

Potret Pemikiran

Phone: 0431-860616

Fax: 0431-850774

Email: jurnal.potretpemikiran@iain-manado.ac.id

Journal homepage: <https://journal.iain-manado.ac.id/index.php/PP>



Selective Linguistic Approach in Islamic Legal Exegesis: A Multi-Dimensional Analysis of Ali al-Shabuni's Rawai' al-Bayan on Surah An-Nur

Neli Putri*¹, Syafruddin², Yasrul Huda³, Junizar Suratman⁴

^{1,2,3,4} Universitas Islam Negeri Imam Bonjol Padang, Indonesia

*Corresponden E-mail: neliputri@uinib.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Linguistic approaches constitute fundamental methodology in Qur'anic legal verse interpretation, yet systematic analysis of their application in contemporary exegesis remains limited. This study analyzes the linguistic approach employed in Muhammad Ali al-Shabuni's Rawai' al-Bayan Tafsir Ayat Ahkam, focusing on Surah An-Nur as a case study. Employing qualitative document analysis with Yin's five-stage analytical framework, this research examined nine legal themes across Surah An-Nur, mapping linguistic dimensions against classical *lughawi* exegesis standards. Al-Shabuni employs a selective multi-dimensional linguistic methodology integrating four primary dimensions: lexical analysis (*al-tahlil al-lafzi*), syntactic analysis (*wujud al-i'rab*), morpho-phonological analysis (*wujud al-qira'at*), and rhetorical-semantic analysis (*latha'if al-tafsir*). Distribution analysis reveals lexical and rhetorical approaches appear consistently across all themes, while morphological and syntactic analyses emerge selectively where grammatically consequential for legal interpretation. This functional selectivity demonstrates pedagogical innovation rather than methodological limitation, strategically deploying linguistic analysis to illuminate legally relevant textual features. Al-Shabuni's approach exemplifies sophisticated linguistic methodology, balancing scholarly rigor with pedagogical accessibility, and offers a replicable model for contemporary Islamic legal education that maintains fidelity to classical tradition while adapting to modern educational contexts.

© 2025 Potret Pemikiran IAIN Manado

How to cite:

Putri, N., Syafruddin, S., Huda, Y., & Suratman, J. (2025). Selective linguistic approach in Islamic legal exegesis: A multi-dimensional analysis of Ali al-Shabuni's Rawai' al-Bayan on Surah An-Nur. *Potret Pemikiran*, 29(1), 129-158. <https://doi.org/10.30984/pp.v29i1.3384>

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Submitted/Received 15 Mar 2025

First Revised 20 Apr 2025

Accepted 28 May 2025

Publication Date 30 Jun 2025

Keyword:

Linguistic approach,
Islamic legal exegesis,
Rawai' al-Bayan,
Multi-dimensional analysis,
Surah An-Nur



All publications by Potret Pemikiran are licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of Qur'anic exegesis in the 20th century demonstrates significant scholarly attention to interpretive methodologies, particularly in the forms of thematic (*maudhu'i*) and linguistic (*lughawi*) exegesis. Although the typology of thematic exegesis emerged in the 14th century Hijri in its embryonic form during the era of the Prophet Muhammad (Rahmawati, 2023). The development of linguistic exegesis has deeper roots. The Prophet himself provided explanations and elaborations of words and expressions that were difficult for his companions to understand, which subsequently became the foundation for the development of *lughawi* exegesis (Mustaqim, 2019).

The linguistic approach in Qur'anic exegesis emerged from the fundamental reality that the Qur'an was revealed in the medium of the Arabic language (Mårtensson, 2022; Mustaqim, 2019). Therefore, linguistic analysis occupies a crucial position in exegesis to achieve an accurate and comprehensive interpretation (Alajlouni et al., 2025; Mu'afa, 2012). Nevertheless, verse interpretation should not rely solely on linguistic analysis, given the inherent limitations that must be considered (Husna & Fikri, 2023; Omran & Al-Shammari, 2025).

Lughawi (linguistic) exegesis represents one exegetical approach that seeks to explain Qur'anic verses through semiotic and semantic interpretation encompassing etymological, morphological, syntactic, lexical, grammatical aspects, and *balaghah* (rhetorical) studies, including the meanings of *majaz*, *kinayah*, and *lafadz gharib* (Haq & Umami, 2022; Karimah & Hasyim, 2023; Putriyani & Qalbah, 2023). Phonological aspects and *uslub* (stylistics) of verses also constitute essential components of interpretation (Atabik, 2021; Mahmoud et al., 2022; Uçar, 2024). Exegesis that predominantly emphasizes these linguistic aspects is recognized as exegesis employing a linguistic approach (Mustaqim, 2019; Sultan et al., 2025).

One thematic exegesis with a *lughawi* orientation that addresses legal verses (*ahkam*) is *Rawai' al-Bayan Tafsir Ayat al-Ahkam min Al-Quran* by Muhammad Ali al-Shabuni (1347 H/1928 CE). This exegesis has become an important reference for contemporary Islamic scholars and has contributed significantly to the field of legal verse interpretation (*fiqh*) (Demircigil, 2025). One of the exegetical approaches employed by al-Shabuni in explicating verse meanings is the linguistic approach.

Ali al-Shabuni presents his exegesis in simple and accessible language. The author demonstrates consistent attention to linguistic analysis, including explanations of lexical meaning, morphological aspects, syntax, and phonology. His presentation differs considerably from other exegetical works, adopting a pluralistic thematic format that addresses multiple themes. Badriyah (2017) characterizes this exegesis as employing a modern, plural, thematic, systematic approach. The work is concise, with clearly delineated points corresponding to each *muhadharah* title.

Rawai' al-Bayan possesses distinctive characteristics compared to other exegetical works, particularly in al-Shabuni's approach to understanding and interpreting Arabic words literally and grammatically. Al-Shabuni frequently adheres to the most fundamental linguistic meanings and employs a linguistic approach grounded in classical Arabic (Alajlouni et al., 2025). He focuses more on formal linguistic aspects,

whereas other exegetical works often provide broader or metaphorical interpretations depending on the verse context and the *fiqh* perspective adopted.

Research on Rawai' al-Bayan has been extensive, though the majority focuses on the interpretation of verses with specific themes and their exegetical methodology. Fatahillah et al. (2016) examined the interpretation of theological verses in this exegesis. Badriyah (2017) investigated Ali al-Shabuni's interpretive techniques in Tafsir Rawai' al-Bayan by presenting examples of interpretation from Surat al-Baqarah verses 222-223, though this study did not specifically examine the linguistic approach employed. Rifai (2019) investigated Ali al-Shabuni's *balaghah* approach in interpreting Surat al-Fatihah, but in the exegesis Shafwah al-Tafasir.

From the perspective of exegetical methodology, Iqbal (2022) examined the *fiqh*-oriented exegetical method of Ali al-Shabuni's Tafsir Ayat Ahkam in comparison with al-Qurtubi's exegesis. This research explains that al-Shabuni's methodology encompasses *tahlili*, thematic, and muqaran approaches, representing an integration of bi al-ma'tsur and bi al-ra'yi exegesis with a focus on legal verses (Iqbal, 2022; Razzaq & Haryono, 2017). Fahimah (2021) explains that the verse-interpretation method in Rawai' al-Bayan is clearly evident in its introduction, where he compiled exclusively verses related to legal matters and organized them thematically. Jali (2021) reveals that Rawai' al-Bayan constitutes a moderate exegesis that is not *ta'asub* (partisan) toward a single school of jurisprudence, possesses clear references, and demonstrates scholarly integrity by citing sources explicitly. This exegesis integrates classical and modern exegetical traditions and tends more toward the bi al-ma'tsur methodology.

Azizah and Romziana (2024) conducted thematic exegetical research on the beatific vision in the hereafter in al-Shabuni's exegesis by analyzing the meanings of two words 'nadhirah and nazhirah' in Surat al-Muthaffifin (QS. 83:22-23). Although this research highlights linguistic aspects of these two key terms, it does not specifically employ a linguistic approach. Setyowaty (2022) examined hadd zina according to Rawai' al-Bayan, but did not specifically analyze linguistic aspects.

In a broader context, research on linguistic exegesis has been conducted by Mustaqim (2019) on al-Farra's Ma'ani al-Quran. Studies on the role of language in legal derivation (*istinbath*) have been examined by Alajlouni et al. (2025) through analysis of al-Baydhawi's exegesis. Ali and Al-Dulaimi (2025) investigated how Rawai' al-Bayan connects Qur'anic texts with contemporary social reality, as legal verse interpretation references social, cultural, and linguistic contexts. Contextual approaches and traditions remain relevant to modern societal needs (Ali & Al-Dulaimi, 2025; Fudge, 2012; Hamim & Abdillah, 2023).

Based on the aforementioned research, it is evident that although various aspects of Rawai' al-Bayan have been examined (ranging from exegetical methodology and thematic interpretation to *fiqh* orientation) no study has systematically mapped the linguistic approach employed by al-Shabuni in this exegesis. Several research gaps have been identified:

First, although some studies mention linguistic aspects (Azizah & Romziana, 2024; Badriyah, 2017), such investigations remain sporadic and fail to comprehensively

analyze the systematically applied linguistic dimensions. Previous studies have focused more on the interpretive content of specific verses than on the holistic linguistic methodology (Khalil, 2022; Usman et al., 2015).

Second, no research has analyzed the selectivity characteristics of al-Shabuni's linguistic approach – why certain aspects are explained while others are omitted, and how this selectivity contributes to the pedagogical objectives of the exegesis (Omran & Al-Shammari, 2025; Yüksesek, 2024). Critical questions regarding how al-Shabuni integrates various linguistic dimensions (lexical, grammatical, semantic, rhetorical) within a unified exegetical framework remain inadequately addressed.

Third, research on linguistic approaches in legal verse exegesis generally examines classical exegetical works such as al-Zamakhshari or al-Baydhawi (Alajlouni et al., 2025; Yüksesek, 2024), while studies on how linguistic approaches are applied in contemporary legal verse exegesis, such as Rawai' al-Bayan, remain severely limited. Understanding the evolution of linguistic methodology from the classical to the contemporary periods is crucial for comprehending the dynamics of the development of exegetical science (Gada, 2022; Mårtensson, 2022).

Fourth, no analysis has compared al-Shabuni's linguistic approach with the eight elements of *lughawi* exegesis formulated by Ibrahim Al-Fahdawi and Awad Al-Kubaisi (2025), which encompass: (1) syntactic (*nahw*) and morphological (*sharf*) studies accompanied by *i'rab* analysis; (2) rhetorical (*balaghah*) studies and the eloquence of the Qur'an; (3) literary *i'jaz* studies; (4) explanation of *gharib* and *musykil* terms; (5) explanation of etymological roots (*isytiqaq*); (6) *qira'at* aspects and their semantic differences; (7) employment of pre-Islamic poetry; and (8) study of polysemous terms (*musyதாக*), metaphor (*majaz*), and literal meaning (*haqiqah*) (Al-Fahdawi & Al-Kubaisi, 2025; Chasuna, 2024; Karimah & Hasyim, 2023).

Based on these research gaps, this study investigates the linguistic approach employed in Rawai' al-Bayan Tafsir Ayat Ahkam, specifically focusing on Surah An-Nur as a case study. This research aims to: (1) identify and map the dimensions of the linguistic approach applied by al-Shabuni in Rawai' al-Bayan, encompassing lexical, grammatical (morphological and syntactic), semantic, phonological, and rhetorical (*balaghah*) aspects; (2) analyze the selectivity characteristics of al-Shabuni's linguistic approach by identifying patterns in the selection of explained and omitted linguistic elements, and their implications for understanding legal verses; (3) describe the concrete application of this linguistic approach to Surah An-Nur as a case study, analyzing the nine legal themes contained therein.

The study of the linguistic approach in this exegesis merits investigation for several reasons:

First, Rawai' al-Bayan possesses a unique presentational style, ranging from lexical analysis to *hikmah al-tasyri'*, distinct from other exegetical works (Yildirim, 2025). Its presentational technique enables a rapid yet comprehensive understanding of legal verses from various perspectives (Noruddin et al., 2025).

