

Siri and al-Ḥayā': Vernacularizing Qur'anic Ethics through Local Wisdom in Daud Ismail's *Tafsir al-Munir*

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Abstract

The relationship between local wisdom and Qur'anic ethics has become an important theme in contemporary Qur'anic studies, particularly within the tradition of Indonesian vernacular exegesis. This study examines how the Bugis concept of *siri* is represented in *Tafsir al-Munir* by Daud Ismail and investigates its relationship with the Qur'anic ethical principle of *al-ḥayā'* (modesty and moral shame). The research is motivated by the contemporary distortion of *siri* within Bugis society, where a value originally intended to preserve human dignity is frequently reduced to a justification for violence and honor-based retaliation. Employing a qualitative library research design, this study applies the Conceptual Framework of Indonesian Qur'anic Exegesis, which analyzes the work through its ontological foundation, language and script, presentation, methodology, and exegetical characteristics. The findings demonstrate that Daud Ismail does not explicitly discuss *siri* as an independent interpretive theme, nor does he directly associate his exegesis with Bugis cultural philosophy. Nevertheless, the ethical substance of *siri* is implicitly embedded through the vernacularization of Qur'anic moral concepts into the local Bugis language. Rather than merely preserving a cultural tradition, *Tafsir al-Munir* establishes a dialogical relationship between local values and Qur'anic ethics, in which *siri* provides social and cultural relevance while the Qur'an offers normative ethical guidance and theological boundaries. Consequently, *siri* is reconstructed from a collective cultural norm into a universal ethical value grounded in Qur'anic teachings, emphasizing dignity, moral responsibility, humility, and humanistic principles. This study contributes to the growing scholarship on vernacular Qur'anic exegesis by demonstrating how local cultural concepts can be critically integrated into Islamic ethical discourse without compromising the normative authority of the Qur'an.

Keywords: *Siri*; *al-Ḥayā'*; Vernacular Exegesis; *Tafsir al-Munir*; Qur'anic Ethics.

Abstrak

Hubungan antara nilai budaya lokal dan etika Al-Qur'an merupakan salah satu tema penting dalam perkembangan kajian Tafsir Nusantara. Penelitian ini berangkat dari fenomena distorsi makna *siri* dalam masyarakat Bugis kontemporer, di mana nilai yang semula berfungsi sebagai penjaga martabat dan kehormatan manusia kerap direduksi menjadi legitimasi tindakan kekerasan atas nama harga diri. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis bagaimana nilai *siri* direpresentasikan dalam *Tafsir al-Munir* karya Daud Ismail serta menjelaskan hubungan antara nilai lokal tersebut dengan etika Qur'ani, khususnya konsep *al-ḥayā'*. Penelitian menggunakan metode kualitatif berbasis studi kepustakaan (*library research*) dengan menerapkan Formulasi Konseptual Kajian Tafsir Nusantara yang mencakup aspek ontologis, aksara dan bahasa, penyajian, metodologi, serta eksegesis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Daud Ismail tidak menjadikan *siri* sebagai tema penafsiran yang berdiri sendiri dan tidak secara eksplisit mengaitkan penafsirannya dengan filosofi *siri* dalam budaya Bugis. Meskipun demikian,

substansi nilai tersebut hadir secara implisit melalui proses vernakularisasi konsep-konsep etika Al-Qur'an ke dalam bahasa lokal Bugis. Temuan penelitian memperlihatkan bahwa *Tafsir al-Munir* membangun hubungan dialogis antara nilai budaya lokal dan etika Qur'ani, di mana *siri* berfungsi sebagai konteks sosial-budaya yang membumikan pesan Al-Qur'an, sementara Al-Qur'an memberikan batasan normatif dan arah etis terhadap pemaknaan *siri*. Dengan demikian, *siri* direkonstruksi dari sekadar norma sosial-kolektif menjadi nilai etis-religius yang bersifat lebih universal, humanis, dan selaras dengan prinsip-prinsip moral Islam. Penelitian ini berkontribusi terhadap pengembangan studi Tafsir Nusantara dengan menunjukkan bahwa vernakularisasi bukan sekadar proses penerjemahan bahasa, tetapi juga merupakan mekanisme negosiasi dan rekonstruksi nilai budaya lokal dalam kerangka etika Al-Qur'an.

Kata kunci: *Siri*; *Al-Ḥayā'*; Tafsir Nusantara; Vernakularisasi; Etika Qur'ani; *Tafsir Al-Munir*.

Introduction

Over the past two decades, scholarly attention has increasingly focused on the interaction between the Qur'an and local cultures, particularly through the emergence of vernacular Qur'anic exegesis in Muslim societies outside the Arab world. Rather than functioning merely as linguistic translations, vernacular commentaries constitute intellectual endeavors through which Qur'anic teachings are interpreted, negotiated, and embedded within indigenous cultural frameworks. Studies on Southeast Asian Islam demonstrate that vernacular tafsir enables universal Islamic teachings to become socially meaningful within particular historical and cultural settings (Johns, 1998; Riddell, 2001). Consequently, vernacularization is no longer understood simply as a linguistic process but as a form of ethical and cultural mediation in which local traditions and Qur'anic values engage in continuous dialogue (Azra, 2004; Woodward, 2011). Within the broader field of Nusantara Qur'anic studies, this perspective has recently been systematized through the Conceptual Formulation of Nusantara Tafsir Studies, which emphasizes the importance of examining the ontological foundations, language, script, methodology, presentation, and exegetical characteristics of local Qur'anic commentaries (Asmullah, 2025).

Indonesia provides one of the richest examples of this phenomenon because its ethnic diversity has produced numerous regional Qur'anic commentaries written in local languages and scripts. These works illustrate that the dissemination of Islam did not replace indigenous cultures but instead encouraged a dynamic process of negotiation between revelation and local wisdom. Rather than eliminating pre-existing ethical systems, many Indonesian mufassirs reconstructed local values by integrating them with Qur'anic moral principles, thereby producing interpretations that remained theologically grounded while culturally accessible to

local Muslim communities (Samsuni, 2003; Winceh Herlena, 2020; Hamzah, 2024; Abd Haris, 2025). From the perspective of Islamic anthropology, such interaction reflects the localization of religious knowledge through continuous engagement between sacred texts and cultural realities (Geertz, 1960; Azra, 2004).

