

STUDY OF INTERPRETATION AND DIVERSITY OF INTERPRETATION LANGUAGES IN INDONESIA: AN ANALYSIS OF LATIN, JAWI, PEGON, AND LONTARA SCRIPTS

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Article History

Received: 28 February 2026

Accepted: 28 March 2026

Published: 12 April 2026

Abstract

Indonesian Qur'anic exegesis has developed within a highly plural linguistic landscape, making script choice (Latin, Jawi, Pegon, Lontara) a practical and intellectual issue rather than a mere technicality. This study aims to map the socio-intellectual bases of Indonesian mufassirs and to explain how those bases shape linguistic expression and interpretive orientation. Drawing on the notion of "basis mufassir" and the view of script as epistemic infrastructure for transmitting authority and accessibility, the research employs a qualitative, descriptive library approach. Primary data are selected tafsir texts and paratexts (prefaces, glosses, layout), supported by secondary scholarship on pesantren literacy and regional traditions; analysis uses comparative document and content analysis. Findings show patterned alignments: Latin supports academic-contextual exposition and wider public circulation; Jawi sustains Malay-Islamic scholarly networks; Pegon anchors pesantren pedagogy and localized moral discourse; Lontara embeds Qur'anic meaning within Bugis-Makassar cultural literacy. The plurality of scripts enriches reception while maintaining revelatory unity.

Keywords: Basis Mufassir, Indonesian Tafsir, Script Diversity.

A. INTRODUCTION

Quranic interpretation is a form of intellectual and spiritual response from Muslims to this divine sacred text. Through interpretation, the contents of the Quran are translated into the language and context of human life so that its messages can be understood and practiced. In Indonesia, the development of interpretation has a unique character because it takes place amidst a highly diverse society, ethnically, culturally, and linguistically. This diversity makes the process of Quranic interpretation in the archipelago rooted not only in Islamic scholarly traditions from the Middle East, but also in local social and cultural foundations.

Islam arrived in the Indonesian archipelago through trade, preaching, and education routes, proceeding peacefully and accommodating to local cultures. As a result, the process of internalizing Islamic teachings, including interpretation of the Quran, is often adapted to local languages and cultural symbols for ease of acceptance. This is where an interesting phenomenon emerges: many works of interpretation in Indonesia are not written in Arabic, but rather in Malay, Javanese, Bugis, and other languages, using various scripts such as Jawi, Pegon, Lontara, and Latin. This phenomenon demonstrates that Indonesian interpretations grew from pluralistic and dynamic social roots, as evidenced by the interpretations of Abdur Rauf as-Sinkily (1615-1693 CE), an Acehnese native, written in Malay. Furthermore, the interpretations of Faid ar-Rahman by K.H. Shaleh Darat (1820-1903 CE) were written in Javanese, and so on (Al-Syirbasi, n.d.). Regarding Quranic studies using Javanese, according to Marsono in his research on "The History of Javanese Language Studies," translation of the Quran into Javanese began in the mid-19th century, around 1858 CE. ³ This translation was published in Javanese script in 1884 CE. A scholar named Bagoes Ngarpah also translated

the Quran into Javanese, accompanied by the original text. The translated manuscript is housed in the Central Jakarta Museum and the Leiden University Library. Furthermore, there is also a Jalalin commentary written by a Solo cleric, Bagus Arafah, in 1913 CE. However, this commentary was not completed because the author had passed away. Next, there was K.H. Shaleh Darat, who also interpreted the Quran using Javanese with Arabic script in 1892 CE. And almost similar in characteristics to the Al Huda commentary is the commentary by Prof. K.H.R. Mohammad Adnan entitled *Tafsir Al Quran Suci Basa Jawi*. However, according to Imam Muhsin in his book, this commentary stands out more as a translation, due to the lack of explanation (Muhsin, n.d).

In addition to the works mentioned above, there are several popular commentaries that are still used by many people to study the Quran. These include the commentary *Al-Iklil fi ma'ani al tanzil* by Kyai Mishbah Musthofa and *Al-Ibriz li Ma'rifah Tafsir Al Quran Al Aziz* by Kyai Bishri Musthofa. In 1977, a commentary by a retired Yogyakarta military officer appeared, and was first published in 1979. It was titled *Al Huda Tafsir Quran Basa Jawi*. This commentary is unique because it uses refined Javanese and is steeped in Javanese culture. Another unique feature of this commentary is that it was written by a colonel with extensive experience in the military and politics.

