

TEXTUAL ORALITY IN PESANTREN TAFSIR: REIMAGINING *MANGAJI TUDANG* THROUGH *TAFSIR SURAH 'AMMA* BY AGH. AS'AD AL- BUGISY

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the relationship between oral and written traditions in the corpus of pesantren Qur'anic tafsir through Tafsir Surah 'Amma bil-Lughah al-Bugisiyyah by AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy, a work that emerged from the mangaji tudang tradition of the As'adiyah Pesantren in South Sulawesi. Although studies of pesantren tafsir have extensively explored philological, linguistic, ideological, and social dimensions, the dimension of orality within tafsir texts as a representation of pesantren teaching traditions has received limited systematic attention in tafsir scholarship. This study aims to reveal how the practice of mangaji tudang is represented in the tafsir text through the concept of textual orality and how the tradition has been transmitted and transformed after AGH. As'ad. This study employs a qualitative textual approach, using *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* as its primary corpus. The analysis is supported by field observation, digital documentation of contemporary *Mangaji Tudang* practices at the As'adiyah Pesantren, as well as relevant scholarly literature and historical sources. The findings demonstrate that orality in the tafsir is manifested through three principal forms: a presentation structure that follows the rhythm of religious instruction, pedagogical strategies that reflect pesantren teaching practices, and the use of terms and experiences closely connected to the everyday life of Bugis society. The study further finds that the tafsir functions as a record of mangaji tudang, preserving not only AGH. As'ad's pedagogical experience but also serving as a medium for the transmission and transformation of Islam based on Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah (ASWAJA) within Bugis culture. These findings advance pesantren tafsir studies by establishing textual orality as an analytical

framework for non-Javanese exegetical traditions, and by demonstrating that local Qur'anic commentaries function as living archives in which pedagogical practice, cultural memory, and Islamic knowledge transmission are simultaneously encoded and sustained.

Keywords: AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy, Mangaji Tudang, Tafsir Surah 'Amma, Textual Orality, Pesantren Tafsir.

ABSTRAK

Artikel ini mengkaji relasi antara tradisi lisan dan tulis dalam khazanah tafsir pesantren melalui Tafsir Surah 'Amma bil-Lughah al-Bugisiyyah karya AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy yang lahir dari tradisi mangaji tudang di Pesantren As'adiyah, Sulawesi Selatan. Meskipun kajian tafsir pesantren telah banyak menyoroti aspek filologis, linguistik, ideologis, dan sosial, dimensi oralitas dalam teks tafsir sebagai representasi tradisi pengajaran pesantren masih relatif kurang mendapat perhatian dalam keserjanaan tafsir. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap bagaimana praktik mangaji tudang direpresentasikan dalam teks tafsir melalui konsep oralitas tekstual serta bagaimana tradisi tersebut ditransmisikan dan ditransformasikan pasca AGH. As'ad. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan tekstual kualitatif dengan Tafsir Surah 'Amma sebagai korpus utama, yang didukung oleh observasi lapangan, dokumentasi digital terhadap praktik Mangaji Tudang kontemporer di Pesantren As'adiyah, serta literatur ilmiah dan sumber-sumber historis yang relevan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa oralitas dalam tafsir hadir melalui tiga bentuk utama, yaitu pola penyajian tafsir yang mengikuti ritme pengajian, strategi pedagogis yang mencerminkan praktik pengajaran pesantren, serta penggunaan istilah dan pengalaman yang dekat dengan kehidupan masyarakat Bugis. Penelitian ini juga menemukan bahwa tafsir berfungsi sebagai rekaman mangaji tudang yang tidak hanya menyimpan pengalaman pedagogis AGH. As'ad, tetapi juga menjadi medium transmisi dan transformasi ajaran Islam berbasis Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah (ASWAJA) dalam kebudayaan Bugis. Temuan ini berkontribusi pada pengembangan studi tafsir pesantren dengan menegaskan pentingnya perspektif oralitas tekstual dalam membaca karya-karya tafsir Nusantara, sekaligus menunjukkan bahwa teks tafsir dapat menjadi arsip hidup yang merekam tradisi intelektual, pedagogis, dan kultural pesantren secara berkelanjutan.

Kata Kunci: AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy, Mangaji Tudang, Tafsir Surah Amma, Oralitas Tekstual, Pesantren Tafsir.

INTRODUCTION

The argument that Qur'anic interpretation constitutes an interaction among the author, the text, and the context¹. This interaction is visible not only in the interpretive content a commentary produces but also in its most fundamental formal dimension: the mode of presentation. As Johanna Pink has shown in her study of tafsīr in Javanese pesantren,² the presentation of tafsīr works reflects the strong influence of oral traditions in the teaching of Qur'anic exegesis, enabling readers to imagine the presence of a kiai delivering interpretations orally. However, the influence of orality on the writing of tafsīr has not been explored in greater depth, particularly in relation to pesantren traditions.³ This opens a space for examining tafsīr not merely as a text to be interpreted, but also as an oral tradition that shapes the scholarly identity of pesantren-based Islamic learning. The close relationship between tafsīr and oral tradition highlights the importance of a new approach in tafsīr studies namely, reading tafsīr as a record of orality. This perspective is significant because orality not only served as the original medium through which writing emerged,⁴ but also left enduring traces within written texts.⁵ In this context, one particularly significant subject of inquiry is *mangaji tudang* as a practice of orality within the pesantren tradition of South Sulawesi that has been preserved in written textual form.

¹See, for example, Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'an: Toward a Contemporary Approach*, (New York: Routledge, 2016); Khaled Abou El Fadl, *Speaking in God's Name: Islamic Law, Authority, and Women*, (Oxford: Oneworld, 2001).

²Johanna Pink, "The kyai's Voice and the Arabic Qur'an; Translation, Orality, and Print in Modern Java", *Wacana: Journal of the Humanities of Indonesia* 21, no. 3 (2020): 329-359. DOI: 10.17510/wacana.v21i3.948.

³The pesantren tradition is understood as a process of internalizing and externalizing Islamic teachings within the pesantren context. Read related to this. Zamakhsyari Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren*, (Jakarta: Sinar Harapan, 1982).

⁴Jack Goody. *The Interface Between the Written and the Oral*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

⁵Walter J. Ong. *Orality and Literacy*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2002).

Mangaji tudang is a legacy of Islamic teaching embedded within local culture that remains widely practiced in various pesantren throughout South Sulawesi,⁶ particularly since the era of AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy (1907–1952), the grand teacher of many scholars in Eastern Indonesia and a key figure in shaping the ulama tradition of the Indonesian archipelago.⁷ Furthermore, *mangaji tudang*⁸ served as an important medium through which AGH. As'ad disseminated moderate Islamic teachings.⁹ It is within this context that the pesantren tradition embedded in textual orality is explored through *Tafsir Surah Amma' bil-Lughah Al-Bugisiyyah*, authored by AGH. As'ad. This work, which discusses Qur'an Surah al-Naba', occupies a significant position in the existence and development of the pesantren tradition in South Sulawesi, as it is regarded as the earliest tafsīr work produced in the region, particularly from As'adiyah Pesantren, the oldest pesantren in South Sulawesi.¹⁰ As the first tafsīr work of its kind, this text is important for examining how the *mangaji tudang*

⁶Before the *mangaji tudang* model of AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy, Islamic teaching in South Sulawesi had already been widely practiced, but it was not yet systematized in the way developed by him. See Christian Pelras, *The Bugis*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publisher Ltd, 1996).

⁷Taqwa dan Muhammad Irfan Hasanuddin, "Anregurutta H.M. As'ad dan Genealogi dan Studi Islam Asia Tenggara di Tanah Bugis Abad 20", *Palita: Journal of Social Religion Research* 5, no. 2 (2020): 149-164. <https://doi.org/10.24256/pal.v5i2.1606>. Wahyuddin Halim, "Kiai Haji Muhammad As'ad Al-Bugisy (1907-1952) and the Construction of Bugis-Muslim Identity in South Sulawesi", in *Religion, Pesantren Tradition, and Socio-Cultural Transformation in South Sulawesi*, (Makassar: Alauddin University Press, 2023).

⁸Literally, the term *mangaji tudang* means "studying while sitting," referring to a religious learning activity conducted in a seated position, either in a circle or facing the teacher.

