

LEXICALIZATION, IDEOLOGY, AND IDENTITY IN KYAI SALIH DARAT'S JAVANESE PEGON EXEGESIS OF SURAH AL-FATIHAH: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Nineteenth-century Indonesian scholars developed a distinctive mode of *ijtihad* by producing local Nusantara interpretations of Qur'anic exegesis. Despite extensive research on Javanese *tafsir* traditions, the systematic study of lexicalization as an ideological and identity-constructing mechanism remains conspicuously absent. This study addresses that gap through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), examining how lexicalization constructs the ideology and identity of Islam Jawa (Javanese Islam) within Kyai Salih Darat's Javanese Pegon exegesis of Surah al-Fatihah. The central research question asks: how do lexical choices in Fayd al-Rahman construct Javanese Islamic ideology and identity through the exegesis of Surah al-Fatihah? Using van Dijk's socio-cognitive framework of lexicalization, ideology, and identity, this descriptive qualitative study employs discourse-linguistic analysis of digital manuscripts. The findings disclose three lexicalization patterns: the preservation of Arabic lexical items to maintain the epistemic authority of Qur'anic referents; the adaptation of Javanese honorifics and speech-level terms to recontextualize Islamic ethics within culturally intelligible moral frameworks; and the hybridization of Arabic and Javanese expressions to negotiate localized Muslim identity while preserving doctrinal orthodoxy. These patterns demonstrate that lexicalization functions as a socio-cognitive and discursive mechanism through which religious authority, ideological meanings, and collective identity are simultaneously reproduced in vernacular Qur'anic interpretation. This study extends van Dijk's framework by demonstrating its applicability in a non-Western religious manuscript context and contributes to comparative scholarship on Islam Nusantara.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, Ideology, Identity, Lexicalization, Pegon Exegesis

ABSTRAK

Pada abad ke-19, para ulama Indonesia mengembangkan corak ijtihad khas melalui penyusunan tafsir Al-Qur'an bercorak lokal Nusantara. Meskipun tradisi tafsir Jawa telah banyak dikaji, belum terdapat penelitian yang secara sistematis menganalisis leksikalisasi sebagai mekanisme pembentukan makna, ideologi, dan identitas dalam tafsir vernakular. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis bagaimana pilihan leksikal dalam tafsir Pegon berbahasa Jawa karya Kyai Salih Darat atas Surah al-Fatihah mengonstruksi ideologi dan identitas Islam Jawa. Penelitian kualitatif deskriptif ini menggunakan konsep leksikalisasi, ideologi, dan identitas dalam Analisis Wacana Kritis pendekatan sosio-kognitif van Dijk dengan menerapkan analisis wacana-linguistik terhadap manuskrip digital. Hasil penelitian mengidentifikasi tiga pola leksikalisasi: pelestarian leksikon Arab untuk mempertahankan otoritas epistemik rujukan Qur'ani; adaptasi gelar kehormatan dan tingkat tutur bahasa Jawa untuk mengontekstualisasikan etika Islam ke dalam kerangka moral lokal; serta hibridisasi ekspresi Arab dan Jawa untuk mengonstruksi identitas Muslim Jawa tanpa mengabaikan ortodoksi doktrinal. Ketiga pola tersebut mendemonstrasikan bahwa leksikalisasi merupakan mekanisme sosio-kognitif dan diskursif yang secara simultan mereproduksi otoritas keagamaan, makna ideologis, dan identitas kolektif dalam tafsir Al-Qur'an vernakular. Temuan ini memperluas penerapan pendekatan sosio-kognitif van Dijk dalam studi tafsir vernakular serta menegaskan pentingnya kajian komparatif dan pelestarian manuskrip Pegon.

Kata kunci: Analisis Wacana Kritis, Ideologi, Identitas, Leksikalisasi, Tafsir Pegon

INTRODUCTION

Tafsir (Qur'anic exegesis) Pegon occupies a distinctive and authoritative position in the broader landscape of Nusantara Islamic scholarship.¹ It exemplifies a systematic process of Qur'anic vernacularization, wherein the Arabic scripture is translated into Javanese through the modified Arabic script known as Pegon.² This tradition operated on two interconnected

¹Abdul Mustaqim, "The Epistemology of Javanese Qur'anic Exegesis: A Study of Salih Darat's Fayd al-Rahman," *Al-Jami'ah* 55, no. 2 (2017): 357-390, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2017.552.357-390>.

²Ronit Ricci, *Prophets, Pegon, and Piety: The Javanese Layang Ambiya*, *Wacana* 22, no. 3 (2021): 617-630; Ronit Ricci, "Added in Translation: Keywords for the

dimensions: as a form of cultural resistance against colonial epistemic dominance, and as a mode of religious pedagogy embedded in the *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) environment.³ Tafsir Pegon therefore not only ensures epistemological continuity with classical Arabic Qur'anic exegesis but also asserts local interpretive legitimacy, challenging the exclusive authority of Arabic as the sole medium of divine interpretation.

The emergence of tafsir Pegon within the Nusantara archipelago constitutes a salient manifestation of *ijtihad* among pre-colonial Indonesian scholars, critically enhancing the accessibility of the Qur'an to indigenous Muslim communities.⁴ Kyai Salih Darat emerges as a pioneering figure in this historical continuum; his magnum opus, *Fayd al-Rahman*, represents the first comprehensive tafsir composed in Javanese using the Pegon script. This localized interpretive practice transcends mere translation, functioning instead as a profound act of cultural exegesis⁵ that negotiates universal Islamic principles with localized socio-cognitive frameworks. A telling example is the performative verb *dhawuh* (for divine speech), which encodes reverence and hierarchical deference through its honorific speech level.⁶ Through the lexicalization of interpretive authority, *Fayd al-Rahman* actively codifies a distinct Islamic identity, harmonizing universal doctrinal principles with localized values and norms.⁷

The Qur'an, as *rahmatan li'l-'alamin* (a universal sacred text), addresses audiences separated by time, language, and

Study of Javanese Islamic Texts," *Philological Encounters* 34, no. 1 (2023): 1-24.