Among Indonesia's indigenous ethical traditions, the Bugis philosophy of *siri* occupies a particularly important position. Bugis society in South Sulawesi is widely recognized for preserving a sophisticated moral system in which *siri* functions as one of the principal foundations of personal integrity and social order (Hamsinah, 2023). Rather than referring merely to shame or personal honor, *siri* represents the very essence of human dignity and the moral purpose of Bugis life. Mattulada (1995) characterizes *siri* as the core of Bugis existence, while Andi Rahmat Munawar (2024) explains that it distinguishes a genuine human being (*tau*) from one who merely possesses biological existence (*rupa tau*) without moral worth. This understanding is encapsulated in the well-known Bugis ethical expression *sirie mi tu riaseng tau, narekko de'ga siri taniaki tau, rupa tau meni asenna*, affirming that only through *siri* can one truly be recognized as human. Culturally, *siri* is institutionalized within the Bugis normative system known as *pangadereng*, comprising *ade* (customary law), *rapang* (social norms), *bicara* (judicial order), *wari* (genealogy), and *sara'* (Islamic law), illustrating the long-standing integration between local ethics and Islamic teachings (Mattulada, 1995).

Despite its philosophical significance, the contemporary understanding of *siri* has undergone a considerable transformation. Instead of functioning primarily as an internal moral regulator that safeguards human dignity and social harmony, *siri* is increasingly reduced to a narrow conception of personal or family honor. In extreme circumstances, such reduction has been employed to justify revenge, violence, and even homicide in the name of preserving honor (Andi Rahmat Munawar, 2024; Muis, 1998; Jumadi, 2024). Acts categorized as *mappakka siri-siri* (bringing disgrace) are frequently answered through responses that contradict the humanitarian values originally embedded within the philosophy of *siri*. As emphasized by Andi Rahmat Munawar (2024), violence represents only an exceptional and final response within Bugis ethical tradition rather than the essential meaning of *siri* itself. This phenomenon demonstrates a widening gap between the normative ideals of Bugis morality and their contemporary social implementation, creating an urgent need to reconstruct the ethical meaning of *siri* within a more comprehensive Islamic framework.

Several recent studies have attempted to reinterpret *siri* through Qur'anic ethics. Ardhy (2024), for example, argues that Qur'anic teachings concerning honesty, integrity, and moral

responsibility resonate strongly with the Bugis philosophy of *siri na pacce*. A more systematic reconstruction is offered by Haris (2025), who reconceptualizes *siri* as a form of social capital rooted in several Qur'anic ethical concepts, including *al-taqwā*, *al-karām*, *al-'izzah*, *al-murū'ah*, *al-ḥayā'*, and *al-'iffah*. His study concludes that contemporary practices legitimizing violence in defense of *siri* represent a form of dehumanization that contradicts Islamic principles of humanity, the sanctity of life, and peace, while simultaneously reflecting a substantial shift from the original philosophical meaning of *siri*. These findings suggest that indigenous ethical concepts require continual reinterpretation through the normative framework of the Qur'an in order to remain relevant within contemporary Muslim societies.

Parallel to these developments, scholarship on *Tafsir al-Munir*—the complete Bugis-language Qur'anic commentary authored by AGH. Daud Ismail—has expanded considerably. Existing studies may be grouped into several major trends. The first examines Daud Ismail's theological and ethical thought, particularly his discussions of morality, theology, and the concept of *al-nafs* (Tahir, 2012; P, 2015; Anshar, 2017). The second investigates the interaction between the Qur'an and Bugis culture, emphasizing the use of the Bugis language, Lontara script, and local cultural expressions as vehicles for vernacularizing Islamic teachings (Samsuni, 2003; Winceh Herlena, 2020; Hamzah, 2024; Abd Haris, 2025). The third explores Daud Ismail's responses to Bugis traditions, revealing patterns of accommodation, modification, and critical engagement within the framework of Islamic monotheism (Amiruddin, 2022; Muh. Azka Fazaka Rif'ah, 2023). A fourth strand consists of thematic studies addressing particular Qur'anic issues, including *Sūrat al-Fātiḥah*, jihad, human actions, and *iddah* (Hudri, 2017; Hasan, 2018; Mutaillah, 2021; Aunillah, 2024). Finally, other studies investigate the reception of *Tafsir al-Munir* among Bugis pesantren communities and Daud Ismail's broader contributions to Islamic education and da'wah (Zaman, 2022; Jofita, 2023).

Although these studies have substantially enriched scholarship on *Tafsir al-Munir*, an important research gap remains. Previous studies have primarily examined Daud Ismail's theology, methodology, local cultural engagement, or specific thematic interpretations independently. Likewise, studies on *siri* have generally approached the concept from anthropological, sociological, or ethical perspectives. Consequently, little attention has been devoted to investigating how Qur'anic ethical terminology is vernacularized into Bugis moral vocabulary through the process of Qur'anic interpretation itself. More specifically, no previous study has systematically examined how Daud Ismail interprets the Qur'anic concept of *al-ḥayā'* and transforms it into Bugis ethical expressions associated with *siri*. This absence is

particularly significant because vernacularization represents more than lexical translation; it constitutes an interpretive process through which universal Qur'anic values acquire culturally intelligible forms while simultaneously reconstructing indigenous ethical concepts (Johns, 1998; Riddell, 2001; Woodward, 2011).

This study therefore seeks to examine how Daud Ismail interprets the concept of *al-ḥayā'* in *Tafsir al-Munīr* and how this interpretation converges with, transforms, and differs from the Bugis philosophy of *siri*. Employing the Conceptual Formulation of Nusantara Tafsir Studies proposed by Asmullah (2025), the study analyzes the ontological foundations, language, script, presentation, methodology, and exegetical characteristics of *Tafsir al-Munīr*. It proceeds from the assumption that Daud Ismail does not explicitly discuss *siri* as an independent exegetical theme; rather, he vernacularizes Qur'anic ethical values into Bugis language and cultural expressions through indigenous moral vocabulary such as *matanre siri'*. In doing so, *Tafsir al-Munīr* creates a dialogical relationship between local wisdom and Qur'anic ethics in which Bugis cultural values are not merely preserved but ethically reconstructed according to Islamic normative principles. Accordingly, this study contributes to the development of Nusantara Qur'anic studies while also enriching broader discussions on vernacular exegesis, Islamic ethics, and the interaction between sacred texts and local cultures.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative library research design to examine the vernacularization of Qur'anic ethical concepts in *Tafsir al-Munīr* authored by AGH. Daud Ismail. Rather than investigating the Bugis concept of *siri* as an independent cultural phenomenon, the study focuses on how Qur'anic ethical terminology—particularly *al-ḥayā'*—is interpreted, translated, and contextualized within Bugis linguistic and cultural expressions. The research is grounded in the assumption that vernacular Qur'anic exegesis represents not merely a process of linguistic translation but also an intellectual negotiation through which universal Islamic ethical values are localized within indigenous cultural frameworks.