The role of local interpreters is crucial in this process. Each interpreter brings a unique scientific background and social experience that influence their interpretive style and style. Exegetes from Islamic boarding schools, for example, tend to interpret Quranic verses using traditional and Sufi approaches. Meanwhile, exegetes from modern academic backgrounds interpret the Quran using a scientific and contextual approach.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept and Basis of Exegesis in Indonesia

Understanding the Basis of Exegesis

Etymologically, the word "basis" comes from the Latin *basis*, meaning "base" or "foundation." In the context of Islamic scholarship, the term "basis" can be understood as the epistemological foundation or primary foundation used by a *mufassir* (Quranic interpreter) in understanding, interpreting, and reinterpreting the text of the Quran. Thus, "basis *mufassir*" linguistically refers to the foundation or foundation that underpins a *mufassir's* way of thinking and interpretive methods in uncovering the meaning of Quranic verses.

Terminologically, the basis of a *mufassir* refers to the scientific, social, cultural, and linguistic background that shapes a *mufassir's* perspective in understanding the Quran. This foundation can include the discipline he or she has mastered (e.g., *fiqh*, Sufism, philosophy, or linguistics), the socio-historical environment in which he or she lives, and the language medium he or she uses in interpreting the Quran. In the Indonesian context, the basis of an interpreter's work is often closely tied to the scholarly traditions of Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) and regional language varieties, such as the use of *Jawi*, *Pegon*, *Lontara*, or Latin scripts in local exegetical works (Azyumardi, 2013).

Factors Shaping the Basis of an Interpreter

An interpreter's educational background significantly influences their way of thinking, methods, and focus of interpretation. *Pesantren* interpreters generally follow a traditional pattern with classical references and local nuances (Azyumardi, 2013), while academic interpreters employ an interdisciplinary, historical, and contextual approach. Those affiliated with the Sufi order emphasize aspects of Sufism, while local institutions such as *surau* (prayer houses) and *pondok* (Islamic boarding schools) produce interpretations that combine Islamic and customary values.

Scholarly traditions also determine the orientation of interpretation: fiqh interpreters emphasize law, Sufi interpreters emphasize inner meaning, linguistic interpreters focus on language analysis, and da'wah interpreters prioritize easy-to-understand communication.. Furthermore, socio-political conditions also shape interpretation. During the colonial period, interpretation functioned as a form of resistance and strengthening of Islamic identity; while in the modern era, interpretation often addresses issues of nationality, modernity, and humanity. Thus, interpretation becomes a dynamic dialogue between revelation and socio-political reality (Shihab, 2011).

Classification of the Basis of Exegetes in Indonesia

The classification of the basis of exegetes in Indonesia can be understood through the socio-intellectual background that shapes the pattern of interpretation, namely the link between Islamic boarding school education, modern academic education, and socio-religious experiences in society (Setiawan, 2019). The traditional basis of Islamic boarding schools displays mastery of the tools of knowledge (nahwu, sharaf, balaghah) and a tendency towards *bi al-ma'tsur* interpretation oriented towards the sanad (translation chain) and the authority of classical scholars, with examples such as the Tafsir al-Ibriz and the Pegon script interpretation tradition in Java (Muzadi, 2012). The modern academic basis developed within the university environment, combining classical methods with contemporary thematic, historical, social, and hermeneutical approaches, and generally employing a communicative and rational Latin Indonesian, as seen in the work of M. Quraish Shihab (Syamsudin, 2017). The socio-cultural basis emerged from the interpreter's close relationship with local dynamics, allowing interpretation to function as a medium for da'wah and social transformation, utilizing regional languages and scripts such as Lontara or Jawi to bridge the understanding of the Quran contextually and rooted in cultural idioms (Gusmian, 2012).