⁹Hamsir, Muhammad Alwi HS, Iin Parningsih, and Khojir, "Mangaji Tudang: AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy's Learning Method in Strengthening Wasathiyah Islam Based on Pesantren in Eastern Indonesia", *Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Raushan Fikr* 12, no. 2 (2023): 146–157. <https://doi.org/10.24090/jimrf.v12i2.8351>.

¹⁰ Firdaus, Muhammad Alwi HS, Iin Parningsih, and Achmad Abubakar. "The Phenomenon of Bugis Tafsir on Islamization in Eastern Indonesia." *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Hadis* 26, no. 2 (2025): 444–468. <https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.v26i2.6271>.

tradition, rooted in oral practices, was articulated into written form. This study argues that tafsīr literature should not be viewed merely as religious texts; rather, it serves as a record of orality that reflects the dynamic interaction between the exegete, the text, and the local context.

Beyond Pink's study, the dimension of orality within tafsīr texts, particularly tafsīr as a reflection of pesantren tradition has received little focused attention in contemporary scholarship. Mapping what has been studied illuminates what has not. Existing studies on tafsīr within the pesantren tradition may generally be classified into three major dimensions. First, the philological-linguistic dimension, which highlights the use of local scripts as a distinctive feature of pesantren tafsīr, as demonstrated in the works of Ahmad Zainal Abidin and colleagues,¹¹ Ahmad Baidowi,¹² Islah Gusmian,¹³ as well as Akhmad Arif Junaidi and Luthfi Rahman.¹⁴ Second, the ideological-cultural dimension, which emphasizes the internalization of pesantren ethical values,¹⁵

¹¹Ahmad Zainal Abidin, N. Nurain, Thoriqul Aziz, and Salamah Noorhidayati, "Qur'anic Exegesis as a Social Critique: A Study on the Traditionalist Bisri Musthofa's Tafsīr al-Ibrīz." *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, 62, no. 1 (2024): 215-239. <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2024.621.215-239>.

¹²Ahmad Baidowi, "Pégon Script Phenomena in the Tradition of Pesantren's Qur'anic Commentaries Writing", *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 21, no. 2 (2020): 469–490. <https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.2020.2102-12>. Ahmad Baidowi and Yuni Ma'rufah, "Localizing the Qur'an in Javanese Pesantren: A Socio-Cultural Interpretation of Al-Ibrīz and Al-Iklīl", *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Hadis*, 26, no. 2, (2025): 302-326 <https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.v26i2.5842>.

¹³Islah Gusmian, "Bahasa dan Aksara dalam Penulisan Tafsir Al-Qur'an di Indonesia Era Awal Abad 20 M." *Mutawatir* 5, no. 2 (2015): 223–247. <https://doi.org/10.15642/mutawatir.2015.5.2.223-247>.

¹⁴Akhmad Arif Junaidi and Luthfi Rahman "The Biblical Insertion in The Javanese Quranic Exegesis: Textual and Contextual Analysis of Tafsir Soerat Wal-Asri by Siti Chayati, Surakarta", *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, 16, no. 2 (2022): 352-377. DOI: 10.15642/JIIS.2022.16.2.352-377.

¹⁵See for example Mubasirun. "Values of *Tepo Seliro* in Bakri Syahid's *Tafsir al-Huda* and Bisri Mustofa's *Tafsir al-Ibriz*." *IJIMS: Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies*, 11, no. 2 (2021): 351-376 DOI: 10.18326/ijims.v11i2.351-376.

the process of cultural enculturation,¹⁶ and the construction of the cultural and ideological identity of pesantren tafsīr.¹⁷ Third, the social-practical dimension, which views tafsīr as a tradition of religious instruction,¹⁸ a medium for the reproduction of scholarly authority,¹⁹ and a site of social interaction.²⁰

Although previous studies have significantly enriched our understanding of tafsīr within the pesantren tradition, attention to the dimension of orality manifested in tafsīr texts remains limited and unsystematic. However, these studies have not specifically examined how tafsīr texts represent the oral practices that underlie their formation. In fact, within the pesantren tradition, tafsīr exists not merely as a written product but also emerges from and

¹⁶Nur Rohman, “Enkulturasī Budaya Pesantren dalam Kitab Al-Iklīl fī Ma’ānī at-Tanzīl Karya Mishbah Musthofa.” *Suhuf: Jurnal Pengkajian Al-Qur’an dan Budaya*, 12, no. 1 (2019): 57–89. doi:<https://doi.org/10.22548/shf.v12i1.397>. Muhammad Sobirin and Ali Muhdi. “Textual Legacies of Javanese-Penginyongan Pesantren”, *Millati: Journal of Islamic Studies and Humanities*, 11, no. 1, (2026): 1-28. <https://doi.org/10.18326/millati.v11i1.5845>.

¹⁷Taufik Hidayatulloh, Hajam, Theguh Saumantri, and Abdillah “Cultural Identity in the Book of Tafsir Raudhatul Irfan fī Ma’rifatil Qur’an by K.H. Ahmad Sanusi” *Jurnal Fuaduna*, 12, no. 1 (2024): 43-56. <https://doi.org/10.30983/fuaduna.v8i1.8490>.

¹⁸Arif Maftuhin, “Translating the untranslatable: The Jalālayn Learning as a Translation Practice”, *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 51, no. 151 (2023): 279-303. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639811.2023.2264672>. Fauzan Adim and Subi Nur Isnaini, “Al-Tafsīr Al-Shafahī Al-Iftirādi Wa Al-İslāh Al-Ijtimā’ī: Dirāsah fī Durūs Gus Bahā’ min Khilāl Tafsīr al-Jalālayn”, *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, 18, no. 2 (2024): 607-733, DOI: 10.15642/JIIS.2024.18.2.607-633.

¹⁹Ubaidillah Baydi and Laitsa Nailul Husna, “Decoding the Cultural Significance of Pengaosan Tafsir Al-Ibriz in Kedawung, Mojo, Kediri: An Analysis of Social Meanings”, *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur’an Dan Hadis*, 24, no. 1, (2023): 59–78. <https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.v24i1.3904>.

²⁰Supriyanto. “Kajian al-Qur’an dalam Tradisi Pesantren: Telaah atas Tafsir al-Iklīl fī Ma’ānī al-Tanzīl.” *Tsaqafah*, 12, no. 2, (2016): 281–98. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.21111/tsaqafah.v12i2.757>. Rosihon Anwar, Dadan Darmawan, and Cucu Setiawan “Kajian Kitab Tafsir dalam Jaringan Pesantren di Jawa Barat”. *Wawasan: Jurnal Ilmiah Agama Dan Sosial Budaya*, 1, no. 1, (2016): 56–69. <https://doi.org/10.15575/jw.v1i1.578>. Muhammad Alwi HS, Fatikhatal Faizah, and Muhammad Kasim. "Produksi Kitab Tafsir Lokal dalam Menunjang Dakwah Moderasi Beragama Ulama Pondok Pesantren As'adiyah Sengkang." *Al-Wasatiyah: Journal of Religious Moderation*, 3, no. 1 (2024): 63-92. <https://doi.org/10.30631/jrm.v3i1.60>.

functions within oral learning environments. Consequently, a significant methodological and empirical gap remains: no study has yet applied a textual orality framework to analyze how pesantren pedagogical practices are structurally and linguistically encoded within tafsīr texts²¹, particularly in traditions outside Java, of which the Bugis tafsīr tradition of South Sulawesi is a prime example.

By taking *Tafsir Surah Amma* by AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy as a case study, this research offers a new perspective in the study of pesantren tafsīr by positioning tafsīr as a form of textual orality—a text that emerges from, records, and represents oral practices within the pesantren environment. Unlike previous studies that have primarily emphasized the philological, ideological, or social dimensions of pesantren tafsīr, this research focuses on the relationship between tafsīr texts and pesantren pedagogical traditions, such as *mangaji tudang*, which shape the production and transmission of religious knowledge. Through a close reading of *Tafsir Surah 'Amma*, this study demonstrates that tafsīr texts function not only as products of literacy but also as cultural archives that preserve the traces of pesantren orality. Consequently, this research contributes to the advancement of Indonesian Qur'anic studies by introducing a framework of textual orality to better understand the interaction between oral and written traditions within the intellectual heritage of the pesantren.