The primary source of this research is *Tafsir al-Munīr*, a complete thirty-volume Qur'anic commentary written in the Bugis language using the Lontara script by AGH. Daud Ismail. Particular attention is devoted to passages discussing *al-ḥayā'*, modesty, honor, morality, and related ethical expressions that correspond conceptually to the Bugis notion of *siri*. To strengthen the interpretation, the analysis is supported by secondary sources consisting of studies on Bugis culture, the philosophy of *siri*, vernacular Qur'anic exegesis, Nusantara

tafsir, and contemporary scholarship concerning the interaction between Islamic teachings and local wisdom.

The analytical framework follows the Conceptual Formulation of Nusantara Tafsir Studies, which examines an exegetical work through five interconnected dimensions: ontology, language and script, presentation, methodology, and exegesis. Within this framework, the present study concentrates primarily on the exegetical dimension by analyzing how Daud Ismail reconstructs Qur'anic ethical meanings through Bugis cultural vocabulary. Simultaneously, the linguistic dimension is employed to investigate the process of vernacularization, particularly the transformation of Arabic ethical concepts into culturally intelligible Bugis expressions without abandoning their theological orientation.

The analysis was conducted through qualitative textual interpretation. Relevant passages in *Tafsir al-Munir* containing discussions of *al-ḥayā'* and related ethical concepts were identified, classified, and interpreted within their Qur'anic context before being compared with the philosophical meaning of *siri* in Bugis culture. The comparison does not seek to establish direct equivalence between the two concepts; instead, it aims to identify areas of convergence, divergence, and ethical reconstruction produced through Daud Ismail's interpretive strategy. Finally, these findings are interpreted within the broader discourse of vernacular Qur'anic exegesis in Indonesia to demonstrate how local cultural values and Qur'anic ethics interact in constructing a contextual yet normatively grounded Islamic moral framework.

Results and Discussion

Results

A. Intellectual Profile of Daud Ismail and the Formation of His Vernacular Exegetical Vision

Previous scholarship has extensively documented the life and intellectual career of Daud Ismail. Nevertheless, this study identifies an unresolved discrepancy concerning his year of birth. Existing literature records at least four different dates: 30 December 1907 (Aunillah, 2024), 31 December 1907 (Haris, 2025; Ashar, 2017), 6 September 1908 (Jofita, 2023), and 30 December 1908 (Mutaillah, 2021). These inconsistencies indicate that the available biographical evidence remains fragmented and requires further verification through primary historical sources. The divergence largely stems from the repeated use of secondary references without direct examination of the original archival materials upon which those dates were initially recorded.

Among these competing accounts, the evidence supporting 1908 appears comparatively stronger. The date is consistently reported in Muhyiddin's dissertation, which has become one of the principal academic references on Daud Ismail and has subsequently been adopted by many later studies (Tahir, 2012; Mutaillah, 2021). Furthermore, field observation conducted during this research at Daud Ismail's burial site also records 1908 as his year of birth, although without specifying the exact day or month. Accordingly, this study adopts 1908 as the most plausible year while acknowledging that complete historical certainty has not yet been achieved.

Daud Ismail was raised within a family deeply rooted in Islamic scholarship. His father, Haji Ismail bin Baco Poso, served both as a *khatib* and *parewa sara'* in Soppeng (Mutaillah, 2021), while his mother was Hj. Pompola binti Latalibe (Wahab, 2025). His grandfather, Kali Adam, was recognized as the first *qadhi* of Soppeng (Ashar, 2017). This religious environment provided the intellectual and spiritual foundation that shaped his lifelong commitment to Qur'anic learning and Islamic education.

His early education began within the family under the guidance of his father before continuing Qur'anic recitation with a female teacher named Maryam. After completing the entire Qur'an, Daud Ismail underwent the Bugis educational tradition known as *massara baca*, during which every page of the Qur'an was repeatedly recited until complete mastery was achieved (Jofita, 2023). This pedagogical practice reflects the Bugis emphasis on discipline, repetition, and precision in Qur'anic education. Alongside his religious studies, he independently mastered both the Bugis language and the Lontara script, skills that would later become fundamental to his exegetical project (Jofita, 2023).

A decisive turning point in his intellectual formation occurred in 1929 when he studied under Muhammad As'ad in Sengkang. As'ad, a Bugis scholar educated in Makkah, played a pivotal role in modernizing Islamic education in South Sulawesi and significantly influenced Daud Ismail's scholarly orientation (Mutaillah, 2021). This educational network connected Daud Ismail to broader currents of Islamic scholarship while simultaneously strengthening his commitment to serving Bugis Muslim communities through locally accessible religious education.

The combination of these formative experiences explains the distinctive character of *Tafsir al-Munir*. Rather than emerging solely from classical Islamic scholarship, Daud Ismail's exegetical vision developed through the interaction of three complementary traditions: family-based Qur'anic education, pesantren learning, and Bugis cultural literacy. Consequently, his

decision to compose a complete Qur'anic commentary in the Bugis language using the Lontara script should not be viewed merely as a linguistic choice but as the culmination of a long intellectual process that integrated Islamic scholarship with local cultural identity. This background provides an important context for understanding why vernacularization occupies a central position throughout *Tafsir al-Munir*.

B. Ontological Conception of the Qur'an in *Tafsir al-Munir*

The first component of Asmullah's (2025) formulation of Nusantara Qur'anic studies concerns the ontological position of the Qur'an within the exegetical framework of a mufasssir. Rather than examining the theological nature of the Qur'an in an abstract sense, this aspect investigates how the exegete understands the function, purpose, and practical role of the Qur'an in the life of its intended audience. Analysis of the preface (*muqaddimah*) of *Tafsir al-Munir* demonstrates that Daud Ismail consistently positions the Qur'an as a practical guide for everyday life rather than merely as a sacred text recited for devotional merit (Aunillah, 2024).

This orientation is evident from the primary objective behind the composition of *Tafsir al-Munir*. Daud Ismail explicitly states that the commentary was written to assist Bugis Muslims in understanding the meanings of the Qur'an through the language they use in their daily lives (Mutailah, 2021). For him, limited proficiency in Arabic should not prevent Muslims from accessing divine guidance. Consequently, the Qur'an must be interpreted in a language that enables ordinary believers to comprehend, internalize, and implement its teachings. This perspective shifts the emphasis from the textual preservation of revelation toward its communicative and transformative function within society.

Such an understanding also reflects Daud Ismail's educational concern. He recognized that many members of Bugis society were unable to participate regularly in religious gatherings because of occupational and social responsibilities. Under these circumstances, written Qur'anic commentary became an alternative medium through which religious knowledge could reach broader segments of society (Samsuni, 2003). The production of a complete vernacular commentary therefore responded not only to linguistic needs but also to changing social conditions that demanded more accessible forms of Islamic learning.

