

AI HERMENEUTIC COMPETENCE IN QUR'ANIC EXEGESIS: A CRITICAL REVIEW BASED ON *MUFASSIR* QUALIFICATIONS IN '*ULŪM AL-QUR'ĀN* TRADITION

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Abstract: The development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has significantly transformed various fields of knowledge, including Qur'anic exegesis. AI can rapidly process Islamic data, analyze language, connect classical and contemporary tafsir sources, and present interpretive information systematically. These advances have raised scholarly debates concerning whether AI possesses the hermeneutic competence required to interpret the Qur'an. This study examines AI's hermeneutic competence by evaluating it against the qualifications of a mufassir within the tradition of '*ulūm al-Qur'ān*. It employs a qualitative library research approach. The findings reveal that AI demonstrates considerable strengths in processing large datasets, retrieving references, recognizing linguistic patterns, and organizing interpretive information efficiently. Nevertheless, these capabilities remain technical and computational rather than epistemological. AI cannot fulfill the essential qualifications of a mufassir, including spiritual maturity, religious experience, scholarly intuition, contextual understanding of socio-religious realities, and ethical responsibility in interpreting divine revelation. Consequently, AI should not be regarded as a replacement for human mufassirs, but as a complementary tool that supports research, documentation, and access to tafsir sources. This study argues that the integration of AI into Qur'anic exegesis must remain grounded in the epistemological principles of '*ulūm al-Qur'ān*. Maintaining a balance between technological innovation and authoritative interpretive methodology is essential to ensure that Qur'anic interpretation remains academically rigorous, contextually sound, ethically responsible, and faithful to the intellectual tradition of Islamic scholarship.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Hermeneutics, Mufassir, Qur'anic Exegesis, '*Ulūm al-Qur'ān*.

Abstrak: Perkembangan kecerdasan buatan (Artificial Intelligence/AI) telah menghadirkan transformasi besar dalam berbagai bidang ilmu pengetahuan, termasuk dalam studi tafsir Al-Qur'an. Teknologi AI saat ini mampu mengolah data keislaman secara cepat melalui analisis bahasa, penghubungan berbagai sumber tafsir klasik hingga kontemporer, serta penyajian informasi interpretatif secara sistematis. Kemampuan tersebut memunculkan perdebatan akademik mengenai sejauh mana AI dapat memiliki kapasitas hermeneutis dalam memahami dan menafsirkan Al-Qur'an. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji kompetensi hermeneutis AI dalam penafsiran Al-Qur'an dengan meninjaunya berdasarkan syarat-syarat mufassir dalam tradisi '*ulūm al-Qur'ān*. Penelitian menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi

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kepastakaan (library research). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa AI memiliki kemampuan yang cukup efektif dalam pengolahan data, pencarian referensi, pengenalan pola bahasa, dan penyusunan informasi tafsir secara cepat dan sistematis. Akan tetapi, kemampuan tersebut masih terbatas pada aspek teknis dan komputasional. AI belum mampu memenuhi unsur mendasar yang menjadi syarat seorang mufassir, seperti kedalaman spiritual, pengalaman religius, intuisi keilmuan, pemahaman konteks sosial-keagamaan, serta tanggung jawab moral dalam memahami wahyu. Oleh karena itu, AI tidak dapat diposisikan sebagai pengganti mufassir manusia, melainkan hanya sebagai instrumen pendukung dalam kajian tafsir Al-Qur'an. Penelitian ini menegaskan pentingnya menjaga keseimbangan antara pemanfaatan teknologi modern dan otoritas epistemologis dalam tradisi tafsir Islam agar proses penafsiran tetap berada dalam kerangka keilmuan yang otoritatif, kritis, dan bertanggung jawab.

Kata-kata Kunci: *Artificial Intelligence*, Hermeneutika, *Mufassir*, Tafsir Al-Qur'an, *'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*.

Introduction

The development of digital technology in the 21st century has brought significant changes in the way humans acquire, manage, and disseminate knowledge. One of the most influential innovations in this development is the emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI), a technology designed to imitate human thinking abilities through the automatic processing of data and language (Russell and Norvig 2021, 5). The presence of AI is now utilized not only in the fields of economics, healthcare, and education, but has also begun to enter the realm of religious studies, including Qur'anic studies and tafsir. Various AI-based platforms can provide explanations of Qur'anic verses, translate Arabic texts, summarize the opinions of tafsir scholars, and even answer religious questions in a very short time. This phenomenon indicates that AI has become part of the intellectual transformation of modern society.

However, this development has also raised new questions regarding the extent to which AI can deeply understand the messages of the Qur'an. In the Islamic tradition, the Qur'an is not understood merely as a linguistic text, but as divine revelation that possesses spiritual, moral, and theological dimensions. Therefore, the activity of interpretation cannot rely solely on language and data processing, but also requires contextual understanding, moral responsibility, and spiritual depth. This issue becomes increasingly important as some members of society have begun to use AI as an instant reference for understanding Qur'anic verses without considering the scholarly authority underlying such interpretations (Mubarik and Sakinah 2024, 189–203; Mukmin et al. 2025, 39–59; Herman et al. 2025, 145–60; Hamdan 2025, 339–62; Ridwan et al. 2026, 440–46; Munir and Am 2026, 388–409).

