaitu klasifikasi penyebutan simbol secara umum dan spesifik. Yang terbagi pada 3 penyebutan simbol flora disebutkan secara umum dan 7 penyebutan simbol flora secara spesifik. Simbol-simbol yang disebutkan secara umum digunakan Al-Qur'an untuk menunjukkan kekuasaan dan kebasaran Allah dalam segala sesuatu yang telah diciptakan. Sedangkan, penyebutan simbol flora secara spesifik digunakan Al-Qur'an untuk menunjukkan manfaat flora dalam keberlangsungan kehidupan manusia.

Kata Kunci: Simbol, Flora, Semiotika, Carles Sanders Peirce

Introduction

The emergence and development of symbols in human life has its own paradigm for the reader. Symbols are one of the most important elements in human life. The symbol itself is a symbol that can lead someone to a certain idea. Symbols that are spread to the general public are generally in the form of writing, images, objects, and movements. The emergence of symbols has a special function, namely so that something that is symbolized can be understood by the audience who sees and pays attention to it. The most important element in understanding a symbol is not to consider that the symbol is the core substance so that later there will be errors in meaning that result in the emergence of subjective justification of meaning, which at the end of the class is the emergence of embryos of fanaticism.²

The importance of understanding symbols is not only in symbols located in certain places but understanding symbols in particular is also very necessary in everyday life. One of them is understanding the symbols contained in the holy book of Islam, namely the Qur'an.³ The Qur'an is a miracle revealed by Allah as a guide for humans who read and understand it. The function of the Qur'an itself according to Sahiron Syamsuddin can be classified into two domains, namely the special domain and the public domain. The public domain means that the Qur'an functions as a reading in certain moments. While the public domain means that the Qur'an functions as a spirit, lamp and guidance for humans in the face of darkness.⁴

Understanding the function of the Qur'an as a public domain requires an in-depth approach and study. Because it not only contains stories, wisdom, commands and prohibitions, but contains symbols that have their purpose and purpose. One of them is a symbol of plants and fruits mentioned several times in the Qur'an. To understand these symbols, the science of semiotics and tafsir is needed as a support to understand them.⁵

¹ Eko Punto Hendro, "Simbol: Arti, Fungsi, Dan Implikasi Metodologisnya," *Endogami: Jurnal Ilmiah Kajian Antropologi* 3, no. 2 (2020): 158–65.

² Muhamad Zaedi, "The Importance to Understand the Al-Qur'an and Knowledge (Pentingnya Memahami Al-Qur'an Dan Ilmu Pengetahuan)," *Risâlah, Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Studi Islam* 5, no. 1, March (2019): 62–70.

³ Ziyadatul Fadhliyah, "Semiotika Ferdinan De Saussure Sebagai Metode Penafsiran Al-Qur'an: Kajian Teoritis," *Al-Afkar, Journal For Islamic Studies*, 2021, 109–22.

⁴ Sahiron Syamsuddin, "Metodologi Penelitian Living Qur'an Dan Hadis," *Yogyakarta: Teras*, 2007.

⁵ Agus Salim Syukran Agus Salim Syukran, "Fungsi Al-Qur'an Bagi Manusia," *Al-I'jaz: Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an, Falsafah Dan Keislaman* 1, no. 2 (2019): 90–108.

Research that discusses semiotics has been written many times before, as written by Hidayat about the meaning of color symbolization in the Qur'an which has many meanings and purposes in it, 6 Semiotic analysis of symbols of traditional house buildings of the Simalungun tribe, ⁷ Semiotic analysis of films under the fog country, ⁸ to the analysis of living Qur'an in the public space of semiotics perspective. Other studies that discuss flora in rhymes such as research written by Khairulanwar, ¹⁰ Yusoff also wrote research on flora in the Qur'an, but his research focuses on the study of fruits and their properties in daily life, 11 in addition, Saleh also wrote research on the use of flora parables in the Our'an. 12 This research is in line with previous studies, which is similar in the use of Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory as an analysis knife and flora symbols as the object of study. The difference between this research is that this research will focus on discussing flora symbols in the Qur'an from the perspective of Charles Sanders Peirce, to know the symbol form, meaning and interpretation of flora symbols contained in the Qur'an. This research is considered important to carry out, as a first step to know and understand the symbols contained in the Qur'an, to avoid misunderstanding the reading of meaning, especially the meaning of the flora symbols in the Qur'an.