The findings further indicate that Daud Ismail's ontological conception of the Qur'an extends beyond accessibility toward ethical transformation. Throughout the *muqaddimah*, the Qur'an is portrayed not simply as an object of recitation or theological reflection but as a source of moral guidance intended to shape individual conduct and collective social life. Understanding the Qur'an is therefore inseparable from practicing its ethical teachings. This

functional orientation explains why Daud Ismail consistently prioritizes clear explanation over elaborate philological discussion and why his interpretations frequently emphasize the practical implications of Qur'anic values for everyday life.

From the perspective of Nusantara Qur'anic studies, this ontological orientation constitutes an essential foundation for vernacularization. Because the Qur'an is understood primarily as guidance (*hudā*) rather than merely as an Arabic linguistic text, translating its ethical messages into Bugis language and cultural expressions becomes not only permissible but necessary. In other words, vernacularization in *Tafsir al-Munīr* originates from Daud Ismail's understanding of the very purpose of revelation itself. The use of Bugis language is therefore not simply a linguistic adaptation but an epistemological consequence of viewing the Qur'an as divine guidance intended for all believers regardless of their linguistic background.

Accordingly, the ontological analysis reveals that Daud Ismail's conception of the Qur'an provides the intellectual basis for the vernacular strategy developed throughout *Tafsir al-Munīr*. The Qur'an is approached as a universally applicable source of ethical guidance whose meanings should be communicated through culturally intelligible forms. This foundational perspective subsequently shapes every aspect of his exegetical project, including the choice of language, script, interpretive method, and, most importantly, the vernacularization of Qur'anic ethical concepts such as *al-ḥayā'* into Bugis moral expressions associated with *siri*.

C. Bugis Language and Lontara Script as Instruments of Vernacularization

The second component of Asmullah's (2025) formulation of Nusantara Qur'anic studies concerns the use of language and script as media through which Qur'anic meanings are communicated within particular cultural settings. Analysis of *Tafsir al-Munīr* demonstrates that Daud Ismail deliberately selected the Bugis language and the Lontara script not merely as tools of translation but as integral components of his exegetical strategy for communicating Qur'anic teachings to Bugis-speaking Muslims. This finding indicates that linguistic choice in *Tafsir al-Munīr* reflects a conscious process of vernacularization rather than a simple replacement of Arabic vocabulary with local expressions.

The preface of *Tafsir al-Munīr* explicitly states that the commentary employs the Wajo–Sengkang dialect of the Bugis language (Ismail, 1980). This choice corresponds closely with Daud Ismail's educational background, which was largely shaped within the scholarly

tradition of Wajo and Sengkang (Jofita, 2023). Rather than adopting a standardized or artificially constructed form of Bugis, he intentionally employed the dialect most familiar to his intended readership. Such a decision reflects an awareness that effective Qur'anic communication depends not only on linguistic accuracy but also on cultural intelligibility. The accessibility of revelation, therefore, becomes inseparable from the accessibility of language itself.

Equally significant is Daud Ismail's decision to compose the entire commentary using the traditional Lontara script. At the time of writing, the use of Lontara was gradually declining as Latin script became increasingly dominant within Bugis society. Daud Ismail explicitly acknowledged this situation in the introduction to his commentary and regarded the use of Lontara as part of an effort to preserve Bugis literary heritage alongside the dissemination of Islamic knowledge (Ismail, 1980). Consequently, *Tafsir al-Munir* performs two complementary functions: transmitting Qur'anic teachings while simultaneously safeguarding an important component of Bugis cultural identity.

The findings further demonstrate that language and script function together as epistemological instruments through which Qur'anic concepts become culturally meaningful. Daud Ismail consistently explains Arabic religious terminology through Bugis expressions that are already embedded within the ethical consciousness of local society. Rather than maintaining unfamiliar Arabic vocabulary, he frequently selects indigenous concepts capable of conveying equivalent moral significance without abandoning the normative substance of the Qur'anic message. This interpretive strategy allows readers to approach Qur'anic ethics through concepts that already possess established social and cultural legitimacy within Bugis tradition.

Accordingly, vernacularization in *Tafsir al-Munir* operates at two interconnected levels. The first is linguistic, whereby Qur'anic meanings are communicated through the Bugis language using expressions readily understood by local readers. The second is cultural, whereby Qur'anic ethical concepts are interpreted through indigenous moral vocabulary that resonates with Bugis social experience. The combination of these two dimensions distinguishes *Tafsir al-Munir* from a literal translation, as the commentary reconstructs Qur'anic meanings within the semantic universe of Bugis culture rather than merely transferring lexical forms from Arabic into another language.

This vernacular strategy provides the interpretive foundation for one of the most significant findings of the present study. Because Daud Ismail consistently prioritizes culturally meaningful expressions over literal lexical equivalence, Qur'anic ethical concepts undergo contextual reformulation when rendered into Bugis. The interpretation of *al-ḥayā'*, for example, is not confined to its literal meaning of "modesty" or "shame" but is expressed through indigenous moral terminology associated with *siri*. This observation demonstrates that the use of Bugis language and Lontara script in *Tafsir al-Munir* serves not merely as a vehicle of communication but also as the principal mechanism through which vernacularization reshapes the relationship between Qur'anic ethics and local moral philosophy. Consequently, the analysis of language and script becomes the necessary foundation for understanding how Daud Ismail vernacularizes *al-ḥayā'* into Bugis ethical discourse, which is examined in the following section.

D. Exegetical Characteristics of *Tafsir al-Munir*

The analysis of *Tafsir al-Munir* reveals a distinctive exegetical model that combines the classical tradition of Qur'anic interpretation with the practical needs of Bugis Muslim society. Rather than pursuing extensive philological analysis or theological speculation, Daud Ismail consistently prioritizes clarity, accessibility, and moral instruction. This orientation reflects his broader objective of making the Qur'an understandable for ordinary readers while preserving the authority of the classical exegetical tradition.

One notable characteristic concerns the organization and presentation of the commentary. Although *Tafsir al-Munir* was completed over approximately ten years, beginning with the thirtieth *juz* before gradually covering the remaining sections of the Qur'an, the final publication follows the canonical order of the *muṣḥaf*, enabling readers to consult the commentary systematically (Ismail, 1980). The writing process was undertaken collaboratively with several assistants, including Hamzah Manguluang, Ismail Husain, M. As'ad Ali Yafi'e, Safaruddin Bakri, and Huzaemah Rauf. Nevertheless, according to Huzaemah Rauf, the conceptual framework and interpretive structure of the commentary were entirely designed by Daud Ismail, while his assistants primarily participated in the technical process of manuscript preparation (Rauf, 2026). This finding confirms that the intellectual authorship of *Tafsir al-Munir* remained under Daud Ismail's direct supervision.