Studies on the relationship between Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Qur'anic exegesis (tafsir) have developed quite significantly over the past five years. Various studies indicate that AI possesses substantial capabilities in assisting the processing of Islamic data, particularly in linguistic aspects, reference searching, and Qur'anic text analysis. One relevant study was conducted by Safa Alrumayh

(Alrumayh 2025, 223–39). The study explains that AI is capable of providing systematic semantic analysis and linguistic structure analysis of the Qur'an; however, the technology still has fundamental limitations in understanding the spiritual and epistemological dimensions of revelation. AI is considered incapable of possessing moral consciousness, religious experience, or ethical responsibility as humans do in the process of interpreting the Qur'an. Therefore, AI is more appropriately positioned as a supporting tool in tafsir studies rather than as a primary interpretive authority. Similar findings were also presented in a study by Muhammad Huzaifa Bashir and his team (Bashir et al. 2023, 6801–54). The study discusses the development of Natural Language Processing (NLP) technology in Qur'anic studies, including semantic analysis, verse classification, and AI-based search systems. The findings show that AI is highly effective in identifying linguistic patterns and thematic relationships within the Qur'an. However, the study emphasizes that the complexity of Qur'anic meanings, particularly those related to metaphor, historical context, and spiritual values, remains difficult for computational systems to fully comprehend. Thus, AI's capability in language processing cannot yet be equated with the hermeneutic competence of a *mufassir*.

In addition, studies on hermeneutics in Islamic studies have also become an important concern in contemporary research. Abdulloh Labib explains that hermeneutics does not merely focus on linguistic aspects, but is also concerned with the relationship between text, context, and human experience in understanding meaning. The study emphasizes that the process of interpreting the Qur'an requires historical reflection, intellectual awareness, and existential experience, all of which are inseparable from the presence of humans as interpretive subjects. In this context, AI is regarded as incapable of replacing the role of humans because technology operates solely through data patterns and statistical algorithms (Labib 2022, 16–29).

One particularly relevant study is by Remy Demichelis (Demichelis 2024). The study explains that modern AI systems are indeed capable of generating responses that appear interpretative through mechanisms such as deep learning and language pattern recognition. Nevertheless, the process is actually based only on statistical relationships among data, rather than on a conscious understanding of meaning. According to the study, interpretation from a hermeneutic perspective is not merely related to the ability to understand linguistic structures, but also requires historical consciousness, existential experience, and the subjective involvement of humans in giving meaning to reality. Therefore, AI is considered not yet capable of being regarded as an interpretive subject in the sense of philosophical hermeneutics. This study is important because it strengthens the argument that hermeneutic competence in Qur'anic exegesis cannot be measured solely through technical abilities in processing language and data, but must also involve dimensions of spiritual awareness, moral responsibility, and religious experience,

which constitute the primary qualifications of a *mufassir* within the tradition of *‘ulūm al-Qur’ān*. Based on the various previous studies, it can be understood that AI makes a significant contribution to supporting the development of tafsir studies and the digitalization of Islamic knowledge; however, the technology still possesses fundamental limitations in the hermeneutic and epistemological aspects of Qur’anic interpretation. Therefore, this study seeks to strengthen the critical examination of AI’s hermeneutic competence by specifically reviewing it in light of the qualifications of a *mufassir* within the tradition of *‘ulūm al-Qur’ān* (Rahman 2021, 125).

Although these studies have made important contributions, there remains a research gap that needs to be addressed. Most previous studies tend to discuss AI from two main perspectives, namely its technical capabilities in processing Qur’anic data and its limitations in understanding spiritual, ethical, and contextual dimensions. Research on NLP, for example, has focused more on the technology’s ability to process language and identify patterns in Qur’anic texts. Meanwhile, research on AI ethics and philosophy has focused more on questioning machines’ ability to understand meaning philosophically (Bagasharov et al. 2026, 1–19).

Thus, there are still few studies that specifically bring together AI’s technical capabilities with the epistemological and methodological qualifications of a *mufassir* within the tradition of *‘ulūm al-Qur’ān*. This gap has become increasingly important because AI’s capabilities are no longer limited to searching for or processing information but have developed into generative systems that can produce religious explanations in a form resembling the answers of an exegete. This condition raises new issues that cannot be adequately addressed merely by saying that AI has spiritual limitations. More systematic criteria are needed to determine the extent to which AI’s capabilities can be called hermeneutic competence and the extent to which these capabilities differ from the competencies required of a *mufassir*. In the tradition of *‘ulūm al-Qur’ān*, the activity of tafsir is related to mastery of the Arabic language, Qur’anic sciences, *ḥadīth*, *asbāb al-nuzūl*, *nāsikh-mansūkh*, principles of *uṣūl al-fiqh*, knowledge of the context in which verses were revealed, as well as the ability to make methodological and ethical considerations. These aspects need to be used as parameters to examine AI’s capabilities more critically (Andrean and Harahap 2025, 661). On that basis, this study does not merely examine whether AI can provide answers regarding Qur’anic verses, but tests whether this ability meets the characteristics of hermeneutic competence required in the activity of Qur’anic interpretation.