This study addresses two interrelated research questions: first, in what ways are the oral practices of *mangaji tudang* structurally and linguistically inscribed within *Tafsir Surah 'Amma*? Second, how has the *mangaji tudang* tradition been transmitted and transformed within the As'adiyah Pesantren community after AGH. As'ad? To address these questions, the study examines *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* by AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy. Its primary focus is to understand how *mangaji tudang*, a longstanding tradition of religious instruction practiced within the As'adiyah Pesantren milieu and the Bugis community, is represented, recorded, and preserved in the form of textual orality. This research is grounded in the assumption that tafsīr texts

²¹Walter J. Ong. *Orality and Literacy*.

function not only as written media for the transmission of religious knowledge but also as repositories of the oral practices that shaped their composition, teaching, and reception. By examining the structure of presentation, language use, narrative style, and communicative patterns reflected in the text, this study seeks to demonstrate how the *mangaji tudang* tradition is reimagined within the written medium. Through this approach, the research is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamic relationship between orality, literacy, and the intellectual traditions of the pesantren within the broader context of Indonesian Qur'anic exegesis.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative textual approach, using *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* as its primary corpus. The analysis is supported by field observation, digital documentation of contemporary *Mangaji Tudang* practices at the As'adiyah Pesantren, as well as relevant scholarly literature and historical sources. As a text-based study, it views tafsīr not merely as an intellectual product containing interpretations of the Qur'an, but also as a cultural artifact that reflects the social context and scholarly traditions within which the text emerged. To achieve this objective, the study employs a textual orality approach, an analytical framework aimed at identifying and explaining traces of oral practices embedded within written texts. This approach was chosen because the purpose of the research is not solely to examine the interpretive content of the tafsīr, but rather to understand how *mangaji tudang*, as a pedagogical tradition of the pesantren, is represented, re-enacted, and transmitted through the medium of tafsīr literature.

The primary source of this study is *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* by AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy. This tafsīr was selected because it is regarded as the earliest Qur'anic commentary produced by a pesantren scholar in South Sulawesi. Its author was the initiator of the *mangaji tudang* tradition, which later became the foundation for the establishment of As'adiyah Pesantren and played a significant role in the development of Islamic scholarly traditions in Indonesia. In addition to providing explanations of Qur'anic

verses, the tafsīr exhibits distinctive modes of presentation, pedagogical strategies, and terminology closely associated with the lived experiences of the local community. Within its historical context, the work was composed in a socio-religious environment where *mangaji tudang* served as one of the principal mechanisms for the transmission of Islamic knowledge in South Sulawesi. Therefore, *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* is considered particularly relevant for examining how elements of pesantren orality were recorded and re-presented in written textual form.

The version of *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* used as the primary source in this study is a transcription, translation, and PDF-based digital adaptation prepared by Gurutta Syamsuddin, a student of AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy. The manuscript was obtained directly from members of the As'adiyah community through the Ikatan Keluarga As'adiyah (IKAKAS) network, and the 1948 edition serves as the basis for this study. The transcription and digital adaptation did not alter the substance of the interpretation, the structure of presentation, the terminology, or the meanings contained in the original text. Gurutta Syamsuddin acted solely as a transcriber and media converter, while AGH. As'ad's original tafsir, written in the Lontara-Bugis script, was preserved in its original form. To verify the accuracy of the transcription, the researcher consulted several senior figures and scholars within the As'adiyah community regarding the authenticity of AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy's interpretation contained in the manuscript.

This verification process was further strengthened by the researcher's direct academic engagement with the text, including serving as a discussant in a study session on *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* at the Ma'had Aly of As'adiyah on 15 October 2025. The manuscript is publicly accessible and may be obtained through the As'adiyah community network. It is acknowledged that analyzing a transcribed and translated version entails an inherent philological limitation: features of the original Lontara-Bugis script may not be fully preserved in transcription. However, as the present analysis focuses on structural patterns of presentation, pedagogical sequencing, and the use of culturally embedded terminology, features that are retained across transcription and

translation, this limitation does not substantially affect the core findings.

Research data were collected through documentation techniques, library research, close reading, and the examination of documentation related to *mangaji tudang* practices. The literature review involved the analysis of scholarly works concerning pesantren tafsir, textual orality, the *mangaji tudang* tradition, and the intellectual history of As'adiyah Pesantren. Meanwhile, close reading was applied to *Tafsir Surah 'Amma bil-Lughah al-Bugisiyyah* in order to identify patterns of presentation, the use of local terminology, and linguistic features that reflect the oral character of the text. The researcher also documented *mangaji tudang* practices through direct observation of religious learning sessions at As'adiyah Pesantren. Field observation was conducted from 13–17 October 2025 at Campus I and the Ma'had Aly of Campus IV. Campus I serves as the historical center of the *mangaji tudang* tradition, while Campus IV represents its continuity within the context of higher pesantren education. The observation focused on the presentation of *mangaji tudang*, particularly its language use, presentation patterns, and pedagogical delivery, with observation notes serving as supporting data for the textual analysis. In addition, supporting data were obtained from digital documentation, including recordings of religious lectures available on the official YouTube channel As'adiyah Channel.

The data were analyzed using a textual orality approach by positioning the tafsir text and the *mangaji tudang* tradition within a mutually illuminating relationship. The analysis was conducted in four stages. First, indicators of orality within *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* were identified, particularly those related to patterns of presentation, pedagogical strategies, and the use of terminology closely associated with everyday community life. Second, these findings were categorized and coded according to the specific characteristics of orality manifested in the text. Third, the textual data were compared with historical documentation and contemporary *mangaji tudang* practices in order to understand the relationship between the text and the pedagogical tradition that underpinned its production. At this stage, the analysis moved from

the context of present-day *mangaji tudang* practices to the historical context in which the tafsīr was composed, and then returned to contemporary practices to examine processes of transmission and transformation. Fourth, all findings were interpreted to explain how the *mangaji tudang* tradition was recorded, reimagined, and transmitted through the medium of tafsīr literature.

The findings derived from the reading of *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* were not analyzed in isolation; rather, they were systematically compared with a range of supporting sources, including previous studies on *pesantren* tafsir and textual orality, historical sources on the *mangaji tudang* tradition, and contemporary documentation of religious learning activities obtained through direct observation and digital archives. This cross-source comparison was conducted to avoid drawing conclusions based solely on a single type of source. To operationalize the concept of *textual orality*, the analysis employed five analytical indicators: presentation pattern, repetition, pedagogical sequence, local terms, and audience orientation. These indicators were used to identify textual features that preserve traces of oral teaching in *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* while examining how the written text reflects the pedagogical practices of the *mangaji tudang* tradition (see, table 1).

Table. 1
Indicators for Identifying Oral Teaching Features in *Tafsir Surah 'Amma*

Analytical Indicator	Analytical Focus
Presentation pattern	Organization of tafsir presentation
Repetition	Recurrent oral formulas and emphasis
Pedagogical sequence	Progression from lexical meaning to explanation and moral advice
Local terms	Bugis vocabulary and cultural expressions
Audience orientation	Features addressing listeners and facilitating oral learning

This study relies primarily on publicly available sources, including *Tafsir Surah 'Amma*, academic literature, historical

documents, and digital archives related to the *mangaji tudang* tradition. In addition, the study includes non-participant observation of publicly accessible religious learning sessions (*mangaji tudang*) conducted at As'adiyah Pesantren.

As the study involved only non-participant observation of publicly accessible religious learning sessions and the analysis of publicly available textual and digital materials, it fell outside the threshold requiring formal institutional review board approval under the guidelines of the researchers' home institution. All sources and observational data were used in accordance with the principles of academic integrity, source transparency, and ethical research.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings

AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy and *Mangaji Tudang*

The *mangaji tudang* tradition represents a distinctive form of Islamic instruction within Bugis–Makassar society, deeply rooted in the local cultural values of South Sulawesi. Etymologically, the term derives from *mangaji*, meaning to read or study the Qur'an and other aspects of Islamic knowledge, and *tudang*, maning “to sit.”²² Accordingly, *mangaji tudang* may be understood as a form of religious learning conducted through communal sitting and study. Comparable traditions in other regions of Indonesia include the *surau* tradition of Minangkabau, *meudagang* in Aceh, *sorogan* and *bandongan* in Java, *pasaran* in Madura, and *ba'aji di langar* among the Banjar community.²³ Although the practice itself predates the twentieth century, *mangaji tudang* gained wider prominence after being systematically revitalized and developed by AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy. Through his efforts, the tradition became an important vehicle for the transmission of Islamic knowledge and played a

²²Kartini, “The Existence of Mangaji Tudang Method in Enhancing Students' Arabic Skills at Islamic Boarding Schools”, *Dinamika Ilmu*, 18, no. 2 (2018): 167-177. <http://dx.doi.org/10.21093/di.v18i2.1174>.