The introductory section further demonstrates that Daud Ismail intended his commentary to function not merely as an explanation of Qur'anic verses but also as an educational guide for readers with limited formal religious training. Before discussing

individual chapters, he provides concise explanations concerning the history of the Qur'an, the codification of the *muṣḥaf*, and fundamental concepts of *'ulūm al-Qur'ān* (Ismail, 1980). Such an arrangement indicates that the commentary was designed to equip readers with essential interpretive knowledge before engaging with the Qur'anic text itself.

Methodologically, *Tafsir al-Munīr* combines transmitted (*tafsīr bi al-ma'thūr*) and rational (*tafsīr bi al-ra'y*) approaches. Daud Ismail frequently interprets one Qur'anic verse through another, a principle summarized in the Bugis expression *Naiyya Akorangnge Saisanna Mato Tafseri Saisanna*, meaning that the Qur'an explains itself. He also incorporates Prophetic traditions, reports from the Companions, and opinions of earlier exegetes when clarification is required (Hamzah, 2024). At the same time, he contextualizes Qur'anic teachings by expressing them through linguistic forms and cultural concepts familiar to Bugis readers, allowing ethical teachings to become directly relevant to local social life.

The analysis further indicates that Daud Ismail adopts a predominantly textual orientation while remaining attentive to social realities. His interpretations rarely depart from the apparent meaning of the Qur'anic text or engage in speculative philosophical discussions. Instead, he emphasizes the moral implications of the verses and their practical application within Bugis society (Muh. Azka Fazaka Rif'ah et al., 2023). This combination of textual fidelity and cultural contextualization constitutes one of the defining characteristics of *Tafsir al-Munīr*.

Taken together, these findings demonstrate that the distinctive contribution of *Tafsir al-Munīr* lies not simply in its use of the Bugis language but in its interpretive strategy. The commentary maintains continuity with the classical exegetical tradition while simultaneously reformulating Qur'anic teachings through locally intelligible cultural expressions. This methodological framework provides the basis for Daud Ismail's vernacularization of Qur'anic ethical concepts, particularly his interpretation of *al-ḥayā'*, discussed in the following section.

E. Vernacularization of *al-Ḥayā'* into *Siri*

The most significant finding of this study concerns Daud Ismail's vernacularization of the Qur'anic concept of *al-ḥayā'* through the indigenous Bugis ethical concept of *siri*. Analysis of *Tafsir al-Munīr* demonstrates that this vernacularization does not operate through literal lexical substitution. Instead, Daud Ismail reformulates the ethical meaning of *al-ḥayā'* by selecting Bugis expressions that already possess established moral significance within the cultural consciousness of his readers. Consequently, the Qur'anic concept acquires a culturally intelligible form while preserving its normative ethical orientation.

The findings further reveal that Daud Ismail does not employ a single equivalent for *al-ḥayā'* throughout the Qur'an. Rather, his translation strategy varies according to the grammatical subject and theological context of each verse. When *al-ḥayā'* refers to human conduct, it is expressed through the Bugis concept of *siri*, which emphasizes honour, dignity, and moral self-restraint. Conversely, when the same root is attributed to Allah, Daud Ismail deliberately avoids literal translation and instead adopts contextual expressions that safeguard divine transcendence (*tanzīh*). These different strategies indicate that vernacularization in *Tafsir al-Munīr* involves semantic negotiation between Qur'anic theology and Bugis moral philosophy rather than mechanical translation.

Accordingly, two distinct patterns of vernacularization emerge from the analysis. The first concerns the ethical dimension of *al-ḥayā'* in relation to human behaviour, whereas the second concerns its theological interpretation when attributed to God.

Vernacularization of *al-Ḥayā'* in Relation to Human Ethics

One of the clearest examples of vernacularization appears in Daud Ismail's interpretation of QS. al-Qaṣaṣ [28]:25, which narrates the encounter between Prophet Musa and one of the daughters of Prophet Shu'ayb. Rather than translating the expression describing her modesty through a literal equivalent of "shyness," Daud Ismail renders the verse using the Bugis phrase *napakkuwa tanre sirina*, meaning that she possesses high *siri* or profound moral honour (Ismail, 1988).

This lexical choice represents more than stylistic adaptation. Within Bugis society, *siri* constitutes one of the highest ethical ideals governing personal dignity, social responsibility, and moral conduct. As Pelras (1996) observes, *siri* functions as the foundation of individual honour and social recognition, while a person who loses *siri* is considered to have forfeited genuine humanity. By employing the expression *tanre siri'na*, Daud Ismail therefore interprets *al-ḥayā'* not merely as an emotional feeling of embarrassment but as an ethical disposition characterised by self-respect, integrity, and moral discipline.

This interpretation corresponds closely with the Bugis classification of moral character. Individuals who consistently preserve propriety, respect others, and maintain ethical conduct are commonly described as *matanre siri'*, meaning those who possess elevated *siri*. Conversely, those who violate accepted moral norms are characterised as *makurang siri'*, indicating diminished honour and weakened moral integrity (Makkasau, 2022). Through this cultural framework, Daud Ismail transforms the Qur'anic notion of *al-ḥayā'* into a concept immediately recognisable within Bugis ethical discourse.

The narrative of Shu'ayb's daughter acquires additional cultural significance when viewed against the traditional Bugis understanding of women as guardians of familial honour. Classical Bugis culture symbolically associates women with expressions such as *intang paramata* (precious jewel), emphasising their dignity and social value (Mattulada, 1995). Other traditional metaphors—including *camming* (mirror), *penne pinceng* (ceramic plate), *aju mamata* (green wood), and *tello* (egg)—likewise portray women as individuals whose honour deserves careful protection (Andi Bini Fitriani, 2021). Within this cultural setting, Daud Ismail's interpretation of *al-ḥayā'* through *tanre siri'na* becomes readily intelligible because it resonates with an existing ethical vocabulary familiar to Bugis readers.

Nevertheless, the findings also indicate that Daud Ismail's interpretation should not be understood as reinforcing restrictive cultural expectations toward women. Instead, the emphasis falls upon *al-ḥayā'* as an expression of moral integrity rather than social subordination. The modesty displayed by Shu'ayb's daughter reflects conscious ethical self-restraint and preservation of personal dignity, qualities that constitute the essence of *siri* as a moral virtue rather than merely a social convention.

Furthermore, this interpretation acquires particular relevance within contemporary Bugis society, where several scholars have observed a gradual weakening of *siri* as an internal mechanism of ethical self-control (Andi Rahmat Munawar, 2024). Behaviours traditionally regarded as *makurang siri'* increasingly receive social tolerance, reducing the capacity of *siri* to function as an effective moral regulator. Against this background, Daud Ismail's vernacularization of *al-ḥayā'* through *tanre siri'* may be understood as reaffirming the original ethical function of *siri* as a principle of self-discipline, honour, and moral responsibility rather than merely a marker of social prestige.