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method, this method is used to explain and describe the problems to be discussed.¹³ The data source of this research is obtained from the Qur'an. The data collection procedure in this study is by reading and understanding the verses of the Qur'an that contain flora symbols, after which the

⁶ Hamdan Hidayat, "Simbolisasi Warna Dalam Al-Qur'an Analisis Semiotika Charles Sanders Peirce," *Ibn Abbas: Jurnal Ilmu Alquran Dan Tafsir* 3, no. 2 (2022).

⁷ Friokto Winra Purba, Junifer Siregar, and Vita Riahni Saragih, "Analisis Semiotik Simbol Terhadap Bangunan Rumah Adat Suku Simalungun Kabupaten Simalungun," *Morfologi: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan, Bahasa, Sastra Dan Budaya* 1, no. 6 (2023): 91–103.

⁸ Halimah Tusaddiah Rambe, Syahrul Abidin, and Achiriah Achiriah, "Analisis Semiotika Film Negeri Di Bawah Kabut," *Berajah Journal: Jurnal Ilmiah Pembelajaran Dan Pengembangan Diri* 2, no. 4 (2022): 989–98, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.47353/bj.v2i4.188.

⁹ Rambe, Abidin, and Achiriah.

¹⁰ Khairulanwar Abdul Ghani and Noriah Mohamed, "Analisis Sosiosemiotik Terhadap Konsepsi Lambang Flora Dalam Pantun Nasihat," *Journal of Advanced Research Design Journal Homepage* 57, no. 1 (2019): 1–20.

¹¹ Ahmad Nasir Mohd Yusoff, Muhammad Hannan Abdul Aziz, and Mohamad Maulana Magiman, "Kajian Tematik Buah-Buahan Dalam Al-Quran Dan Penggunaannya Untuk Rawatan Perubatan Islam," *ANP Journal of Social Science and Humanities* 3 (2022): 10–16, https://doi.org/10.53797/anp.jssh.v3sp.2.2022.

¹² Solehah Saleh, "Penggunaan Flora Sebagai Perumpamaan Di Dalam Al-Quran" (Master's Thesis, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 2017).

¹³ Lexy J Moleong, "Qualitative Research Methodology," *Bandung, PT Remaja Rosdakarya, Year*, 2007.

researcher collects relevant data and analyzes it in depth. The data that has been collected is then analyzed using Carles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory. According to Carles Sanders Peirce, there are three semiotic meaning analyses: representamen, object and interpretant (triangle meaning semiotice).¹⁴

First, representamen analysis has three elements, namely qualisign (a sign that appears based on a trait or feeling), sinsign (a sign that appears as a representation of a situation), and legisign (a sign that appears is a general basis/rule). Second, object analysis has three elements, namely icon (a sign that shows the intention of the object), index (a sign that connects to the object), symbol (a sign that does not depend on the object). Third, interpretant analysis consists of elements of rheme or seme (a sign that can represent its object), dicent or decisign or pheme (a sign that can represent information about its object), argument (a sign that represents its object in connection with existing laws and customs). This research focuses on analyzing flora symbols using semiotic analysis which is considered relevant to the object of study to be examined, so that later this research is expected to get accurate results. ¹⁵

Results and Discussion

Symbols in the Qur'an

Understanding symbols (signs) is important to pay attention to, because symbols are representations that show meanings that can provide an understanding of something that exists.¹⁶ The symbol itself has the meaning of everything that appears such as colors, signs, objects, or other forms that can present other than itself.¹⁷ According to this assumption, symbols cannot represent or show themselves. That is, something can only be considered a symbol as long as it does not represent or show itself.

The Qur'an was revealed on earth as a miracle to guide mankind, and it contains stories, wisdom, and God's provisions. In addition, the Qur'an also contains unique symbols with varied characters and meanings, such as symbols of color, water, fire and so on.¹⁸ These symbols can be understood using a relevant scientific discipline approach,

¹⁴ Charles Sanders Peirce, *Peirce on Signs: Writings on Semiotic* (UNC Press Books, 1991).

¹⁵ Susanna Marietti and Rossella Fabbrichesi, *Semiotics and Philosophy in Charles Sanders Peirce* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009).

¹⁶ Hendro, "Simbol: Arti, Fungsi, Dan Implikasi Metodologisnya."

¹⁷ Marcel Danesi, "Pesan, Tanda, Dan Makna," Yogyakarta: Jalasutra, 2010.