³Mustaqim, "The Epistemology of Javanese Qur'anic Exegesis."

⁴Taufiq Hanafi, "Contemporary Sundanese Quran: A Departure or Divine Proximity?," *Wacana* 26, no. 2 (2025): 212-235.

⁵Halim Calis, "The Theoretical Foundations of Contextual Interpretation of the Qur'an in Islamic Theological Schools and Philosophical Sufism," *Religions* 13, no. 2 (2022): <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13020188>.

⁶Thoriqul Aziz and Abad Badruzaman, "Conflict Resolution According to KH. Sholeh Darat: A Study of the Interpretation of Fayd al-Rahman," *QOF* 6, no. 2 (2022): 199-218.

⁷Cyrille Aillet, "Les Indigenes de l'Islam," *Hispania Sacra* 73, no. 147 (2021): 107-114.

culture. This universality necessitates ongoing hermeneutic engagement to mediate its principles within specific socio-historical contexts.⁸ Localization serves as an essential strategy for presenting the Qur'an's teachings through the semantic and cultural systems of a receiving society, a process evidenced by the Persian translation of the Qur'an.⁹ Kyai Salih Darat's Javanese exegesis of Surah al-Fatihah provides a relevant case study for investigating this dynamic. This Surah, regarded as the "essence of the Qur'an," contains fundamental Islamic teachings¹⁰ and is recited in every cycle of prayer, meaning its lexical choices shape the theological beliefs and moral orientations of ordinary Javanese Muslims.¹¹

Prior studies on Islamic textual localization have approached the subject through a range of disciplinary frameworks. Early inquiries have examined theological debates concerning the legitimacy of translation,¹² while socio-historical studies have detailed the role of the Javanese Pegon script in disseminating orthodox Islam.¹³ Other research has drawn on illuminative (*'irfānī*) epistemology to analyze Kyai Ṣāliḥ Darat's commentary, framing his use of Pegon as a form of cultural resistance.¹⁴ Complementary philological analyses of Javanese Mawlid translations have revealed how such discursive practices

⁸Rois et al., "Islamic Hierarchy of Value."

⁹David Inglis, "Pre-Modern Glocalization and Ancient Texts in the Online 21st Century: Explorations in and between Translations, Communications, and Inter-Civilizational Encounters," *Frontiers in Communication* 9 (2024): undefined-undefined, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2024.1472594>.

¹⁰Travis Zadeh, *The Vernacular Qur'an: Translation and the Rise of Persian Exegesis* (Yale University, 2012), <https://macmillan.yale.edu/middleeast/iran/publications/vernacular-quran-translation-and-rise-persian-exegesis>.

¹¹undefined Azis Rustandi and undefined M. Aufa, "Analisis Peran Surah Al-Fatihah Dalam Pelaksanaan Ibadah Sehari-Hari Menurut Mufassir Klasik Dan Kontemporer," *Al-Fahmu: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 4, no. 1 (2025): 41–54, <https://doi.org/10.58363/alfahmu.v4i1.278>.

¹²Zadeh, *The Vernacular Qur'an: Translation and the Rise of Persian Exegesis*.

¹³Saiful Umam, "Localizing Islamic Orthodoxy in Northern Coastal Java in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries: A Study of Pegon Islamic Texts," *University of Hawaii*, 2011, undefined-undefined.

¹⁴Mustaqim, "The Epistemology of Javanese Qur'anic Exegesis."

simultaneously reflect and reproduce social hierarchies.¹⁵ Collectively, these historical, sociological, epistemological, and philological studies have significantly advanced the understanding of Islamic textual localization. However, no study has systematically examined how the substitution of theological terms in the exegesis of al-Fatihah forges a distinctly Javanese Islamic identity, particularly under the colonial pressures exerted by the Dutch on script and language. This study addresses that critical gap by arguing that exegetical identity is primarily forged through the strategic curation of a theological lexicon.

The central research question that guides this study is: how do lexical choices in Kyai Salih Darat's *Fayd al-Rahman* construct Javanese Islamic ideology and identity through the exegesis of Surah al-Fatihah? To answer this question, this study adopts a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework that accords context a constitutive role in the production of meaning. It integrates Van Dijk's CDA¹⁶ at the micro-level (lexicalization), macro-level (ideology), and the social aspect of identity. Lexicalization, as defined by van Dijk, refers to the strategic selection of words in discourse that reflects and reproduces underlying ideologies, attitudes, and mental models.¹⁷ van Dijk argues that lexical choice is a key ideological mechanism that expresses group ideologies while constructing social identity.¹⁸ Fairclough adds that every lexical choice embodies power relations, which unconsciously shape and regulate social identities.¹⁹ A telling example is the Javanese lexical choice *gusti* for 'God' which positions God within a vertical, absolute power relation, actively constructing a hierarchical theology and a

¹⁵Ricci, "Added in Translation."

¹⁶Teun A. Van Dijk, "Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction," *Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*, 2011, 1–414; Teun van Dijk, "Ideology: A Multidisciplinary Approach," *Ideology: A Multidisciplinary Approach*, 2012, undefined-undefined.