The research focuses on a comparison between the characteristics of AI’s work in producing interpretations and the epistemological, methodological, and ethical qualifications of a *mufassir* (Fepriani and Ratnasari 2026, 350). With this approach, this study seeks to fill a gap in research that has tended to separate discussions of AI’s technical capabilities, hermeneutic theory, and tafsir methodology. This

study's position also emphasizes that the main issue is not merely whether AI can produce interpretations that appear correct, but whether the process that produces those interpretations can be justified as a hermeneutic activity within the framework of Qur'anic scholarship. Based on this gap, the research problem in this study is the unclear position of AI as a hermeneutic subject or instrument in Qur'anic interpretation when its generative capabilities are compared with the scholarly standards of a *mufassir* (Azani et al. 2026, 104870).

Therefore, this study is directed at answering two main questions: (1) to what extent can AI's ability to generate Qur'anic interpretations fulfill the elements of hermeneutic competence; and (2) how does this ability compare with the epistemological, methodological, and ethical qualifications of a *mufassir* in the *'ulūm al-Qur'ān* tradition? This study aims to analyze AI's hermeneutic competence in Qur'anic interpretation through the perspective of *'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, while also identifying the boundary between computational capabilities in generating interpretations and human hermeneutic capacity in understanding revelation. This study is expected to make a conceptual contribution to the discourse on Qur'anic exegesis in the era of artificial intelligence, particularly in formulating AI's position as a supporting technology that can be utilized in Qur'anic research without disregarding scholarly authority, methodological validity, and the ethical responsibility inherent in the activity of interpretation (Saifullah et al. 2026, 460).

Within the tradition of *'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, Muslim scholars have established several qualifications that must be possessed by a *mufassir* so that their interpretations can be accounted for both scientifically and religiously. These qualifications include not only mastery of the Arabic language, *naḥwu* (Arabic grammar), *ṣaraf* (morphology), *balāghah* (rhetoric), *asbāb al-nuzūl* (occasions of revelation), hadith studies, and *uṣūl al-fiqh* (principles of Islamic jurisprudence), but also moral integrity, piety, and spiritual depth. Figures such as Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī and al-Zarkashī (Zarkashī 2017, 45), and Mannā' al-Qaṭṭān (Qaṭṭān 2017, 79) explained that a *mufassir* must possess broad knowledge as well as good character, because tafsir is directly related to conveying the message of Allah to humanity. In this context, the interpretation of the Qur'an cannot be separated from the ethical and spiritual responsibility of the interpreter. The issue then arises when AI begins to be used to answer religious questions and generate interpretations of Qur'anic verses automatically. Technically, AI can indeed be trained using thousands of tafsir books and Islamic references, enabling it to formulate responses that appear scholarly and argumentative. However, AI still operates through statistical algorithms and data patterns, rather than through conscious awareness of the meaning of revelation. Technology does not possess intention, moral responsibility, or religious experience as humans do. In Q.S. An-Nahl [16]: 43, Allah commands people to ask those who possess knowledge when they do not know a matter. This verse indicates that the authority of knowledge

in Islam remains with humans who possess competence and integrity, rather than with mechanical systems. Thus, using AI in Qur'anic exegesis requires clear limits so it does not lead to misunderstandings about the authority of interpretation in Islam.

On the one hand, this condition provides significant benefits by facilitating public access to tafsir sources and Islamic literature. AI can assist students, university scholars, and researchers in locating verse references, comparing the opinions of scholars, and understanding particular themes in the Qur'an more efficiently. On the other hand, excessive reliance on AI may give rise to an instant and superficial understanding of religion (Adinugraha et al. 2026, 70).

In the Islamic tradition, the process of acquiring knowledge is not carried out merely through reading texts, but also through the cultivation of *adab* (proper ethics), scholarly chains of transmission (*sanad*), and the relationship between teacher and student. This tradition demonstrates that knowledge possesses ethical and spiritual dimensions that cannot be separated from the learning process itself. AI does not possess a scholarly *sanad*, does not undergo the process of *talaqqi* (direct transmission of knowledge), and cannot be held morally accountable for its interpretations before society. Furthermore, AI also has the potential to produce interpretive bias because it is highly dependent on the data used in its training process. If the data sources employed are limited or inclined toward certain perspectives, then the interpretations generated may likewise be influenced by such biases. This condition demonstrates that technology is never truly neutral and still requires human control in its use. Therefore, it is important to position AI proportionally so that it remains a supporting tool in tafsir studies without undermining the scholarly authority of the *ulama* (Istiqomah et al. 2024, 178–200; Qulyubi et al. 2026, 119–36; Hayat et al. 2026, 774–94).