Accordingly, the analysis demonstrates that Daud Ismail does not simply translate *al-ḥayā'* into Bugis. Instead, he reconstructs the Qur'anic ethical concept through an indigenous moral framework that already possesses deep cultural legitimacy. The resulting interpretation establishes *siri* as the closest ethical equivalent to *al-ḥayā'* within Bugis society while simultaneously orienting local moral philosophy toward the normative values of the Qur'an.

Vernacularization of *al-Ḥayā'* in Relation to Divine Attributes

A different pattern of vernacularization emerges when the Qur'anic root *ḥ-y-y* is attributed to Allah. Analysis of *Tafsir al-Munīr* demonstrates that Daud Ismail deliberately abandons the strategy employed in interpreting human modesty and instead adopts context-sensitive expressions that preserve the theological principle of divine transcendence (*tanẓīh*).

This finding indicates that vernacularization in *Tafsir al-Munir* is governed not only by linguistic and cultural considerations but also by the doctrinal boundaries of Islamic theology.

The first example appears in QS. al-Baqarah [2]:26, in which the Qur'an states, *inna Allāha lā yastahyī an yaḍriba mathalan mā ba'ūdatan*. Rather than translating *lā yastahyī* literally as "Allah is not ashamed" through the Bugis expression *de' namasiri*, Daud Ismail renders the verse as *Puang Alla Ta'ala de' nabilang matunai*, meaning "Allah does not regard it as insignificant or beneath His majesty" (Ismail, 1983). This lexical shift constitutes one of the clearest examples of interpretive adaptation within the commentary.

The choice of *de' nabilang matunai* reflects careful theological consideration. In Bugis moral discourse, the expression *de' namasiri* commonly denotes an individual who has lost honour, propriety, or moral restraint (Abdullah, n.d.). Applied to a human being, the expression carries strongly negative ethical connotations. Consequently, attributing the same expression to Allah could unintentionally suggest imperfection or deficiency, thereby conflicting with the Islamic doctrine of divine transcendence. By replacing the literal rendering with an expression meaning that Allah does not consider such examples beneath His majesty, Daud Ismail preserves the intended Qur'anic meaning while simultaneously avoiding anthropomorphic implications.

From an exegetical perspective, this interpretive decision illustrates a process of semantic interpretation rather than literal translation. Although the lexical meaning of *lā yastahyī* is retained at the conceptual level, its cultural expression is reformulated to remain compatible with both Bugis linguistic conventions and Islamic theological principles. In this respect, Daud Ismail privileges theological coherence over lexical correspondence, demonstrating that vernacularization requires continuous negotiation between language, culture, and doctrine.

A different yet complementary strategy appears in QS. al-Aḥzāb [33]:53, where the Qur'an declares, *wallāhu lā yastahyī mina al-ḥaqq*. Here, Daud Ismail translates the expression as *Puang Alla Ta'ala de' namasiri pannessai tongeng'e*, literally meaning "Allah is not ashamed to explain the truth" (Ismail, 1988). At first glance, this rendering appears inconsistent with his interpretation of QS. al-Baqarah [2]:26 because the expression *de' namasiri* is now employed directly.

Closer examination, however, reveals that the apparent inconsistency is instead evidence of contextual sensitivity. In this verse, the object of the verb is *al-ḥaqq* (the truth), not a parable or ordinary action. The expression therefore cannot reasonably be interpreted as

implying a deficiency in the divine nature. Rather, it emphasizes that Allah never refrains from revealing or clarifying the truth regardless of social convention or human sensitivity. Daud Ismail reinforces this interpretation through his explanatory remark, *de' naelo passia-siai tongeng'e*, indicating that Allah never allows the truth to remain neglected or concealed (Ismail, 1988). The emphasis thus shifts from the emotional notion of shame toward the certainty and completeness of divine guidance.

Comparison of these verses demonstrates that Daud Ismail intentionally rejects lexical uniformity in favour of semantic appropriateness. The same Qur'anic root is rendered differently according to its theological context. When referring to human beings, *al-ḥayā'* is vernacularized through *siri* because both concepts share an ethical function of preserving honour and regulating moral conduct. When referring to Allah, however, literal equivalence is abandoned whenever it risks introducing anthropomorphic or culturally misleading associations. Instead, Daud Ismail reformulates the meaning to safeguard the transcendence and perfection of the divine attributes.

These findings indicate that vernacularization in *Tafsir al-Munir* extends beyond linguistic localization. It constitutes an interpretive process in which Qur'anic meanings are negotiated simultaneously with local culture and Islamic theology. Daud Ismail does not merely translate Arabic vocabulary into Bugis but carefully evaluates whether a particular indigenous expression remains compatible with the doctrinal principles governing the Qur'anic discourse. Consequently, vernacularization operates within clear theological boundaries, allowing local language to communicate divine revelation without compromising fundamental Islamic beliefs.

Taken together, the analyses of QS. al-Qaṣaṣ [28]:25, QS. al-Baqarah [2]:26, and QS. al-Aḥzāb [33]:53 reveal two complementary models of vernacularization in *Tafsir al-Munir*. The first is ethical vernacularization, in which *al-ḥayā'* is expressed through *siri* as a culturally embedded principle of honour, dignity, and moral self-restraint. The second is theological vernacularization, in which equivalent local expressions are selectively reformulated to preserve the principle of *tanzīh* whenever the attribute is associated with Allah. These two models demonstrate that Daud Ismail's interpretive strategy is neither literal nor arbitrary but systematically balances cultural intelligibility with theological orthodoxy. This balanced approach constitutes one of the principal contributions of *Tafsir al-Munir* to the tradition of vernacular Qur'anic exegesis in the Indonesian archipelago.

Discussion

A. Vernacularization as Ethical Negotiation Rather than Linguistic Translation

The findings of this study suggest that vernacularization in *Tafsir al-Munir* should not be understood merely as the linguistic transfer of Qur'anic vocabulary into the Bugis language. Rather, Daud Ismail employs vernacularization as a process of ethical negotiation through which universal Qur'anic values are reformulated within an indigenous moral framework without compromising their theological foundations. This observation extends prevailing understandings of vernacular Qur'anic exegesis by demonstrating that localization involves not only the accessibility of language but also the reconstruction of ethical meaning.

Previous scholarship has consistently emphasized that vernacular Qur'anic interpretation emerged as an important medium for communicating Islamic teachings to non-Arab Muslim communities. Johns (1998) argues that vernacular commentaries enabled the Qur'an to become intellectually accessible within diverse linguistic environments, while Riddell (2001) demonstrates that regional tafsir traditions across Southeast Asia represent dynamic processes of adaptation rather than literal translation. Likewise, Azra (2004) shows that the spread of Islam in the Malay-Indonesian world was characterized by continuous interaction between Islamic scholarship and local cultural traditions, whereas Woodward (2011) highlights that local expressions of Islam should be understood as creative articulations of universal Islamic principles rather than deviations from orthodoxy.