¹⁷Teun A. van Dijk, "Ideology and Discourse Analysis," *Journal of Political Ideologies* 11, no. 2 (2006): 115–40, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13569310600687908>.

¹⁸Dijk, "Ideology."

¹⁹Norman Fairclough, *Language and Power*, 3rd ed. (Routledge, 2014), <https://www.routledge.com/Language-and-Power/Fairclough/p/book/9781138790971>.

collective Muslim Javanese identity characterized by submission. This case substantiates the claim that identity is discursively constructed, dynamic, and mediated by power relations,²⁰ a process central to the study of foundational religious discourse.

The existing body of research reveals a productive tension between the universal claims of Islamic teachings and the particularities of Javanese cultural frameworks. Studies affirm that the Islamization of Java was an active and reflexive intellectual enterprise.²¹ Departing from earlier work that prioritizes epistemology, philology, or historical networks, this article argues that the Islamization of Java can be most effectively traced through systematic lexical analysis. Through close examination of key terminological choices in Kyai Salih Darat's exegesis, this study identifies deliberate strategies of theological negotiation instrumental in integrating Islam into the Javanese cognitive and spiritual framework. Ultimately, it proposes that the Islamization of Java was, in fundamental respects, a lexical project and offers a textually grounded methodology for understanding Indonesian Islam.

This study draws on three interrelated concepts from van Dijk's socio-cognitive Critical Discourse Analysis: lexicalization, ideology, and identity. These are treated not as autonomous linguistic phenomena but as mutually constitutive dimensions of exegetical discourse.

Van Dijk views lexicalization as the specific lexical choices through which a speaker or writer expresses concepts, thoughts, or ideology regarding a particular reality or social group.²² Such choices are never neutral; they actively construct reality, foregrounding certain aspects while concealing others. As van Dijk argues, lexical choices are a function of the mental models of events and their ideological basis, indicating that every word choice indexes a particular perspective, value system, or in-group/out-group positioning. Complementing this, Wodak

²⁰Fairclough, *Language and Power*.

²¹Fairclough, *Language and Power*.

²²Mustaqim; Ricci, "Added in Translation"; H. Zuhri, "Evidence of the Vernacularization of Islamic Theological Terms in Javanese Literature in the 19th Century," *Al-Jami'ah* 60, no. 2 (2022): 373-398.

contends that discourse-analytical research must recognize that lexical patterns are systematically shaped by institutional practices, historical trajectories, and recurring argumentation schemes.²³ In the present analysis, every identified lexical selection in *Fayd al-Rahman* is thus interpreted not as the author's personal intuition but as a strategic ideological maneuver embedded within colonial-era Javanese religious discourse.

METHOD

This research employed a qualitative, descriptive-analytical design grounded in Critical Discourse Analysis. CDA extends beyond textual description to examine the relationships between language, contextual factors, and the constructions of ideology and identity,²⁴ necessitating a multidisciplinary approach integrating cognition, society and discourse.²⁵

The primary data is the digital manuscript of *Fayd al-Rahman*, a Javanese-language Qur'anic exegesis of Surah al-Fatihah written in Pegon script by Kyai Salih Darat, accessible via an online repository (https://archive.org/details/FaidhurRahman_1115_201603). This text was selected for its foundational status within the Nusantara exegetical tradition: it constitutes the first comprehensive tafsir composed in Javanese using an adapted Arabic script. The corpus is bounded to Surah al-Fatihah for three reasons: its theological centrality as the opening chapter recited in every unit of daily prayer; the relative analytical manageability of a seven-verse text that nonetheless contains diverse lexical registers; and its dense ideological significance as a text that articulates the fundamental relationship between God, the believing community, and those who deviate. Restricting the corpus to this Surah is a recognized limitation of the study, addressed further in the conclusion. Secondary data comprise academic literature on Qur'anic hermeneutics, the history of Nusantara tafsir, and CDA theory.

Two units of analysis were specified: words and noun phrases. Words constitute minimal bearers of lexical meaning,

²³Van Dijk, Ideology.

²⁴Van Dijk, Ideology.

²⁵Fairclough, Language and Power.

whereas noun phrases capture collocational patterns.²⁶ Each identified unit was systematically cross-referenced using a lexical classification schema that includes its Pegon form, Latin transliteration, English gloss, and religious category. Transliteration from Pegon script into Latin was performed by one of the authors, who holds expertise in classical Arabic and Javanese Islamic manuscript traditions, and was subsequently verified against published transliterations of the same manuscript in secondary literature.

Data analysis proceeded in three sequential stages: (1) transliterating the Pegon script into the Latin alphabet; (2) classifying lexical items according to origin (Arabic, Javanese, and hybrid); and (3) applying lexical-ideological and identity analysis using van Dijk's socio-cognitive framework, including the Ideological Square's four discursive moves.

To ensure validity, a triangulation procedure was implemented across two dimensions. Theoretical triangulation was applied by interpreting data through three interlocking CDA lenses: lexicalization, ideology, and identity. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing the lexicalization patterns identified in Fayd al-Rahman with analogous Nusantara exegetical works, specifically Tafsir al-Iklil (Javanese), Tafsir Nurul Bajan (Sundanese), and Madurese vernacular tafsir, to identify common patterns and ideological divergences across regional traditions. Researcher positionality is acknowledged: both authors are trained in Arabic-Islamic manuscript traditions and Indonesian Islamic studies, which both enables close reading of the source texts and requires conscious reflexivity regarding potential ideological alignment with the tradition under study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

FINDINGS

Micro-Level Analysis: Lexicalization Construction

The analyzed unit is shown below.

