

## Synthesizing Islam with Local Values: The Philosophy of Minangkabau Speech *Kato nan Ampek* and the Qur'an

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### Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji kemungkinan mensintesis secara substantif dua komponen yang berbeda, yaitu Al-Qur'an dan kearifan lokal Nusantara Indonesia. Dalam hal ini, *Kato nan Ampek* yang merupakan filsafat tindak tutur di Minangkabau. Ada empat jenis *Kato*: *Mandaki*, *Manurun*, *Malereng*, dan *Mandata*. Masing-masing *Kato nan Ampek* digunakan sesuai dengan mitra tuturnya. Penelitian ini dilakukan secara kualitatif dengan pendekatan sintesis. Ditemukan bahwa *Kato Mandaki*, secara substantif dan penggunaannya, dapat disintesis dengan prinsip-prinsip *Qawlan Karima*; *Kato Manurun*, dapat disintesis dengan *Qawlan Sadida*, dan prinsip pada praktik *Kato Manurun* harus didasarkan pada prinsip *Qawlan Sadida*; dan *Kato Malereng*, dalam praktiknya juga harus didasarkan pada prinsip *Qawlan Baligha*; seperti halnya *Kato Manurun*, penggunaannya juga harus didasarkan pada prinsip *Qawlan Layyina*.

**Kata Kunci:** Minangkabau; Al-Qur'an; *Kato nan Ampek*; Sintesis.

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### **Abstract**

This article explores the potential for substantively synthesizing two distinct components: the verses of the Qur'an and the local wisdom of Nusantara, Indonesia. In this case, *Kato nan Ampek* is a philosophy of speech acts and politeness in the Minangkabau language. There are four *Kato* or Speech Styles: *Mandaki*, *Manurun*, *Malereng*, and *Mandata*. Each of the *Kato nan Ampek* is used according to the speech partner. This research was conducted qualitatively with a synthesis approach. It was found that *Kato Mandaki*, in substance and use, is by the principles of *Qawlan Karîma*; *Kato Manurun*, in substance, can be synthesized with *Qawlan Sadîda*, and the principle of the practice of *Kato Manurun* should be based on the principle of *Qawlan Sadîda*; and with *Kato Malereng*, in practice, it should also be based on the principle of *Qawlan Balîgha*; as well as *Kato Manurun*, its use should also be based on the principle of *Qawlan Layyina*.

**Keywords:** *Minangkabau; Al-Qur'an; Kato nan Ampek; Syntesis.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Islam has been the majority religion in Indonesia for several centuries, with developments influenced by trade, peaceful preaching, and cultural interaction. According to Feener's research (2004), Islam entered the archipelago through maritime trade routes between the 7th and 16th centuries AD, brought by traders from Gujarat, Arabia, and Persia. These traders introduced Islamic teachings and adapted them to local values, allowing the community to quickly accept them (Ricklefs, 1993, p. 4).

The Samudra Pasai Kingdom in Aceh was among the first political entities to embrace Islam in the 13th century (Nazurah et al., 2024). Later, Islam's influence expanded through large kingdoms such as Demak, Mataram, and Banten. Wali Songo played a crucial role in spreading Islam in Java, employing an inclusive approach that utilized traditional puppets and gamelan arts to capture public interest (Afandi, 2023). Islam remains the majority religion in Indonesia, with over 87% of the population adhering to it (Susilawati & Kurnia, 2024). The success of Islam in Indonesia lies in its ability to blend in with the local culture without losing its spiritual essence. This makes Islam an integral part of the nation's identity (Prasetyo, 2023).

In Indonesia, one of the tribes most closely associated with Islam is the Minangkabau. Islam has been integrated with the Minangkabau tribe through a unique and harmonious acculturation process (Nur, 2016). The Minangkabau tribe, renowned for its matrilineal system, can effectively integrate Islamic values into its customs without compromising its cultural identity. According to Navis (1984), the Minang proverb "*Adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah*" indicates that Islam serves as the

philosophical foundation for Minangkabau customs. This principle demonstrates that customary law does not contradict Islamic teachings, but rather complements them.

The integration is also evident in the Minangkabau people's philosophical values, particularly in their language and communication philosophy. Language is also referred to as *Baso* in Minangkabau. Language has been a concern of the community and elders for a long time. *Baso* is often associated with *Budi* (ethics), *Raso* (emotion), and *Kato* (speech). A Minangkabau idiom even states, “*di budi jo baso basi sajo kito nan tunduak*” (in ethics and language we obey). This philosophical statement indicates that language plays a vital role in the ethics of Minangkabau society (Heider, 2011). *Baso-basi* means the ability to speak politely and be accepted by the interlocutor. Additionally, shrewdness in small talk requires proficiency in interacting in various situations.