¹⁸ Anasiatul Aisiyah Anasiatul, Indana Zulfa Kumala, and Riski Yanti, "Urgensi Kemukjizatan Al-Quran Di Masa Modern," *Advances in Humanities and Contemporary Studies* 3, no. 1 (2022): 55–62.

to understand the existing symbols properly and correctly. One of the scientific fields that can be used to understand symbols in the Qur'an is by using the approach of understanding al-Qur'an interpretation, which can be strengthened using semiotic science so that existing symbols can be interpreted comprehensively.¹⁹

Analysis of Flora Symbols in the Qur'an

After the researchers conducted an in-depth analysis by reading, understanding and classifying the verses of the Qur'an. Researchers found 25 verses that use flora symbols which are divided into 2 classifications, namely general and specific symbols, with 3 mentions of flora symbols in general and 7 mentions of flora symbols in particular (specific). There are 3 mentions of flora in general in the Qur'an which are scattered in 11 verses in the Qur'an, with the following details:

Plants	Text	Surah and Verse	Description
Plant Seed	حبّة	Al-Baqarah: 261	Madaniyyah
	حبّة	Al-An'am: 59	Makiyyah
Tree	الشّجرة	Al-Baqarah: 35	Madaniyyah
	الشّجرة	Al-A'raf: 19	Makiyyah
	الشّجرة	Al-A'raf: 20	Makiyyah
	الشّجرة	Al-A'raf: 22	Makiyyah
	الشّجرة	Ibrahim: 24	Makiyyah
Plant	نبات	Al-An'am: 99	Makiyyah
	نبات	Al-A'raf: 58	Makiyyah
	نبات	Yunus: 24	Makiyyah
	نبات	Al-Kahfi: 45	Makiyyah

Applying the triadic semiotic theory of Charles Sanders Peirce (triangle meaning semiotics), it is found that in the Qur'an, there are symbols related to flora (plants) that are mentioned in general. The representamen of the sentence relating to the mention of symbols in general is "habbatun, syajaratun, nabaatun" from the verses scattered in the

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¹⁹ Syamsuddin, "Metodologi Penelitian Living Qur'an Dan Hadis."

Qur'an. The object of "habbatun, syajaratun, nabaatun" is the vocabulary contained in the Qur'anic verse.

Intrepretant of the symbol "habbatun" which means "plant seeds". Seeds have the characteristics of something dead and useless if no one grows the seeds. The seed symbol is used to show Allah's power over everything. The symbol of "habbatun" contained in surat al-Baqarah shows that Allah's reward is greater than what humans do and humans estimate, in this verse it is described when humans invest their wealth, the reward is like a plant seed that grows fertile then from it grows seven stalks and each stalk has a hundred seeds that will later be harvested by the person who invested. Whereas in Surah al-An'am the symbol "habbatun" is used to show that Allah is all-knowing of everything in the heavens and on earth, which is illustrated that indeed Allah is all-knowing of everything on earth even if it is a seed that is in darkness.²⁰

Second, the Intrepretant of the symbol "syajaratun" which means "tree". Trees have general characteristics, namely sturdy plants that have roots, stems, branches, leaves and fruit. This symbol is used by the Qur'an to describe the obedience and good deeds of its servants. In Surah al-Baqarah and Surah al-A'raf the whole symbol "syajaratun" is used to describe and measure obedience by forbidding the prophet Adam to approach the symbol, in another verse from Surah al-A'raf Satan tries to persuade the prophet Adam to approach the symbol with various seduction and deception so that the prophet Adam approaches and violates obedience. Furthermore, in the Ibrahim letter, the symbol is used to describe good deeds in the form of the sentence "tayyibah", the sentence has wisdom when the more the sentence is spoken, the stronger and more fertile the symbol.²¹

Third, the Intrepretant of the symbol "nabaatun" which means "plant". Plants have the characteristics of living things that have roots, stems and leaves to produce food and grow well. This symbol is used by the Qur'an to describe Allah's power to revive and fertilize everything. All verses that use this symbol show that Allah is the one who revives, grows and fertilizes everything and in time Allah will also take it back, which

²⁰ Balya Rozudin, "Analisis Semantik Kata Dzarrah Dan Padanannya Dalam Al-Qur'an" (UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, 2022).

²¹ Muhammad Ebin Rajab Sihombing, "Menelisik Makna Syajarah Dalam Al-Qur'an: Analisis Semantik Toshihiko Izutsu," *Basha'ir: Jurnal Studi Alquran Dan Tafsir* 3, no. 2 (2023): 61–73.

means that everything in this world is not eternal, such as the symbol of a tree that has a period of life and in time will die too.²²

Furthermore, there are 7 specific mentions of flora symbols scattered in 15 verses in the Qur'an, with the following details:

Plants	Text	Surah and Verse	Description
 Tin Fruit	التّين	At-Tiin: 1	Makiyyah
Olive Fruit	الزّيتون	At-Tiin: 1	Makiyyah
	الزّيتون	An-Nahl: 11	Madaniyyah
	الزّيتون	Al-An'am: 99	Makiyyah
	الزّيتون	Al-An'am: 141	Makiyyah
Date Fruit	نخيل	Al-Baqarah: 266	Madaniyyah
	النّخيل	Al-An'am: 99	Makiyyah
	نخيل	Ar-Ra'd: 4	Madaniyyah
	النّخيل	An-Nahl: 11	Makiyyah
	نخيل	An-nahl: 67	Makiyyah
	نخيل	Al-Isra': 91	Makiyyah
Grape Fruit -	أغناب	Al-Baqarah: 266	Madaniyyah
	الأغنب	An-Nahl: 11	Makiyyah
	الأغنب	An-nahl: 67	Makiyyah
	عنب	Al-Isra': 91	Makiyyah
Pomegranate Fruit –	الرّمّان	Al-An'am: 99	Makiyyah
	الرّمّان	Al-An'am: 141	Makiyyah
	الرّمّان	Ar-Rahman: 68	Madaniyyah
Pumpkin Fruit	يقطين	As-Shaffat: 146	Makiyyah

The specific mention of flora symbols in the Qur'an is used to show the power and greatness of Allah over everything that has been created with its respective benefits for human life.²³ The mention of the symbol gives the meaning that the flora symbols

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 $^{^{22}}$ Muhammad Quraish Shihab, $Lentera\,Al\text{-}Quran$: Kisah Dan Hikmah Kehidupan (Mizan Pustaka, 2008).

²³ Mahmud Rifaannudin, "Manfaat Tumbuhan Dalam Al Qur'an Bagi Kesehatan (Pendekatan Tafsir Ilmi)," *Al-Muhafidz* 2, no. 1 (2022): 87–100.

mentioned specifically in each verse of the Qur'an have extraordinary benefits and privileges for the needs of creature life on earth.²⁴

The representamen of the sentence relating to the specific mention of the symbol is "al-tiin, al-zaituun, nakhilu, al-aghnaabu, al-rumman, yaqtiin" from the verses scattered in the Qur'an. Object of "al-tiin, al-zaituun, nakhilu, al-aghnaabu, al-rumman, yaqtiin" is the vocabulary contained in the verse of the Qur'an.

Interpretant symbol "al-tiin" which means tin fruit is mentioned once in the Qur'an gives a clue that the fruit has its own specialty, namely tin fruit (Fiscus carica L.) is a fruit that has extraordinary nutritional content including vitamin A, vitamin K, vitamin C, vitamin B6, iron, calcium, potassium, magnesium, phosphorus, and contains fiber. In addition, tin fruit contains bioactive compounds, polyphenols and flavonoids that can be used to treat various diseases, which can be used to treat ulcers and diarrhea, in pharmacological activities tin fruit is used for antibacterial, antioxidant, antitumor, and anti-inflammatory agents. Tin fruit is also one of the main commodities in the economy because of its many properties and the rarity of tin fruit cultivation.

Interpretant symbol "al-Zaituun" means olives. The symbol is mentioned in the Qur'an four times scattered in various verses. Olives (Olea europaea) are mentioned in the Qur'an because they are one of the special fruits that contain a lot of nutrients and benefits. Olives contain phenol compounds, tocopherols, sterols, pagan, and squalene and contain salts, iron, phosphorus, and vitamins A and B.²⁸ These ingredients are very beneficial for the body. These contents are very beneficial for life and can prevent various diseases in the human body, including lowering blood sugar and preventing viruses, bacteria, and fungi that disturb humans. ²⁹

Furthermore, the Interpretant symbol "nakhilu" and its derivations mean dates which are mentioned six times in the Qur'an. The symbol shows that dates have special

²⁴ Shihab, Lentera Al-Quran: Kisah Dan Hikmah Kehidupan.

²⁵ Tresno Saras, Buah Tin: Keajaiban Kesehatan Dari Alam (Tiram Media, 2023).

²⁶ Nova Ramadhanti, "Khasiat Buah Tin (Fiscus Carica L.) Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an Dan Sains," *Es-Syajar: Journal of Islam, Science and Technology Integration* 1, no. 2 (2023): 102–9, https://doi.org/10.18860/es.v1i2.23342.

²⁷ Enjang Suherman, "Pemanfaatan Buah Tin Untuk Perekonomian Dan Kesehatan," *Jurnal Buana Pengabdian* 1, no. 1 (2019): 6–14.