Examples of Exegetes and Their Works in Indonesia

The study of exegesis in Indonesia is inseparable from the contributions of exegetes who come from various social and intellectual backgrounds. Each exegete brings a particular style and orientation of scholarship that reflects their scientific basis, whether from the pesantren tradition, modern academics, or socio-cultural traditions. Through

Traditional Islamic Exegetes

From the pesantren (Islamic boarding school) base, one of the most prominent figures is KH. Bisri Musthofa (1915–1977) with his work, "Tafsir al-Ibriz li Ma'rifat Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīz." This commentary was written in Javanese and the Pegon Arabic script, intended for students (*santri*) to understand the contents of the Quran without losing local nuances. The distinctive feature of this commentary lies in its simple, communicative presentation, and rich moral and Sufi values. Furthermore, works such as "Tafsir Marah Labid" by Nawawi al-Bantani, a Bantenese scholar who taught at the Grand Mosque, demonstrate the connection between the scholarship of Indonesian scholars and the Middle East (Azyumardi, 2013).

Modern Academic Exegetes

From the academic community, M. Quraish Shihab is a central figure with his work "Tafsir al-Mishbah: Messages, Impressions, and Harmony of the Qur'an." Written in Latin Indonesian, this work employs a contextual approach that emphasizes the harmony between the text and social reality. His interpretive style tends to be rational, moderate, and inclusive, making it one of the most influential exegetes of the contemporary era.

Besides Shihab, figures such as Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy's "Tafsir an-Nur" also stand out. Hasbi sought to develop exegesis using a thematic approach and social fiqh reasoning, demonstrating an integration between exegesis and modern Islamic law (Ash-Shiddieqy, 1999).

Socio-Cultural Exegesis

Meanwhile, from a socio-cultural perspective, exegetes have emerged who write exegesis in regional languages as a medium for da'wah. One example is the "Tafsir Lontara" from South Sulawesi, compiled by Bugis scholars to facilitate the understanding of the Qur'an in local languages.

In Sumatra, Abdurrauf as-Singkili's Tafsir Tarjuman al-Mustafid is also known, the first tafsir in Malay. Written in Jawi script, this work served as an important reference for the Malay tafsir tradition until the 19th century. Both works demonstrate that regional languages are not merely a means of communication but also a vehicle for expanding access to understanding the Quran within the multicultural society of the archipelago (Shihab, 2016).

Language and Script in Qur'anic Interpretation in Indonesia **Four Scripts in Nusantara Interpretation**

The development of Qur'anic interpretation in Indonesia cannot be separated from the surrounding social, cultural, and linguistic context. Amidst the ethnic diversity and literary traditions of the archipelago, scripts have become a crucial instrument in conveying religious understanding, including Qur'anic interpretation. The use of certain scripts is not merely technical, but also represents the scholarly identity and da'wah orientation of scholars in their respective regions (Gusmian, 2013). Throughout the history of Islam in the archipelago, four main scripts have played a significant role in the writing and dissemination of Qur'anic interpretation: Latin, Jawi, Pegon, and Lontara. Each has a distinct role, according to the social dynamics and scholarly networks in the regions where it is used (Faturahman, 2015).

These four scripts bear witness to the long journey of Islamization in Indonesia, from the traditional stage based on Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) and sultanates to modernization through academic institutions and print media. Each script embodies its own worldview on how sacred texts should be presented to society.

Latin Script

The Latin script became a major milestone in the transformation of Indonesian Islamic literacy in the 20th century. With the establishment of modern educational institutions such as Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, and the emergence of Western-oriented schools, Latin began to replace Arabic-Malay (Jawi) scripts in scholarly communication (Azra, 2016). The use of the Latin script marked a paradigm shift in interpretation: from the traditional, pesantren-oriented form to an academic and rationalistic model. In this context, Latin served as a symbol of modernity and openness. Interpretations using Latin were more accessible to newly educated groups receiving modern education. Monumental works such as M. Quraish Shihab's Tafsir al-Mishbah, Buya Hamka's Tafsir al-Azhar, and Hasbi ash-Shiddieqy's Tafsir al-Nur represent this era. All three demonstrate that the use of the Latin script is not merely a matter of written form, but also relates to a scientific, systematic, and contextual interpretation methodology. Latin enables the integration of Indonesian as a national lingua franca with global Islamic thought. Furthermore, the Latin script facilitates the digitalization of interpretations in the contemporary era. With Latin, interpretations can be disseminated online (digitally), reaching audiences across regions and generations.