Another statement of Minangkabau philosophy states (Madjoindo, 1999);

*Nan baiak iolah budi*                      what is good is the mind

*Nan elok iolah baso*                      what is beautiful is language

It states that morals, ethics, behavior, and any action that embodies them must be well implemented and judiciously evaluated. In addition, speech and language, as manifestations of *Baso*, must be considered polite and beautiful. *Budi jo Baso*: In this term, it can be interpreted as Speech Acts.

Other Minangkabau philosophies also explain the importance of *Budi jo Baso* in the daily ethics of the Minangkabau people.

*Kok kayo, kayo dek budi*                      Be rich because of your mind

*Nak mulie, mulie dek baso*                      Be noble because of language

Every human being typically aspires to wealth and glory. In this philosophy, these two things are stated in philosophical terms. That wealth and glory are not due to possessions and other material objects owned. However, real wealth and glory are the nobleness of ethics in action (*kayo dek budi*) and politeness in speech (*mulie dek baso*).

Having only one aspect of *Budi jo Baso in speech practice is not enough*. Both must synergize to show one's true personality. If not based on clarity of heart and mind, language politeness will not produce genuine ethical values and will only be trapped in pretense. It is also conveyed in the following philosophy;

*Ditiliak jo aka budi*                      Judged by reason

*Muluik manih baso katuju*                      Sweet      mouth,      favored  
language

An objective mind and heart must be the foundation for action and behavior. Likewise, with speech, the expression “*muluik manih baso katuju*” means that speech must be considered polite and, as far as possible, accepted by speech partners without leaving a bad impression.

The discussion of speech acts in Minangkabau customs has been around for a long time. It is difficult to determine when the various teachings of Minangkabau customary philosophy, especially those related to *Baso* and *Kato*, were formulated. However, let us look at the long history of thought and religious upheaval in the Minangkabau realm. It can be assumed that the teachings of Minangkabau Politeness and other philosophies have existed since before the 20th century, perhaps even long before that. Therefore, Minangkabau politeness speech theories can be said to have existed before the Speech Act theories that developed in the academic world around the beginning of the 20th century—the theories initiated by Wittgenstein and Austin (Harris & Unnsteinsson, 2018).

The philosophy of *Kato nan Ampek* is the manner, ethics, or rules of communication that the Minangkabau people understand and use. When speaking with elders, the choice of words, sentence structure, and tone (intonation) must also show politeness and respect. Sometimes it involves talking or issuing orders directly (*fi'l Amr*), such as when an elder speaks down to a younger person. So, each communication style used produces varied meanings (Aslinda, 2000).

So far, *Kato nan Ampek*, as understood by most Minangkabau people, is limited to how to speak to others. However, it should be noted that Minangkabau's speech acts no longer seem to be guided by this *Kato nan Ampek* philosophy (Barlian, 2010). The lack of introduction to formal education and the lack of family awareness in understanding and implementing the values of *Kato nan Ampek*, both in large tribal families and small families at home, are some of the main factors in the lack of knowledge of the community, especially the Minangkabau, about one of their philosophies (Fimansyah, 2020). For this reason, raising the issue of integrating Minangkabau customs and Islam by discussing the philosophy of *Kato nan Ampek* is expected to reawaken the Minangkabau people's awareness and demonstrate to the world community the nobility of their customary philosophy. It is also a form of realistic interpretation of QS. Al-Hujurat/49:13 states that Allah created people of different nations and tribes so they could get to know one another.

However, based on direct observation, the *Kato nan Ampek* philosophy is better known as oral speech. At the same time, the Qur'an can be said to be God's speech in two forms: oral and written. In addition, although Minangkabau is known for its

matriarchal culture, there are no differences in speech styles or in the use of *Kato nan Ampek* when speaking with the opposite sex. There are no specific restrictions on the use of *Kato nan Ampek*; instead, there is a classification of age, degree, and status between speakers and speech partners.

In formulating the form of *Kato nan Ampek* based on the Qur'an, no research results have been found so far that confirm how the forms of *Kato*, *Mandaki*, *Manurun*, *Malereng*, and *Mandata* are reflected in Allah's speech in the Qur'an. In addition, *Kato nan Ampek* is also inseparable from the discussion of speech politeness. Mahmoud Al-Khathib considers that the Qur'an's speech includes forms of politeness and strategies in polite speech, evident in various redactions of verses, such as direct statements with a lower politeness value than indirect statements. In addition, Al-Khathib (2012) also describes various politeness strategies in speech, such as using stories (*Qashash*) or examples (*Matsal*).

The discussion of *Kato nan Ampek* is inseparable from the debate of Speech Acts. John Langshaw Austin (1962), considered the originator of the term "speech act," observed that every use of language by humans simultaneously carries out an action, which is then referred to as a Speech Act. Austin believed that the lowest unit of communication is not an expression or sentence, but rather a specific action, such as asking, stating, explaining, or thanking, among others. Spoken words are not only used to express something, but also to invite others to do something.