Second, Surah An-Nur was selected as the research focus because it constitutes one of the Qur'anic chapters replete with sharia law and highly relevant to social, communal, and domestic life (Khalil, 2022; Sultan et al., 2025). An in-depth analysis of

the linguistic approach in this surah can provide a useful model for understanding other legal verses.

Third, this research is expected to contribute to the development of contemporary exegetical methodology that balances academic rigor with pedagogical accessibility (Haftador & Khodaparast, 2015). Understanding how al-Shabuni integrates various linguistic dimensions can serve as a reference for developing more systematic and comprehensible legal verse exegesis.

Fourth, theoretically, this research contributes to enriching Qur'anic hermeneutics studies by demonstrating how a selective linguistic approach can produce rigorous yet accessible interpretation, a challenge frequently encountered in contemporary Islamic legal education (Demircigil, 2025; Fudge, 2012).

Consequently, this research comprehensively addresses: how is the linguistic approach manifested in *Rawai' al-Bayan* and its application specifically to Surah An-Nur as a sample? What linguistic aspects are elaborated in explaining the verses of Surah An-Nur? The analysis will employ al-Isfahani's framework of eight elements of linguistic exegesis as a baseline for identifying patterns in al-Shabuni's linguistic approach.

2. METHODS

This study constitutes library research employing a qualitative approach with descriptive-analytical methods. The qualitative approach was selected because this research aims to explore, describe, and analyze in depth the linguistic approach applied in the exegesis *Rawai' al-Bayan*, which requires interpretive understanding of the exegetical text and its interpretive context (Fudge, 2012; Yin, 2016). The descriptive-analytical method enables the researcher not only to describe the linguistic phenomenon employed but also to analyze patterns and characteristics, and their implications for understanding legal verses (Mårtensson, 2022; Yüksek, 2024).

The research data sources comprise documents, namely the work *Rawai' al-Bayan Tafsir Ayat Ahkam min al-Quran* by Muhammad Ali al-Shabuni as the primary data source. Specifically, the analytical focus is on the exegetical sections explaining Surah An-Nur, which encompasses nine *muhadharahs* (legal themes) with diverse linguistic aspects. Additionally, this research employs relevant references as secondary data sources, including classical exegetical works cited by al-Shabuni, such as those of al-Zamakhshari, al-Qurtubi, and Ibn al-'Arabi, as well as literature on linguistic exegetical methodology and Arabic linguistic sciences, such as *nahw*, *sharf*, *balaghah*, and *qira'at*. The use of secondary sources is essential for understanding the referential context al-Shabuni employed and for verifying the linguistic analysis he conducted.

Data collection techniques involved document analysis, with repeated and in-depth reading of the exegetical text *Rawai' al-Bayan*, particularly sections containing linguistic analysis (Gada, 2022; Hamim & Abdillah, 2023). The reading process was conducted systematically by identifying and recording each text segment demonstrating the application of linguistic approaches, both explicit and implicit, in sub-discussions such as *al-tahlil al-lafzi*, *wujuh al-qira'at*, *wujuh al-i'rab*, and *latha'if al-*

tafsir. The collected data were then organized by linguistic analysis type and legal theme to facilitate subsequent analytical processes.

The data analysis technique employed follows the five-stage procedure developed by Yin, which has proven effective in document-based qualitative research. The first stage is compilation, namely collecting all identified data into a database, organizing them methodologically by relevant categories, and then compiling them into smaller, more manageable data units. At this stage, the researcher organizes the data based on legal themes in Surah An-Nur, the types of linguistic approaches employed, and the exegetical sub-discussions in which linguistic analysis appears.

The second stage is disassembling, namely, deconstructing the collected data to be reorganized into groups and sequences of items constructed according to the analytical framework. At this stage, each element of linguistic analysis is separated from its original context and categorized based on corresponding linguistic dimensions, such as lexical, grammatical (morphological and syntactic), semantic, phonological, and rhetorical (*balaghah*) aspects (Alajlouni et al., 2025; Mahmoud et al., 2022; Uçar, 2024). This deconstruction and regrouping process enables the researcher to observe the distribution patterns and the frequency of each type of linguistic approach across all examined legal themes.

The third stage is reassembling (and arraying), namely, rearranging and recombining data by depicting and organizing it into various representational forms, such as lists, tables, graphs, comparative matrices, and others, that facilitate the visualization of existing patterns (Baydar, 2021; Berber Sardinha & Veirano Pinto, 2019). At this stage, categorized data are reorganized into formats that enable the identification of inter-categorical relationships, tendencies in the use of certain linguistic aspects, and selectivity characteristics in al-Shabuni's approach. The resulting tables and matrices demonstrate the presence or absence of each linguistic exegetical element across the nine analyzed legal themes, thereby revealing patterns more clearly.

The fourth stage is interpreting, namely conducting an analysis of arranged data by providing a new narrative that explains the meaning behind identified patterns. Interpretation is conducted by considering the methodological context of *Rawai' al-Bayan* exegesis, the pedagogical objectives al-Shabuni sought to achieve, and the classical linguistic exegetical tradition as a comparison (Yildirim, 2025). At this stage, the researcher addresses critical questions such as why certain linguistic aspects are explained in detail while others are omitted, how this selectivity contributes to accessibility and effectiveness of the exegesis, and what methodological implications the applied linguistic approach has for understanding legal verses.

The fifth stage is the conclusion, namely drawing conclusions from the entire research by synthesizing findings from previous stages to comprehensively answer the research questions. At this stage, the researcher formulates the characteristics of al-Shabuni's linguistic approach, identifies consistent selectivity patterns, explains how various linguistic dimensions are integrated into the overall exegetical structure, and formulates the contributions and implications of the research findings for the development of contemporary exegetical methodology (Waruwu, 2024; Yin, 2016).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Tafsir Rawai' al-Bayan: Context, Structure, and Characteristics

Muhammad Ali al-Shabuni and the Context of Exegetical Composition

The exegesis *Rawai' al-Bayan* was composed by Muhammad Ali Ibn Ali Ibn Jamil al-Shabuni, a scholar born in Aleppo, Syria, in 1347 AH/1928 CE. He received his initial formal education in Arabic language, inheritance law, and religious sciences from his father. Al-Shabuni's academic journey commenced with his education in Syria, followed by a master's degree at Al-Azhar University in Egypt, and culminated in a doctoral program in Syria. Prior to becoming a full professor, he had acquired a solid grounding in classical Islamic scholarly tradition while simultaneously being exposed to modern intellectual developments at Al-Azhar. Ali al-Shabuni subsequently became a Full Professor at the Faculty of Shari'ah and Islamic Studies, Umm al-Qura University, Mecca (Fatahilah et al., 2016).

The compositional context of this exegesis occurred during the twentieth century, a period characterized by significant scholarly attention to Qur'anic exegesis, particularly in the forms of thematic exegesis and linguistically oriented exegesis. As documented by Pink (2010) and Sirry (2016), the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of various contemporary exegetical works that endeavored to bridge classical tradition with modern societal needs. This period was also marked by the appearance of influential exegetical works such as *Tafsir al-Manar* by Muhammad Rashid Ridha, which emphasized rational approaches and *ijtihad* in understanding the Qur'an (Hamim & Abdillah, 2023), as well as *Tafsir al-Azhar* by Hamka in Indonesia, which integrated classical tradition with local social contexts (Armayanto et al., 2025). *Rawai' al-Bayan* is part of this tradition, in which al-Shabuni sought to present legal verse exegesis with a systematic yet accessible approach for contemporary readers (Abidin et al., 2024; Mujahidin et al., 2024).

As an exegesis focused on legal verses (*ayat al-ahkam*), *Rawai' al-Bayan* provides an important contribution to the development of contemporary *fiqh*-oriented exegesis. Demircigil (2025) notes that legal verse exegesis confronts methodological challenges in balancing exegetical approaches (*tafsir*) with juridical approaches (*fiqh*), which possess distinct intellectual objectives and methodologies. Al-Shabuni addressed this challenge by integrating profound linguistic analysis as a foundation for understanding the legal implications of Qur'anic verses, while maintaining a robust classical exegetical tradition (Shah, 2013).

Structure and Characteristics of Tafsir Rawai' al-Bayan

Rawai' al-Bayan comprises two volumes constituting a monumental work in the study of legal verse exegesis. This work is renowned as al-Shabuni's magnum opus, synthesizing classical scholarship with content replete with brilliant ideas and insights, while incorporating modern perspectives through its distinctive stylistic presentation, organization, and idiom (Fahimah, 2021). This exegesis integrates classical exegetical works on content and ideational frameworks with modern works on stylistic accessibility (Jali, 2021).

Examination of the *Rawai' al-Bayan* index reveals seventy principal themes concerning legal verses, with forty discussions elaborated in the first volume and thirty discussions explicated in the second volume. For each principal discussion, al-Shabuni employs the term *al-muhadharah* for classification, subsequently specifying the thematic focus of the verses. The presentation of exegesis in the form of sub-discussion titles for particular groups of legal verses demonstrates well-organized systematization. Ali al-Shabuni occasionally introduces a *muhadharah* on a particular surah with a preliminary exposition, while at other times proceeding directly to the explanatory sub-discussions.

Although this exegesis addresses legal themes, it remains inseparable from linguistic analysis. The applied linguistic approach is intended to achieve a comprehensive understanding of legal verses. Linguistic examination plays a crucial role in Qur'anic verse interpretation, as it is also implemented in other contemporary exegetical works that integrate linguistic analysis with theological and juridical interpretation (Shah, 2013; Yildirim, 2025).

Systematic Framework of Exegetical Sub-Discussions

The presentational style of this exegesis generally encompasses nine sub-discussions presented consistently, as demonstrated in the following table 1:

Table 1: Sub-Discussions in Tafsir Rawai' al-Bayan

No Sub-Discussion	Description
1 <i>Al-tahlil al-lafzi</i>	Elaboration of important and problematic vocabulary
2 <i>Al-ma'na al-ijmaliy</i>	Explanation of the global verse meaning
3 <i>Sabab al-nuzul</i>	Context of the verse revelation
4 <i>Wujud al-qira'at</i>	Variant readings: phonological and morphological
5 <i>Wujud al-i'rab</i>	Variant syntactic positions of words in verses
6 <i>Lathaif al-tafsir</i>	Mysteries of verse composition, rhetorical values, and scholarly insights
7 <i>Al-ahkam al-syar'iyah</i>	Sharia rulings in verses
8 <i>Irsyadat al-ayat</i>	Essential verse guidance
9 <i>Hikmah al-tasyri'</i>	Philosophical values underlying legislated rulings in verses

Source: Al Shabuni (1997)

This nine-part systematic framework reflects al-Shabuni's comprehensive approach to interpreting legal verses. The first four sub-discussions (*al-tahlil al-lafzi*, *wujud al-qira'at*, *wujud al-i'rab*, and *lathaif al-tafsir*) specifically relate to the linguistic approach, while the remaining sub-discussions pertain to contextual, legal, and philosophical

aspects. This structure enables readers to comprehend legal verses from multiple dimensions in a systematic and concise manner (Badriyah, 2017).

Legal Themes in Surah An-Nur

Technically, the exegetical composition employs *maudhu'i* (thematic) systematization. Generally, the number of legal verses examined in this work totals two hundred forty-eight verses distributed across twenty-one surahs. Surah An-Nur, the twenty-fourth surah in the Qur'an, constitutes the only surah commencing with the word "surah." This surah contains nine categories of legal rulings (legal themes), with each group of verses receiving an explanation in accordance with the established sub-discussions.