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study seeks to critically analyze the hermeneutic competence of AI in Qur'anic exegesis by employing the perspective of the qualifications of a *mufasssir* within the tradition of *'ulūm al-Qur'ān*. This study is important because the development of AI has created a major transformation in the way society acquires and understands religious knowledge. The research is not intended to reject technological advancement, but rather to position AI proportionally within the epistemological framework of Islamic tafsir. Research sources are divided into primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include *al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *al-Burhān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* by Badr al-Dīn al-Zarkashī, *Mabāḥith fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* by Mannā' Khalīl al-Qaṭṭān, as well as the Qur'an as the primary textual source. Meanwhile, secondary sources consist of journal articles, books, and contemporary research on AI, tafsir, hermeneutics, NLP, and AI epistemology, particularly publications from 2023–2025. Data were collected through search, selection, reading, and documentation of relevant literature. The analysis was conducted descriptively-

analytically and comparatively using three main indicators, namely linguistic-textual, methodological-contextual, and ethical-spiritual and epistemological competencies. These three indicators were used to compare AI's ability to produce interpretations with the scholarly requirements of a *mufasssir*. The results of the comparison were then used to determine the limits of AI's hermeneutical capabilities and its position in contemporary Qur'anic tafsir activities (Bakar et al. 2025, 429–46).

The Concept of Hermeneutics in Qur'anic Exegesis

Hermeneutics can generally be understood as a discipline concerned with the processes, principles, and methods involved in understanding and interpreting texts. Its scope is not limited to written language, but may also include symbols, traditions, historical events, and various forms of human expression. In the development of Western intellectual history, hermeneutics initially emerged in connection with the interpretation of religious texts, particularly the Jewish and Christian scriptures. Over time, however, its scope expanded considerably. Hermeneutics was subsequently employed in literary studies, historical research, philosophy, and the social sciences as a framework for examining how human beings construct meaning through language and experience. This development demonstrates that interpretation is not simply an activity of discovering a meaning that is already completely fixed within a text. Rather, interpretation involves an interaction between the text, the interpreter, the linguistic structure of the text, and the historical and social circumstances in which understanding takes place (Ahmad 2026, 60–79).

The development of modern hermeneutics was strongly influenced by several major thinkers, including Friedrich Schleiermacher, Wilhelm Dilthey, Martin Heidegger, and Hans-Georg Gadamer. Schleiermacher viewed interpretation as an effort to understand a text through both its linguistic structure and the intention of its author. For him, a careful interpreter needs to pay attention not only to individual words but also to the broader context in which the author expressed an idea. Dilthey subsequently expanded hermeneutics by relating the process of interpretation to historical experience and human life. He argued that understanding human expressions requires attention to the historical world in which those expressions emerge. Heidegger moved hermeneutics into a more philosophical direction by connecting interpretation with the fundamental condition of human existence. Meanwhile, Gadamer developed the idea of the “fusion of horizons,” emphasizing that understanding occurs through an encounter between the horizon of the text and the horizon of the interpreter. Consequently, interpretation cannot be separated from the historical, cultural, linguistic, and experiential background of the person who interprets a text (Azhar et al. 2025, 101).

This perspective is particularly relevant when discussing the interpretation of religious texts, including the Qur'an. A text is not interpreted in an empty space

because the interpreter always approaches it with certain linguistic knowledge, intellectual assumptions, social experiences, and historical circumstances. Nevertheless, this does not necessarily mean that every interpretation is equally valid or that the meaning of a text can be changed arbitrarily according to the interpreter's personal interests. Rather, hermeneutics draws attention to the complex process through which meaning is understood. An interpreter is required to engage seriously with the structure and language of the text while also considering the context in which the text was produced and the circumstances in which it is being interpreted. In this sense, hermeneutics provides an analytical framework for examining the relationship between text, context, and interpreter.

Although the terminology and theoretical formulation of hermeneutics developed within the Western intellectual tradition, the activity of interpreting religious revelation has a long history within Islamic scholarship. The Qur'an itself was revealed in a particular linguistic, historical, and social environment, and its meanings were explained and contextualized from the earliest period of Islam. The Prophet Muhammad served as the first authoritative interpreter of the Qur'an. Through his statements, actions, and explanations, he clarified the meanings of verses that were difficult for the Companions to understand. His interpretation was not separated from the realities faced by the early Muslim community. Certain verses were explained in response to questions, particular events, or circumstances experienced by the Companions. Therefore, the earliest practice of Qur'anic interpretation already demonstrated an awareness of language, context, and the circumstances surrounding revelation (Andrean and Harahap 2025, 666).