Furthermore, *Kato nan Ampek* is also closely related to Speech Politeness. In interpersonal communication, in addition to all parties having correct language skills, they must also pay attention to politeness in their speech. In addition to conveying accurate information, maintaining harmony in the communication process is also required to create a positive impression after the interaction (Brown & Levinson, 1978). Pranowo explains that linguistic politeness is the agreed-upon code of conduct within a community, society, or ethnicity, as part of social ethics. Pranowo (2009) added that spoken language will feel more polite if it uses indirect speech, figurative language, and a euphemistic style, rather than ordinary expressions, distinguishing between what is delivered and what is intended, and preferring implicit speech over explicit speech.

There are several forms of *Qawl* in the Qur'an. Irwandi (2019) explained that among them are the five Qur'anic Ethics of Speech. That is *Qawlan Sadîda* or truth speech; *Qawlan Ma'rûfa* or accepted speech; *Qawlan Maysûra* or simple speech; *Qawlan Layyina* or gentle speech; and *Qawlan Karîma* or noble speech. These qualities of *Qawl*, apart from being human qualities taught by the Qur'an, are also considered miracles of the Qur'an.

This article aims to integrate the values of the Minangkabau locality, as expressed in the philosophy of *Kato nan Ampek*, with those in the verses of the Qur'an. Both Qur'anic values are found in *Kato Mandaki*, *Kato Manurun*, *Kato Mandata*, and *Kato Malereng*. This qualitative research uses a synthesis research method with a substantive integration approach. The primary sources in this study are verses from the Qur'an containing the diction and substance of the characteristics of *Qawl*. Meanwhile, the secondary sources are various writings and explanations on speech acts, politeness, and the philosophy of *Kato nan Ampek*. The synthesis approach involves finding the meeting point between the two research objects: the philosophy of *Kato nan Ampek* and related Qur'anic verses, along with some scholars' interpretations, by aligning the essential values in each *kato* with the Qur'an. Then, it is analyzed using a substantive integration approach, examining the similarities in values and central teachings across the two objects.

### **Styles (*Langgam*) of *Kato nan Ampek* in Qur'an**

*Kato* (speech), understood as communication in society, is a custom that has long been required of every boy in Minangkabau society. Moreover, to become a *Penghulu* or customary leader who leads a particular tribe or customary territory, it is necessary to be proficient in "tongue-twisting" (*bersilat lidah*) and shrewd for the "tip of the needle" (*ujung jarum*). This means that, in addition to being skilled at verbal interaction, he must also be adept at acting and taking action. Likewise, when appointed as *Alim Ulama* or *Cadiak Pandai*. Although it is not explicitly stated, expertise and skill with words are essential. *Ba-Kato* means to say, speak, or speak out. The sentences that are delivered must be delivered very carefully. It is good to pay attention to the use of grammar, order, selection of diction, paying attention to the interlocutor, the substance conveyed, and the momentum of delivering *kato*.

*Langgam kato*, or the style of speech, involves paying attention to the context of speech, including both the speaker and the speech partner. It is also known as *Kato nan Ampek* or ethical speech acts. This style applies to all groups, including both women and men, as well as young and old, traditional leaders, officials, and ordinary individuals. *Kato* means word, the form or pattern of words to others. *Ampek* means four, according to Marah Rusmali et al. (1985), the four *kato* are *Kato Mandaki* (climbing words, usually spoken to elders); *Kato Malereng* (slope words, traditionally spoken to in-laws or respected people); *Kato Mandata* (flat words, usually spoken to peers); and *Kato Manurun* (descending words, traditionally spoken to younger ones).

*Langgam* means a distinctive way of speaking. The politeness of speech is usually judged by it. In this case, *Langgam Kato nan Ampek* is a form of traditional Minangkabau

communication. A long time ago, in the rhyme of customary philosophy, it was explained (Madjoindo, 1999).

<i>Macam/Langgam kato</i>	Word types/styles
<i>Partamo kato mandaki</i>	Firstly, the word climb
<i>Kaduo kato mandata</i>	Second, word levelling
<i>Katigo kato malereang</i>	Third, word slope
<i>Kaampek kato manurun</i>	Fourth, word downhill

There are four communication styles in Minangkabau, classified by directional motion: ascending, horizontal, sloping, and descending. Each style indicates the direction of the conversation, the interlocutor, and the level of emphasis on the message.

Detecting the type of communication style in *Kato nan Ampek* can be done by paying attention to its segmental and suprasegmental aspects. Segmental aspects can be seen in grammar, order, and the lexicon of greeting usage. Detecting through suprasegmental elements involves paying attention to intonation and expression (Zuhariya et al., 2024). This is also commonly done in sociolinguistic studies and is included in the discourse of speech acts and politeness. However, in the context of this research, because the main object of study is speech (*Kalâm*) in the form of text, the analysis is done only through segmental aspects.