The themes (*maudhu'*) addressed in Surah An-Nur comprise nine *muhadharahs*, as indicated in the following table 2:

Table 2: Legal Verse Themes in Surah An-Nur

<i>Muhadharah</i>	Verses	Theme
<i>Al-muhadharah al-Ula</i>	1-3	<i>Hadd zina</i> (punishment for fornication)
<i>Al-Muhadharah al-Tsaniyah</i>	4-5	<i>Qazaf</i> (false accusation of adultery)
<i>Al-muhadharah al-Tsalitsah</i>	6-10	<i>Li'an</i> (mutual cursing/oath of condemnation)
<i>Al-Muhadharah al-Rabi'ah</i>	22-26	Punishment for slanderers (<i>al-ifk</i>)
<i>Al-muhadharah al-Khamisah</i>	27-29	Etiquette of seeking permission and visiting
<i>Al-Muhadharah al-Sadisah</i>	30-31	Hijab and looking
<i>Al-muhadharah al-Sabi'ah</i>	32-34	Encouragement of marriage and avoidance of fornication
<i>Al-Muhadharah al-Tsamimah</i>	58-59	Seeking permission at specific times
<i>Al-Muhadharah al-Tasi'ah</i>	61	Permissibility of eating at relatives' homes

Source: Al-Shabuni (1997)

The selection of Surah An-Nur as the research focus rests upon several considerations. First, this surah constitutes one of the Qur'anic chapters replete with shari'ah law and highly relevant to social, communal, and domestic life (Khalil, 2022). Second, the diversity of legal themes in this surah (encompassing nine distinct *muhadharahs*) provides sufficient variation in the data to identify patterns in al-Shabuni's linguistic approach. Third, the linguistic complexity of verses in this surah enables researchers to identify various dimensions of the linguistic approach, ranging from lexical, grammatical, and semantic to rhetorical aspects. Fourth, the surah's

adequate length of sixty-four verses renders it neither excessively lengthy for in-depth analysis nor insufficiently comprehensive to yield representative findings concerning the characteristics of al-Shabuni's linguistic approach.

The Linguistic Approach Framework in Tafsir Rawai' al-Bayan

Linguistic Exegesis Methodology: Classical Perspectives

Methodologically, the product of linguistic exegesis, explicating the meaning of a Qur'anic word, is achieved through several approaches. First, explicating the meaning of a vocabulary item without explaining its argumentation, from where that meaning is derived, whether from Arabic discourse, poetry, or Arabic prose. Second, explicating the meaning of a verse by providing opinions derived from pre-Islamic poetry or existing prose. Mustaqim adds a third approach, namely through detailed (*tahlili*) interpretation to obtain the intended meaning of the verse, although this sometimes results in the main message appearing to be overlooked (Chasuna, 2024; Mustaqim, 2019).

Quraish Shihab explains that *lughawi* exegesis constitutes a linguistic exegetical method encompassing the study of idiom (*uslub*) and Arabic linguistic principles (Shihab, 2007). *Lughawi* exegesis predominantly provides linguistic explanations encompassing word meanings, their origins, syntactic functions in sentences (*i'rab*), employed idioms, and discussions of linguistic schools such as the Kufan and Basran schools. In the context of legal verse exegesis, the linguistic approach assumes critical importance because legal determinations frequently depend upon an accurate understanding of the lexical meaning and grammatical structure of verses (Al-Fahdawi & Al-Kubaisi, 2025; Alajlouni et al., 2025).

The role of language in legal derivation (*istinbath*) has long been recognized in Islamic scholarly tradition. Alajlouni et al. (2025) demonstrate that language functions as one of the tools of *tarjih* (determining the stronger opinion) in juridical reasoning, although its utilization may be relatively limited compared to other forms of evidence. Similarly, Ibrahim Al-Fahdawi and Awad Al-Kubaisi (2025) emphasize the importance of understanding semantic and rhetorical issues in legal interpretation, particularly concerning general expressions (*'aam*) in *usul al-fiqh*. Profound comprehension of these linguistic dimensions constitutes a prerequisite for producing accurate and comprehensive legal interpretation.

Eight Elements of Lughawi Exegesis as Baseline

More comprehensively, al-Dhahabi (2000) explicates that there exist eight elements of *lughawi* exegetical study formulated within classical tradition. First, syntactic (*nahw*) and morphological (*sharf*) analysis are typically accompanied by an *i'rab* explication of the words under discussion. Second, the rhetorical (*balaghah*) study and the eloquence (*fashahah*) of the Qur'an reveal the beauty of language and elevated rhetorical style. Third, literary inimitability (*i'jaz*) and *balaghah* study of the Qur'an, demonstrating the miraculous nature of the Qur'an from linguistic aspects. Fourth, an explanation of rare (*gharib*) and problematic (*musykil*) words that prove difficult to comprehend without specialized linguistic references. Fifth, explanation of Arabic etymological roots (*isytiqaq*) and loanwords from non-Arabic languages, providing etymological understanding. Sixth, aspects of variant readings (*qira'at*) of verses and their semantic

differences demonstrate how reading variations carry different semantic implications. Seventh, utilization of pre-Islamic poetry (*syi'ir jahili*) in understanding word meanings in verses, functioning as evidence of classical Arabic usage. Eighth, study of polysemous terms (*musytarak*), including semantic aspects (*syi'ir jahili*), metaphor (*majaz*), and literal meaning (*haqiqah*), distinguishing between literal and metaphorical meanings (Al-Dhahabi, 2000; Chasuna, 2024; Karimah & Hasyim, 2023).

These eight elements have become standards within classical *lughawi* exegetical tradition and have been employed by prominent exegetes throughout history. However, in practice, not all exegetical works apply these eight elements comprehensively. As demonstrated by Mårtensson (2022), significant variation exists in how exegetes integrate linguistic theory into their exegetical works, often influenced by methodological objectives and the historical context of composition. Similarly, Ali and Al-Dulaimi (2025) demonstrate that semantic shift and meaning specification in different contexts constitute phenomena that must be considered in the linguistic analysis of religious texts.

Within the context of legal verse exegesis, the selective application of these linguistic elements is an important methodological issue. Omran and Al-Shammari (2025) caution against the dangers of selective interpretation, which can lead to bias and deviation from divine intent, as interpreters tend to select evidence based on sectarian, doctrinal, or political considerations. Therefore, a clear understanding of the employed linguistic framework becomes essential for assessing the objectivity and methodological consistency of an exegetical work.

The Linguistic Approach in Rawai' al-Bayan: Four Primary Dimensions

The foregoing explanation indicates that the exegesis *Rawai' al-Bayan: Tafsir Ayat Ahkam min Al-Quran* is categorized as a *lughawi* exegesis, or one employing a linguistic approach. Of the eight aspects of exegetical study with the aforementioned linguistic approach, these aspects serve as the foundation for analysis in this research.

The linguistic approach presented in the exegesis *Rawai' al-Bayan* is found in four principal sub-discussions. First, lexical word analysis (*al-tahlil al-lafzi*) explicating the meanings of key terms both linguistically and terminologically. Second, explication of idiom (*uslub*), rhetoric (*balaghah*), and semantics in the sub-discussion *latha'if al-tafsir*, revealing the mysteries of verse composition and rhetorical values. Third, variant verse readings (*wujud qira'at*) explaining phonological and morphological variations along with their semantic implications. Fourth, variant syntactic positions of words in verses (*wujud i'rab*) analyze syntactic aspects and grammatical relationships among words in sentences (Haq & Umami, 2022; Sultan et al., 2025).

The characteristics of al-Shabuni's linguistic approach in *Rawai' al-Bayan* demonstrate strategic selectivity. Unlike classical *lughawi* exegesis, which tends toward comprehensiveness in explicating all linguistic aspects of every word in a verse, al-Shabuni adopts a functional approach by explicating only those linguistic elements relevant to legal understanding. This selectivity does not signify disregard for the importance of profound linguistic analysis; rather, it reflects pedagogical

objectives to render legal verse exegesis more accessible without diminishing its academic depth (Haftador & Khodaparast, 2015).

The integration of these four linguistic dimensions within the exegetical sub-discussion structure demonstrates al-Shabuni's methodological awareness of the central role of language in understanding legal verses. As explained by Karimah and Hasyim (2023), the dynamics of *lughawi* methodology in interpretation involve not merely literal textual comprehension but also appreciation of semantic nuances, grammatical structures, and rhetorical functions, all of which contribute to comprehensive understanding of verse intent. This multi-dimensional approach enables al-Shabuni to provide rigorous yet practical interpretation that remains comprehensible to contemporary readers.

Multi-Dimensional Mapping of the Linguistic Approach in Surah An-Nur

Distribution of Linguistic Aspects Across Nine Legal Themes

Surah An-Nur, the twenty-fourth surah in the Qur'an, is one of the surahs commencing with the word "surah" and contains nine categories of legal rulings (legal themes), with each group of verses receiving explanation within the established sub-discussions. Based on an examination of Rawai' al-Bayan, the data reveal that the linguistic approach applied in this exegesis generally encompasses several principal aspects, not all of which appear in every legal theme.

The lexical approach is evident in the sub-discussion *al-tahlil al-lafz*, namely, the revealing of the meanings of particular words. Lexical analysis is not performed on all the vocabulary present in the verses. The researcher observes that al-Shabuni provides explanations only of lexical items considered key terms and important to elucidate because they possess potential alternative meanings or because such terms pose comprehension problems. Lexical or word explanation is conducted both linguistically and terminologically, presenting the opinions of preceding exegetes (Khalil, 2022). In the context of legal verse exegesis, the selection of key terms for in-depth analysis reflects awareness of the importance of linguistic precision in legal derivation (Usman et al., 2015).

The syntactic approach constitutes a principal characteristic of al-Shabuni's linguistic approach. He interprets legal verses by, among other methods, first elaborating the position of a word in a sentence and inter-word relationships within sentences (verses). Ali al-Shabuni explicates several variations in the syntactic function of a word in a sentence, resulting in diverse verse interpretations, although these differences sometimes strengthen verse comprehension. Minor alterations in sentence structure can significantly impact legal interpretation (Alajlouni et al., 2025).

The morphological approach concerns word-form changes, which influence word meaning. Arabic words are highly diverse; a single word can change meaning when its form (*shighat*) changes (Al-Samarra'i, 2000). Al-Shabuni provides explanations of key terms deemed important. He also explicates semantic differences and their impact on the legal rulings contained in verses. The morphological approach is understood from the aspect of *wujuh al-qira'at*. Reading diversity causes differences in vocalization (*harkat*), form (*shighat*), and pattern (*wazan*). Reading diversity influences word meaning and resultant legal implications (Noruddin et al., 2025).

The *balaghah* (rhetorical) approach is employed to demonstrate that the Qur'an possesses linguistic beauty and elevated rhetorical style, such as the use of *isti'arah* (metaphorical extension), *tasybih* (simile), *majaz* (metaphor), *taukid* (emphasis), *taqdim*, and *ta'khir* (fronting and backing). *Balaghah* analysis emphasizes the importance of understanding linguistic style (*uslub*) in conveying the message of legal verses. This explication demonstrates that the idiom and linguistic structure of Qur'anic verses are elegant, semantically rich, and capable of strengthening legal argumentation (Atabik, 2021; Uçar, 2024).

The semantic approach is employed to explicate the meaning of legal verses by explaining their lexical and contextual meanings. Lexical explanation constitutes the key term, yet it must consider the verse context and background so that the intended meaning is conveyed. Understanding semantic aspects closely relates to *dilalah* (signification), including *dilalah sharfiyah nahwiyah* (morphological and syntactic semantics), *lafziyah* (lexical semantics), contextual and customary (*haliyah and 'urf*), as well as *mu'jamiyah* (lexicographic) (Ali & Al-Dulaimi, 2025; Mårtensson, 2022).

The phonological approach in this exegesis is evident in the presentation of *wujuh al-qira'at*. The exegesis *Rawai' al-Bayan* presents several differences among the *imam qurra'* (reading authorities) in reading a single word. Different readings can occasionally affect the meaning they convey. Reading differences lead to diversity in verse rulings, which may constitute options as long as they remain within the bounds of *imam qurra'* (reading authorities) opinions.