Following the death of the Prophet, the Companions continued the practice of interpreting the Qur'an based on their knowledge of the Arabic language, their familiarity with the circumstances of revelation, their direct experience of the Prophet's teachings, and their understanding of the social conditions of the early Muslim community. Figures such as Ibn 'Abbās, Ibn Mas'ūd, 'Ā'ishah, and other Companions contributed significantly to the development of early Qur'anic interpretation. Their interpretations often involved explaining unfamiliar vocabulary, clarifying the meaning of particular expressions, relating verses to specific events, and connecting Qur'anic guidance with concrete social circumstances. The generation of the *tābi'in* then inherited this interpretive tradition and further developed it through regional centers of Islamic scholarship such as Mecca, Medina, and Iraq.

As Islamic intellectual history developed, Qur'anic interpretation became increasingly diverse in terms of method and orientation. The classical tradition produced *tafsīr bi al-ma'thūr*, which emphasized transmitted reports from the Prophet, the Companions, and the *tābi'in*, as well as *tafsīr bi al-ra'y*, which gave greater attention to reasoning and intellectual analysis while remaining within the methodological boundaries of Islamic scholarship. Other approaches

subsequently emerged, including linguistic, juridical, theological, philosophical, and Sufi interpretations. The diversity of these traditions indicates that Qur'anic exegesis has never developed through a single interpretive model. Different scholars employed different intellectual instruments depending on their historical circumstances, scholarly disciplines, and questions concerning the Qur'anic text (Berg et al. 2026, 28).

The relationship between hermeneutics and Qur'anic exegesis therefore needs to be approached carefully. Hermeneutics should not simply be regarded as an entirely new concept that is imported into Islamic scholarship without any connection to the existing tradition of tafsir. At the same time, it would also be inaccurate to assume that classical Islamic tafsir and modern Western hermeneutics are completely identical. Both emerged from different intellectual histories and operated within different conceptual frameworks. Classical Muslim scholars developed their interpretive methodologies around disciplines such as *'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, Arabic linguistics, *ḥadīth*, *fiqh*, *kalām*, and principles of interpretation, whereas modern hermeneutics developed through debates concerning language, history, consciousness, existence, and the relationship between the interpreter and the text. The similarities therefore lie primarily in the concern with understanding meaning, while the theoretical foundations and methodological assumptions may differ (Rohmah 2025, 65).

In the context of contemporary Qur'anic studies, hermeneutics can nevertheless provide an additional analytical perspective for examining how Qur'anic meaning is understood in different historical circumstances. It encourages researchers to distinguish between the historical context in which a verse was revealed and the context in which the verse is interpreted today. Such an approach becomes important because contemporary readers encounter the Qur'an within social, political, technological, and cultural conditions that are different from those of the early Muslim community. Questions concerning artificial intelligence, digital culture, environmental crises, gender relations, human rights, and other contemporary issues may require interpreters to consider how Qur'anic principles can be understood in relation to new circumstances without disregarding the historical and linguistic foundations of the revelation.

Nevertheless, the use of hermeneutics in Qur'anic studies requires methodological awareness. The Qur'an occupies a distinctive position in Islamic epistemology as divine revelation, and therefore its interpretation cannot be treated in the same way as the interpretation of ordinary literary or historical texts. A hermeneutical approach to the Qur'an needs to take into account the established principles of Qur'anic scholarship, including Arabic language, *asbāb al-nuzūl*, *munāsabah al-āyāt*, *nāsikh* and *mansūkh* where relevant, *ḥadīth*, and the broader principles of *'ulūm al-Qur'ān*. By combining contextual sensitivity with respect for the internal structure of Islamic interpretive traditions, hermeneutics can

function as a complementary analytical instrument rather than as a replacement for established Qur'anic scholarship (Bakar et al. 2025, 429–46).

From this perspective, hermeneutics in Qur'anic exegesis can be understood as an effort to examine the relationship between revelation, historical context, language, and the contemporary interpreter. The main concern is not merely transferring a verse from the past into the present but understanding the message of the verse in a manner that considers both its original context and its relevance to changing circumstances. Such an approach requires a balance between textual fidelity and contextual awareness. The interpreter must therefore avoid two extremes: treating the text as if it had no relationship to its historical context or interpreting it solely according to contemporary assumptions while neglecting the linguistic and historical foundations of revelation.

Accordingly, the development of hermeneutical approaches in Qur'anic studies demonstrates that the tradition of interpretation can continue to engage with changing intellectual and social conditions. The presence of different interpretive methods throughout Islamic history shows that Qur'anic exegesis has always involved an interaction between the revealed text and the intellectual circumstances of its interpreters. Modern hermeneutics can contribute to this discussion by providing conceptual tools for examining how historical horizons, language, and contemporary experiences influence the process of understanding. However, its application to the Qur'an remains most productive when it is placed in dialogue with the methodological heritage of Islamic scholarship. In this way, hermeneutics can serve as a bridge for discussing how the Qur'an maintains its normative significance while its interpretation continues to respond to the changing realities of humanity (Saifullah et al. 2026, 468).