²⁶Dijk, "Ideology." Mary Bucholtz and Kira Hall, "Identity and Interaction: A Sociocultural Linguistic Approach," *Discourse Studies* 7, nos. 4-5 (2005): 585-614.



Source: Author's personal documentation.

Figure 1.

Depiction of Sūrah al-Fātiḥah from Kyai Sālīh Darat's Qur'ānic Exegesis, Fayḍ al-Raḥmān

Arabic Lexicon

Table 1 below a deliberate and strategic use of Arabic vocabulary rather than a neutral application of religious terms. The lexical choices span several domains: spiritual concepts, scripture and revelation, prophetic figures, religious communities, and Islamic law. The preference for Arabic terms such as *Islam batin*, *tariqah*, *nur al-haqiqah*, and *ahl al-ma'rifah* functions as a form of specialized discourse. For instance, the juxtaposition of *Islam* with *batin* (the inward or esoteric) operates as a powerful semantic move that redefines the very concept of Islam, shifting its primary focus from communal orthopraxy to individual interiority. Similarly, the term *nur al-haqiqah* combines Qur'anic imagery of divine light (*nur*) with the concept of ultimate truth (*al-haqiqah*) to represent a profound cognitive and spiritual transformation.

Table 1.

Lexical Classification of Arabic Lexicons

	Arabic				
Analytical Unit	Javanese Pegon Script	Transliteration	English Gloss	Category	
Words	تَوْرَاة	<i>Tawrāh</i>	Torah		
	اِنْجِيل	<i>Injīl</i>	Gospel		
	زَبُور	<i>Zabūr</i>	Psalms		
	فُرْقَان	<i>Furqān</i>	Criterion (Qur'an)		
Phrases	صُحُفْ اَدَمْ	<i>Suhuf Ādam</i>	Scrolls of Adam	of	Scripture and Revelation
	صُحُفْ اِدْرِيسْ	<i>Suhuf Idrīs</i>	Scrolls of Idris		
	صُحُفْ اِبْرَاهِيمْ	<i>Suhuf</i>	Scrolls of Abraham	of	
	اِبْرَاهِيمْ	<i>Ibrāhīm</i>	Abraham		
Words	اِسْمَاعِيلْ	<i>Ismā'īl</i>	Ishmael		Apostles/Prophets
	مُوسَى	<i>Mūsā</i>	Moses		
	يُونُسْ	<i>Yūnus</i>	Jonah		
	يَهُودِي	<i>Yahūdī</i>	Jewish		Abrahamic Religions
Phrases	نَصَارَى	<i>Naṣārā</i>	Christian		
	سَيِّدِنَا اَبُو بَكْرْ	<i>Sayyidinā Abū Bakr</i>	Our Master Abū Bakr		
	اِمَامْ اَبُو حَامِدْ	<i>Imām Abū Ḥāmid al-</i>	Imam Abū Ḥāmid al-		
	الغزالي	<i>Ghazālī</i>	Ghazālī		Islamic Figures
Word	عُلَمَاءْ	<i>'Ulamā'</i>	Religious Scholars		
Phrase	اَهْلْ بَغْدَادْ	<i>ahli Baghdad</i>	People of Baghdad	of	
	بَغْدَادْ	<i>Baghdad</i>	Baghdad		Islamic Civilization
Words	اُمَّة	<i>Ummah</i>	Muslim Community		Muslim Community
	شَرِيْعَة	<i>Sharī'ah</i>	Islamic Law		
	سُنَّة	<i>Sunnah</i>	Prophetic Tradition		Islamic Laws
	اِسْلَامْ بَاطِنْ	<i>Islām bāṭin</i>	Esoteric Islam		Spiritual Concept

Word	طَرِيقَةٌ نُورٌ	<i>Ṭarīqah</i> <i>Nūr</i>	Spiritual Path Light	of
Phrases	الْحَقِيقَةُ أَهْلٌ	<i>ḥaqqīqah</i> <i>Ahl</i>	Ultimate Truth People	of
	المَعْرِفَةُ رِيَاءٌ	<i>ma'rifah</i> <i>Riyā'</i>	Gnosis Hypocrisy/Sho	
Words	شِرْكٌ مَعْصِيَةٌ	<i>Shirk</i> <i>Ma'ṣiyat</i>	Polytheism Disobedience	Theological Deviation
			[to God]	

Source: Author's personal documentation.

The following excerpt from *Fayd al-Rahman* illustrates these dynamics. In the exegesis of *al-Rahman al-Rahim* (Surah al-Fatihah, 1:3), Kyai Salih Darat writes (transliterated): "*Iku Allah kang welas asih marang wong mukmin ing donya lan akhirat, tegese al-Rahman al-Rahim*" ("That is Allah who is compassionate and loving toward believers in this world and the hereafter, meaning al-Rahman al-Rahim"). Here, the retention of the Arabic *al-Rahman al-Rahim* alongside the Javanese *welas asih* exemplifies the co-deployment of Arabic authority and Javanese moral sensibility, demonstrating lexicalization as an ideological act.

The Qur'anic discourse on antecedent revelation establishes scriptural continuity within the Abrahamic tradition through terms such as *Tawrah*, *Injil*, *Zabur*, *Furqan*, and the *Suhuf* attributed to primordial prophets. Semantically, this terminology functions not merely as historical nomenclature but as a constitutive discursive strategy that positions the Qur'an as the culmination of a divinely ordained chain of revelation.