²³Ervan Nurtawab and Dedi Wahyudi. "Restructuring Traditional Islamic Education in Indonesia: Challenges for Pesantren Institution" *Studia Islamika*, 29, no. 1. (2022): 55–81. <https://doi.org/10.36712/sdi.v29i1.17414>.

central role in shaping the religious and intellectual life of Muslim communities in South Sulawesi.²⁴

AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy was one of the most influential Muslim scholars in Eastern Indonesia and is widely recognized as the *Maha Guru* (Grand Ulama) of Bugis–Makassar ulama.²⁵ Born into a Bugis family in Mecca, he grew up and received his Islamic education in the holy city. His scholarly reputation was widely acknowledged, and he is often compared to KH. Hasyim Asy'ari because both scholars studied within the same networks of prominent ulama in Mecca.²⁶ In 1928, AGH. As'ad returned to South Sulawesi to engage in da'wah activities and strengthen the religious understanding of local communities, which at the time were considered to face various challenges in the practice of Islam.²⁷ His arrival quickly attracted people from different regions who traveled to Sengkang to study Islamic sciences through learning gatherings that later became widely known as *mangaji tudang*.

The *mangaji tudang* tradition was developed by AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy through the adaptation of the *halaqah* system that he had studied in Mecca *Mangaji tudang* became one of AGH. As'ad's principal instruments for disseminating *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah* (ASWAJA) teachings, which he integrated with the cultural context of Bugis–Makassar society as well as with a

²⁴Ilham, “Konsep Pendidikan Kader Ulama Anregurutta Muhammad As'ad Al-Bugisi (1907-1952)”, *Dissertation*, Universitas Ibn Khaldun, 2017.

²⁵Abdul Kadir Ahmad, *Ulama Bugis*, (Jakarta: Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama RI, 2012); Suyuti Gafar and Muhammad Takbir. “Modernisasi Pendidikan Islam Abad ke-20 di Sulawesi Selatan”. *El-Hikmah: Jurnal Kajian dan Penelitian Pendidikan Islam*, 12, no. 1 (2018): 31-52. <https://doi.org/10.20414/elhikmah.v12i1.242>.

²⁶Muhammad Alwi HS, Iin Parnasih and Riyan Hidayat, “The Dakwah Movement of Kiai Muda in Eastern Indonesia: Study of Islamic Application and Islamization Models of As'adiyah”, *Dialog*, Vol. 44, no. 2 (2021): 139-151. <https://doi.org/10.47655/dialog.v44i2.491>.

²⁷Abd. Karim Hafid, *KH. Muhammad As'ad dan Perannya terhadap Pemurnian Aqidah Islamiyah di Wajo*, (Sengkang: Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam As'adiyah, 1997).

broader sense of Indonesian nationalism.²⁸ The transformation of the term *halaqah* into *mangaji tudang* reflects a process of localization through which Islamic scholarly traditions were made more accessible and meaningful to local communities, with the aim of grounding the Islamic textual heritage (*turāth*) within everyday social life.²⁹

Over time, *mangaji tudang* evolved from a traditional instructional method into the pedagogical foundation of Madrasah Arabiyah Islamiyah (MAI), which later developed into As'adiyah Pesantren and influenced numerous pesantren established by AGH. As'ad's students throughout South Sulawesi.³⁰ Grounded in the study of classical Islamic texts (*kitab kuning*) within the ASWAJA tradition—such as *Tanwīr al-Qulūb*, *Maw'izat al-Ḥasanah*, *Tafsir al-Jalalayn*, *Tafsir al-Munīr*, and *Riyād al-Ṣāliḥīn*—this pedagogical model is characterized by a structured teacher–student relationship, oral explanation, repetition, and contextual elaboration.³¹ These pedagogical features provide the historical context for understanding *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* not merely as a written commentary, but as a textual record of the *mangaji tudang* tradition that preserves patterns of oral instruction, the use of local language, and the pedagogical sequence that defines the tradition.

Moreover, *mangaji tudang* serves as an important medium through which students disseminate religious knowledge to the broader community, whether through formal educational forums

²⁸Wahyuddin Halim, “As’adiyah Tradition: The Construction and Reproduction of Religious Authority in Contemporary South Sulawesi”, *Dissertation*, Australian National University, 2025.

²⁹Read Wahyuddin Halim, “Islamization or Arabization? The Arab Cultural Influence on the South Sulawesi Muslim Community since the Islamization in the 17th Century”, *Suvannabhumi: Multidisciplinary Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 1, (2018): 35-61.

³⁰Tim Penulis, *Sejarah dan Perkembangan Pondok Pesantren As’adiyah*, (Wajo: Penerbit As’adiyah, 2022).

³¹Muljono Damopolii, et. al. “The Phenomenon of Punishment at Pesantren in South Sulawesi: An Islamic Law and Islamic Education Approaches”. *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga dan Hukum Islam*, 7, no 3 (2023): 1643–1660. <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhc.v7i3.18207>.

or through everyday da'wah activities.³² Its enduring continuity demonstrates that *mangaji tudang* has become a defining pedagogical identity of pesantren in South Sulawesi, affirming the preservation of both scholarly and cultural chains of transmission (*sanad*). Through this process, *mangaji tudang* functions not only as a mechanism for transmitting religious knowledge but also as a space for the internalization of ethical values, the formation of Islamic worldviews, and the intergenerational transmission of the intellectual traditions of the pesantren.

In practice,³³ the teacher reads the text aloud, translates it, and explains its contents in both the Bugis language and Indonesian, while students participate by listening attentively, taking notes, and raising questions whenever further clarification is needed. The learning process proceeds gradually and continuously, with textual comprehension occupying a central position. In this setting, the teacher does not merely convey the literal meaning of the text; rather, he provides contextual explanations, offers interpretations, clarifies local terminology, and relates the discussion to the social realities and challenges faced by the community.

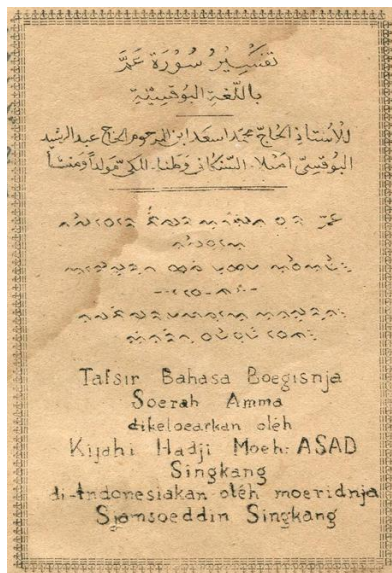
Description of *Tafsir Surah 'Amma*

Tafsir Surah 'Amma by AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy is a Qur'anic commentary that focuses on the interpretation of *Sūrat al-Naba'*. The work was originally written in two languages (Arabic and Lontara-Bugis) and was later translated into Indonesian by Syamsuddin, one of AGH. As'ad's students. The tafsīr was published in 1948 by Adil Publishing House in Sengkang and consists of 35 pages. Structurally, the work may be divided into three main sections: the introduction, the main body, and the conclusion.

³² Muhammad Alwi HS and Iin Parninsih, "Mangaji Tudang: Dari Metode Pembelajaran ke Penguatan Islam Wasathiyah", in *Islam Bugis: Melokalkan Islam, Menguniversalkan Bugis*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pranala, 2025).

³³ Researcher's observation at Pondok Pesantren As'adiyah Sengkang, October 13 2025. Saenong, "Kontekstualisasi Model Pembelajaran Kitab Kuning di Ma'had Aly As'adiyah Sengkang", *Dissertation*, UIN Alauddin Makassar, 2026.

The introductory section contains a *muqaddimah* (preface), reflections on the nature and significance of the Qur'an, and an explanation of the motivations that inspired the author to compose the commentary. These opening pages establish the intellectual and religious framework of the work while also providing insight into the author's objectives in presenting Qur'anic teachings to his audience.³⁴ As such, the introduction functions not merely as a preliminary section but as an important gateway for understanding the pedagogical and communicative orientation that characterizes the tafsīr as a whole.