Jawi Script

Before Latin became dominant, the Jawi script served as a bridge for the spread of Islam in the Malay archipelago. Jawi is a modified Arabic script adapted for writing Malay and has been used since the 14th century in religious, legal, and literary texts. In the field of exegesis, Jawi played a significant role as the language of classical Islamic scholarship in the Malay world, particularly during the Sultanates of Aceh, Johor, and Patani. Through this script, interpretations of the Quran were conveyed to communities lacking a thorough understanding of Arabic. One of the most important works of exegesis written in the Jawi script is the Tarjuman al-Mustafid by Abdur Rauf as-Singkili, a prominent 17th-century scholar from

Aceh. This work was the first complete exegesis in Southeast Asia and marked the intersection of Middle Eastern exegetical traditions with the Malay context of the Indonesian archipelago (Azra, 2004). The Jawi script reflects the efforts of Malay scholars to integrate Islam into local culture without losing its Arabic roots. The sentence structure combines Arabic, Malay, and sometimes Persian vocabulary, demonstrating the cosmopolitanism of Islam in the region. Through Jawi, the messages of the Quran became more accessible to the coastal and interior Malay communities. Its use also strengthened the role of traditional educational institutions such as surau (Islamic prayer houses) and madrasahs (Islamic schools) as centers for the dissemination of tafsir (interpretation of the Islamic faith).

Pegon Script

The Pegon script is an adaptation of Arabic script to write Javanese and Sundanese, which grew out of the pesantren (Islamic boarding school) tradition, primarily as a da'wah strategy to make Islamic teachings easily understood by the local community. The term "Pegon" is derived from the Javanese word *pego* ("unusual"), referring to a writing system that differs from the Latin alphabet but serves effectively as a medium for copying scriptures, translating Arabic texts, and writing regional-language commentaries. One important work is the *Tafsir al-Ibriz li Ma'rifati Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Aziz* by KH Bisri Musthofa, written in Javanese Pegon, thus opening access to understanding the Quran for rural Javanese communities who do not master Arabic or Indonesian (Baso, 2018). This tradition is also seen in the *Tafsir Al-Quran Suci Bahasa Jawi* by Prof. R. Mohammad Adnan, which was originally published in 1924 in Pegon and then translated into the alphabet in 1953 without changing the Javanese content, because it was intended for lay readers in the Solo area (Zunafida, 2023). The development of Pegon in Nusantara interpretation is increasingly apparent in the work of KH Misbah Musthofa through *Tafsir al-Iklil fi Ma'ani al-Tanzil* (30 volumes) which is in Javanese Pegon and responds to social issues of the New Order era with a communicative tahlili style, then continued with *Taj al-Muslimin min Kalam Rabb al-'Alamin* which stopped at four volumes due to the author's death (Abidin et al., n.d.). A comparison of examples of interpretations of al-Fatihah verse 1 shows a shift in emphasis: al-Iklil emphasizes more on the explanation of basic meanings and language, while Taj al-Muslimin emphasizes more on considerations of fiqh and careful worship, including a discussion of differences in schools of thought regarding the status of basmalah and choices that maintain the unity of the community (Jamal, n.d.). Overall, Pegon represents interpretation that lives in the ecology of Islamic boarding schools as a practice of religious literacy rooted in local wisdom, while also being evidence of the adaptation of Javanese Islam that maintains the authenticity of the message of revelation.

Lontara Script

The Lontara script, distinct from Jawi and Pegon, which are rooted in Arabic script, originates from the local literacy tradition of South Sulawesi and is used by the Bugis-Makassar people to write literary and religious texts. In the context of exegesis, its importance has been evident since the mid-20th century, through a series of works in Bugis (often supplemented by Arabic and Indonesian) aimed at bringing the message of the Quran closer to the religious and social needs of the local community. The earliest exegesis was recorded in 1948 by KH. Muhammad As'ad, with his three-language commentary on Juz 'Amma, published by the As'adiyah Sengkang Islamic School. This was followed by AGH. M. Yunus Martan, who compiled a three-juz commentary (published in 1961), KH. Abdul Qadir Khalid, who interpreted Al-Fatihah in two volumes for academic purposes (printed in 1971), and KH. Abdullah Pabbaja (1977), who interpreted several short suras with a functional orientation and ijmal style. Subsequent developments included the translation of the Qur'an into Bugis-Lontara script by AGH. Hamzah Manguluang (1978), followed by the