The selection of prophetic names such as *Ibrahim*, *Isma'il*, *Musa*, and *Yunus* functions as a discursive cue, invoking well-established narrative frameworks centered on trial, tribulation, and divine deliverance. The Arabic terms *Yahudi* (Jews) and *Nasara* (Christians) serve to distinguish historically constituted communities from the Muslim community, which is consistently lexicalized as *ummah*: a term carrying a distinctly religious and transnational meaning that unifies all Muslims under a single moral and legal framework. In the domain of Islamic law, *shari'ah* and *sunnah* function in a complementary yet hierarchically

distinct manner, with *shari'ah* denoting the divine, immutable path and *sunnah* representing its practical elaboration.

Javanese Lexicon

Table 2.
 Lexical Classification of Javanese Lexicons

Analytic Unit	Arabic-Javanese Pegon Script	Transliteration	English Gloss	Category
Phrases	وَلَا سَ أَسِيه	<i>Welas asih</i>	Compassion/ Love	Moral
	سَمْبُرْ نَانِي مَنْعَسَا	<i>Sampurnané manungsa</i>	Human Perfection	Concept
Word	عَنْدِيَقَا	<i>Ngendiko</i>	Said	Javanese
Phrase	قَعُو جَاوِي	<i>Pengucapé</i>	His utterance	Speech Level

Source: Author's personal documentation.

The Javanese lexicon in this tafsir is intentionally selective. Only four distinct Javanese items were identified in the exegesis of Surah al-Fatihah, a pattern that itself carries ideological significance: it suggests that Kyai Salih Darat reserved vernacular lexicalization for moments of maximum affective and ethical salience, using it to ground theological abstraction in lived Javanese moral experience rather than as a wholesale replacement of Arabic terminology.

The phrase *welas asih* is used to render the divine attributes *al-Rahman al-Rahim* in the opening verses. *Welas* signifies an instinctive, pity-driven compassion awakened by witnessing another's suffering, whereas *asih* means active, sustained compassionate affection. Together, *welas asih* enriches the Arabic concept of *rahmah* (mercy) by combining a distinctly Javanese socio-moral dimension with the theological attribute. In the colonial context, this lexical choice functions as implicit resistance: the colonial order was structurally incompatible with *welas asih*, and by lexicalizing divine mercy in these terms, the

exegete positioned Javanese ethical sensibility as the moral standard against which colonial violence was implicitly measured.

The second Javanese phrase, *sampurrane manungsa*, translates literally as "the perfection or wholeness of the human being." It localizes the universal Qur'anic teaching on human dignity within a Javanese spiritual framework in which excellence is measured by inner harmony and moral totality, conceptually related to the Arabic *insan kamil* (the perfect human) yet inflected with Javanese nuance. The strategic use of Javanese speech levels further articulates the negotiation of authority. The highest register (*krama inggil*), specifically the honorific *ngendiko* ("said"), is deployed when referring to Allah and the Prophet Muhammad, formally encoding profound reverence. By contrast, the lower register (*ngoko*), as in *pengucape* ("his utterance"), is used for Iblis (the Devil), establishing sharp lexical boundaries that indicate disrespect and reinforcing the ideological hierarchy between the divine and the demonic.

Hybrid Lexicon

Table 2.
Lexical Classification of Hybrid Lexicons

Analytical Unit	Arabic-Javanese Pegon Script	Transliteration	English Gloss	Category
Word	الله	<i>Allāh</i>	God	Theology
	فغيرن	<i>Pangeran</i>	God (Javanese honorific)	
Phrase	ككُجَعُ نَبِي	<i>Kangjěng Nabī</i>	The Honored Prophet	

Source: Author's personal documentation.

Three key lexical items exemplify the dynamic interplay between Arabic and Javanese linguistic systems. The term *Allah* retains its purely Arabic theological root, clearly referencing the supreme divine entity within Sunni Islam. By contrast, the Javanese honorific *pangeran* (literally "lord" or "prince") serves

as a local equivalent. This lexical choice is not neutral; it builds a specific group attitude rooted in Javanese politeness and spiritual hierarchy. The co-occurrence of *Allah* and *pangeran* establishes a semantic bridge at the discourse level, linking the textually anchored, universal religious authority to the locally situated. Furthermore, the Javanese-Arabic term *Kangjeng Nabi* combines the high Javanese honorific *Kangjeng* (exalted, revered) with the Arabic *Nabi* (prophet), stressing the greatest esteem accorded to the Prophet Muhammad within Javanese Islamic culture.

Macro-Level Analysis: Ideological Construction

Based on van Dijk's framework for ideology, the use of Arabic, Javanese, and hybrid lexicons constitutes a strategic form of ideological discourse designed to construct, legitimize, and reproduce a particular social reality for its intended readership.

Applying the Ideological Square to the data, the analysis identifies positive self-presentation in the valorization of Javanese ethical sensibilities through terms such as *welas asih* and *sampurrane manungsa*, which position the Javanese Muslim in-group as morally sophisticated and spiritually refined. Negative other-presentation operates through the deployment of *ngoko* (low register) for Iblis, and through the implicit moral contrast between Javanese compassion (*welas asih*) and the structural cruelty of colonial rule, though this contrast remains discursively implicit rather than explicitly stated in the text. The de-emphasis of in-group negatives is achieved through the selective preservation of Arabic doctrinal terms, which anchors the community's theological identity in orthodox Islam, thereby deflecting any association of cultural localization with heterodoxy. The de-emphasis of out-group positives is accomplished through the use of Arabic terms for non-Muslim religious communities (*Yahudi*, *Nasara*) that categorize these groups as distinct from the Muslim *ummah* without attributing to them any honorific standing.