Selectivity Patterns in Linguistic Aspect Application

Based on examination of thematic verses in Surah An-Nur explicating their linguistic approach, it was found that the applied linguistic aspects encompass several dimensions, as indicated in the following table 3:

Table 3: Linguistic Approaches to Legal Verse Themes in Surah An-Nur

Theme	Linguistic Approach
<i>Hadd zina</i> (fornication punishment)	Lexical, <i>balaghah</i> , semantic, grammatical (morphological, syntactic)
<i>Qazaf</i> (false accusation)	Lexical, <i>balaghah</i>
<i>Li'an</i> (mutual cursing)	Lexical, <i>balaghah</i> , semantic, morpho-phonological, syntactic
Punishment for slanderers (<i>ifk</i>)	Lexical and grammatical (morpho-phonological)
Etiquette of seeking permission and visiting	Lexical, <i>balaghah</i> , semantic
Hijab and looking	Lexical, <i>balaghah</i> , semantic

Theme	Linguistic Approach
Encouragement of marriage and avoidance of fornication	Lexical, <i>balaghah</i> , semantic
Seeking permission at specific times (privacy)	Lexical, <i>balaghah</i> , semantic
Permissibility of eating at relatives' homes	Lexical, morpho-phonological, syntactic, semantic

Source: Authors' analysis based on Al-Shabuni (1997)

The above table demonstrates that the linguistic approach in Surah An-Nur across the sub-discussions does not comprehensively encompass all eight elements of linguistic exegesis. This selectivity pattern reflects al-Shabuni's methodological strategy in balancing analytical depth with pedagogical efficiency. As explained by Omran and Al-Shammari (2025), selectivity in interpretation must be distinguished between biased selectivity and functional selectivity. In the case of *Rawai' al-Bayan*, the applied selectivity is functional, namely selecting linguistic aspects most relevant to legal understanding without abandoning objectivity.

The distribution of linguistic aspects shows that lexical and *balaghah* aspects constitute the two dimensions that appear most consistently across nearly all legal themes. This indicates that al-Shabuni considers understanding key term meanings and appreciation of Qur'anic rhetorical style as essential foundations in interpreting legal verses. Meanwhile, morpho-phonological and syntactic aspects appear selectively, particularly in themes where *qira'at* variations or grammatical structures possess direct implications for legal interpretation.

Characteristics of Linguistic Dimension Integration

The integration of the linguistic dimension in *Rawai' al-Bayan* demonstrates a systematic yet flexible approach. Al-Shabuni does not follow a rigid formula in applying linguistic analysis, but rather adjusts the depth and scope of the analysis based on the verse's complexity and the legal understanding requirements. This approach aligns with Arabic *balaghah* principles, emphasizing congruence between context and expression (*maqam and kalam*) (Uçar, 2024).

This multidimensional integration also reflects al-Shabuni's understanding of the Arabic language and the Qur'an as dynamic. As demonstrated by Mårtensson (2022), linguistic theory in exegesis developed from the understanding that meaning depends on context. Al-Shabuni applies this principle by integrating lexical analysis (basic word meaning), grammatical analysis (sentence structure), semantic analysis (contextual meaning), and rhetorical analysis (communicative function) to produce a comprehensive interpretation.

This approach also avoids the pitfall identified by Omran and Al-Shammari (2025), namely the tendency to select linguistic evidence supporting predetermined opinions. By presenting various *wujuh al-i'rab* and *wujuh al-qira'at* from diverse classical

authorities, al-Shabuni provides space for legitimate interpretive diversity while maintaining rigorous methodological standards (Yildirim, 2025).

Furthermore, the integration of linguistic dimensions in *Rawai' al-Bayan* demonstrates awareness of the central role of language in Islamic legal derivation. As explained by Alajlouni et al. (2025), language functions as a tool of *tarjih* in *istinbath* (legal derivation), although its utilization must be based on established grammatical authority rather than independent linguistic judgment. Al-Shabuni consistently cites classical authorities such as al-Zamakhshari, al-Qurtubi, and the imam of *nahw* (grammar) authorities in his linguistic analysis, thereby maintaining the credibility and objectivity of his interpretation.

Application of the Linguistic Approach: Concrete Analysis

This sub-discussion presents concrete examples of the application of the linguistic approach in the exegesis *Rawai' al-Bayan* on Surah An-Nur, encompassing four principal dimensions: lexical, grammatical (syntactic and morphological), semantic-rhetorical (*balaghah*), and phonological.

Lexical Approach: *Al-tahlil al-lafziy*

Vocabulary explanation in verses is essential because Arabic words exhibit phenomena of synonymy (*taraduf*), antonymy (*tudhad*), and polysemy (*musytarak*), such as the word *فُرُؤٌ*, which has contradictory meanings: purity and menstruation (Nisa et al., 2025; Yasin & Ahmad, 2021). In lexical analysis, this exegesis does not explicate all words in verses. In Surah An-Nur verses 1-3 concerning the theme of *hadd zina* (fornication punishment), Ali al-Shabuni explicates only thirteen words: *سُورَةٌ، أَنْزَلْنَاهَا، وَفَرَضْنَاهَا، آيَاتٍ، تَذَكَّرُونَ، فَاجْلِدُوا، رَأْفَةً، الزَّانِيَةَ وَالزَّانِيَ، بَيْنَ، طَائِفَةٍ، لَا يَكْفُحُ، مُشْرِكَةٌ، وَحَرَّمَ ذَلِكَ*. This exegesis explicates only key terms considered likely to generate misunderstanding in verse comprehension. In word-meaning explanations, explication occurs both linguistically and terminologically, occasionally employing synonyms (*taraduf*) (Sultan et al., 2025).

The following exemplifies lexical explication in verses:

سُورَةٌ: السُّورَةُ فِي اللُّغَةِ مَعْنَاهَا الْمُنزَلَةُ السَّامِيَّةُ وَالْمَكَانَةُ الرَّفِيعَةُ، قَالَ النَّابِغَةُ: "أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَعْطَاكَ سُورَةً: تَرَى كُلَّ مَلِكٍ دُونَهَا يَتَذَبَّدُ" وَهِيَ فِي الْإِصْطِلَاحِ: مَجْمُوعَةٌ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ الْكَرِيمَةِ لَهَا بَدْءٌ وَنِهَائَةٌ كَسُورَةِ الْكُوفْرِ، وَسُمِّيَتْ (سُورَةً) لِشَرَفِهَا وَارْتِفَاعِهَا، كَمَا يُسَمَّى السُّورُ لِلْمُرْتَفِعِ مِنَ الْجِدَارِ.

The word "*surah*" is explicated linguistically and reinforced with an example from poetic verse. Subsequently, the terminological meaning is explained, accompanied by an explication of why it is designated "*surah*."

أَنْزَلْنَاهَا: الْمُرَادُ أَوْحَيْنَا بِهَا إِلَيْكَ يَا مُحَمَّدٌ. وَلَعَلَّ السِّرَّ فِي التَّعْبِيرِ بِالْإِنْزَالِ الَّذِي يُشْعِرُ بِالنُّزُولِ مِنَ الْعُلُوِّ هُوَ الْإِشَارَةُ إِلَى أَنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى لَا مِنْ تَأْلِيفِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا زَعَمَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ

He explains the word "*anzalna*" using its contextual synonym, "*auhaina*." He presents the mystery of Qur'anic expression by employing the word "*anzala*," which signals that the Qur'an descended from Allah the Most High, not composed by Muhammad, as alleged by polytheists. Such semantic explication demonstrates al-Shabuni's

awareness of the semantic nuances contained in the selection of particular terms (Ali & Al-Dulaimi, 2025).

In the following lexical analysis:

وَفَرَضْنَاهَا: أَيِ أَوْجَبْنَا مَا فِيهَا مِنَ الْأَحْكَامِ إِبْجَابًا قَطْعِيًّا، وَأَصْلُ الْفَرْضِ قَطْعُ الشَّيْءِ الصُّلْبِ وَالتَّأْيِيرُ فِيهِ وَالْمُرَادُ بِهِ هُنَا الْإِجَابُ عَلَى أْتَمِّ وَجْهِ، وَفِي ذِكْرِ ذَلِكَ بَرَاعَةٌ اسْتِهْلَالٍ عَلَى مَا قِيلَ، وَفِرَى بِالتَّشْدِيدِ فَرَضْنَاهَا، لِلْمُبَالَغَةِ، وَالتَّأْيِيدِ الْإِجَابِ، وَلِتَعْدُدِ الْفَرَائِضَ وَكَثْرَتِهَا.

The word "*faradnaaha*" is explicated through its synonym "*awjabnaa*," then providing etymological explication of the root "*fardh*." Subsequently, he explicates the *qira'at* element, namely the difference in reading "*faradhnaa*" with tashdid on the letter *ra'* (*farradhnaa*). The provision of tashdid adds meaning with the purpose of *mubalaghah* (indicating extreme importance) and *ta'kid* (emphasis). The addition of *tashdid* indicates the addition of an identical letter, thereby affecting meaning, as explained by al-Rajihi in his work (Al Rajihi, 2010). Thus, in this verse context, "*farradhnaha*" signifies truly (extremely) obligated while indicating numerous obligations. This verse affirms that Allah has truly obligated, requiring human seriousness in the execution of His commands and laws. This word explication encompasses morphological elaboration and *balaghah* elements.

In another presentation, lexical analysis also explicates word forms from singular and plural perspectives and their meanings, as exemplified below:

آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ (الآيَاتُ جَمْعٌ) آيَةٌ (وَهِيَ قَدْ تَرَدُّ بِمَعْنَى الْآيَةِ الْقُرْآنِيَّةِ، وَقَدْ تَرَدُّ بِمَعْنَى الْعَلَامَةِ، أَوِ الشَّاهِدِ عَلَى الْقُدْرَةِ الْإِلَهِيَّةِ، مِثْلُ قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى): وَآيَةٌ لَهُمُ اللَّيْلُ نَسَلَخُ مِنْهُ النَّهَارَ (وَقَوْلِهِ) وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ الْجَوَارِ فِي الْبَحْرِ كَالْأَعْلَامِ (وَقَوْلُ الشَّاعِرِ: وَفِي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ لَهُ آيَةٌ تَدُلُّ عَلَى أَنَّهُ وَاحِدٌ وَمَعْنَى) بَيِّنَاتٍ (أَيِ وَاصِحَاتٍ

Thus, in the *tahlil lafziy* sub-discussion, this exegesis indirectly provides readers with a rich treasury of linguistic knowledge. The exegete provides varied, at times comprehensive, lexical analysis (Mahmoud et al., 2022).

Lexical analysis aspects, as exemplified above, already address semantic aspects, revealing lexical meaning. Contextual meaning explication is found in its scholarly aspects (*latha'if tafsir*), such as in explicating why the word "*al-zaniah*" is fronted by Allah in verse 2 of Surah An-Nur:

الرَّانِيَّةِ وَالرَّانِي: الرِّئِيَّةُ فِي اللُّغَةِ: الْوَطْءُ الْمُحَرَّمُ، وَفِي الشَّرْحِ: وَطْءُ الرَّجُلِ الْمَرْأَةَ فِي الْفَرْجِ مِنْ غَيْرِ نِكَاحٍ وَلَا شُبْهَةٍ نِكَاحٍ (وَيُسَمَّى الْفَاحِشَةَ

اللطيفة الخامسة: فإن قيل: بما الحكمه في أن يبدأ الله في الرئی بالمراة وفي السرقة بالرجل؟ فالجواب أن الرئی من المرأة أقبح، وجرمه أشنع، لما يترتب عليه من تلطيخ فراش الرجل وفساد الأنساب وإلحاق العار بالعشيرة ثم الفضيحة بالنسبة للمرأة) بالحمل (تكون أظهر وأدوم فلهذا كان تقديمها على الرجل

قال الفرطبي: فدمت الرانیه في هذه الآية، من حيث كان في ذلك الزمان زنى النساء فاش وكان الإماء العرب وبغايا الوقت رايات وكُنَّ مجاهرات بذلك

Factually, the adverse consequences of fornication are predominantly experienced by women, defiling honor and corrupting lineage, bringing familial disgrace through pregnancy. Fornication's impact remains clearly visible and ineradicable, unlike for men. This explains why the word *pezina* (female fornicator) is mentioned first or fronted in verse articulation. This demonstrates emphasis from Allah that fornication constitutes an abominable act with particularly severe consequences for women.