birth of a complete commentary of 30 chapters, namely Tafsir Al-Munir by KH. Daud Ismail (written 1980–1994) and Tafseere Akorang Mabbhasa Ugi compiled by the MUI team under KH. Mu'in Yusuf (written 1988–1996), as well as other works such as Al-Nahj Al-Qawim by Abd. Muin Salim (1995); this series emphasizes that the use of Lontara in commentary functions as a medium for the culturalization of Islam in South Sulawesi, not merely a linguistic choice. (Rahim, 1985).

C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research applies a qualitative-descriptive approach through library research, with an emphasis on document analysis and comparative content analysis. The choice of a qualitative approach is considered the most relevant because the object of study is not merely "data" in the quantitative sense, but rather interpretive texts along with the socio-intellectual landscape that underlies the birth of interpretation, so that reading needs to be directed at revealing meaning, argumentation patterns, and conceptual relationships that are inadequate if reduced to numerical measures (Creswell & Poth, 2018). It is worth noting that document study is an appropriate strategy because the main sources of research rely on interpretive works including paratext elements such as introductions, language styles, and script choices as well as scientific literature that maps the network of ulama, pesantren traditions, and the development of Nusantara literacy (Bowen, 2009). Interestingly, content analysis allows for the formation of thematic categories and methodological tendencies of interpretation reflected through the choice of the interpreter's script and basis, then tested for consistency through cross-case comparisons to reveal similarities, variations, and substantive points of difference (Krippendorff, 2019). With such a design, the diversity of scripts is not treated as a mere technical aspect, but rather is read as a marker of intellectual tradition as well as a communication-da'wah strategy that is closely linked to the interpreter's background and the chosen mode of interpretive expression.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Relationship Between Exegete's Base and Script Choice as a Key Finding

The key findings of this study confirm that the diversity of scripts in the Nusantara exegetical tradition cannot be treated as mere technical variations, as they actually record a close connection with the socio-intellectual basis of exegetes that shapes the interpretive process. Mapping the pesantren (Islamic boarding school), modern academic, and socio-cultural bases provides an analytical basis for understanding why Latin, Jawi, Pegon, and Lontara scripts tend to follow the "ecology" of scholarship and the characteristics of the audiences they serve (Setiawan, 2019). This pattern appears relatively consistent: the pesantren environment typically emphasizes the transmission of tradition and local accessibility, while the modern academic base more often demonstrates systematic argumentation, rational nuances, and a national orientation through Indonesian with the Latin script. Interestingly, the script simultaneously functions as a marker of authority; certain choices often emphasize institutional affiliations, networks of scholars, and even how society tests the "worthiness" of an exegesis for reference. In this sense, script functions as a medium that binds knowledge, identity, and da'wah strategies together in a single, inextricable chain.

Findings regarding the relationship between the socio-intellectual basis of interpreters and their choice of script are supported by arguments from the historiography of Nusantara exegesis, which, interestingly, positions language and script as part of the transmission mechanism of scholarly authority, not merely as technical writing tools. Gusmian, for example, shows that in the early phase of modernity, particularly in the early 20th century, shifts in script and language of interpretation moved in tandem with changes in the

educational arena, the configuration of ulama networks, and the expansion of target audiences. Consequently, the written medium helped shape how interpretive authority was produced, circulated, and ultimately recognized within specific communities (Gusmian, 2015). A similar pattern is also evident in the Islamic boarding school tradition, through Pegon, which consciously maintains a symbolic closeness to Arabic heritage while simultaneously expanding its legibility for students and the surrounding community, allowing script to function as both a pedagogical and cultural strategy. In the Bugis region, the use of local languages and scripts in the tafsir tradition can be read as part of an Islamization process based on the legitimacy of local ulama, confirming that the choice of script is inherent in the ecology of knowledge and authority structures within a specific social space (Anshar & Haddade, 2020).