The Arabic lexicon furnishes a cognitive schema that defines the group's ideology and articulates its core values. The Javanese lexicon emerges as a potent instrument of ideological construction and resistance. The hybrid lexicon serves as a semantic bridge, constructing a shared ideological ground that

renders the distant, universal God cognitively and socially proximate to the local community.

Social-Level Analysis: Identity Construction

Arabic lexical terms such as *Islam batin*, *tariqah*, *nur al-haqiqah*, and *ahl al-ma'rifah* operate as constitutive elements of a specialized discourse that actively constructs the identity of an esoteric spiritual elite. The term *ahl al-ma'rifah* serves as a boundary marker distinguishing this in-group from others, reinforcing social stratification and fostering a shared community identity. The category of scripture and revelation and the names of prophets' function as constitutive narrative devices, constructing a coherent framework of scriptural continuity that positions the Islamic community as the inheritor of an authoritative religious lineage.

The terms *Yahudi* and *Nasara* illustrate how intergroup discourse defines identity through contrast, while *ummah* unifies Muslims under a single moral framework. Honorifics such as *Sayyidina* and *Imam*, alongside the category of *ulama'*, function as markers of institutional authority and intellectual reference, reinforcing an internal hierarchy. Foundational legal terms like *shari'ah* and *sunnah* represent the stable, axiomatic principles of the group's ideology.

The Javanese lexicon constructs a group self-schema that intrinsically links Muslim identity to an empathetic worldview. *Welas asih* becomes a potent native instrument of ideological positioning: the shared social representation of divine mercy serves as a means to define and safeguard the group's identity against a dehumanizing colonial Other. The strategic deployment of Javanese speech levels constitutes a context-specific manifestation of identity: by using *krama inggil* for God and the Prophet and *ngoko* for Iblis, the exegete performs and reinforces the group's ideological stance, demonstrating that social identities are actively negotiated through discourse.

The hybrid terms function as precise markers of a distinct Javanese Islamic identity. By using *pangeran* alongside *Allah*, the exegete constructs a group identity where belonging is defined by understanding and revering a divine authority that is both textually universal (*Allah*) and locally hierarchical (*pangeran*). The choice

of *Kangjeng Nabi* reinforces this through the high Javanese honorific *Kangjeng*, a socially shared representation of status and deference that elevates the Prophet and thereby defines the group's norms regarding prophetic authority. The hybrid lexicon thus directly exemplifies how group identity is a dynamic process of identification through which abstract theological concepts are mapped onto familiar local categories.

DISCUSSIONS

This discussion synthesizes the findings through three theoretical contributions to the study of vernacular Qur'anic interpretation: preservation, adaptation, and hybridization. In each case, the analysis connects the empirical data to van Dijk's socio-cognitive framework and situates the findings within the broader comparative landscape of global Qur'anic studies.

Preservation: Arabic Lexical Retention as Epistemic Authority

The data reveals a consistent pattern of Arabic term preservation across the lexical categories examined. These lexical items are selectively maintained in their original form, especially for core doctrinal concepts. This pattern indicates that Arabic terms operate as stable semantic anchors within vernacular explanation. Retaining Arabic vocabulary serves a dual discursive function: it maintains semantic proximity to the Qur'anic source language and signals the exegete's alignment with the authoritative Arabic-Islamic scholarly tradition. From a discourse-analytical perspective, this aligns with van Dijk's concept of lexicalization, wherein lexical choices reflect and reproduce shared social representations of knowledge and authority.²⁷

Comparative evidence from vernacular Qur'anic traditions in Nusantara supports this pattern. Studies on Javanese Pegon tafsir show that Arabic religious terminology is consistently retained alongside vernacular explanation to preserve earlier ulama traditions and familiarize students with Arabic script.²⁸

²⁷Van Dijk, Ideology.

²⁸Zumaroh Hadi Sulistiani et al., "Aksara Pegon Dan Transmisi Keilmuan Islam: Potret Dari Pesantren Babakan Ciwaringin Cirebon," *EDUKASI: Jurnal*

Similar patterns appear in Madurese²⁹ and Banyumasan translations,³⁰ where Arabic terms are embedded within local grammatical structures while still functioning as authoritative reference points. This stable translational strategy is also observed in Persian tafsir,³¹ Ottoman Turkish translations,³² Urdu exegesis,³³ and Malay-Jawi commentaries. The preservation of Arabic lexical items in these diverse traditions reflects a long-standing hermeneutical principle that certain Qur'anic concepts possess semantic and theological densities that resist full vernacular substitution.

Within van Dijk's socio-cognitive framework, preserved Arabic terms are gradually internalized as collective knowledge, enabling readers to recognize them not merely as foreign lexical forms but as cognitive markers of legitimate Islamic interpretation. Their authority is also performative and ultralingual:³⁴ the preserved lexical forms symbolically enact continuity with the sacred text and the broader Arabic-Islamic intellectual tradition. Intertextual references to prophets and earlier scriptures reinforce this legitimacy structure, situating local exegesis within a continuous sacred history and establishing doctrinal continuity across revelations. Vernacularization and the

Penelitian Pendidikan Agama Dan Keagamaan 21, no. 2 (2023): 117–37, <https://doi.org/10.32729/edukasi.v21i2.1415>.

²⁹Wasisto Raharjo Jati et al., "Local Values and Religious Moderation in the Madurese Translation of the Qur'an," *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 23, no. 2 (2025): 374–98, <https://doi.org/10.31291/jlka.v23i2.1350>.