The present findings support these broader observations while simultaneously refining them. Analysis of *Tafsir al-Munir* indicates that Daud Ismail does not simply replace Arabic terminology with Bugis lexical equivalents. Instead, he selectively employs indigenous ethical concepts that already possess deep cultural legitimacy within Bugis society and reorients them toward Qur'anic moral teachings. Consequently, vernacularization functions as a dialogical process in which local culture becomes the semantic medium through which the ethical vision of the Qur'an is communicated and internalized.

This process is particularly evident in Daud Ismail's treatment of *al-ḥayā'*. When interpreting QS. al-Qaṣaṣ [28]:25, he renders the Qur'anic concept through the expression *tanre siri'na*, thereby connecting Qur'anic modesty with the Bugis ideal of honour and moral dignity. At the same time, his interpretation demonstrates that *siri* is not adopted uncritically. Rather, the indigenous concept is reconstructed through the ethical orientation of the Qur'an, transforming it into an expression of self-restraint, integrity, and moral responsibility. Conversely, when *al-ḥayā'* is attributed to Allah, Daud Ismail abandons lexical equivalence

altogether and reformulates the expression according to the theological demands of *tanzīh*. These contrasting interpretive strategies illustrate that vernacularization operates through contextual discernment rather than linguistic consistency.

Accordingly, this study proposes that vernacularization in *Tafsir al-Munīr* is more accurately understood as ethical negotiation than as linguistic translation. Ethical negotiation refers to an interpretive process in which Qur'anic moral concepts and indigenous ethical traditions enter into a reciprocal dialogue. Within this dialogue, local concepts provide culturally intelligible forms through which revelation can be understood, while the Qur'an simultaneously redefines and redirects those concepts according to its own normative framework. Vernacularization therefore becomes a two-way process: revelation acquires local intelligibility, and local ethics undergo normative reconstruction.

This perspective expands existing scholarship on vernacular Qur'anic exegesis in at least two respects. First, it demonstrates that language constitutes only one dimension of vernacularization; equally important is the transformation of ethical meaning within a particular cultural context. Second, it shows that indigenous moral philosophies should not be viewed merely as passive recipients of Qur'anic teachings but as active interpretive spaces in which universal Islamic ethics are negotiated, reformulated, and embodied within local social realities. From this perspective, *Tafsir al-Munīr* represents not only a Bugis-language commentary but also a sophisticated example of how vernacular exegesis mediates between the universality of Qur'anic ethics and the particularity of local moral traditions.

B. Reconstructing *Siri* through Qur'anic Ethics

One of the principal findings of this study is that Daud Ismail's interpretation of *al-ḥayā'* does not seek to Islamize Bugis culture by replacing the indigenous concept of *siri* with an exclusively Islamic terminology. Instead, his vernacular interpretation reconstructs *siri* through the ethical framework of the Qur'an. The relationship between the two concepts is therefore dialogical rather than substitutive. While *siri* remains the cultural vocabulary through which Bugis society understands honour and dignity, its ethical orientation is redirected by the Qur'anic concept of *al-ḥayā'*, transforming it from a predominantly social value into a spiritually grounded moral virtue.

This finding is consistent with Mattulada's (1995) classical description of *siri* as the moral essence of Bugis identity embedded within the normative system of *pangadereng*. According to Mattulada, *siri* constitutes the foundation of personal dignity and social legitimacy, functioning as the principal mechanism regulating behaviour within Bugis society.

However, the present study demonstrates that in *Tafsir al-Munīr*, this indigenous ethical concept is not simply reproduced in its traditional cultural meaning. Rather, Daud Ismail selectively employs Bugis moral vocabulary to express Qur'anic ethical principles, indicating that local concepts are accepted only insofar as they remain compatible with the normative orientation of revelation.

From a broader anthropological perspective, this interpretive strategy supports Geertz's (1960) argument that Islam in Indonesia developed not through the elimination of indigenous traditions but through continuous interaction with existing cultural systems. Religious ideas become socially meaningful because they are articulated through familiar cultural symbols while simultaneously reshaping the meanings attached to those symbols. Daud Ismail's vernacularization of *al-ḥayā'* illustrates precisely this process. Instead of abandoning *siri* as a pre-Islamic cultural value, he reinterprets it within a Qur'anic ethical horizon, allowing Bugis readers to understand divine moral teachings through concepts already embedded in their cultural consciousness.

The findings also extend recent scholarship on the relationship between *siri* and Islamic ethics. Ardhy (2024) argues that the ethical principles of honesty, integrity, and moral responsibility found in the Qur'an resonate with the philosophy of *siri na pacce*. Likewise, Haris (2025) reconstructs *siri* through several Qur'anic ethical concepts—including *al-taqwā*, *al-karūmah*, *al-'izzah*, *al-murū'ah*, *al-ḥayā'*, and *al-'iffah*—and concludes that contemporary violent interpretations of *siri* represent a deviation from both Bugis philosophy and Islamic ethics. These studies successfully establish conceptual compatibility between Qur'anic morality and Bugis ethical traditions.

Nevertheless, the present study advances this discussion in an important way. Whereas Ardhy (2024) and Haris (2025) primarily reconstruct *siri* at the level of ethical theory, this research demonstrates how that reconstruction actually occurs within the practice of Qur'anic exegesis. Through his translation choices in *Tafsir al-Munīr*, Daud Ismail vernacularizes *al-ḥayā'* into expressions such as *tanre siri'na* when referring to human morality, while simultaneously avoiding literal equivalence when the same lexical root is attributed to Allah. This contextual differentiation indicates that vernacularization is governed by Qur'anic theology rather than by cultural convention alone. Consequently, *siri* is not merely preserved as local wisdom but is normatively reconstructed through the ethical boundaries established by revelation.

This constitutes the second theoretical contribution of the present study. Previous scholarship generally describes the interaction between Islam and Bugis culture as a process of accommodation or Islamization. By contrast, the findings presented here suggest a more precise model of ethical reconstruction. Daud Ismail neither replaces *siri* with Islamic terminology nor simply legitimizes existing cultural values. Instead, he reconstructs the cultural meaning of *siri* through the Qur'anic concept of *al-ḥayā'*, producing a vernacular ethical synthesis in which indigenous moral philosophy retains its cultural intelligibility while being reoriented by the universal ethical vision of the Qur'an.