In the study of Islamic tafsir, understanding the Qur'an cannot be limited merely to the literal aspect of the text. The Qur'an is a sacred scripture that encompasses dimensions of language, law, ethics, spirituality, and social guidance for humanity. Therefore, a *mufassir* is required not only to understand the structure of the Arabic language, but also to be capable of grasping the moral messages and universal values contained within the verses of the Qur'an. This interpretive process requires the involvement of human intellect, heart, life experience, and spiritual reflection. Allah says in Q.S. Şād [38]: 29:

كُنْزٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ

“This is a blessed Book which We have revealed to you so that they may reflect upon its verses and that those of understanding may take heed.”

The verse indicates that understanding the Qur'an requires a process of *tadabbur*, namely deep contemplation of the meaning of revelation. *Tadabbur* is not only related to intellectual understanding, but also to spiritual and moral reflection. In

this context, the hermeneutics of Islamic tafsir possesses characteristics that differ from Western secular hermeneutics, because revelation is understood as a source of divine truth that carries a sacred dimension. Furthermore, the hermeneutics of tafsir are also closely connected to social contexts and the development of different eras. The Qur'an was revealed within the context of seventh-century Arab society, yet its messages are universal and relevant to all humankind. Therefore, *mufasssirs* throughout history have sought to present contextual interpretations so that the values of the Qur'an may continue to be applied in modern life. In this process, a *mufasssir* must be capable of critically reading social realities without abandoning the fundamental principles of the *shari'ah*. Tafsir is not merely about explaining the text's meaning, but also about bridging revelation and the realities of human life (Winter 2018, 80).

From a technical perspective, artificial intelligence is capable of reproducing several features commonly associated with human interpretation. Through language models, AI can identify relationships between words, recognize semantic patterns, compare different textual sources, and generate explanations that appear coherent and logically structured. However, the ability to reproduce the linguistic form of interpretation should be distinguished from the human process of understanding. AI fundamentally operates through computational mechanisms that involve algorithms, statistical relationships, and patterns derived from large collections of data. Human beings, on the other hand, engage with texts through a much broader process that includes personal experience, historical awareness, emotions, intellectual reflection, and the circumstances in which they encounter a particular text. Thus, the similarity between AI-generated explanations and human interpretations does not necessarily indicate that both undergo the same process of understanding.

This distinction becomes particularly important when AI is applied to the interpretation of the Qur'an. A human interpreter encounters the Qur'an as a religious text and may relate its message to personal experiences, historical circumstances, social realities, and questions concerning human existence. Such encounters can shape the way a *mufasssir* identifies problems, understands context, and reflects upon the significance of a particular verse. AI does not possess an equivalent form of lived experience or personal consciousness. It does not experience suffering, moral dilemmas, religious commitment, or the existential questions that often influence human engagement with sacred texts. Its responses are generated from the information and linguistic patterns available within its computational framework. Consequently, although AI can formulate an explanation that resembles a human interpretation, this process may be more accurately understood as computationally generated interpretation rather than hermeneutical understanding in the full philosophical sense.

The issue is further complicated by the spiritual dimension embedded within

the Islamic tradition of Qur’anic interpretation. In the classical understanding of tafsir, intellectual knowledge is not necessarily separated from ethical conduct and spiritual refinement. The interpreter is expected to approach the Qur’an with sincerity, humility, piety, and awareness of his or her responsibility before Allah. The process of understanding revelation therefore involves not only the intellect but also the moral and spiritual orientation of the person interpreting it. AI does not possess faith, *taqwa*, intention to worship, or an inner spiritual relationship with the Qur’an. It may reproduce explanations concerning spirituality because such concepts are contained in its training data, but reproducing religious language is different from experiencing its spiritual meaning. For this reason, AI can provide valuable assistance in the technical aspects of Qur’anic research, while the deeper hermeneutical and spiritual dimensions of interpretation remain dependent upon human scholarly engagement (Elmahjub et al. 2026).

Table 1. Comparison of Hermeneutical Approaches: Western, Islamic, and AI (Source: Compiled from various literature 2024–2025).

Aspect	Western Hermeneutics (Gadamer, Schleiermacher)	Islamic Tafsir Hermeneutics	AI Approach
Source of Authority	Reader and text in free dialogue.	Divine revelation as the central authority.	Data and statistical patterns.
Role of the Reader	Active subject with a historical horizon.	<i>Mufassir</i> with scholarly and moral qualifications.	Passive computational system.
Spiritual Dimension	Not the primary focus.	Highly central and essential.	None.
Main methods	Phenomenology, linguistics, text–dialogue approach.	<i>Tafsir bi al-ma’thūr, tafsir bi al-ra’yi, maqāṣid</i> approach.	NLP, machine learning, deep learning.
Validity of Interpretation	Academic consensus.	Scholarly <i>sanad</i> and <i>ijmā’</i> (consensus of scholars).	Statistical accuracy.
Ultimate Aim	Historical understanding of textual meaning.	Guidance for life and salvation of the community.	Efficient information processing.