In Indonesian culture, various styles of communication emphasize politeness and respect. For example, the Javanese language is known as *Unggah-ungguhing Boso*, and it is classified into *Kromo*, *Madya*, and *Ngoko*. *Kromo* is the highest level of speech politeness, while *Ngoko* is commonly used due to its closeness, which, in other words, is the lowest level of politeness in Javanese (Priyatiningih, 2019). In addition, Sundanese also recognizes *Unda Usuk*, which is mapped with *Kasar*, *Sedeng*, *Lemes*, and *Lemes Pisan*. Some classify *Unda Usuk* with *Basa Songong*, *Basa Lemes*, and *Basa Lemes Pisan*. *Basa Songong* has the lowest level of politeness in Sundanese speech. At the same time, *Lemes Pisan* is the highest level of politeness (Astuti, 2014). The *Unda-Usuk* division in Sundanese is similar to the *Anggah-Ungguh Kruna* or *Sor-Singgih* communication politeness classification in Balinese, with the major divisions of *Alus* and *Kasar*, each of which has a more detailed classification (Suwija, 2017).

In relative terms, the Indonesian language shares similarities with *Ungguah-Ungguh*, *Unda Usuk*, *Sor-Singgih Basa Bali*, *Kato nan Ampek*, and perhaps other regional language communication styles in Indonesia. It emphasizes politeness in communication. If

analyzed as a text, politeness can serve as a barometer of the level of assertiveness in the message (predicate) from the subject to the object (agent).

To clarify the framework for discussing the synthesis between the *Kato nan Ampek* style and the properties of *Qawl* in the Qur'an, the following table highlights possible similarities in context between the two.

Table 1. Similar Contexts to Synthesize Between *Kato Nan Ampek* and *Qawl* Properties

Types of <i>Kato</i>	Possible <i>Qawl</i>	Basic Context (Pragmatic Values)
<i>Mandaki</i>	<i>Qawlan Karîma</i>	Speeches to parents
<i>Manurun</i>	<i>Qawlan Sadîda</i>	Speeches to descendants
<i>Malereng</i>	<i>Qawlan Balîgha</i>	Speeches to the exalted because of certain things
<i>Mandata</i>	<i>Qawlan Layyina</i>	Speeches to people considered equal

### 1. *Kato Mandaki*

*Mandaki* means climbing, which signifies moving from the bottom up. In Minangkabau tradition, what is called *Kato* or *Mandaki* Speech refers to the style of communication used by individuals with a lower social status than the person they are speaking to. As explained in the following three-stanza rhyme (Madjoindo, 1999);

<i>Dari Malako ka Suliki</i>	From Melaka to Suliki
<i>Payokumbuah Koto nan Gadang</i>	Payakumbuh Koto nan Gadang
<i>Baparak tabu satumpak</i>	Planting a patch of sugar cane
<i>Basuo kato mandaki</i>	Meeting the climbing word
<i>Dari nan ketek ka nan gadang</i>	From younger to the older
<i>Dari anak ka Ibu Bapak</i>	From son to mother to father

*Kato Mandaki* is an expression from the younger (*ketek*) to the older (*gadang*), similar to what a child says to their parents.

In practice, *Kato Mandaki* is not just speech between children and parents; it is more a style of communication used between those of lower and higher social ranks. As the following piece of philosophy explains;

*Nan dikatokan kato mandaki*

What is said is the word climbing

*Babahaso nan disampaikan ke lawan bicaro nan labiah tinggi darajaiknyo*

Language that is conveyed to interlocutors who are higher in degree

The degree in question is social status. Whether in family, such as nephew to uncle; social environment, such as youth to elders; work environment, such as subordinates to superiors; political environment, such as ordinary citizens to Regional Heads; or even to higher degrees, such as humans to God.

Segmentally, *Kato Mandaki* is typically characterized by the use of more precise grammar, more explicit expressions, and specialized greetings or pronouns. For example, the first-person pronoun is *ambo* rather than *denai* (I/me). Additionally, second-person pronouns are often used with honorifics such as *Etek* (aunt), *Mamak* (uncle), *Uda* (older brother), *Uni* (older sister), and others. Similarly, third-person pronouns are accompanied by greetings such as *beliau* (he/she), instead of *dia* or *inyo* (Navis, 1984).