Latin Script: Literary Modernity and the Academic-Contextual Orientation of Tafsir

The Latin script can be seen as one of the most prominent symbols of the transformation of Indonesian Islamic literacy in the 20th century, particularly as modern education strengthened and the need for cross-regional scholarly communication became increasingly pressing. The dominance of Latin not only facilitated reader access through the broader Indonesian language but also encouraged a style of interpretation that tended to be structured, argumentative, and sensitive to modern issues, as seen in works that structured tafsir in both academic and communicative formats. It is noteworthy that this expansion of media allowed tafsir to move further into the public sphere: circulating not only within the santri community but also penetrating urban spaces, campuses, popular publications, and media channels, enabling tafsir to function as both a religious and a national discourse. However, this expansion leaves significant consequences, namely the potential shift of the center of authority from traditional spaces to more standardized, modern spaces. At this point, some readers of Islamic boarding schools or local communities may experience distance as local scripts are pushed aside by the flow of national literacy. In other words, Latin offers efficiency and scale, but demands serious cultural work to ensure that local traditions do not lose their space for expression and social function (Azra, 2016).

The dominance of Latin script in Indonesian exegesis can generally be understood as a consequence of the standardization of modern literacy and the strengthening of Indonesian as a medium of communication across regions—a development that, worth noting, has both epistemic and institutional implications. Studies of modern-day exegetical scripts demonstrate that Latin not only facilitates the circulation of texts but also encourages a more systematic style of exposition compatible with campus academic culture and modern publishing practices (Gusmian, 2015). This shift becomes even more pronounced as Latin-script exegesis undergoes a "medium expansion" into the digital ecosystem. The digitization of the Tafsir al-Mishbah, for example, demonstrates how public access to exegesis has expanded, but simultaneously, new negotiations have emerged regarding authority, curation, and how readers interpret exegesis online (Ali & Isnaini, 2024). At this point, Latin tends to benefit because it is most compatible with search engines, applications, and digital distribution, while local scripts require transliteration and archival strengthening to avoid being marginalized within the contemporary literary architecture.

Jawi Script: Malay-Islamic Cosmopolitanism and the Sultanate's Scholarly Network

Jawi script holds a significant historical position because it served as a bridge for Islamization in the Malay world from its earliest period, particularly when Malay served as a religious and intellectual lingua franca. The use of Jawi in exegesis demonstrates the ability of Malay scholars to integrate the heritage of Middle Eastern exegesis into the local language structure without severing its Arabic roots, resulting in a style of interpretation that can be described as cosmopolitan yet communicative for non-Arabic readers. The existence of Jawi

exegesis, often associated with the sultanate's traditions and traditional educational institutions such as surau (prayer houses) or madrasahs (Islamic schools), reminds us that script is not merely a writing tool but also an institutional device that regulates the flow of knowledge: who writes, for whom the texts are provided, and in which social spaces the exegesis is distributed. Interestingly, Jawi also demonstrates a mechanism of cultural selection, as the link between Arabic and Malay vocabulary fosters both religious affinity and scholarly legitimacy in the imagination of its readers. However, when Latin became the new standard, Jawi faced challenges for the sustainability of literacy; As a result, Jawi's existence today is more often sustained through specific communities and manuscript preservation efforts that require institutional support (Azra, 2004).

The Jawi script, within the Malay-Indonesian exegetical tradition, has a strong historical foothold as a medium for the dissemination of Islamic knowledge within the sultanate, the surau (prayer hall), and the Malay ulama network. This means that from the beginning, Jawi has been part of the knowledge infrastructure that links religious texts to social institutions. Studies on Malay-Jawi exegesis demonstrate that Jawi is not merely a script, but rather a symbol of the continuity of Malay-Islamic scholarly traditions intertwined with the local education system and the reading habits of its community (Nurmansyah, 2021). The study of *Tarjumān al-Mustafīd* further strengthens the argument that interpretation in the local language with Arabic script (Jawi) serves as a strategy of accessibility and legitimacy, as it maintains a symbolic connection to the "Arabic flavor" of the sacred text while providing a bridge of understanding for non-Arabic readers (Rahman, 2018). Thus, the challenges of Jawi in the era of Latin dominance cannot be sufficiently explained as a problem of "losing popularity", but rather it is more appropriate to read it as a problem of the sustainability of the educational literacy ecosystem, publishing, and the inheritance of reading competencies that support the life and death of this script.