Source: Author's personal documentation

Figure 1
Tafsir Surah 'Amma by AGH

The composition of this tafsīr was motivated by AGH. As'ad's sense of social and religious responsibility as a scholar ('ālim) who possessed the knowledge and ability to explain the

³⁴Nur Adinda, Ida Kurnia Shofa, and Muhammad Ghifari. "Telaah Kitab *Tafsere Bicara Ugina Surah Amma* Karya AGH. Muhammad As'ad Sengkang." *Tajdid* 22, no. 2 (2023): 458-488. <https://doi.org/10.30631/tjd.v22i2.363>.

meanings of the Qur'anic verses. For him, scholarly knowledge was not merely a personal possession but a trust that had to be conveyed for the benefit of the wider community. This motivation is clearly reflected in the following statement:

“It is also an obligation upon those who possess knowledge. For this reason, I have endeavored to prepare for my people (the Bugis community) a tafsīr in the Bugis language on *Surah 'Amma*, with the aim of elucidating some of the guidance contained in the Noble Qur'an, so that they may take it as a guide for themselves. In doing so, they may attain well-being and happiness in their lives and social relations, God willing.”³⁵

AGH. As'ad's effort to encourage the Bugis–Makassar community to seek guidance from the Qur'an was grounded in Qur'an 27:77 (*Sūrat al-Naml*), a verse that speaks of the Qur'an as guidance and mercy for those who believe. According to AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy, such guidance can only be attained through the study, understanding, and deep engagement with the Qur'an.³⁶ This conviction provided the theological foundation for his decision to compose a tafsīr in the Bugis language, thereby making Qur'anic teachings more accessible to the wider community.

With regard to its content, *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* focuses primarily on themes related to the Day of Resurrection (*Qiyāmah*). The commentary discusses the signs and extraordinary events associated with the Last Day, divine recompense for human deeds, the question of intercession (*shafā'ah*) in the Hereafter, and various moral and spiritual lessons that believers should derive from the sūrah. Within this interpretive framework, ASWAJA teachings are affirmed through the claim that the Qur'an is the Word of God (*kalāmullāh*), while the Prophet Muhammad (peace

³⁵Muhammad As'ad Al-Bugisy, *Tafsir Surah Amma' bil-Lugha Al-Bugisyah*, p. 1-2.

³⁶Muhammad As'ad Al-Bugisy, *Tafsir Surah Amma' bil-Lugha Al-Bugisyah*, p. 2.

be upon him) functions only as a messenger (*rasūl*) who conveys it:

“Meaning: Say, O Muhammad: In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful. I convey this sūrah to all people. It is not in my name, nor in the name of any created being, because only God has revealed it and commanded me to deliver it to you.”³⁷

Forms of Orality in *Tafsir Surah ‘Amma*

Based on a close reading of *Tafsir Surah ‘Amma bil-Lughah al-Bugisiyyah*, it was found that orality is present in several aspects of the tafsīr’s presentation. This orality is manifested not only through the use of the Bugis language as the medium of interpretation, but also through the structure of the material’s presentation, the manner in which explanations are delivered, and the use of terms that are closely connected to the lived experiences of the Bugis community. From the overall data analyzed, three prominent forms of orality were identified: orality in the pattern of tafsīr presentation, orality in pedagogical strategies, and orality in the use of terms closely associated with the everyday life of the Bugis community.

1. Patterns of Tafsīr Presentation

Orality in the pattern of presentation can be observed in the way AGH. As’ad Al-Bugisy organizes the discussion of the sūrah in a gradual and systematic manner. In the main body of the work, the commentary presents, among other elements, an explanation of the sūrah’s title, followed by discussions of its meanings and interpretations.³⁸ The concluding section contains an exposition of the guidance and lessons derived from the interpretation of the sūrah. Within this structure, AGH. As’ad counts the *basmalah* as the first verse, resulting in a total of forty-one verses in the sūrah.

Verses 2 (*‘amma yatasa’alūn*) through 16 (*linukhrija bihi...*) are explained through concise interpretations consisting of

³⁷Muhammad As’ad Al-Bugisy, *Tafsir Surah Amma’ bil-Lughah Al-Bugisyah*, p. 6.

³⁸Muhammad As’ad Al-Bugisy, *Tafsir Surah Amma’ bil-Lughah Al-Bugisyah*, p. 7.

linguistic explanations and brief interpretive insertions. These translations and succinct explanations are presented as a general exposition of a group of verses rather than as detailed verse-by-verse commentary. Consequently, they form a single unit or session of interpretation, reflecting a mode of presentation that resembles the flow of an oral teaching session.

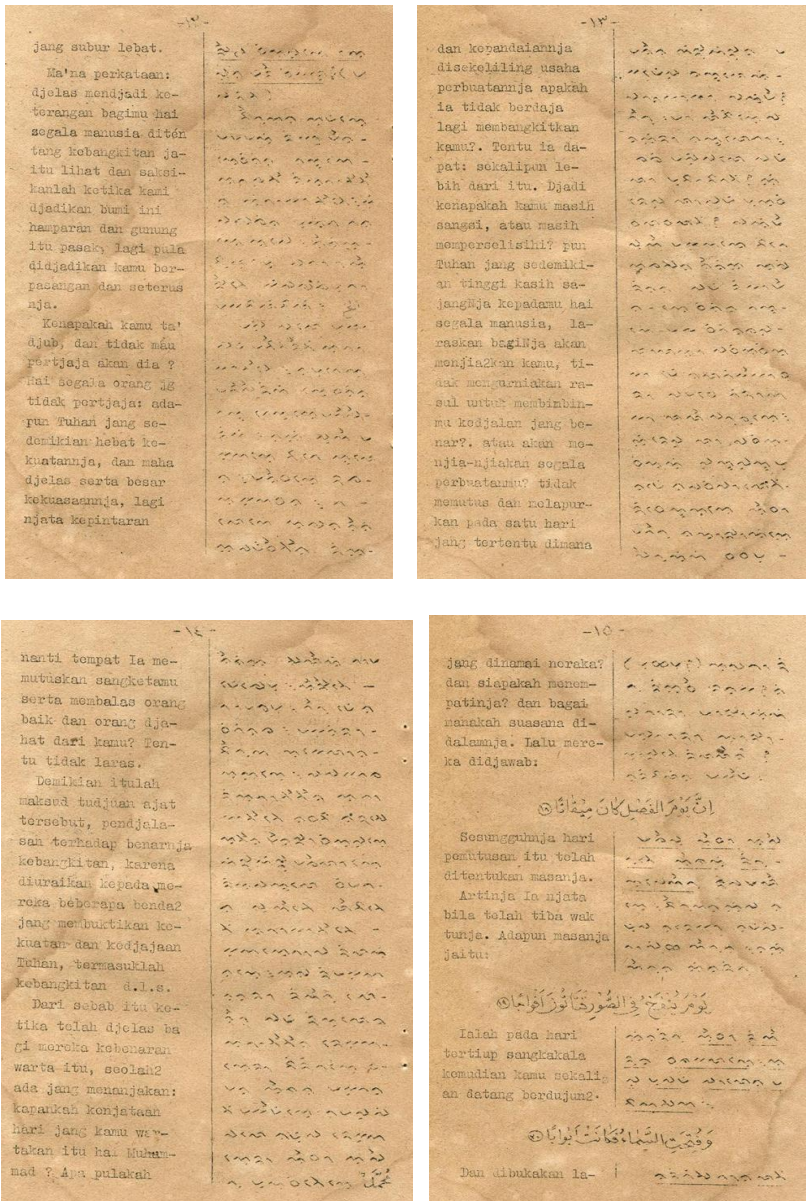
An example of AGH. As'ad's translation, cited here in its Indonesian version, is: "*And the mountains as pegs*" (verse 8).³⁹ An example of his brief interpretation is: "*That is, concerning the truth of the great news. Its meaning: the news of resurrection*" (verse 2).⁴⁰ Following these concise explanations, AGH. As'ad introduces a section entitled "Ma'na Perkataan" ("Meaning of the Expressions"), which is intended to provide more detailed explanations and deeper elaborations on several verses that have already been interpreted in a general manner.

After presenting the brief meanings, AGH. As'ad proceeds to expand upon selected verses through a more comprehensive discussion. To illustrate this model of detailed exposition—without focusing on the substantive interpretation itself—the author cites below the translated version of his commentary on Qur'an 78:2–16 (*Sūrat al-Naba'*):⁴¹

³⁹Muhammad As'ad Al-Bugisy, *Tafsir Surah Amma' bil-Lughah Al-Bugisyah*, p. 9.