In Arabic, especially in the language of the Qur'an, the form of *Mandaki* speech is similar to *kalâm* (speech) *min al-adnâ ila al-a'la* (from the lowest to the highest). Looking at the core concept, *Kato Mandaki* is a very polite way of speaking used when addressing a higher-ranking person, which, in the context of the example given earlier, refers to parents. In the Qur'an, speech directed to parents is characterized by *Qawla Karîma*. The phrase *Qawl Karîm* is only mentioned once in the Qur'an, specifically in QS. Al-Isrâ'/17: 23;

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا إِمَّا يَبُلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَيْهِمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا  
أَفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرُهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا

*And your Lord has commanded you to worship none but Him and to be good to your parents. If either of them or both of them come to an old age in your care, then do not say to them the word "ah" and do not yell at them, and say to them good words.*

*Karîm* generally means good. Ibn Manzhûr (1993, p. 511) explains that *Al-Karîm* is also one of the attributes of Allah, signifying that all types and forms of good deeds are included. *Karîm* is the root word (*mashdar*) form of the verb pattern *karima-yakromu*, which means good and noble. In usage, it is often found in morphological derivatives such as the verbs *karruma* and *akroma*, meaning to glorify. Hamka explains that the command to keep words from parents is closely linked to the psychological state that becomes increasingly sensitive as one ages. Hamka describes this by quoting an old

Minangkabau expression: "*Awak tuo ati paibo*" (We are old; our hearts are growing more and more desperate). (Hamka, 1990, p. 4032).

The only time *Qawl Karîm* is paired with speech in the Qur'ân is in the context of speaking to parents. In the Minangkabau speech, the principle of *Qawl Karîm* is central to *Kato Mandaki*, especially in interactions between children and parents. Considering the basic meaning of *karîm*, which encompasses all goodness, it seems that the purpose of the command to speak with this *karîm* principle is that speaking *Mandaki* to parents, regardless of the scene and setting, obliges one to utter very polite speech. Moreover, the verse is preceded by a double prohibition, indicating that the potential for yelling and rebuking is greater than simply saying kind words. Additionally, the delay ('*ta'khîr*') of the command suggests that speaking *karîm* cannot be achieved without avoiding the earlier prohibitions. Furthermore, the *advance* ('*taqdîm*') of the ban is intended to help the child restrain themselves and humble their position before the parents.

## 2. *Kato Manurun*

Descending or downward movement is the opposite of climbing. If *Kato Mandaki* represents a communication style from a lower to an upper level, then *Kato Manurun* is its opposite. This describes the communication style of someone whose rank or level is above that of the interlocutor, who has a lower level. In traditional Minangkabau philosophy, it is explained (Madjoindo, 1999, p. 123).

<i>Nan dikatokan kato manurun</i>	Which is said to be a descending word
<i>Babahaso nan disampaikan ka lawan bicaro nan di bawah darajaiknyo</i>	Language spoken to an interlocutor of lesser rank

A simple example is the communication style of parents with their children, bosses with their subordinates, or teachers with their students. Usually, *Kato Manurun*'s grammar appears neat but tends to use shorter sentences. This is to emphasize and make the message more assertive (Navis, 1984, p. 106).

In greeting usage, *Manurun*'s speech tends to be more direct, addressing the person directly. For example, in Minangkabau, phrases such as "*Oi Malin...*" or "*Hai Supiak...*" Besides direct name-calling, it can also be addressed with a title or nickname without any embellishments, such as "*Oi urang mudiak...*" (Hi people of Urban) or "*Hi my son...*" (Syafyahya et al., 2000).

Additionally, *Kato Manurun* usually uses imperative sentences that are delivered firmly and directly. Perhaps primarily of suprasegmentals, *Kato Manurun* mainly employs high-pitched and fast intonation. However, segmentally, *Manurun*'s speech can be observed through the way words are released during utterance delivery. It can take

the form of direct commands and prohibitions, or commands and prohibitions expressed using sentence patterns that create the impression of indirect imperatives.

In the context of the command to speak kindly to fellow human beings, a hint of *Kato Manurun* in the Qur'an can be seen in the phrase *Qawla Sadîda*. *Sadîda*, not *Shadîd*, which means firm and hard, is usually interpreted as something true. The verb pattern is *sadda-yasuddu*, which means to cover up a flaw and correct it until it appears reasonable and convincing (Manzhûr, 1993, p. 207). In QS. Al-Nisâ' /4: 9, it is mentioned;

وَلِيَخْشَ الَّذِينَ لَوْ تَرَكُوا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّةً ضِعْفًا خَافُوا عَلَيْهِمْ فَلْيَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْيَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا

Furthermore, fear (Allah) those who, if they leave a weak offspring behind them, fear for their welfare. Therefore, let them fear Allah, and let them speak the truth.

Essentially, this verse commands everyone to cultivate the next generation mentally. The nature of *Sadîd* in this verse usually refers to words or intentions aimed at building a strong and resilient future generation.