The Competence of a *Mufassir* in the Tradition of ‘*Ulūm al-Qur’ān*

Within the scholarly tradition of ‘*ulūm al-Qur’ān*, the *mufassir* holds a significant position because the interpretation of the Qur’an involves explaining

the message of divine revelation to other people. The role of a *mufasssir* is therefore not limited to producing an intellectual explanation of a text but also includes the responsibility of helping the Muslim community understand the guidance contained in the Qur'an. Since the Qur'an occupies a central position in Islamic belief and practice, its interpretation cannot be approached solely through personal assumptions or general intellectual ability. Classical Muslim scholars consequently placed considerable emphasis on the qualifications of those who engage in tafsir. A person who interprets the Qur'an is expected to possess sufficient knowledge, understand the principles governing interpretation, and demonstrate caution when formulating conclusions about the meaning of revelation (Bagasharov et al. 2026, 7).

The requirements established within the tafsir tradition cover several areas of scholarly knowledge. A *mufasssir* needs an adequate command of Arabic because the Qur'an was revealed in Arabic and many aspects of its meaning are closely related to vocabulary, grammar, morphology, rhetoric, and linguistic context. In addition, knowledge of *'ulūm al-Qur'ān* is essential for understanding subjects such as *asbāb al-nuzūl*, *Makkiyyah* and *Madaniyyah*, *nāsikh wa mansūkh*, *muhkam* and *mutashābih*, as well as other disciplines relevant to Qur'anic interpretation. Familiarity with hadith and the interpretations transmitted from earlier scholars is also important because these sources contribute to the broader contextualization of Qur'anic verses. Through these requirements, the classical tradition demonstrates that tafsir is an interdisciplinary form of scholarship that demands more than the ability to translate or explain individual words.

Beyond intellectual mastery, the qualifications of a *mufasssir* also involve ethical and spiritual dimensions. An interpreter is expected to approach the Qur'an with intellectual honesty, responsibility, humility, and awareness of the consequences that may arise from an interpretation. This ethical dimension encourages the *mufasssir* to distinguish between established knowledge and personal speculation, verify relevant sources, and avoid presenting unsupported claims as authoritative interpretations. Such requirements are important because Qur'anic interpretation can influence religious beliefs, worship, moral attitudes, and social practices within the Muslim community. Consequently, the authority of a *mufasssir* is traditionally built upon the combination of knowledge, methodological competence, ethical integrity, and spiritual awareness. These qualifications also provide an important framework for examining contemporary forms of Qur'anic interpretation, particularly when technological systems such as artificial intelligence are increasingly being used to assist in understanding and explaining Qur'anic texts (Niam 2025, 57).

The importance of these qualifications becomes apparent when considering the possible consequences of inaccurate interpretation. An explanation of the Qur'an may influence how people understand their beliefs, perform religious practices, and

respond to social issues. Errors in interpretation can consequently extend beyond academic disagreement and potentially affect aspects of *'aqīdah*, *'ibādah*, morality, and social relations within the Muslim community. This is why the authority of a *mufasssir* is traditionally accompanied by a significant responsibility toward both the text and its readers. In this context, the qualifications established within *'ulūm al-Qur'an* provide an important framework for assessing contemporary forms of Qur'anic interpretation, including interpretations assisted by artificial intelligence. AI may facilitate access to information and assist with textual analysis, but the question of whether it can fulfill the intellectual, ethical, and spiritual qualifications traditionally associated with a *mufasssir* requires careful examination (Alrumayh 2025, 223–39).

In addition to academic competence, a *mufasssir* must also possess strong moral and spiritual integrity. Scholars emphasize that an interpreter of the Qur'an must be trustworthy (*amānah*), honest, humble, and pious (*taqwa*) to Allah. This shows that the interpretation of the Qur'an is not merely an intellectual activity, but also a religious trust (*amānah*) that requires moral responsibility. Allah says:

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا

“And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight, and the heart—all of these will be held accountable.”

Q.S. Al-Isra' [17]: 36 emphasizes the importance of ensuring that every claim or statement is based on reliable knowledge. The verse warns human beings not to follow or communicate something without possessing sufficient knowledge of it, while also reminding that hearing, sight, and the heart will all be held accountable. This principle has important implications for the process of understanding and interpreting the Qur'an. An interpretation should not be constructed merely from assumptions, incomplete information, or unsupported claims, particularly when it concerns a sacred text that serves as a source of religious guidance. The verse therefore provides an ethical foundation for intellectual responsibility, requiring every attempt to understand revelation to be accompanied by careful examination and adequate knowledge (Masrur 2018, 188).