According to al-Qurtubi's contextual interpretation, the fronting of "*zaniyah*" in the verse occurred because at the time of revelation, female fornication was rampant, and Arab slave girls and contemporary prostitutes openly displayed this practice. Such contextual semantic analysis demonstrates integration between linguistic and historical-sociological understanding (Mårtensson, 2022).

Grammatical Approach: Syntax and Morphology

Syntactic Approach (Wujuh al-I'rab)

This exegesis does not explicate the *i'rab* of all words in verses, but provides explication for words potentially leading to diverse verse meanings and intentions as well as intended verse emphasis. Theoretically, syntactic and *balaghah* studies also explain that the intention and purpose of fronting a word in its composition is to provide emphasis (Mansyur & Kustiwan, 2002), as in the chapters on *taqdim* and *ta'khir*, *qashr*, *nakirah*, *ma'rifah*, and *hazaf*.

I'rab word explication in this exegesis also relies upon preceding exegetical works. The researcher observes that Ali al-Shabuni's exegesis does not demonstrate partisan alignment with any particular opinion. He appears to adopt a moderate and objective stance in presenting the opinions of preceding scholars and exegetes (Yildirim, 2025).

As a sample:

قَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى (سُورَةٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهَا (سُورَةٌ خَيْرٌ مُبْتَدَأٌ مَحْدُوفٌ تَقْدِيرُهُ: هَذِهِ سُورَةٌ، وَإِنَّمَا قَدَرْنَا ذَلِكَ لِأَنَّهَا نَكْرَةٌ، وَالْمَشْهُورُ عِنْدَ "عُلَمَاءِ النَّحْوِ أَنَّهُ لَا يَجُوزُ الْإِبْتِدَاءُ بِالنَّكْرَةِ كَمَا قَالَ ابْنُ مَالِكٍ "وَلَا يَجُوزُ الْإِبْتِدَاءُ بِالنَّكْرَةِ مَا لَمْ تُفَدَّ كَعِنْدِ زَيْدٍ نَمِرَةٌ

وَجَوَزَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَنْ تَكُونَ مُبْتَدَأً لِأَنَّهَا مَوْصُوفَةٌ بِجُمْلَةٍ (أَنْزَلْنَاهَا (وَهُوَ رَأْيِي) الْأَخْفَشُ (قَالَ الْفَرَطِيُّ وَيَحْتَمِلُ أَنْ يَكُونَ قَوْلُهُ) سُورَةٌ (إِبْتِدَاءً وَمَا بَعْدَهَا صِفَةٌ لَهَا أَخْرَجَتْهَا عَنْ حِدِّ النَّكْرَةِ الْمَحْضَةِ فَحَسَنَ الْإِبْتِدَاءُ لِذَلِكَ

وَيَرَى (الزَّمْخَشَرِيُّ (أَنَّهُ يَجُوزُ أَنْ تَكُونَ مُبْتَدَأً مَوْصُوفًا وَالْخَبَرُ مَحْدُوفٌ تَقْدِيرُهُ فِيمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ سُورَةٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهَا وَقَدْ رَدَّ الْعَلَامَةُ (أَبُو السُّعُودِ (هَذَا الرَّأْيِ وَقَالَ وَأَمَّا كَوْنُهَا مُبْتَدَأً مَحْدُوفٌ الْخَبَرِ عَلَى أَنْ يَكُونَ التَّقْدِيرُ (فِيمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ سُورَةٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهَا (إِلخ) فَيَأْبَاهُ أَنْ مُفْتَضَى الْمَقَامِ بَيَانُ شَأْنِ هَذِهِ السُّورَةِ الْكَرِيمَةِ لَا أَنْ فِي جُمْلَةٍ مَا أَوْحِيَ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ سُورَةٌ شَأْنُهَا كَذَا وَكَذَا. وَحَمَلَهَا عَلَى السُّورَةِ الْكَرِيمَةِ بِمَعُونَةِ الْمَقَامِ يُؤْهِمُ أَنْ غَيْرَهَا مِنَ السُّورِ الْكَرِيمَةِ لَيْسَتْ عَلَى تِلْكَ الصِّفَاتِ

أَنْزَلْنَاهَا: الْجُمْلَةُ مِنَ الْفِعْلِ وَالْفَاعِلِ فِي مَحَلِّ رَفْعٍ (لِأَنَّ الْجُمْلَةَ مِنْ بَعْدِ النَّكْرَاتِ صِفَاتٌ

In this sub-discussion, Ali al-Shabuni presents the opinions of several nahw scholars, despite their differing views. His explication references several exegetical works, including al-Zamakhshari, al-Anbari, Abi al-Su'ud, and al-Qurtubi. Explication concerning *i'rab* aspects remains limited to problematic verses and sentences prominent among exegetes and Arabic linguists (Alajlouni et al., 2025).

I'rab constitutes an essential component in sentence composition. A word's syntactic function is determined by its *i'rab*: *raf'*, *nasb*, *jazm*, and *khafdh*. Erroneous *i'rab* can distort meaning. It is stated that if word *i'rab* is correct, then meaning will be correct (صَحَّ الْإِعْرَابُ صَحَّ الْمَعْنَى). Nahwu (science of *i'rab*) comprises principles regulating Arabic sentence structure, word function in sentences, and inter-element relationships in sentences (Ghulayaini, 1987).

For example, the word سُورَةٌ at the beginning of Surah An-Nur, there exists an explication that this word form is *nakirah* (indefinite), thus its *i'rab* functions as *khabar mubtada'* *mahzuz* (predicate of an omitted subject). However, other scholars opine that the word "*surah*" may function as *mubtada'* (subject) despite being *nakirah* because it is qualified by the subsequent clause, with its *khabar* omitted. The word "*anzalnaaha*" becomes a descriptive attribute (*sifat*) of "*surah*" because syntactically, when a clause (*al-jumlah*) follows an indefinite word, it functions as a descriptive attribute.

The word choice in the "*nakirah*" form of سُورَةٌ conveys *tafkhim* (magnification), demonstrating grandeur; namely, this *surah* possesses importance and elevated status. *Nahwu* aspects are occasionally revealed in the *wujuh qira'at* sub-discussion, such as:

قَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى (الزَّانِيَةُ وَالزَّانِي) (قَرَأَ الْجُمُحُورُ بِالرَّفْعِ وَفُرِيَ بِالنَّصْبِ) (الزَّانِيَةُ وَالزَّانِيَةُ) (وَأَخْتَارَ الْخَلِيلُ وَسَبَّيْبِيُّهُ الرَّفْعَ اخْتِيَارَ الْأَكْثَرِينَ قَالِ الرَّجَاجُ: وَالرَّفْعُ أَقْوَى فِي الْعَرَبِيَّةِ لِأَنَّ مَعْنَاهُ: مَنْ زَنَى فَاجْلِدُوهُ فَتَأْوِيلُهُ الْإِبْتِدَاءُ وَيَجُوزُ النَّصْبُ عَلَى مَعْنَى: اجْلِدُوا الزَّانِيَةَ).

The majority reads the final vocalization of "*al-zaniyah*" with *nasb* and *raf'*, whereas al-Khalil and Sibawayh read it with *raf'* as do most others. Reading with *raf'* is stronger in Arabic because its meaning is "whoever commits fornication, flog them," its interpretation being a nominal sentence. Reading with *nasb* is permissible with the meaning "flog the female fornicator." Philosophy of *nahwu* states that *raf'* indicates a higher status consistent with the meaning of "*rafu'*," whereas *dhammah* constitutes the strongest vocalic phoneme (Gheibi, 2019; Hadi, 2020; Jawwad, 1968).

Another example:

اسْتَدَلَّ أَهْلُ الظَّاهِرِ عَلَى الْجَمْعِ بَيْنَ الْجُلْدِ وَالرَّجْمِ بِمَا يَلِي: أ - الْعُمُومُ الْوَارِدُ فِي الْآيَةِ الْكَرِيمَةِ (الزَّانِيَةُ وَالزَّانِي) (فَإِنَّ (أَل) (لِلْجِنْسِ وَالْعُمُومِ، فَيَشْمَلُ جَمِيعَ الرُّنَاةِ وَجَاءَتِ السُّنَّةُ بِزِيَادَةِ حُكْمٍ فِي حَقِّ الْمُحْصَنِ وَهُوَ الرَّجْمُ فَيُرَادُ عَلَى الْجُلْدِ).

In explicating legal rulings (*tashri'*) in verses, Ali al-Shabuni also presents views from various schools, such as among ahl al-Zahiriyy. They also explicate from linguistic aspects (syntactically) that the "*alif lam*" in the word *al-zaniyah* constitutes *alif lam li al-jins* (generic) and general, thus encompassing all female fornicators, whether married or virgin, free or enslaved. However, for *muhshan* (married women), the stoning punishment is added to flogging. Based on this, the ahl al-Zahiri school combines two punishments (flogging and stoning) for fornication perpetrators (*muhshan*) (Al-Fahdawi & Al-Kubaisi, 2025).

Morphological Approach

Morphological aspect study in this exegesis is not found in a separate sub-discussion or section as with syntax. However, it occasionally appears in the *tahlil lafzy*, *wujuh i'rab*, and *wujuh qira'at* sections. This demonstrates that morphology cannot be separated from syntax on the one hand. It is even stated that morphology (*ilm sharf*) constitutes the mother of knowledge, and syntax the father, expressed as *الصَّرْفُ أُمُّ الْعُلُومِ وَالنَّحْوُ أَبُوهَا* (Elbanjari & Rachman, 2024).

Morphological and syntactic knowledge plays a crucial role in understanding Qur'anic verses. These two sciences even constitute prerequisites for those who would interpret the Qur'an (Al Syirbasyi, 1962; Al Zarqani, 1999; Shihab, 2015), as also stated by Nasrullah and Jamroh (2025).

Example of morphological analysis application:

تَذَكَّرُونَ: مُضَارِعٌ حُذِفَ مِنْهُ إِحْدَى النَّاعَيْنِ وَأَصْلُهَا تَتَذَكَّرُونَ. وَمَعْنَى التَّذَكُّرِ أَنْ يُعَادَ إِلَى الدَّائِرَةِ الشَّيْءِ الَّذِي غَابَ عَنْهَا، وَالْمُرَادُ بِهِ هُنَا الْإِتْعَاطُ وَالْإِعْتِبَارُ أَي (لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْتَبِرُونَ وَتَتَّعِظُونَ)

The word "tazakkarun" constitutes a present tense verb (*fi'il mudhari'*) that underwent deletion of one letter, namely the letter 'ta' (originally: تَتَذَكَّرُونَ). Another example:

أَوَّلًا - قَرَأَ الْجُمُهُورُ (بِالْبِنَاءِ لِلْمَعْلُومِ، وَقَرَأَ سَعِيدُ بْنُ جُبَيْرٍ، وَأَبُو الْعَالِيَةِ) مُلَكَّتُمْ (بِضَمِّ الْمِيمِ وَتَشْدِيدِ اللَّامِ مَعَ كَسْرِهَا بِالْبِنَاءِ لِلْمَجْهُولِ

The above explanation indicates that the word "malaktum" in An-Nur verse 61 is read in active voice (*bina' ma'lum*) according to the majority reading and Sa'id ibn Jubayr. Meanwhile, Abu al-'Aliyah reads it as "mulliktum" in passive voice (*bina' majhul*). Both readings encounter no objection, meaning both *qira'at* forms are permissible without altering meaning. *Qira'at* differences in morpho-phonological terms change the word, but in this verse context, the word's meaning remains identical.