In this verse, two words express fear: *yakhsya* and *khâfû*. Specifically, for the verb *khasyiyâ-yakhsya*, the connotation is to fear Allah. Additionally, this verse contains three commands that follow the *fi'l mudhâri'* pattern preceded by the letter *lâm al-amr*: *wa-l-yakhsya*; *fa-l-yattaqû*; and *wa-l-yaqûlû*. According to Abu al-Mundzir, this command pattern suggests a more polite request or one without *isti'la'*, making it more likely a request without pressure (Minsyâwiy, 2011, p. 74). Therefore, the meaning of this verse can be seen as an order, but because it is more polite, it tends to serve as a gentle warning or suggestion. For this reason, the principle of *Qawl Sadîd* is essential in guiding the next generation's mindset toward piety to Allah. Practically, it means speaking honestly about each child's shortcomings and strengths, providing solutions to overcome deficiencies and build on their benefits. From this verse, the principle of *Qawl Sadîd* can be regarded as one of the guiding principles in the use of *Kato Manurun*.

Additionally, the principle of *Qawl Sadîd* must be rooted in a strong motivation to approach various issues objectively and scientifically, both within families and social settings. The principle of *Qawl Sadîd* can be viewed as including multiple forms of advice, proverbs, and negotiations aimed at promoting peace (Sa'diy, 2000, p. 673). Therefore, when offering guidance and instruction, speakers should be honest, objective, and scientific to help develop a better generation. This principle can also be adapted to the Minangkabau philosophy.

<i>Mangaie baumpan</i>	Fishing using bait
<i>Bakato batipuan</i>	Deceptive speech (must be skillful)
<i>Malantiang manuju tampuak</i>	Slanting towards the summit
<i>Bakato manuju bana</i>	Speak towards the truth.

This philosophy teaches that the purpose of delivering a message or speech is to convey the truth. This idea is also emphasized in the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith. In the verse mentioning *Qawl Sadîd*, one of the goals is to bring peace to every aspect of life. Therefore, you should speak kindly and correctly when interacting with those who are younger, less experienced, or hold lower academic degrees.

### 3. *Kato Malereng*

*Malereng* means sloping, neither climbing nor descending. *Malereng's* speech is generally understood as a figurative communication style used to maintain politeness because the interlocutors respect each other. In traditional philosophy, it is explained.

<i>Nan dikatokan kato malereang</i>	What is meant by the sloping word
<i>Babahaso nan disampaikan ka lawan bicaro nan disagani dalam pagaulan</i>	Speaking to a respected interlocutor in a social setting

*Kato Malereng* is used by people regardless of whether they are equal, higher, or lower in status, but they show mutual respect. This respect is often based on family roles, such as for in-laws (*mandata malereng*), son-in-law (*manurun malereng*), or other relatives (*mandaki malereng*). Mutual respect can also exist between different roles, such as *Penghulu*, *Ulama*, Teachers, Officials, and others. Additionally, it can occur between people who do not know each other well but choose to respect and honor one another.

*Kato Malereng* can be recognized by its use of clear and well-structured grammar, and it is more likely to incorporate specific figures of speech, allusions, parables, or proverbs to communicate meaning. In greetings, *Kato Malereng* also tends not to mention the object's name directly but instead uses other respectful terms. In other words, *Kato Malereng* is a speech style that is almost equivalent but shows a high level of politeness (Navis, 1984, p. 105).

The term *Malereng* in speech may only exist within the discourse of Minangkabau speech acts. Although it is also found in other language studies, *Malereng's* speech is indirect, with the primary goal of conveying the intended message. Practically, forms of

*Kato Malereng* include allusions, insinuations, permissiveness, and other speaking styles that give an indirect impression. However, the main goal is for the message to be received clearly, and even though the sentences are structured in a specific way, this gesture resembles the *Qawl Balîgh* in the Qur'an.

*Balîgha* originates from the verb pattern *balagha-yablughu*, which means to arrive. When the form changes to *ballagha-yuballighu*, it means to convey or preach. Ibn Manzhûr (1993, p. 419) explains that the expression "*Balîgh*" means to reach or bring closer to the intent and purpose conveyed in the Qur'an. The principle of *Qawl Balîgh* is only found in one verse, specifically QS. Al-Nisâ'/4: 63. The context of the verse tends to be intense, particularly dealing with conflict.

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَعِظْهُمْ وَقُلْ لَهُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًا بَلِيغًا

*Those are the ones (surely) Allah knows what is in their hearts. So turn away from them, and give them counsel, and speak to them words that will make an impression on their souls.*

Hamka (1990, p. 1291) explains that what is meant by *Qawl Balîgh* is speech that contains *fashâhah* (eloquence) and *balâghah* (literature). Because *Qawl Balîgh* is a speech that imprints itself into the hearts of the interlocutors, it must also be spoken from the heart of the speaker. Eloquence and skill in choosing words and constructing sentences to be well received are among the requirements of the Leader taught by Allah to His Prophets, such as Prophet Musa AS to Fir'aun and Prophet Muhammad SAW to his people, who at that time were very good at speaking. When related to today's disciplines, *Qawl Balîgh* is the product of the Science of Rhetoric, Public Speaking, and similar fields. In various Indonesian translations of the Qur'an, *Qawl Balîgh* is translated with words that leave a strong impression—words that leave a lasting impact on the speech partner. The choice of words, sentences, and intonation is adjusted to suit the conditions of the speech partner.