⁴⁰Muhammad As'ad Al-Bugisy, *Tafsir Surah Amma' bil-Lughah Al-Bugisyah*, p. 8.

⁴¹Muhammad As'ad Al-Bugisy, *Tafsir Surah Amma' bil-Lughah Al-Bugisyah*, 8-11.



Source: Author's personal documentation

Figure 2

Translated Commentary of AGH. As'ad on Qur'an 78:2-16 (Sūrat al-Naba')

Ma'na Perkataan (Meaning of the Expressions):

It has been made clear to you, O all people, regarding the resurrection (the Day of Judgment), namely: behold and observe when We (Allah) made the earth a spread-out expanse and the mountains as pegs, and likewise created you (humankind) in pairs, and so on...[and so on]

The same pattern of presentation described above is also applied to verse 17 (*inna yawma al-fashl...*) through verse 38 (*yawma yaqumu al-rūh*).⁴² Likewise, a similar structure is used for verses 39 (*dhālika al-yawmu al-ḥaqq*) through verse 41, the final verse (*yawma yundharu...*).⁴³ At the end of the sūrah, the commentary concludes with a set of practical guidance formulated specifically for the Bugis community. This concluding section does not merely contain theological messages, but also carries ethical and social dimensions, thereby positioning the tafsīr as an instrument of moral education.

2. Pedagogical Strategies

In addition to being evident in the pattern of presentation, orality is also found in the pedagogical strategies used to explain Qur'anic verses. This strategy is reflected in a tiered mode of exposition, beginning with general information and gradually moving toward more detailed explanations. In several parts of the tafsīr, AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy does not immediately provide extended interpretations of the verses; instead, he first offers brief meanings before proceeding to more in-depth discussions.

The section “Ma'na Perkataan” serves as one of the main spaces for the expansion of these explanations. In this part, specific terms are further elaborated with more extensive descriptions compared to the sections of translation and general

⁴²Muhammad As'ad Al-Bugisy, *Tafsir Surah Amma' bil-Lughah Al-Bugisyah*, p. 12.

⁴³Muhammad As'ad Al-Bugisy, *Tafsir Surah Amma' bil-Lughah Al-Bugisyah*, p. 15-22.

meaning. In addition, at the end of the sūrah's discussion, AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy also provides a concluding section containing advice and practical guidance directed to the readers. In this work, he offers six pieces of advice to the Bugis community. These recommendations are introduced with the following statement:⁴⁴

“Thus; thereafter; indeed there are many lessons and guidance brought by Surah ‘Amma.”

It is then concluded with the following statement:

“All of this I have interpreted for my people (the Bugis) so that they may take guidance from this sūrah. So blessed are those who take and obtain guidance from it while believing in the Day of Resurrection...”

3. Use of Terms Closely Related to Everyday Life

Another form of orality is evident in the use of terms and experiential references that are closely connected to the everyday life of the Bugis community. This is already visible in the choice of the sūrah title used in the work. AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy uses the term “Sūrah ‘Amma” rather than “Sūrah al-Naba’.”⁴⁵

In local religious practice, the term ‘*Amma* commonly refers to Juz 30 of the Qur’an, which is often printed as a separate mushaf and is popularly known as *koran beccu* (“the small Qur’an”).⁴⁶

⁴⁴Muhammad As'ad Al-Bugisy, *Tafsir Surah Amma' bil-Lughah Al-Bugisyah*, p. 25-29.

⁴⁵Scholars have labeled this sūrah with several names, namely Sūrah ‘Amma, Al-Naba’, Al-Tasā’ul, Al-Mu‘shirāt, and ‘Amma Yatasa’alūn. However, scholars differ regarding its primary designation. Imām al-Suyūfī, in *Al-Itqān*, uses the name “‘Amma.” Jalāl al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Bakr Al-Suyūfī. *Al-Itqān fī ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān*. (Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 2015). Imam Al-Bukhari dalam *Shahih Bukhari*-nya menggunakan nama ‘*amma yatasa-alun*. *Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, (Beirut: Dār Ṭawq al-Najāh, 2001). The majority of scholars use the name *Al-Naba’*.

⁴⁶The term “Small Qur’an” refers to a small portion of the Qur’an (only Juz 30), and this type of mushaf is read only by young children. Read more. Muhammad Alwi HS, Iin Parnisih dan Ihsan Nurmansyah, “Tradisi Perayaan Khatam Al-Qur’an pada Masyarakat Muslim Bugis-Makassar, Indonesia: Dari Resepsi ke

The use of this term indicates a strong proximity between the presentation of the tafsīr and the religious experiences of the local community, demonstrating how Qur'anic knowledge is mediated through familiar cultural and devotional frameworks.

The use of terms closely related to everyday life is also found in expressions such as *sirājān* (Qur'an 78:13), which is interpreted as *sulo*. In the Bugis cultural context, *sulo* refers to a traditional oil lamp that produces light from fire and a wick,⁴⁷ commonly used before the advent of modern lamps and electricity. Similarly, the term *kawā'ib* (Qur'an 78:33) is translated as *ana' wijadari* (houris).⁴⁸ The expression *ana' wijadari* is an old Bugis lexical item that was once widely recognized and used. These terms demonstrate the incorporation of vocabulary that was familiar within the linguistic and cultural repertoire of the Bugis community at the time.

Up to this point, the discussion demonstrates that orality in *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* can be identified through three principal forms: orality in the pattern of tafsir presentation, orality in pedagogical strategies, and orality in the use of terms closely associated with the everyday life of the Bugis community. These three forms appear consistently throughout the text and constitute distinctive characteristics that differentiate this tafsir from other exegetical works. The findings indicate that orality is reflected not only in language use, but also in the mode of presentation, the organization of explanations, and the selection of interpretive terminology. For clarity, the main forms of textual orality identified in *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* are summarized in Table X below.

Sikap Moderat.” *Al-Bayan: Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies* 22, no. 3 (2024); 498–521. <https://doi.org/10.1163/22321969-20240160>.

⁴⁷ Douglas Laskowske, *Kamus Bugis-Inggris-Indonesia*, (Makassar: Penerbit Innawa, 2025).

⁴⁸ Douglas Laskowske, *Kamus Bugis-Inggris-Indonesia*.

Table 1.
Main Forms of Textual Orality Identified in Tafsir Surah ‘Amma

Bugis/Lontara term	Qur'anic Arabic Term	Translation	Context	Oral Feature	Interpretation
'Amma	عَمَّ ('amma)	About what	Sūrah title	Retention of the Arabic term	Preserves the Qur'anic recitation tradition within oral teaching.
Sulo	سِرَاجًا (sirājan)	Lamp/torch	Q. 78:13	Local-language adaptation	Explains the Qur'anic term through a familiar Bugis expression to facilitate audience comprehension.
Ana' wijad ari	كَوَاعِبَ (kawā'iba)	Maidens	Q. 78:33	Vernacularization	Renders the Qur'anic concept into a culturally familiar Bugis expression to enhance understanding.
Ma'na Perkaatan	—	Lexical meaning	Opening section of each interpretation	Pedagogical sequence	Reflects the instructional pattern of introducing word meanings before detailed explanation.
Closing Advice	—	Closing moral advice	Concluding section of the interpretation	Moral elaboration	Reinforces the function of the tafsir as a medium for ethical instruction through oral exhortation.

Source: Author's personal documentation

Mangaji Tudang after AGH. As'ad: Transmission and Transformation

After identifying the various forms of orality in *Tafsir Surah ‘Amma bil-Lughah al-Bugisiyyah*, this section seeks to reconstruct the practice of *mangaji tudang* that constituted the original context of the tafsir's emergence. This effort is undertaken by positioning the tafsir as a record of pedagogical traditions inherited from AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy and continuously maintained within the As'adiyah Pesantren environment up to the present day. In this sense, the orality embedded in the text is not understood merely as

a trace of the past, but as part of a living discursive tradition that continues to be transmitted through *mangaji tudang* practices in South Sulawesi. Based on the findings above, the *mangaji tudang* practice in the model developed by AGH. As'ad is characterized by at least two main features.

First, the mode of presentation begins with an introduction to the *sūrah*, followed by verse-by-verse translation, brief meaning-making, deeper interpretive elaboration, and concludes with practical affirmations in the form of moral advice. Second, its substantive orientation emphasizes the contextualization of Islam grounded in ASWAJA principles within Bugis cultural settings. These two characteristics form the foundational structure that enables *mangaji tudang* to be recognized, sustained, and transmitted across generations.