Another example:

قَرَأَ الْجُمُهُورُ) أَنْ يُؤْتُوا (وَقَرَأَ أَبُو حَيَوَةَ) أَنْ تُؤْتُوا (بِنَاءِ الْخُطَابِ عَلَى طَرِيقِ الْإِنْفَاتِ
قَوْلُهُ) وَلْيَعْفُوا وَلْيَصْفَحُوا (قِرَاءَةُ الْجُمُهورِ بِالْيَاءِ، وَقَرَأَ الْحَسَنُ وَسُفْيَانُ بْنُ الْحُسَيْنِ) وَلْتَعْفُوا وَلْتَصْفَحُوا (بِنَاءِ الْخُطَابِ
عَلَى وَفْقِ قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى) أَلَا تُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ) (النور 22)

The present-tense verb in third-person plural may be read in second-person plural through *iltifat* (shifting), as known in the science of *balaghah*. Similarly, "*liya'fu* and *liyashfahu*" may be read in the present tense, second-person plural, "*lita'fuu wa litashfahu*," to correspond with Allah's subsequent statement, "do you not desire that Allah forgive you?" This phenomenon does not alter the meaning despite the shift through pronoun substitution (Atabik, 2021).

Reading differences (*qira'at*) occasionally do not produce semantic differences and occasionally have implications for interpretation and generate differences in legal derivation. Another example: the word مُحْصَنَاتٍ in verse 4 is the plural form of مُحْصَنَةٌ, with fathah vocalization on the letter nun in the passive participle, yet it conveys the meaning of the active participle (Al Farmawi, 1980; Ghulayaini, 1987). The word "*muhshanat*" signifies women who guard themselves (chaste/'*afifah*).

Semantic and Rhetorical Approach (Balaghah)

In this exegesis, the *balaghah* aspect explication occasionally appears in the scholarly study section, and occasionally in lexical explication. Example:

الطَّيْفَةُ الثَّانِيَةُ: تَكَرُّيرُ لَفْظٍ (فِي قَوْلِهِ) أَنْزَلْنَا (و) أَنْزَلْنَا فِيهَا آيَاتٍ (لِإِبْرَارِ كَمَالِ الْعِنَايَةِ بِشَأْنِهَا، وَهُوَ يُشْبِهُ ذِكْرَ الْخَاصِّ بَعْدَ الْعَامِّ لِلْعِنَايَةِ وَالْإِهْتِمَامِ

In the first verse of Surah An-Nur, two repeated expressions occur, namely "anzalna." *Tikrar* (repetition) constitutes one idiom (*uslub*) in *balaghah* study. In this verse, repetition serves to demonstrate great attention to the Qur'an, just as

mentioning the specific after the general adds emphasis. Repetition in the Qur'an functions as a rhetorical device, strengthening divine messages for easier reception and internalization by humanity (Sabirunah & Zahiyah, 2022).

Other *balaghah* aspects, such as *taqdim* and *ta'khir* in the verse fragment *الرَّانِيَةُ وَالرَّانِي* – the word *zaniyah* (female fornicator). Allah fronts the word *al-zaniyah* because fornication proves more reprehensible, with consequences predominantly borne by women for a prolonged duration if pregnancy occurs (Al Shabuni, 1997).

Word choice *الْمُحْصَنَاتِ* to specify chaste women (married). Thus, accusing them of fornication proves more heinous because it degrades them and their relatives. Without this specification, no distinction would exist between men and women in legal rulings (Uçar, 2024).

Phonological Approach through Wujud al-Qira'at

The phonological approach in this exegesis is evident in the presentation of *wujud al-qira'at*. The exegesis *Rawai' al-Bayan* presents several differences among *imam qurra'* (reading authorities) in reading a single word. Different readings can occasionally affect the meaning they convey. As already explained in the examples above, such as reading differences between "*faradhnaa*" and "*farradhnaa*", which produce different semantic emphasis. Similarly, variations in reading "*malaktum*" and "*mulliktum*" demonstrate Arabic's flexibility in conveying the same meaning through different structures (Noruddin et al., 2025).

Methodological Implications and Critical Evaluation

Contributions of the Linguistic Approach to Legal Verse Comprehension

The systematic application of linguistic approaches in *Rawai' al-Bayan* demonstrates significant contributions to the comprehension of legal verses in the Qur'an. The multidimensional integration of lexical, grammatical, semantic, and rhetorical analysis provides a robust methodological framework for deriving legal rulings from the Qur'an. As demonstrated in the preceding analysis, al-Shabuni's selective yet comprehensive approach enables a precise understanding of legal implications embedded within linguistic structures.

The linguistic approach is particularly crucial for addressing the ambiguities inherent in legal terminology. As noted by Alajlouni et al. (2025), language serves as an essential tool in *tarjih* (legal preference determination) in *istinbath* (legal derivation), where subtle linguistic distinctions can significantly affect juridical conclusions. Al-Shabuni's meticulous attention to lexical nuances, grammatical variations through *wujud al-i'rab*, and semantic implications of *qira'at* differences exemplifies how linguistic precision underpins sound legal interpretation.

Furthermore, the integration of classical linguistic authorities—such as al-Zamakhshari, al-Qurtubi, and the imam nahw—within al-Shabuni's exegetical framework ensures methodological rigor while maintaining accessibility for contemporary readers. This balance between scholarly depth and pedagogical clarity addresses a persistent challenge in Islamic legal education, namely, rendering classical jurisprudential reasoning comprehensible to modern audiences without sacrificing intellectual integrity (Demircigil, 2025; Haftador & Khodaparast, 2015).

The multi-dimensional linguistic analysis in *Rawai' al-Bayan* also facilitates the harmonization of apparently contradictory interpretations. By presenting multiple *wujud al-qira'at* and *wujud al-i'rab* from diverse classical authorities, al-Shabuni demonstrates that linguistic diversity within legitimate boundaries enriches rather than undermines Qur'anic interpretation. This methodological pluralism, grounded in established grammatical and phonological principles, reflects the intellectual breadth characteristic of classical Islamic scholarship while remaining relevant to contemporary exegetical discourse (Shah, 2013; Yildirim, 2025).

Strengths: Accessibility and Selective Depth

The principal strength of al-Shabuni's linguistic approach in *Rawai' al-Bayan* lies in its strategic selectivity and analytical depth. Unlike comprehensive classical *lughawi* exegesis that explicates every linguistic aspect of every word (potentially overwhelming readers with excessive detail) al-Shabuni adopts a functional approach that prioritizes legally relevant linguistic elements. This selectivity reflects methodological sophistication rather than superficiality, as demonstrated by his consistent focus on lexical items that influence legal understanding, grammatical structures that affect semantic scope, and rhetorical devices that illuminate divine legislative intent.

This functional selectivity proves particularly evident in the sub-discussion *al-tahlil al-lafzi*, where al-Shabuni explicates only key terms susceptible to multiple interpretations or possessing technical legal significance. As Sultan et al.(2025) demonstrate in their linguistic analysis of family law verses, selective focus on legally consequential vocabulary proves more pedagogically effective than exhaustive lexical exposition. Al-Shabuni's approach thus reflects awareness that effective legal exegesis requires not merely linguistic erudition but judicious application of linguistic knowledge to juridical questions.

The accessibility of *Rawai' al-Bayan* also derives from al-Shabuni's consistent structural framework across all nine legal themes in Surah An-Nur. The nine-part sub-discussion architecture – encompassing *al-tahlil al-lafzi*, *al-ma'na al-ijmaliy*, *sabab al-nuzul*, *wujud al-qira'at*, *wujud al-i'rab*, *latha'if al-tafsir*, *al-ahkam al-syar'iyah*, *irsyadat al-ayat*, and *hikmah al-tasyri'* – provides readers with predictable organizational logic facilitating comprehension and cross-referencing. This systematic presentation exemplifies what contemporary exegetical studies characterize as "methodological transparency," where interpretive procedures remain explicit and replicable (Armayanto et al., 2025; Pink, 2010).

Moreover, al-Shabuni's integration of linguistic analysis into broader exegetical concerns demonstrates an awareness that language is a means rather than an end in Qur'anic interpretation. By situating linguistic explication within sections addressing revelation context (*sabab al-nuzul*), legal rulings (*al-ahkam al-syar'iyah*), and legislative wisdom (*hikmah al-tasyri'*), he prevents the reduction of exegesis to purely philological exercise. This holistic approach resonates with contemporary calls for contextual Qur'anic interpretation that integrates textual analysis with historical, social, and ethical considerations (Abidin et al., 2024; Mujahidin et al., 2024).

Limitations and Academic Critique

Notwithstanding its considerable strengths, *Rawai' al-Bayan's* linguistic approach exhibits certain limitations warranting critical examination. The most significant limitation concerns the selectivity itself, which, while generally functional and purposeful, occasionally results in gaps where potentially relevant linguistic dimensions receive insufficient attention. For instance, the sporadic treatment of morphological aspects—often subsumed within discussions of *qira'at* or *i'rab* rather than systematically addressed—may obscure morphological patterns that could illuminate legal interpretation.

Academic critique of al-Shabuni's exegetical methodology has been articulated by various scholars. As al-Shabuni himself acknowledges, Shaykh Dr. Muhammad Sa'id Ramadhan al-Buti criticized certain aspects of his tafsir methodology. Al-Buti's critique, while recognizing al-Shabuni's scholarly contributions, raised concerns regarding specific interpretive choices and their implications for legal understanding. Such scholarly dialogue reflects the vibrant tradition of critical engagement within Islamic exegetical scholarship, where even widely respected works remain subject to rigorous academic scrutiny (Shah, 2013).

From a methodological perspective, the selective linguistic approach in *Rawai' al-Bayan*, while avoiding the pitfall of excessive comprehensiveness, risks what Omran and Al-Shammari (2025) identify as "interpretive selectivity" if not carefully calibrated. Although al-Shabuni's selectivity appears functionally motivated rather than ideologically driven, the absence of explicit criteria for determining which linguistic elements warrant detailed explication versus cursory treatment renders the methodology somewhat opaque. Greater methodological transparency regarding selection principles would enhance the work's scholarly rigor.

Additionally, while al-Shabuni demonstrates commendable balance in presenting diverse classical opinions on grammatical and *qira'at* matters, his exegesis occasionally lacks critical evaluation of these transmitted positions. The presentation of multiple views without explicit assessment of their relative strengths—though reflecting scholarly humility and respect for legitimate diversity (*ikhhtilaf*)—may leave readers uncertain regarding optimal interpretive choices. Contemporary exegetical scholarship increasingly emphasizes not merely transmitting classical opinions but critically engaging them through contemporary linguistic, historical, and juridical lenses (Mårtensson, 2022; Yildirim, 2025).

Furthermore, the integration of phonological analysis through *wujuh al-qira'at*, while valuable, could benefit from more systematic attention to the semantic and legal implications of variant readings. Although al-Shabuni notes that when *qira'at* differences affect meaning, a more comprehensive framework correlating phonological-morphological variations with juridical consequences would strengthen the exegesis's analytical depth. Recent scholarship on *qira'at* and legal derivation suggests that phonological variations often carry subtle yet significant implications for legal interpretation that merit sustained analytical attention (Noruddin et al., 2025).

Theoretical Contribution to Qur'anic Hermeneutics

Despite these limitations, *Rawai' al-Bayan* makes substantial theoretical contributions to Qur'anic hermeneutics, particularly regarding the relationship between linguistic analysis and legal interpretation. The exegesis demonstrates that rigorous linguistic methodology need not compromise accessibility, challenging the false dichotomy between scholarly depth and pedagogical clarity. This contribution proves especially significant in contemporary Islamic legal education, where students frequently struggle to bridge classical exegetical tradition with modern juridical discourse (Haftador & Khodaparast, 2015).