C. Theoretical Contribution to Nusantara Tafsir Studies

Beyond its contribution to the interpretation of *al-ḥayā'* and *siri*, this study also offers a broader theoretical implication for the development of Nusantara tafsir studies. Recent scholarship has increasingly attempted to formulate the defining characteristics of Qur'anic interpretation produced in the Indonesian archipelago. Among the most systematic efforts is the Conceptual Formulation of Nusantara Tafsir Studies proposed by Asmullah (2025), which identifies several principal dimensions of Nusantara tafsir, including its ontological orientation, the use of local languages and scripts, methods of presentation, interpretive methodology, and exegetical characteristics. This framework provides an important foundation for distinguishing Nusantara tafsir from other regional traditions of Qur'anic interpretation by emphasizing its intellectual and cultural particularities.

The findings of the present study confirm the relevance of Asmullah's formulation. The analysis of *Tafsir al-Munīr* demonstrates that Daud Ismail clearly reflects all of these dimensions. Ontologically, the Qur'an is understood primarily as practical guidance that should be accessible to ordinary Muslims through their own language. Linguistically, the use of the Bugis language and Lontara script illustrates how local literary traditions function as legitimate media for communicating Qur'anic teachings. Methodologically, Daud Ismail combines classical exegetical authorities with contextual explanations that resonate with the social realities of Bugis society. These findings reinforce the explanatory power of Asmullah's framework for analysing the structural characteristics of Nusantara tafsir.

Nevertheless, the present study also suggests that the existing formulation remains primarily descriptive. While it successfully explains how Nusantara tafsir is constructed, it does not fully explain what intellectual processes occur when Qur'anic ethical concepts encounter indigenous moral systems. The analysis of *al-ḥayā'* in *Tafsir al-Munīr* demonstrates that vernacular interpretation involves more than the selection of local languages, scripts, or

interpretive methods. Rather, it encompasses an active process through which universal Qur'anic ethics are reformulated within culturally meaningful moral categories while simultaneously reshaping those categories according to the normative vision of the Qur'an.

Accordingly, this study proposes an additional analytical dimension that may enrich the Conceptual Formulation of Nusantara Tafsir Studies, namely ethical vernacularization, or more specifically, the vernacularization of Qur'anic ethics. This dimension refers to the interpretive process through which ethical concepts contained in the Qur'an are articulated through indigenous moral vocabularies without reducing their theological and normative substance. In this process, vernacularization is understood not merely as linguistic localization but as the ethical negotiation through which local cultural values are critically reconstructed in light of Qur'anic moral principles.

The case of Daud Ismail illustrates this process clearly. His translation of *al-ḥayā'* into expressions such as *tanre siri'na* does not simply provide a Bugis lexical equivalent for an Arabic term. Instead, it transforms the cultural meaning of *siri* by positioning it within the ethical horizon of the Qur'an. Likewise, his contextual interpretation of *al-ḥayā'* when attributed to Allah demonstrates that vernacularization remains constrained by theological considerations, ensuring that cultural adaptation never compromises the principle of *tanzīh*. Consequently, vernacularization functions simultaneously as cultural mediation and ethical reconstruction.

Theoretically, this finding broadens the analytical scope of Nusantara tafsir studies. Previous formulations have primarily emphasized the external characteristics of regional Qur'anic interpretation, including language, script, methodology, and literary presentation. The present study argues that equal attention should be given to the internal ethical dynamics of interpretation, particularly the ways in which Qur'anic moral concepts are localized, negotiated, and reconstructed within indigenous systems of meaning. Incorporating ethical vernacularization into the analytical framework therefore enables Nusantara tafsir to be understood not only as a regional literary tradition but also as a distinctive mode of ethical interpretation through which universal Qur'anic values are continually re-expressed in culturally intelligible forms.

Accordingly, the principal theoretical contribution of this study is not the rejection of Asmullah's formulation but its extension. The findings suggest that the study of Nusantara tafsir should move beyond structural dimensions toward a more comprehensive framework that also examines the ethical transformation produced through vernacular interpretation. In

this respect, ethical vernacularization may serve as a complementary analytical category for future studies investigating how Qur'anic ethics are negotiated, reconstructed, and internalized within diverse cultural traditions across the Muslim world.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the vernacularization of Qur'anic ethics in *Tafsir al-Munir* extends far beyond the translation of Arabic terminology into the Bugis language. Through an analysis of Daud Ismail's interpretation of *al-ḥayā'*, the study reveals that vernacularization constitutes an interpretive process in which universal Qur'anic ethics are negotiated within indigenous moral concepts while simultaneously reshaping those concepts according to Islamic ethical principles. Daud Ismail does not explicitly formulate *siri* as an exegetical category, nor does he construct a Qur'an-centered philosophy of Bugis culture. Instead, his selection of vernacular expressions—particularly *tanre siri'na* when referring to human morality and his contextual reinterpretation of *al-ḥayā'* when attributed to Allah—demonstrates a careful balance between cultural intelligibility and theological consistency. Consequently, *siri* is neither abandoned nor accepted uncritically but is reconstructed through the ethical framework of *al-ḥayā'*, transforming it from a predominantly socio-cultural concept of honour into a moral virtue grounded in Qur'anic values of dignity, self-restraint, and accountability before God.

The findings contribute to the development of Nusantara tafsir studies in two important respects. First, they challenge the prevailing understanding of vernacularization as primarily a linguistic or translational phenomenon by demonstrating that vernacular tafsir also functions as a process of ethical negotiation between revelation and local culture. Second, the study extends Asmullah's Conceptual Formulation of Nusantara Tafsir Studies by proposing ethical vernacularization as an additional analytical dimension. While existing formulations successfully explain the ontological orientation, linguistic features, methodology, and exegetical characteristics of Nusantara tafsir, the present study argues that equal attention should be given to the transformation of Qur'anic ethical concepts within indigenous systems of meaning. This perspective offers a broader framework for understanding how local wisdom is not merely accommodated within Qur'anic interpretation but is critically reconstructed through the normative vision of the Qur'an.

This study is limited to Daud Ismail's interpretation of *al-ḥayā'* in *Tafsir al-Munir* and therefore does not represent the full diversity of vernacular ethical interpretations across the Indonesian archipelago. Future research may expand this analytical framework by comparing

the vernacularization of Qur'anic ethical concepts in other regional commentaries, such as Javanese, Sundanese, Madurese, Banjar, Acehese, or Malay tafsir traditions. Comparative studies of additional ethical concepts—including *al-taqwā*, *al-karūmah*, *al-ʿadl*, *al-ʿiffah*, and *al-amānah*—would further clarify how different local cultures negotiate Qur'anic moral values through their own indigenous ethical vocabularies. Such investigations would contribute to a more comprehensive theoretical understanding of ethical vernacularization as a distinctive characteristic of Nusantara Qur'anic exegesis and enrich broader discussions on the relationship between sacred texts, local cultures, and Islamic ethics in the contemporary Muslim world.

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