The primary goal of *Qawl Balîgh* is to deliver a speech that leaves a lasting impression by considering the needs of the listener. Additionally, for speakers, the principle of *Qawl Balîgh* requires maintaining clear thinking and objectivity to make decisions and speak in ways that do not harm others. Given its purpose of conveying messages, the *Qawl Balîgh* Principle is suitable when integrated with the principles of Minangkabau philosophy.

<i>Elok-elok manyusun kato</i>	Be careful in composing words
<i>Mato musuh Kaki musuh</i>	Eyes can be the enemy Feet are also the enemy
<i>Tanganpun musuh juo</i>	Hands can be enemies too
<i>Kato nan singo-singo lancang</i>	A sassy word like a lion

This means that in applying the principle of *Qawl Balîgh*, there are many factors speakers should consider. It also reminds us that sometimes what is seen, where to go, and what is felt, when expressed in speech, can backfire if the data obtained is incorrect. Therefore, the principle of *Qawl Balîgh* requires valid, accurate, and factual data.

#### 4. *Kato Mandata*

*Mandata*, or speaking to equals, means that the communication style is equal. Both the speaker and the interlocutor are considered equal in terms of age, profession, position, and so on. Additionally, what is meant by equal is due to the familiarity of the conversation. In traditional philosophy, it is said;

<i>Nan dikatokan kato mandata</i>	What the horizontal word says
<i>Babahaso nan disampaikan ke lawan bicaro nan sadarajaik</i>	Language delivered to an equal interlocutor

Due to its equal and familiar usage, *Manurun's* speech style tends to resemble the language used in public places, such as markets. Additionally, the sentences are typically brief or concise. The pronouns are more comparable, such as *inyo* (he/she), *kau* or *wa'ang* (you), and *aden* (me) (Navis, 1984).

Examining the verses of the Qur'an, the use of words that indicate equality of degree between speakers renders it impossible to regard Allah as the subject of speech with *mandates directed* at anyone, His interlocutor. In the faith of the *Abrahamic* religions, Allah holds the highest position and is above everyone and everything in this universe. However, cues related to the principle of *Kato Mandata* can be seen from Allah's command to Prophet Moses and Prophet Aaron to speak softly to Fir'aun, who was known to be very arrogant and haughty. In QS. Thâha/20: 44;

فَقُولَا لَهُ قَوْلًا لِّئِنَّا لَعَلَّهُ يَتَذَكَّرُ أَوْ يَخْشَى

*So talk to him (Pharaoh) with gentle words, so that he may realize or be afraid.*

*Layyin* means soft. Ibn Mazhûr (n.d., p. 394) believes that *Layyin* signifies gentleness and is the opposite of rudeness (*khusyûnah*). It may refer to the kindness of speech, allowing words to flow smoothly and efficiently without obstacles.

The verse is part of the story of Prophet Moses and Prophet Aaron, whom Allah commanded to face Pharaoh to deliver His message. When Allah instructed Prophet Moses to confront Pharaoh in the previous verse, Prophet Moses responded with various prayer requests that are recorded in the following verses, 25 to 32. The main requests were for clarity and eloquence in speech, as well as asking Prophet Aaron to accompany him in confronting Pharaoh. In verses 42-43, Allah directly commands Prophet Moses to speak to Pharaoh face-to-face and to deliver His words. Then, in verse 44, Allah instructs us to speak *with* gentle and kind words to Pharaoh. As shown in the following verses, Prophet Moses and Prophet Aaron, as ordinary people, were afraid to face, let alone negotiate with, a notorious despot. In this context, the emergence of the principle of *Qawl Layyin* relates to the approach of *da'wah* and diplomacy with a stronger authority, which might even have the power to weaken the opponent.

Al-Sa'diy (2000, p. 506) understands that *Qawl Layyin* refers to speech that is soft-toned, ethically grounded in both segmental and suprasegmental aspects, does not display arrogance, avoids sentence ambiguity, and remains calm without showing fear or anxiety. Likewise, Hamka (1990) explained that despite Fir'aun's arrogance and hubris, which exceeded reasonable human limits, it was still advised to begin with gentle *da'wah* speech. If it starts with confrontation, then *da'wah* cannot succeed. Additionally, the ending of the verse, which contains hope for Pharaoh (to be afraid and remember), suggests that the instruction to fight violence with gentleness means that no matter how harsh or rough a person is, he still maintains a gentle attitude. It can be understood that *Qawl Layyin* reflects the Kato Mandata principle, considering Prophet Moses and Prophet Aaron as messengers of God who receive direct commands. Therefore, it is unethical to place a Prophet below other ordinary humans – at least as equals.