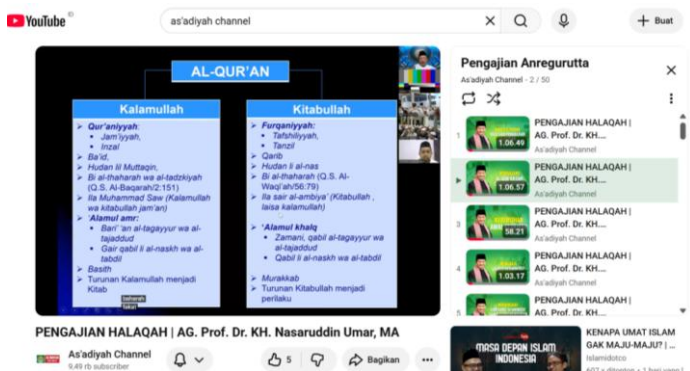
In its development, *mangaji tudang* after the era of AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy shows a variety of transformations. Based on the researcher's observation,⁴⁹ these transformations are evident in terms of actors, language, and the media used in the teaching process. If during AGH. As'ad's period the religious sessions were generally led directly by charismatic ulama, today the same practice is also conducted by his students and successors who are recognized as possessing scholarly authority. From the linguistic perspective, the use of the Bugis language is now often combined with Indonesian in order to reach a more diverse audience. Meanwhile, technological developments have encouraged changes in the medium of instruction through the use of digital platforms such as YouTube,⁵⁰ Facebook,⁵¹ and Zoom meetings, enabling *mangaji tudang* to be accessed by a wider audience beyond the geographical boundaries of South Sulawesi. The following figure presents an example of a contemporary *mangaji tudang* session conducted by AGH. Nasaruddin Umar, the current leader of As'adiyah, on 12 November 2023. The lecture, entitled

⁴⁹Researcher's observation at Campus I and Campus IV of Pondok Pesantren As'adiyah Sengkang, October 2025.

⁵⁰Youtube Pesantren As'adiyah, @As'adiyah Channel, Accessed April 20, 2026. https://www.youtube.com/@asadiyah_channel/featured.

⁵¹Facebook Pesantren As'adiyah, @As'adiyah Pusat, Accessed April 20, 2026. <https://www.facebook.com/share/18ycRsVPr8/>.

“Understanding the Qur'an through Sūrah al-Fātiḥah,” was delivered via Zoom Meeting and simultaneously livestreamed on the official YouTube channel, *As'adiyah Channel*.⁵²



Source: Author's personal documentation

Figure: 2
The official YouTube channel, *As'adiyah Channel*

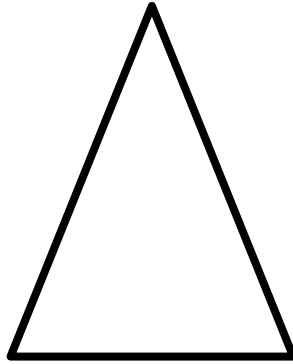
Nevertheless, these various changes do not eliminate the fundamental characteristics of the *mangaji tudang* tradition. ASWAJA-based Islamic teachings remain the primary orientation underpinning the instructional content, as reflected in various study sessions that continue to emphasize the authority of scholars (*ulama*), the continuity of scholarly transmission (*sanad*), and a moderate approach to religious understanding.⁵³ More broadly, the changes that occur are mainly adaptive in terms of the mode of delivery, while the substantive teachings that are transmitted remain preserved, namely ASWAJA principles. These findings indicate that transmission and transformation occur simultaneously: transmission ensures the continuity of the tradition's core values, whereas transformation enables the

⁵²As'adiyah Channel, "Pengajian Halaqah | AG. Prof. Dr. Kh. Nasaruddin Umar, Ma", Accessed April 20, 2026. https://www.youtube.com/@asadiyah_channel/featured.

⁵³See also Wahyuddin Halim, "Young Islamic Preachers on Facebook: Pesantren As'adiyah and its Engagement with Social Media", *Indonesia nad the Malay World*, 46, No. 134, (2018).

tradition to remain relevant in the face of social and technological change.

AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy's *Mangaji Tudang*



(Source: processed by author)

Figure: 3

Variations of *Mangaji Tudang* Models among the Students of AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy

The diversity of *mangaji tudang* practices found today is fundamentally rooted in the foundation established by AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy. The various innovations that have emerged do not break the continuity of the tradition; rather, they represent a creative reproduction of earlier pedagogical models. In this context, *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* demonstrates its role as a medium that preserves as well as transmits these characteristics of orality. Although it now exists in written form, has been translated into Indonesian, and arranged in a more modern format, its structure of presentation and pedagogical orientation continue to show a strong connection to the practice of *mangaji tudang*. Therefore, reading this tafsīr not only provides access to the exegetical content of AGH. As'ad, but also revives the pedagogical experience embedded within the living tradition of As'adiyah Pesantren instruction.

Discussion

Textual Orality in *Tafsir Surah 'Amma*

Tafsir Surah 'Amma demonstrates a form of orality that is not only present in the use of the Bugis language as the medium of interpretation, but also embodied in its structure of presentation, pedagogical strategies, and the use of terms closely related to the lived experiences of the Bugis community. These findings show that orality does not disappear when teaching is transformed into written form. On the contrary, elements of orality persist and remain legible within the written medium. In this context, *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* exhibits a character that can be understood as textual orality, namely the presence of oral logic, communicative patterns, and experiential traces of oral tradition within a written text. This perspective extends the analytical repertoire available to scholars of Nusantara tafsīr—who have tended to approach these works primarily through philological, ideological, or social lenses—by recovering the pedagogical and communicative dimensions that underlie their composition. In many cases, however, pesantren tafsīr works emerge from oral teaching practices and are subsequently preserved in written form.

The presence of textual orality in the tafsīr of AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy shows that the relationship between oral and written traditions within the pesantren is not dichotomous. Writing does not replace orality, just as orality does not disappear when it is transformed into written form. Instead, both mutually reinforce each other in the process of transmitting Islamic knowledge.⁵⁴ This is evident in the structure of the tafsīr's presentation, which moves gradually from the introduction of the sūrah, to the translation of verses, to brief interpretive meanings, and finally to deeper elaboration through the section *Ma'na Perkataan*. Such a structure indicates that the text is not organized according to the logic of modern academic writing, which tends to be systematic and argumentative, but rather follows the rhythm of pedagogical delivery commonly found in pesantren learning traditions. Thus, orality in this tafsīr is not merely a linguistic feature; it also

⁵⁴Walter J. Ong. *Orality and Literacy*. Compare with Ruth Finnegan, *Literacy and Orality*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988).

concerns the way knowledge is organized and communicated to its audience. In this sense, the text becomes a space in which pedagogical practice remains alive, even though it has been transferred into written form.

Findings regarding pedagogical strategies and the use of terms closely related to the everyday life of the Bugis community further reinforce this oral character. In oral tradition, the effectiveness of communication is not determined solely by the content of the message, but also by the speaker's ability to adapt language and explanation to the audience's lived experience. For this reason, the use of terms such as *sulo*, *ana' wijadari*, and the designation *'Amma* as an already familiar term within the social life of communities in South Sulawesi reflects a strong communicative orientation. In this context, a narrative text such as a tafsīr is not delivered through concepts that are foreign to its readers, but rather through language and experiences that are already part of their collective memory. In this way, the tafsīr functions as a bridge connecting the message of revelation with the social reality of the community. This characteristic shows that orality in the tafsīr operates as a mechanism of adaptation that enables Islamic teachings to be understood in a more immediate and contextual manner by its audience.

From a broader perspective, these findings contribute to the study of pesantren tafsīr, which has so far tended to focus more on philological, linguistic, ideological, and social aspects. This study demonstrates that the dimension of orality is also an essential element in understanding the character of pesantren tafsīr. Through the perspective of textual orality, tafsīr is not only understood as a product of Qur'anic interpretation, but also as a record of pedagogical practices and intellectual traditions that underlie its emergence. Thus, the study of pesantren tafsīr cannot be sufficiently conducted through content or linguistic analysis alone; it must also consider how teaching experiences, communication patterns, and social interactions shape the structure of the resulting text. In this context, *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* shows that orality is an integral part of the pesantren intellectual tradition, one that persists and remains identifiable even when it is expressed in written form. These findings also affirm that tafsīr

texts can serve as an entry point for understanding the dynamics between orality, literacy, and the transmission of Islamic knowledge within the Indonesian pesantren tradition.