³⁰Mohamad Sobirin and Mohd Rosmizi Abd Rahman, "Cultural Barriers in Translating the Qur'an into Low-Context Culture: The Word of God in Javanese Banyumasan," *Global Journal Al-Thaqafah* 12, no. 1 (2022): 27–39, <https://doi.org/10.7187/GJAT072022-2>.

³¹Nihal Ahmad Khan, "Layers of Authority in Shāh Walī Allāh's Persian Interlinear Qur'ān Translation," *Muslim World* 113, no. 4 (2023): 434–46, <https://doi.org/10.1111/muwo.12481>.

³²Oguzhan Tan, "Translating The Sacred: Islamic Law, Ottoman Readership, and Two Examples of a Transitional Genre," *Ilahiyat Studies* 15, no. 2 (2024): 201–31, <https://doi.org/10.12730/is.1458921>.

³³Simon Leese, "Arabic Utterances in a Multilingual World: Shāh Walī-Allāh and Qur'anic Translatability in North India," *Translation Studies* 14, no. 2 (2021): 242–61.

³⁴Leese, "Arabic Utterances in a Multilingual World."

preservation of Arabic lexical forms are therefore complementary rather than contradictory processes.³⁵

Adaptation: Javanese Lexicalization as Cognitive Localization

Lexical adaptation in Javanese Qur'anic interpretation operates as a cognitive and discursive mechanism that restructures how ethical meanings are internalized. In *Fayd al-Rahman*, divine attributes are consistently rearticulated through vernacular moral vocabulary. The expression *welas asih* activates a pre-existing Javanese moral schema in which relational care, social sensitivity, and ethical responsibility are already culturally encoded. In cognitive terms, this lexical choice restructures abstract theological meaning (God's compassion) into a mental model anchored in lived social experience.

The ideological significance of this process becomes particularly evident in the colonial context. Such lexical adaptation discursively constructs a moral principle through which injustice and domination are evaluated and contested. It also exposes a fundamental contradiction within colonial rule: while compassion is upheld as a normative social value, colonial structures systematically undermine the conditions necessary for its realization. Rather than serving merely descriptive functions, these linguistic forms become resources for challenging hegemonic representations and advancing alternative moral visions. From a socio-cognitive perspective, such discourse does not merely criticize domination but reproduces an alternative ideological framework shared by subordinated communities.³⁶

This finding aligns with studies of vernacular Qur'anic interpretation in Nusantara, which show that indigenous lexical choices reduce the semantic distance between scriptural concepts and everyday moral experience,³⁷ as seen in tafsir al-Iklil³⁸ and the

³⁵Yusuf Olawale Uthman Owa-Onire, "The Interpretation of Islamic Education," *Tafkir* 3, no. 1 (2022): 77-91.

³⁶Andrey Rosowsky, "To What Extent Are Sacred Language Practices Ultralingual?," *International Journal of Bilingualism* (2023), <https://doi.org/10.1177/13670069231203080>.

³⁷Sultan Samah A. Almjlad, "Semantic Untranslatability in Quranic Discourse," *Cogent Arts and Humanities* 12, no. 1 (2025).

³⁸Van Dijk, *Ideology*.

Rembang manuscript.³⁹ The cognitive dimension of this process is clarified through van Dijk's concept of mental models, wherein meaning is not stored as abstract linguistic knowledge but constructed through socially situated experience.⁴⁰ The Javanese expression *sampurrane manungsa* illustrates this mapping process: it constructs an ethical ideal of humanity grounded in moral refinement and social responsibility, translating Qur'anic ethical discourse into a culturally recognizable model of human perfection embedded in Javanese moral philosophy. The result is cognitive localization, where abstract theology becomes actionable moral knowledge within a specific cultural setting. Comparable processes are observable in Ottoman Turkish hermeneutics,⁴¹ Jambi Malay translation,⁴² and Banjarese commentary,⁴³ confirming that vernacularization has long operated as a shared hermeneutical strategy through which Islamic ethical discourse is simultaneously universalized and culturally situated.

Hybridization: Lexical Fusion as Ideological Localization

This study conceptualizes lexical hybridization as a socio-discursive mechanism through which Islamic discourse is localized within Javanese ideological frameworks. The hybrid Arabic-Javanese lexical terms *Allah-Pangeran* and *Kangjeng Nabi* demonstrate how Qur'anic concepts are linguistically recontextualized into culturally recognizable categories of authority and reverence. From a socio-cognitive standpoint, hybrid lexicons function as mechanisms of schema alignment: they facilitate comprehension by linking new religious discourse

³⁹Ahmad Baidowi and Yuni Ma'rufah, "Localizing The Qur'an in Javanese Pesantren," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 26, no. 2 (2025): 302-326.

⁴⁰Supriyanto et al., "Cultural Integration in Tafsir Al-Iklil," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 25, no. 2 (2024): 392-415.

⁴¹Ulfah Rahmawati and Aziizatul Khusniyah, "Local Wisdom in Script and Spirit," *Utamax* 7, no. 3 (2025): 182-193.

⁴²Reni Nurmawati et al., "Vernakularisasi Dalam Tafsir Basa Sunda," *TAJDID* 22, no. 2 (2023): 427-457; Supardi et al., "Wasathiyah Islam In Local Language Commentaries," *Millati* 8, no. 1 (2023): 101-121.