²⁸ Ida Khoirunnisa, Rakhmiyati Rakhmiyati, and Risti Widyaningsih, "Keistimewaan Zaitun Dalam Perspektif Islam Dan Sains," *Prosiding Konferensi Integrasi Interkoneksi Islam Dan Sains* 2 (2020): 75–77.

²⁹ Aisya Nabila Savitri and Muhammad Reza Fahlevi, "Manfaat Dan Kandungan Buah-Buahan Dalam Al-Qur'an," *Islamic Education* 1, no. 4 (2023): 472–81.

privileges compared to other fruits, namely dates have many contents and benefits. Among the contents contained in dates are antioxidants, iron and minerals that are useful as antioxidants, anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial, anti-carcinogenic, anti-microbial which can maintain the health and fitness of the human body.³⁰ In addition, if the date fruit is made into date extract, it can be used as a powerful antioxidant to maintain body fitness and increase hemoglobin levels in the human body.³¹

The interpretant symbol "al-Aghnaabu" and its derivations mean grapes. The symbol is mentioned at least four times in the Qur'an. The symbol also shows that grapes are a good fruit for consumption, and the fruit is also special for human life. Grapes (Vitis vinifera) contain protein, calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, sodium, iron, zinc, vitamins B1, B2, B3, B6, vitamins C and K, and contains a lot of fiber and water. All of these ingredients can have a good effect on the human body by consuming them. In addition, grapes also contain phytochemical compounds that are beneficial for maintaining human skin to prevent antiaging and avoid premature aging.³²

Pomegranate is also one of the fruits mentioned in the Qur'an which is mentioned three times, with the Interpretant symbol "al-rumman". Pomegranate has its own specialty with its various contents and benefits. Namely pomegranate (Punica granatum L) in it has a high antioxidant content that is good for maintaining human skin and as a basic ingredient of cosmetics, 33 besides that pomegranates also contain protein, fiber, follat and potassium which are beneficial for human health, especially preventing gastric diseases. 34

Pumpkin is also one of the fruits mentioned in the Qur'an, which is mentioned once with the Interpretant symbol "yaqtiin". Pumpkin contains protein, carbohydrates, fat, fiber, vitamins A and C, calcium, magnesium and carotenoids. All the contents contained in pumpkin can be beneficial for the human body. Especially the content of

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³⁰ Raudhah Nurul Ainina, "Buah Kurma (Phoenix Dactylifera) Dan Pemanfaatannya Terhadap Kesehatan (Literature Review)," 2021.

³¹ Azkiyah Siti Zamilatul and Hayatul Rahimah, "Analisis Kadar Zat Besi (Fe) Dan Vitamin C Pada Ekstrak Buah Kurma (Phoenix Dactylifera L.)," *Formosa Journal of Science and Technology* 1, no. 4 (2022): 363–74, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.55927/fjst.v1i4.1065.

³² Jihan Rahmi Nabila, "Potensi Buah Anggur Sebagai Anti Aging Alami Dalam Perspektif Sains Dan Islam," *Konferensi Integrasi Interkoneksi Islam Dan Sains* 4, no. 1 (2022): 150–54.

³³ Andariningtyas Putri Febriati et al., "Manfaat Ekstrak Buah Delima (Punica Granatum L.) Sebagai Zat Aktif Dalam Formulasi Sediaan Kosmetika," *Jurnal Health Sains* 3, no. 6 (2022): 793–97, https://doi.org/10.46799/jhs.v4i06.516.

³⁴ Saiku Rokhim et al., "Mengenal Lebih Dekat Delima: Buah Surga Kaya Manfaat," 2023.

carotenoids that have high vitamin A activity, which is commonly referred to as betacarotene. Betacarotene in pumpkin serves to protect eye health from cataract disorders. In addition, the benefits of betacarotene are also able to protect the human body from cancer, heart disease, diabetes and premature aging.³⁵

Conclusion

Through an in-depth analysis and research, it was identified that flora symbols are utilized in the Qur'an with two distinct classifications: general and specific mentions. Specifically, the Qur'an includes three general mentions and seven specific mentions of flora symbols, distributed across 25 verses. General mentions of flora symbols are employed to demonstrate Allah's omnipotence and magnificence in all aspects of creation. Conversely, specific mentions are used to emphasize the practical utility and significance of flora in human life, underscoring its essential role and benefits in this world. This dual classification of flora symbols in the Qur'an underscores the multifaceted nature of its teachings, highlighting both the divine power and the practical applications of flora in everyday life.

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³⁵ Fitra Fitra Dahlia, "Khasiat Buah Labu Bagi Kesehatan Perspektif Hadis (Kajian I'jaz Ilmi Fi Hadis)" (Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau, 2022).

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