Tafsir as a Record of *Mangaji Tudang*

Tafsir Surah 'Amma did not emerge independently of the social and pedagogical practices of the pesantren. The various forms of textual orality identified throughout the work demonstrate its close relationship with the *mangaji tudang* tradition that developed within As'adiyah Pesantren. Accordingly, the tafsir should be understood not merely as a written commentary intended for individual reading, but as the textual continuation of an earlier oral teaching tradition. Its gradual mode of presentation, pedagogically organized explanations, and use of Bugis cultural expressions preserve traces of AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy's teaching practices. This finding supports Ong's argument that writing does not necessarily replace orality; rather, written texts may continue to embody oral modes of thought and communication. In this sense, *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* represents a written extension of the *mangaji tudang* tradition rather than a departure from it.

The relationship between the tafsir and *mangaji tudang* is evident in the correspondence between the structure of the text and the rhythm of oral instruction observed in pesantren learning sessions. The sequence of introducing the sūrah, translating the verses, presenting their general meaning, elaborating through the *Ma'na Perkataan* section, and concluding with moral advice reflects the recurring instructional pattern of *mangaji tudang*. This structure demonstrates that the written text functions as a pedagogical script preserving the dynamics of oral teaching. From Goody's perspective, literacy should not be understood as eliminating oral knowledge but as reorganizing and stabilizing it in textual form. Consequently, reading *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* also involves reconstructing the teacher–student interaction embedded within its textual organization.

The tafsir further illustrates how oral pedagogy functions as a process of cultural mediation. The extensive use of the Bugis language, vernacular expressions, familiar examples drawn from

everyday life, and moral exhortation enables Qur'anic teachings to be communicated within the cultural framework of Bugis society while maintaining the doctrinal orientation of ASWAJA. Thus, *mangaji tudang* serves not only as a medium for transmitting religious knowledge but also as a means of translating Islamic concepts into culturally meaningful forms. This finding resonates with Finnegan's view that oral traditions are adaptive cultural practices in which meaning is continuously negotiated through language, performance, and audience engagement, rather than transmitted as fixed verbal formulas.

The continuity of *mangaji tudang* beyond the lifetime of AGH. As'ad further demonstrates that oral traditions endure through both transmission and adaptation. Field observations show that the tradition now involves multiple instructors, incorporates Indonesian alongside Bugis, and is conducted through YouTube, Facebook, and Zoom while retaining its pedagogical sequence and moral orientation. Rather than indicating the decline of oral tradition, these developments demonstrate its capacity to adapt to changing communicative environments. In this respect, the findings also complement Pink's studies of vernacular tafsir, which argue that local Qur'anic interpretation involves more than translation into regional languages; it also preserves the communicative patterns, pedagogical strategies, and social contexts that shape the interpretive process. The case of *mangaji tudang* demonstrates that these oral dimensions continue to be maintained even as the medium of transmission has shifted to digital platforms.

From a broader perspective, these findings suggest that *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* contributes not only to the study of pesantren tafsir but also to broader debates on orality and literacy. Rather than treating orality and writing as successive and separate stages, this case demonstrates that the two coexist within a single exegetical tradition. The tafsir preserves the pedagogical rhythm, linguistic choices, and cultural context of *mangaji tudang* while simultaneously transforming them into a durable written archive. Accordingly, the As'adiyah case extends the theoretical perspectives of Ong, Goody, Finnegan, and Pink by showing that an Islamic exegetical text does not simply represent a transition

from orality to literacy, but constitutes a space where both coexist and mutually reinforce one another. In this way, *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* functions simultaneously as an exegetical work, a pedagogical guide, and a living archive of oral tradition, thereby enriching our understanding of the epistemology of Nusantara pesantren and Indonesia's local tafsir heritage.

Textual Orality as Traces of Tradition in Pesantren Literature

The preceding analysis of *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* suggests a broader theoretical proposition, advanced here as an implication for future research rather than a finding of this study: pesantren literature more generally cannot be understood merely as a written cultural product that stands apart from the oral traditions that give rise to it. In many cases, texts circulating within pesantren settings are the result of a long process of knowledge transmission that takes place through *pengajian*, *halaqah*, *bandongan*, *sorogan*, and other forms of collective learning. These oral traditions do not disappear when knowledge is expressed in written form; rather, they leave discernible traces that can still be identified in the structure, linguistic style, and patterns of textual presentation. In this sense, pesantren works can be seen as a space of encounter between orality and literacy, both of which mutually shape the production of Islamic knowledge.

In this context, textual orality offers an important perspective for understanding the social and pedagogical dimensions that are often overlooked in studies of pesantren literature. Elements such as the use of address terms directed to the audience, patterns of repetition in explanation, simplification of technical terms, illustrations drawn from listeners' lived experiences, and the use of local language can be read as indicators of the teaching situation underlying the composition of the text. In other words, the text does not merely preserve the religious ideas intended by the author, but also records how those ideas were communicated to a particular learning community. Through a reading of such oral features, researchers gain the opportunity to reconstruct aspects of pesantren pedagogical dynamics that are not always documented in formal historical sources.

More broadly, the analysis of orality allows the text to be treated as a trace of pesantren tradition that goes beyond its documentary function as a written work. If studies of pesantren literature have so far tended to focus on content, sources, intellectual networks, or the scholarly authority of the author, then attention to orality opens a different analytical path, namely tracing the relationship between the text and the social practices that produced it. This perspective helps demonstrate that a work does not only reflect the intellectual views of its author, but also represents a culture of learning, patterns of teacher–student interaction, and the ways in which a pesantren community manages and transmits religious knowledge. In this sense, orality functions as an entry point for reading the traditions embedded behind the text.

Based on this, textual orality can be considered a relevant approach for the broader study of pesantren literature. This approach is not limited to tafsīr works, but can also be applied to various other genres such as fiqh manuals, works on Sufism (*tasawwuf*), theology (*'aqīdah*), commentaries (*sharḥ*), lecture notes, and other local religious writings produced within pesantren environments. By positioning orality as an analytical category, the study of pesantren literature does not only generate an understanding of textual content, but also enables the uncovering of traces of tradition that shape the processes of production and transmission. Therefore, attention to textual orality can enrich pesantren studies by offering a more comprehensive perspective on the relationship between text, tradition, and Islamic scholarly practice.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that *Tafsir Surah 'Amma* by AGH. As'ad Al-Bugisy functions not only as a work of Qur'anic exegesis but also as a textual record of the *mangaji tudang* tradition within As'adiyah Pesantren. Through an analysis of the tafsir's presentation pattern, pedagogical strategies, and the use of terms and expressions closely associated with the everyday life of the Bugis community, this study finds that orality remains embedded in the written text. These findings indicate that the tafsir serves as

a bridge between oral and written traditions, enabling the pedagogical experience of Islamic learning to be transmitted across generations. The study further shows that *mangaji tudang* has continued through simultaneous processes of transmission and transformation while preserving its primary orientation, namely the contextualization of ASWAJA teachings within the cultural context of Bugis society.

This study makes an original contribution by introducing *textual orality* as an analytical framework for pesantren tafsīr scholarship, the first application of this framework to a Bugis exegetical text and to a non-Javanese pesantren context—thereby demonstrating its applicability beyond the Javanese traditions where comparable work has previously been concentrated. The findings affirm that orality constitutes an integral component of pesantren epistemology, shaping the production and transmission of Islamic knowledge. Accordingly, this article enriches the study of Nusantara religious literature and pesantren textual heritage by demonstrating how local Qur’anic exegesis preserves and transmits oral traditions through written texts.

This study carries some limitations. First, the analysis rests on a transcribed and translated version of a text originally composed in Lontara-Bugis script; features specific to that script system may not be fully recoverable from the translated corpus. Second, the study is limited to a single tafsir and a single scholar and therefore does not represent the full diversity of pesantren exegetical traditions across the Indonesian archipelago. Reconstructing *mangaji tudang* through written texts cannot fully recover the performative and situational dimensions of oral teaching. Future research should therefore expand the corpus to include pesantren tafsīr from other regional traditions—such as those of Aceh, Banjar, and Minangkabau—and across multiple scholarly generations within the As'adiyah network, so as to map the variations and continuities in textual orality across the archipelago’s diverse Islamic intellectual heritage.

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