Pegon Script: The Ecology of Javanese Islamic Boarding Schools and a Local Wisdom-Based Da'wah Strategy

The Pegon script represents a pesantren reading culture that, interestingly, demands creative adaptation: Arabic texts are retained as the central authority, but access to understanding is expanded through Javanese or Sundanese written in modified Arabic script. The findings in this section demonstrate that Pegon functions as an effective da'wah strategy because it maintains the emotional-cultural closeness of students and the community to Islamic tradition, while also providing a reading pathway for communities that have not yet fully mastered Arabic or Indonesian. The Pegon exegetical tradition, such as the *Tafsir al-Ibriz* and similar works that have developed within the pesantren ecosystem, generally displays communicative interpretations, grounded in classical authority, and often incorporates moral messages and Sufi nuances close to everyday experience (Muzadi, 2012). It is worth noting that Pegon is not always "traditional" in the static sense; some works actually demonstrate a responsiveness to the socio-political situations of their time, making the tradition appear alive and continually negotiating with the context. However, contemporary challenges arise from the limited literacy of the younger generation and the barriers to digitalization, making the agenda of transliteration, archiving, and strengthening literacy crucial to ensure the continuity of Islamic boarding schools' intellectual heritage (Baso, 2018; Zunafida, 2023).

The findings regarding Pegon as a strategy for da'wah and Islamic boarding school pedagogy are directly supported by studies that position Pegon as a unique phenomenon within the tradition of Islamic boarding school tafsir writing. Baidowi emphasizes that Pegon allows for a "double mediation": Arabic authority is maintained through the letter form, while understanding is grounded in the local language, allowing Islamic boarding schools to

maintain the continuity of tradition while meeting the demands of readability (Baidowi, 2020). Further strengthening comes from studies of the localization of tafsir in Javanese Islamic boarding schools, which show that works such as *Al-Ibrīz* and *Al-Iklīl* function as socio-cultural tools; The choice of language/script, examples, and narrative style ties the Qur'anic text to the realities of the community, rather than simply explaining its meaning lexically (Baidowi & Ma'rufah, 2025). Interestingly, this reading also corrects the assumption that the pesantren tradition is static, as a number of pesantren interpretations actually incorporate social responses and contextual readings; "traditional," in this sense, is more accurately understood as a living tradition that continually negotiates with changing times.

Lontara Script: The Culturalization of Bugis-Makassar Islam and the Production of Interpretations for Local Needs

The Lontara script exhibits a distinctive pattern because it is rooted in the local literacy tradition of South Sulawesi; therefore, the writing of interpretations in Lontara is more accurately understood as a process of culturalization of Islam, rather than simply a choice of language. The series of Bugis interpretations and translations recorded in the manuscript demonstrates how Islam was understood and taught through established cultural tools, so that the Qur'anic message was presented in a local idiom without losing its religious orientation. The production of trilingual (Bugis, Arabic, and Indonesian) commentaries in a number of works, interestingly, implies an audience-conscious pedagogical strategy: readers are given gradual access, from local languages to Arabic references, while remaining connected to the national language for modern needs. It is also noteworthy that the emergence of Lontara commentaries is linked to educational institutions and local networks of ulama; at this point, the script functions as a node of identity as well as a means of stabilizing religious authority within the Bugis-Makassar community. Nevertheless, Lontara faces challenges similar to those of other local scripts: limitations in reproduction, standardization, and integration with publishing and digital ecosystems, making documentation, transliteration, and translation key to sustainability. (Rahim, 1985)

Implications of the Findings: Script Diversity as Epistemic Capital, Not Fragmentation of Meaning