Al-Shabuni's methodological integration of multiple linguistic dimensions (lexical, grammatical, semantic, rhetorical, and phonological) within a unified exegetical framework exemplifies what Fudge (2012) characterizes as "comprehensive hermeneutics." Rather than treating these linguistic aspects as discrete analytical categories, al-Shabuni demonstrates their dynamic interrelationship in producing Qur'anic meaning. For instance, his analysis of the word "*faradhna*" integrates lexical etymology, morphological variation (*tashdid*), semantic intensification (*mubalaghah*), and rhetorical emphasis (*ta'kid*) in a seamless interpretive synthesis. This integrative approach reflects a sophisticated understanding of how linguistic levels interact in generating textual significance.

The exegesis also contributes to the theoretical understanding of interpretive selectivity. As demonstrated in the analysis of Surah An-Nur themes, al-Shabuni's selective application of linguistic tools (emphasizing lexical and rhetorical analysis across all themes while employing morphological and syntactic analysis primarily where legally consequential) models a functional hermeneutic that prioritizes interpretive relevance over comprehensive exhaustiveness. This selective functionality, grounded in juridical purpose rather than arbitrary preference, offers a methodological model applicable beyond legal verse exegesis to broader Qur'anic interpretation.

Furthermore, *Rawai' al-Bayan* exemplifies how contemporary exegesis can maintain fidelity to classical tradition while adapting to modern contexts. Al-Shabuni's consistent referencing of classical authorities (al-Zamakhshari, al-Qurtubi, Ibn al-'Arabi) situates his work within established interpretive tradition, yet his organizational structure, selective focus, and pedagogical clarity reflect contemporary educational needs. This balance between tradition and adaptation addresses ongoing debates within Islamic scholarship regarding authentic renewal (*tajdid*) versus innovation (*bid'ah*) in religious sciences (Armuyanto et al., 2025; Pink, 2010).

Implications for Contemporary Islamic Legal Education

The methodological approach exemplified in *Rawai' al-Bayan* holds significant implications for contemporary Islamic legal education. The integration of linguistic rigor with juridical application demonstrates that language study constitutes not merely auxiliary knowledge for legal scholars but foundational competence essential for sound *istinbath*. Contemporary curricula in Islamic legal studies could benefit from adopting al-Shabuni's integrative model, where linguistic analysis directly informs

legal reasoning rather than remaining confined to separate grammatical or rhetorical coursework.

The selective yet systematic approach also addresses practical pedagogical challenges in contemporary Islamic education. Students frequently encounter either excessively technical linguistic analysis divorced from legal application or juridical discussions insufficiently grounded in textual-linguistic analysis. Al-Shabuni's functional selectivity (explicating linguistic aspects directly relevant to legal understanding while omitting tangential philological details) offers a pedagogically viable middle path. This approach could inform curriculum development in Islamic universities seeking to balance linguistic proficiency with juridical competence (Demircigil, 2025).

Moreover, the transparent structural framework of *Rawai' al-Bayan*—with its consistent nine-part subdivision architecture—provides a replicable template for contemporary exegetical production. Students and scholars producing new exegetical works could adapt this organizational logic to their specific interpretive objectives, whether focusing on legal, theological, ethical, or other Qur'anic dimensions. The methodological transferability of al-Shabuni's approach thus extends its utility beyond immediate legal verse interpretation to broader exegetical pedagogy (Yildirim, 2025).

Directions for Future Research

This study's findings suggest several promising directions for future research. First, a comprehensive comparative analysis of al-Shabuni's linguistic approach across all seventy legal themes in *Rawai' al-Bayan* would reveal whether the patterns identified in Surah An-Nur remain consistent throughout the exegesis or exhibit thematic variation. Such comprehensive mapping would provide more robust evidence regarding al-Shabuni's methodological consistency and selectivity principles.

Second, comparative studies examining al-Shabuni's linguistic methodology relative to classical *lughawi* exegetes (such as al-Zamakhshari) and contemporary legal exegetes would illuminate the distinctive characteristics of his approach and situate it more precisely within exegetical tradition. Such a comparison could reveal whether al-Shabuni's selective functionality represents methodological innovation or continuity with established precedents.

Third, empirical research assessing the pedagogical effectiveness of al-Shabuni's approach in contemporary Islamic legal education would address practical questions about the optimal design of exegetical instruction for student learning. Comparative studies examining student comprehension and retention when studying legal verses through *Rawai' al-Bayan* versus more comprehensive or more concise exegetical works could inform evidence-based curriculum development.

Fourth, a deeper investigation into the relationship between linguistic analysis and juridical pluralism in *Rawai' al-Bayan* would contribute to the theoretical understanding of how linguistic diversity (through *wujud al-qira'at* and *wujud al-i'rab*) generates legitimate juridical diversity. This research could illuminate broader questions about the relationship between textual indeterminacy and legal pluralism in Islamic jurisprudence.

Finally, studies examining how contemporary digital technologies might enhance accessibility and functionality of works like *Rawai' al-Bayan* (through hyperlinked cross-referencing, searchable databases of linguistic analyses, or interactive visualization of grammatical relationships) could explore how classical exegetical methodologies translate to digital environments while preserving their interpretive integrity.

4. CONCLUSION

This study has systematically analyzed the linguistic approach employed in *Rawai' al-Bayan Tafsir Ayat Ahkam min al-Quran* by Muhammad Ali al-Shabuni, specifically focusing on its application to Surah An-Nur. The research addresses three primary objectives: identifying and mapping the dimensions of the linguistic approach, analyzing the selectivity characteristics, and describing concrete applications to legal themes in Surah An-Nur.

The findings reveal that al-Shabuni employs a selective multi-dimensional linguistic methodology characterized by strategic integration of four primary dimensions: lexical analysis (*al-tahlil al-lafzi*), syntactic analysis (*wujuh al-i'rab*), morpho-phonological analysis (*wujuh al-qira'at*), and rhetorical-semantic analysis (*latha'if al-tafsir*). The application of these dimensions demonstrates functional selectivity rather than comprehensive exhaustiveness, prioritizing linguistic elements directly relevant to legal understanding while omitting linguistically interesting yet legally inconsequential details.

The selectivity analysis reveals systematic patterns distinguishing al-Shabuni's approach from classical comprehensive *lughawi* exegesis. Lexical and rhetorical analyses appear most consistently across all nine legal themes in Surah An-Nur, reflecting their foundational importance for legal comprehension, whereas morphological and syntactic analyses emerge selectively in contexts where grammatical variations bear direct legal consequences. This selectivity operates not through ideological bias but through pedagogical functionality, serving dual objectives of maintaining scholarly rigor while ensuring accessibility for contemporary readers.

The concrete application analysis demonstrates sophisticated integration of etymological explication, morphological variation, semantic contextualization, and rhetorical emphasis within unified interpretive syntheses. Examples from Surah An-Nur illustrate how al-Shabuni transcends mere transmission of classical opinions, actively engaging linguistic complexity in the service of juridical clarity.

This research contributes to Qur'anic hermeneutics by demonstrating that rigorous linguistic methodology need not compromise accessibility. Al-Shabuni's integrative hermeneutic, in which multiple linguistic dimensions function as dynamically interrelated components that generate textual meaning, offers a methodological template applicable beyond legal verse exegesis to broader Qur'anic interpretation. The study provides the first systematic mapping of al-Shabuni's linguistic dimensions, addressing a significant research gap: previous studies examined thematic

interpretations or general methodologies but did not systematically analyze the linguistic approach as a distinct methodological feature.

In practice, the findings have significant implications for contemporary Islamic legal education. The functional selectivity model offers a pedagogically viable approach for curricula seeking to balance linguistic proficiency with juridical competence. The transparent structural framework, with its consistent nine-part subdivision architecture, provides additional pedagogical advantages by enabling students to develop predictable analytical routines when engaging legal verses.

However, limitations warrant acknowledgment. The selectivity can result in gaps in which potentially relevant linguistic dimensions receive insufficient systematic attention, particularly in morphological aspects. Additionally, while al-Shabuni demonstrates balance in presenting diverse classical opinions, his exegesis occasionally lacks explicit critical evaluation of transmitted positions.

Future research directions include a comprehensive comparative analysis across all 70 legal themes in *Rawai' al-Bayan* to test pattern consistency; comparative studies situating al-Shabuni's methodology within the exegetical tradition; empirical research assessing pedagogical effectiveness; and investigations into the relationships between linguistic diversity and juridical pluralism.

In conclusion, *Rawai' al-Bayan* exemplifies sophisticated linguistic methodology characterized by selective functionality, multi-dimensional integration, and pedagogical accessibility. Al-Shabuni's approach demonstrates that contemporary exegesis can maintain fidelity to classical tradition while adapting to modern educational contexts. The selective multi-dimensional linguistic approach represents not a methodological limitation but a pedagogical innovation, strategically deploying linguistic analysis to illuminate legally consequential textual features while maintaining interpretive accessibility. This functional selectivity offers a replicable methodological model applicable to contemporary Islamic legal education and exegetical production, extending the influence of *Rawai' al-Bayan* beyond its immediate interpretive contributions to broader methodological discourse within Qur'anic studies and Islamic legal scholarship.

5. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors express gratitude to all parties who supported the completion of this research.

6. REFERENCES

- Abidin, A. Z., Nurain, Aziz, T., & Noorhidayati, S. (2024). Qur'anic Exegesis as a Social Critique: A Study on the Traditionalist Bisri Musthofa's Tafsir al-Ibriz. *Al-Jami'ah*, 62(1), 215–239. <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2024.621.215-239>
- Al-Dhahabi, M. H. (2000). *Al-Tafsir wa al-Mufasssirun* (7th ed., Vols. 1--3). Maktabah Wahbah.
- Al-Fahdawi, A. A.-S. I., & Al-Kubaisi, M. A.-A. wad. (2025). Imam Al-Ramli's Usuli Preferences on "the General" ('Aam): A Comparative Analytical Study of Four Semantic and Rhetorical Issues. *Dragoman*, 2025(19), 389–407. <https://doi.org/10.63132/ati.2025.alimam.8474>

- Al-Samarra'i, M. F. S. (2000). *Ma'ani al-Nahw* (Vol. 1). Dar al-Fikr.
- Al Farmawi, A. al-H. al-F. (1980). *Al Bidayah fi al Tafsir al-Maudhu'i: Madkhal wa Dirasat*. Al Azhar.
- Al Rajihi, A. (2010). *Al-Tathbiq al-Nahwi* (3rd ed.). Dar al Muayassarah.
- Al Shabuni, M. A. (1997). *Rawai' Al Bayan Tafsir Ayat Ahkam min al Quran*. Dar al Ihya' al-Turats al-'Arabi.
- Al Syirbasyi, A. (1962). *Qishshah al Tafsir*. Dar al Qalam.
- Al Zarqani, M. A. A. (1999). *Manahilul 'Irfan*. Dar al Ma'rifah.
- Alajlouni, A. M. S. A., Al Ghneimin, O. A. E., Alsharayri, N. N., Shatnawi, Z. S., & Rababah, M. A. (2025). The Role of Language in Juristic Preference (Tarjih) through the Interpretation of "Anwar Al-Tanzil" and "Asrar Al-Ta'wil." *Forum for Linguistic Studies*, 7(7), 1085–1095. <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i7.9385>
- Ali, Z. H., & Al-Dulaimi, A. M. J. M. (2025). Semantic Shift Beyond Lexical Origins: A Normative Approach in al-Fayūmi's *Fath al-Qarib al-Mujib*. *Dragoman*, 2025(19), 457–467. <https://doi.org/10.63132/ati.2025.thedep.9951>
- Armayanto, H., Suntoro, A. F., Reza, A., Al Faruqi, H., Ulfa, M., & Sahidin, A. (2025). Reviewing Religious Pluralism Through a Qur'anic Approach: the Relevance of Hamka's Tafsir AL-Azhar in Indonesia and Malaysia. *Afkar*, 27(2), 341–380. <https://doi.org/10.22452/afkar.vol27no2.11>
- Atabik, A. (2021). Al-naẓm stylistic discourse in i'jāz al-qur'ān based on al-jurjānī's perspective: Analysis of arabic literature criticism on the qur'an studies. *Ulumuna*, 25(1), 57–83. <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v25i1.425>
- Azizah, N., & Romziana, L. (2024). Tafsir Ali Al-Shabuni: Sebuah Kajian Tematik Atas Ayat Ayat Melihat Allah Di Akhirat. *Journal of Education Research*, 5(3).
- Badriyah, L. (2017). Kajian terhadap tafsir rawa'i al-bayan: tafsir ayat al-ahkam min al-quran muhammad ali ash-shabuni. *Syaikhuna: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pranata Islam*, 8(1), 135–148.
- Baydar, T. E. (2021). The Significance of Practical Custom ('Urf 'Amalī) in Takhṣiṣ al-Nass. *Hitit Theology Journal*, 20(1), 53–80. <https://doi.org/10.14395/hid.864860>
- Berber Sardinha, T., & Veirano Pinto, M. (2019). *Multi-Dimensional Analysis: Research Methods and Current Issues*. Bloomsbury Academic. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350023857>
- Chasuna, H. N. A. (2024). Linguistic Interpretation. *Qaf*, 6(2).
- Demircigil, B. (2025). The Conceptualization of Jurisprudential Exegesis as the Intersection of Tafsir and Fiqh: A Critical Approach. *Religions*, 16(2), 254. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16020254>
- Elbanjari, M., & Rachman, M. R. N. (2024). Word Forms in The Book of Marahatil Arwah and Their Application in Teaching Ilmu Sharaf (Morphology). *Pesan Trend: Jurnal Pesantren Dan Madrasah*, 3(1), 122–149.
- Fahimah, S. (2021). Tafsir Shawa Al Tafasir Dan Ra'wi Al Bayan Karya Ali As-Shobuni. *Al Furqan*, 4(1).
- Fatahilah, A., Izzan, A., & Isnaeniah, E. (2016). Penafsiran Ali al-Shabuni tentang ayat-ayat yang berkaitan dengan teologi. *Al-Bayan Jurnal Studi Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir*, 1(2).
- Fudge, B. (2012). *Qur'anic Hermeneutics: Al-Tabrisi and the Craft of Commentary*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203830093>