⁴³Ulya Fikriyati et al., "Vernacular Tafsir in Madura," *Australian Journal of Islamic Studies* 6, no. 4 (2021): 47-67.

with established cognitive structures derived from everyday social experience.⁴⁴

From the perspective of Islamic intellectual history, this process exemplifies what Talal Asad conceptualizes as Islam as a discursive tradition,⁴⁵ wherein religious authority is reproduced through the continuous reinterpretation of foundational texts within historically specific cultural contexts. The hybrid lexicons identified here thus represent discursive negotiations through which universal Qur'anic concepts become embedded within locally shared systems of social knowledge without losing their connection to the broader Islamic exegetical tradition. Classical Persian exegetes combined Arabic theological terminology with Persian honorific expressions to render complex Qur'anic meanings intelligible to non-Arabic-speaking audiences,⁴⁶ while Ottoman Turkish commentaries integrated Arabic religious vocabulary into imperial systems of etiquette and political hierarchy.⁴⁷ Urdu tafsir similarly employed indigenous expressions of reverence alongside Qur'anic terminology.⁴⁸ In South Asian tafsir traditions, the retention of Arabic terms such as *Allah* in place of the Persian *Khoda* became a significant site of theological contestation, marking orthodox reformist positions in contrast to Sufi-influenced vernacular practices.⁴⁹

Comparative evidence from Javanese, Sundanese, and Malay tafsir traditions confirms a consistent pattern: honorific systems and culturally embedded lexical choices regularly mediate representations of divine authority while maintaining continuity of theological reference, as in the hybrid term *Gusti*

⁴⁴Van Dijk, Ideology.

⁴⁵Ghada Ghazal, "Qur'anic Hermeneutics in the Ottoman Context," *Australian Journal of Islamic Studies* 11, no. 2 (advance online 2026), <https://doi.org/10.55831/ajis.v11i2.1141>.

⁴⁶Ahmad Taufik and Bambang Husni Nugroho, "Negotiating Translators, State, and Local Communities," *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Mu'ashirah* 22, no. 1 (2025): 29-49.

⁴⁷Wardani, "Sisi Kearifan Lokal Dalam Terjemah Al-Qur'an Berbahasa Banjar," *Khazanah* 18, no. 1 (2020).

⁴⁸Novita Siswayanti, "Javanese Ethical Values in Tafsir Al-Huda," *Analisa Journal of Social Science and Religion* 20, no. 2 (2013): 207-220.

⁴⁹Leese, "Arabic Utterances in a Multilingual World."

Allah for God.⁵⁰ The ideological function of lexical hybridization becomes visible at the level of identity construction: the integration of Arabic and Javanese elements contributes to the formation of a localized Muslim identity in which religious commitment is expressed through culturally embedded linguistic practices. This identity reflects a dual structure: theological authority remains grounded in universal Islamic teachings, while social expression is organized through local norms of respect, hierarchy, and communicative etiquette. Lexical hybridization therefore functions as a mechanism through which global Islamic identity becomes locally meaningful, and through which vernacularization and religious orthodoxy operate as complementary rather than competing processes.⁵¹

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that lexicalization in Kyai Salih Darat's Javanese Pegon tafsir of Surah al-Fatihah functions as a socio-cognitive mechanism through which Qur'anic interpretation simultaneously constructs religious authority, ideology, and Muslim identity. Rather than serving merely as a translational device, lexical choices strategically preserve the epistemic authority of Arabic, adapt Qur'anic ethics into culturally intelligible moral concepts, and hybridize Arabic and Javanese expressions to negotiate local Islamic identity without compromising doctrinal orthodoxy. These findings extend van Dijk's socio-cognitive perspective by demonstrating its applicability within a non-Western religious manuscript context and by showing that lexicalization operates as a discursive process through which shared social representations reproduce interpretive legitimacy while embedding universal Qur'anic meanings within culturally situated cognitive frameworks.

This study's theoretical contribution to the field is threefold. First, it demonstrates that the Islamization of Java was, in fundamental respects, a lexical project, traceable through the systematic analysis of terminological choices in tafsir discourse. Second, it extends van Dijk's Ideological Square by showing how

⁵⁰Alam Tarlam et al., "Sundanese Tafsir as Lived Religion," *Religious: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama Dan Lintas Budaya* 9, no. 3 (2025): 273-290.

⁵¹Van Dijk, *Ideology*.

all four of its discursive moves operate simultaneously within a single exegetical text, rather than in isolation. Third, it offers a textually grounded methodology for studying how global Islamic interpretive traditions are continuously reproduced across culturally diverse Muslim societies.

Several limitations of the present study must be acknowledged. The corpus is bounded to a single Surah within a single manuscript, which constrains the generalizability of the findings. The analysis relies primarily on van Dijk's framework, and engagement with competing CDA approaches (such as Fairclough's dialectical-relational framework or Wodak's Discourse-Historical Approach) remains limited. Furthermore, the attribution of colonial resistance to lexical choices in the source text is an interpretive inference grounded in historical context rather than an explicitly stated authorial intention. These limitations open productive directions for future research.

Future scholarship should extend the analysis to analogous texts in Malay, Sundanese, Buginese, and other regional languages, employing a comparative corpus approach to map regional variations in ideological strategies and the discursive formation of Muslim identities. A multidisciplinary framework integrating corpus linguistics, CDA, and Islamic intellectual history would further elucidate the dynamics of knowledge transfer and cultural negotiation embedded in lexical choices. Finally, the broader corpus of Nusantara Pegon manuscripts faces urgent preservation challenges. Government bodies and academic institutions should coordinate systematic digitization and transliteration efforts, not only to safeguard physical artifacts but to ensure these texts remain accessible for ongoing scholarly engagement.

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