Comparatively, these findings point to an implication worth emphasizing: the plurality of scripts and languages in Nusantara interpretation is more appropriately read as evidence of the flexibility of Islamic scholarly traditions in responding to Indonesia's socio-cultural context, rather than as a sign of the fragmentation of revelation. Latin tends to strengthen the expansion of scholarly access and standardization; Jawi maintains the continuity of Malay-Islamic traditions; Pegon maintains the down-to-earth ecology of Islamic boarding schools; while Lontara emphasizes Islam's ability to engage in dialogue with Bugis-Makassarese identities through cultural media familiar to the community. Interestingly, these differences in media also influence how interpretations "work" in the social sphere: some are strong as educational instruments, others are dominant as public discourse, and still others emerge as bridges for local da'wah. However, a critical aspect lies in the risk of inequality of access in the digital era: Latin is relatively advantaged, while local scripts are potentially marginalized if strategies for translation, digital archiving, and literacy strengthening are not seriously prepared. Therefore, scholarly recommendations should not stop at recognizing diversity, but rather should be directed toward preservation and transformation efforts so that the entire Nusantara exegetical tradition remains present and legible in the contemporary knowledge landscape.

The findings regarding Lontara as a medium for the culturalization of Bugis-Makassar Islam align with research that maps the Bugis exegetical tradition based on local scripts as a da'wah and educational project rooted in community identity. Studies of the Bugis exegetical

tradition show that the use of the Bugis language/script extends beyond translation to influence learning strategies: who the readers are, how the teaching process takes place, and how the authority of local scholars is instilled through a medium familiar to the community (Anshar & Haddade, 2020). An article on the Tafsir Al-Munir (Bugis) demonstrates that local exegesis is often designed as a multi-level bridge (local, national, and Arabic), allowing readers to gain gradual access without having to sever ties with Arabic references (Khaerussalam et al., 2025). Consequently, Lontara's contemporary problems extend beyond reading interest to manuscript reproduction, standardization, and integration into a predominantly Latin-based digital ecosystem—a challenge that demands more focused documentation and translation policies.

Overall, the synthesis of findings leads to the conclusion that the plurality of scripts in Nusantara interpretation constitutes epistemic capital, demonstrating the adaptive power of the interpretation tradition in responding to Indonesia's diversity, not an indicator of a fragmented understanding of revelation. However, it is worth noting that the shift to digital spaces exacerbates the issue of access: expanding access can be accompanied by the risk of weakening the authority of scholars, a flood of uncurated references, and an imbalance in visibility between Latin texts and local scripts that have not been adequately digitized (Ichwan et al., 2024). At the same time, studies of the transformation of interpretation to digital platforms also demonstrate its productive side, namely the opportunity for expanded participation and independent learning, provided that the curation framework and authoritative design are clear so that interpretations do not fall into fragmented understanding (Ali & Isnaini, 2024). The implications are quite concrete: a sensible research and policy agenda is to strengthen transliteration, digital archiving, and reader literacy, so that the diversity of scripts does not cease to be a “heritage,” but remains alive as a source of knowledge that can be accessed more equitably.

E. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the diversity of scripts in Nusantara Latin, Jawi, Pegon, and Lontara interpretations is significantly intertwined with the socio-intellectual basis of the interpreters (pesantren, modern academic, and socio-cultural), so that the choice of written medium can be understood as a marker of methodological direction, target readers, as well as communication-da'wah strategies that accompany the interpretation. It is noteworthy that Latin, in general, is more prominent as a vehicle for academic-contextual interpretation that moves into a wider public space; Jawi maintains the continuity of Malay-Islamic traditions through the network of sultanates and traditional educational institutions; Pegon records the ecology of Javanese pesantren that maintains the authority of Arabic treasures while grounding local understanding; while Lontara presents the culturalization of Bugis-Makassar Islam through local literacy tools. Interestingly, these findings actually show that the plurality of languages-scripts does not fracture the unity of revelation, but rather demonstrates the flexibility of the Indonesian Islamic scholarly tradition in bridging sacred texts with socio-cultural diversity. Thus, the research objective of mapping the interpreter's basis and its linguistic-literary expression can be declared achieved. The contribution of this study lies in the affirmation of the script as an "epistemic infrastructure" of interpretation, not just a technical aspect that helps explain how the authority of knowledge, institutions, and reader communities is formed and maintained in various spaces of the archipelago. However, to make this map more robust, further studies are recommended to expand the corpus of

interpretations across regions and periods, combine document analysis with reader reception studies, and strengthen the agenda of standardized digital translation and archiving, so that the tradition of local-literate interpretation is not further marginalized in the contemporary literacy ecosystem.

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