- Gada, M. Y. (2022). Tarjumān al-Qur'ān and Tafhīm al-Qur'ān: A Comparative Analysis of Selected Qur'ānic Chapters. *Australian Journal of Islamic Studies*, 7(1), 115–140. <https://doi.org/10.55831/ajis.v7i1.467>
- Gheibi, A. (2019). A Semantic Study of “Dhammah” Vowel Abstract Arabic language. *RALL*, 20. <https://doi.org/10.22108/rall.2018.108586.1096>
- Ghulayaini, M. (1987). *Jami' al Durus al 'Arabiyah*. Maktabah 'Ashriyah.
- Hadi, S. (2020). *Permata Semantik di Samudera Stilistik (I)*. A Empat.
- Haftador, H. R., & Khodaparast, A. (2015). Ijtihad in quranic exegesis. *Asian Social Science*, 11(27), 125–131. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v11n27p125>
- Hamim, K., & Abdillah, M. M. (2023). Renaissance of Islam: A Content Analysis of Muhammad Rashīd Riḍā's Exegesis. *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization*, 13(2), 104–119. <https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.132.07>
- Haq, E. Z., & Umami, K. (2022). Telaah Kitab Tafsir Bercorak Lughawi Di Abad Pertengahan. *Al Muhafidz: Jurnal Ilmu Al Quran Dan Tafsir*.
- Husna, A., & Fikri, M. (2023). Analisis Linguistik dalam Studi Tafsir Al-Qur'an Perspektif Pendidikan Islam. *ISLAMIC PEDAGOGY: Journal of Islamic Education*, 1(2), 108–119. <https://doi.org/10.52029/ipjie.v1i2.164>
- Iqbal, M. N. (2022). Metode Tafsir Ahkam Ash-Shabuni Tafsir Ayat al-Ahkam dan Al-Qurthubi Al-Jam'I li Ahkam al-Qur'an. *Jurnal Syariah & Hukum Bisnis*, 1(2). <https://jurnal.islahiyah.ac.id/index.php/jl>
- Jali, H. bin. (2021). Keistmewaan Metodologi Pentafsiran Kitab Rawai Al-Bayan Tafsir Ayat Al-Ahkam Min Al-Quran Karya Muhammad Ali Al-Sabuni. *International Conference On Syariah & Law (ICONSYAL)*, 379–385.
- Jawwad, M. (1968). *Dirasat fi Falsafah al-Nahwu wa al-Sharf wa al-Lughah wa al-Rasm*. Mathba'ah As'ad Baghdad.
- Karimah, U., & Hasyim, M. F. (2023). Dinamika Manhaj Lughāwī (Linguistik) dalam Penafsiran. *Muhadasah*, 5(1).
- Khalil, H. (2022). Argument Structures in Sūrat al-Nūr: A Pragmatic Approach. *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, 24(3), 120–142. <https://doi.org/10.3366/jqs.2022.0523>
- Mahmoud, H., Khamaiseh, A., Alomary, A., & Ghnaim, F. (2022). A Stylistic Study in Surat Al-Baynah. *Dirasat: Human and Social Sciences*, 49(6), 267–279. <https://doi.org/10.35516/hum.v49i6.4008>
- Mansyur, M., & Kustiwan. (2002). *Dalil al Katib wa al Mutarjib* (A. A. Alamsyah (ed.); 1st ed.).
- Mårtensson, U. (2022). Linguistic Theory in tafsīr between 100/400 and 700/1000: Implications for Qur'anic Studies. *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, 24(3), 1–45. <https://doi.org/10.3366/jqs.2022.0514>
- Mu'afa, A. (2012). Pendekatan Linguistik Dalam Penafsiran Al-Qur'an. *JIE: Jurnal Islamic Review*, 1(2), 213–245.
- Mujahidin, A., Itmam, M. S., & Rofiq, A. C. (2024). The Dynamic of Contextualization in Indonesian Qur'anic Tafsirs: A Comparative Study of Tafsir Al-Azhar And Tafsir Al-Mishbāh on The Story of The Prophet Moses. *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis*, 25(2), 221–246. <https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.v25i2.5397>
- Mustaqim, A. (2019). Tafsir Linguistik (Studi Atas Tafsir Ma'anil Qur'an Karya al-Farra'). *QOF*, 3.
- Nasrullah, M. A., & Jamroh, N. M. B. (2025). Peran Pembelajaran Nahwu dan Sharf dalam Memahami Struktur Gramatikal Ayat-ayat Musykilat dalam Al-Qur'an.

- Tadris Al-Arabiyyat*, 5(2), 216–231.
<https://ejournal.iaida.ac.id/index.php/arabiyyat/article/view/4201/2048>
- Nisa, K., Aini, N. M., & Khairani, P. D. (2025). Analisis Semantik Tiga Relasi Makna (Al-Musyarak Al-Lafzi, Al-Taraduf, dan Al-Tadhad) dalam Al-Qur'an Surah Al-Mulk. *Siyaqiy: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Bahasa Arab*, 2(2), 96–106.
- Noruddin, N., Wahid, N. A., Yusoff, M. T., & Salleh, S. F. (2025). Development of the Declarative Style Module Based on Quranic Verses in Arabic Rhetoric: A Needs Analysis. *Global Journal Al-Thaqafah*, 15(2), 142–153.
<https://doi.org/10.7187/GJAT122025-8>
- Omran, R. A., & Al-Shammari, R. A. (2025). The Problem of Selective Interpretation in Exegetical Works and Methodological Standards to Limit It. *Journal of Ecohumanism*, 4(1), 3438–3457. <https://doi.org/10.62754/joe.v4i1.6177>
- Pink, J. (2010). Tradition, Authority and Innovation in Contemporary Sunnī tafsīr: Towards a Typology of Qur'an Commentaries from the Arab World, Indonesia and Turkey. *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, 12(1–2), 56–82.
<https://doi.org/10.3366/E1465359110000963>
- Putriyani, S. N. U., & Qalbah, I. N. (2023). Menyingkap Polemik Historisitas Tafsir Corak Lughawi. *Jurnal Iman Dan Spiritualitas*, 3(1), 43–50.
<https://doi.org/10.15575/jis.v3i1.21802>
- Rahmawati, L. E. (2023). *Lebih Dekat Dengan Metode Tafsir Maudhu'i; Kajian Tematik Atas Ayat-Ayat Al-Qur'an*.
- Razzaq, A., & Haryono, A. (2017). Analisis Metode Tafsir Muhammad Ash-Shabuni dalam Kitab rawâiu' al-Bayân. *Wardah*, 18(1), 56–67.
- Rifai, J. (2019). Pendekatan Ilmu Balaghah Dalam Shafwah Al-Tafâsīr Karya 'Ali Al-Shabuni. *Ulunnuha*, 8(1).
- Sabirunah, B., & Zahiyah, M. (2022). *Balaghah al Tikrar Fi al Quran al Karim*. Jami'ah Ahmad Diarayah.
- Setyowaty. (2022). *Hadd zina dalam al-quran (Kajian Tafsir Surat an-Nur Ayat 1-3 Menurut Muhammad "Ali ash-Shabuni dalam Tafsir Rawai" al-Bayan)*.
- Shah, M. (2013). Al-Tabarī and the dynamics of tafsīr: Theological dimensions of a legacy. *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, 15(2), 83–139.
<https://doi.org/10.3366/jqs.2013.0097>
- Shihab, M. Q. (2007). *Membumikan Al Quran*. Mizan.
- Shihab, M. Q. (2015). *Kaidah Tafsir: Syarat, Ketentuan, dan Aturan yang Patut Anda Ketahui*. Lentera Hati.
- Sirry, M. (2016). What's modern about modern tafsīr?: A closer look at Hamka's Tafsir al-Azhar. In *The Qur'an in the Malay-Indonesian World: Context and Interpretation*.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315646350-19>
- Sultan, M., Alimin, Muttaqin, A., Hanafi, S., & Furqany, S. (2025). Female Friendly, Patriarchy and the Adoption of Arabic Pronouns: Linguistic Analysis of Family Law Verses in the Al-Qur'an. *Samarah*, 9(3), 1491–1517.
<https://doi.org/10.22373/jqs4ej66>
- Uçar, H. (2024). Basic Principles of Arabic Rhetoric. *Mutefekkir*, 11(22), 329–350.
<https://doi.org/10.30523/mutefekkir.1600487>
- Usman, A. H., Fattah, M., Amin, M. F. M., Abdullah, W. N. W., Othman, F. M., & Kadir, M. N. A. (2015). The rules of interpretation: How do al-'ām and al-khāṣ

- applied in Shihab's exegesis? *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(4S1), 523–532. <https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2015.v6n4s1p523>
- Waruwu, M. (2024). Pendekatan Penelitian kualitatif: Konsep, Prosedur, Kelebihan dan Peran di Bidang Pendidikan. *Afeksi: Jurnal Penelitian Dan Evaluasi Pendidikan*.
- Yasin, A., & Ahmad, A. (2021). Al-Musyarak Al-Lafdzi Fii Al-Qur'an Al-Karim (Lafdzah Al-Hikmah Namudzajan). *Lisanudhad*, 8(1), 25–44. <https://doi.org/10.21111/lisanudhad.v8i1.6138>
- Yildirim, T. (2025). Kāfiyaji's Exegetical Method: An Analysis of the First Part of the Treatise Nuzhat al-Aṣḥāb. *Hitit Theology Journal*, 24(2), 974–999. <https://doi.org/10.14395/hid.1740054>
- Yin, R. K. (2016). *Qualitative Research From Start to Finish* (Second). The Guildford Press.
- Yüksek, M. İ. (2024). Abū al-Suūd (Ebüssuūd) Efendi's Tafsīr with its Style and Content from Ĥāshiya to Tafsīr: In the Context of the First Verse of Sūrah al-Baqara. *Islam Tetkikleri Dergisi*, 14(2), 333–357. <https://doi.org/10.26650/iuitd.2024.1445763>