Upon examining the context and reviewing specific components, the principle of *Qawl Layyin* can be integrated with one of the principles in the Minangkabau philosophical rhyme.

<i>Anggang tabang bamangkuto</i>	Hornbill flying with its crown
<i>Rajo bajalan badaulaik</i>	The king walked on his sovereignty
<i>Alang sariknyo bakato-kato</i>	It's hard to make a speech
<i>Tiok kato baalamaik</i>	Every word must have an address.

In addition, it seems fitting that the principle of *Qawl Layyin* aligns with some of the principles of *Martabaik Kato* (Levels of Dignity of Speech) in Minangkabau philosophy.

*Pandai babicaro tabaokan taratik jo sopan santun* Articulate with manners and politeness

*Pasiah lidahnyo babicaro nan manyanangan hati urang banyak* Fluent in speech that pleases the people

*Mamparhatikan sagalo pandapek jo bicaro urang* Attentive to all opinions and words of people.

## Discussion

This study suggests that there may be a substantive connection between the Minangkabau philosophy of speech, specifically *Kato nan Ampek*, and the principles of speech ethics (*Qawl*) outlined in the Qur'an. The main findings show a contextual and substantive fit between the four types of *Kato* with specific *Qawl* attributes, which affirms the Minangkabau philosophical principle "*Adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah*" (*Custom with sharia, sharia with Kitabullah joint*).

Specifically, *Kato Mandaki* (speaking to a higher degree, like a child to a parent) is synthesized with the principle of *Qawlan Karîma* (noble speech). *Karîm*'s concept of all-encompassing goodness is well-suited to describe the necessity of speaking in a very polite and respectful manner, as commanded in the Qur'an. Al-Isra'/17:23. Furthermore, *Kato Manurun* (speaking to the lower degrees, like a parent to a child) is synthesized with the principle of *Qawlan Sadîda* (righteous speech). *Sadîda* here is interpreted as a word that aims to build and straighten out, relevant to the context of educating the next generation, in line with the recommendations in QS. Al-Nisâ'/4: 9. Meanwhile, *Kato Malereng* (speaking to a respected person in figurative language) is integrated with the principle of *Qawlan Balîgha* (speech that touches the soul). *Balîgha* requires fluency (*fashâhah*) and literature (*balâghah*), intending to convey the message in depth, as the context advises in QS. Al-Nisâ'/4: 63. Lastly, *Kato Mandata* (speaking to others/equals) is

synthesized with the principle of *Qawlan Layyina* (gentle speech). *Qawl Layyin's* command to the Prophet Moses and Aaron when dealing with Pharaoh shows that even in communication that upholds the truth (*da'wah*) against arrogant authority, meekness (*Layyin*) must take precedence. This indicates that politeness is at the core of various Minangkabau communication styles and also Qur'anic ethics.

## Conclusion

*Kato nan Ampek* can be seen as a theory of speech acts and Minangkabau politeness. It focuses on the form of speech that emphasizes attention to the listener and a polite speaking style, tailored to the context. *Kato Mandaki* is characterized by speech directed to interlocutors of higher rank, while *Kato Manurun* is for those of lower status. Conversely, *Kato Mandata* is used when speaking to equal interlocutors (*musâwah*). Unlike these, *Kato Malereng* finds it challenging to identify the appropriate interlocutor because it emphasizes politeness regardless of the speaker's or listener's position, status, occupation, or other factors.

*Kato Mandaki*, both substantively and in its use, can be synthesized with the principles of *Qawlan Karîma*; *Kato Manurun* can be synthesized with *Qawlan Sadîda*, and the principles in the practice of *Kato Manurun* should be based on the principles of *Qawlan Sadîda*; and *Kato Malereng*, in practice, must also be based on the principle of *Qawlan Balîgha*; as with *Kato Manurun*, its use must also be based on the principle of *Qawlan Layyina*. The synthesis between each *Kato* and the properties of *Qawl* in the Qur'an is obtained from the identification of the internal context of the verses of the Qur'an. This highlights the similarity between the context of the Qur'an and the culture in the *Nusantara*, particularly in Minangkabau. Both from the cultural aspect of speaking style and politeness in speaking.

This research can be regarded as the initial study in the discussion of *Kato nan Ampek* and different types of Qur'anic demands. This study only emphasizes four attributes of *Qawl* in the *Qur'an*; in fact, there are additional attributes of *Qawl*. Moreover, the identification of the form of *Kato nan Ampek* in the Qur'an can be further developed by examining various forms of *khithâb* involving *mukhâthab*.

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