This principle is particularly relevant in the contemporary use of artificial intelligence for Qur'anic studies. AI can provide information rapidly and generate explanations based on large collections of textual data. Nevertheless, the information produced by an AI system cannot automatically be regarded as authoritative or accurate. AI may combine different sources, misunderstand a particular context, or produce an explanation that appears convincing despite requiring further verification. In the context of Qur'anic interpretation, such possibilities demand greater caution because an inaccurate explanation can influence how readers understand religious teachings. Q.S. Al-Isra' [17]: 36 can therefore be understood

as providing an important ethical reminder that information should be examined before it is accepted, used, or disseminated.

The verse also highlights the responsibility of the human being as the party who ultimately receives, evaluates, and acts upon information. In AI-assisted Qur'anic interpretation, this means that researchers and users should not simply accept generated responses without examining their sources and methodological basis. AI can function as a supporting instrument for searching verses, comparing tafsir, and organizing information, but it does not remove the researcher's responsibility to verify the results. Human scholars remain responsible for determining whether an interpretation is consistent with the Qur'anic text, relevant linguistic and historical contexts, and established principles of *'ulūm al-Qur'ān*. In this sense, Q.S. Al-Isra' [17]: 36 provides a valuable ethical framework for emphasizing that technological convenience should never replace the obligation to seek knowledge carefully and take responsibility for the information that is conveyed to others (Mauluddin 2024, 105).

This verse emphasizes the importance of scholarly responsibility in conveying religious knowledge. A *mufassir* must not interpret the Qur'an based on personal desires or self-interest, but rather on knowledge and intellectual honesty. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) also issued a strong warning against speaking about the Qur'an without knowledge. In a hadith narrated by al-Tirmidhī, it is stated that "whoever interprets the Qur'an without proper knowledge will face a severe warning." This hadith indicates that interpreting the Qur'an carries significant moral consequences. Therefore, Qur'anic scholars have always been cautious in presenting interpretations of Qur'anic verses (Hidayat 2017, 53; Cole 2022, 207–24). In the history of Islam, the authority of a *mufassir* was also established through the tradition of scholarly transmission (*sanad*). A Qur'anic scholar acquires knowledge through a long process of learning from teachers who possess recognized scholarly legitimacy. The tradition of *sanad* constitutes one of the important foundations of Islamic epistemology because it ensures the continuity of knowledge transmission from one generation to the next. Through *sanad*, Qur'anic interpretation gains not only intellectual validity but also moral and spiritual legitimacy. Therefore, the authority of a *mufassir* is not measured solely by academic ability, but also by personal integrity and spiritual depth. In the context of modern AI development, these qualifications of a *mufassir* become important parameters for assessing the extent to which technology can perform Qur'anic interpretive activity. AI indeed has significant capabilities in processing data, searching references, and producing systematic responses. However, AI does not possess the intention of worship, moral responsibility, religious experience, or a scholarly *sanad* as humans do. Technology operates based on statistical algorithms and data patterns, not on spiritual awareness of revelation (Yensi et al. 2025, 92).

Table 2. Fulfillment of the Qualifications of a *Mufasssir* in the Tradition of *‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān* by AI Systems.

Qualification of a <i>Mufasssir</i> (<i>‘ulūm al-Qur’ān</i>)	AI Fulfillment Status	Explanation
Mastery of the Arabic language (<i>naḥwu, ṣaraf, balāghah</i>)	Partial	AI recognizes patterns, not linguistic substance.
Mastery of <i>qirā’āt</i> (Qur’anic recitations)	Limited	Based only on recorded digital data.
Understanding <i>asbāb al-nuzūl</i> (occasions of revelation)	Partial	Dependent on data availability.
Mastery of <i>nāsikh wa mansūkh</i> (abrogation)	Partial	Lacking epistemological validation.
Mastery of <i>uṣūl al-fiqh</i> (principles of Islamic jurisprudence)	Limited	Unable to perform independent <i>ijtihād</i> .
Understanding hadith and its chains of transmission (<i>sanad</i>)	Partial	Lacking authority in narration/transmission.
Moral integrity (<i>amānah, wara’</i>)	Not fulfilled	AI does not possess morality.
Piety and spirituality	Not fulfilled	AI does not possess religious consciousness.
Possession of a scholarly <i>sanad</i> (chain of transmission)	Not fulfilled	AI does not have a chain of knowledge transmission.
Ability to take responsibility for interpretation	Not fulfilled	AI lacks moral subjectivity.

AI Capacity in Qur’anic Interpretation

The rapid progress of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in recent decades has influenced the way knowledge is produced, accessed, and analyzed in many academic disciplines. Islamic studies and Qur’anic scholarship are also experiencing the impact of this technological development. AI refers to a range of computational technologies that enable machines to process information, recognize patterns, learn from data, and generate responses that resemble certain forms of human intellectual activity. These capabilities have expanded considerably through developments in machine learning, Natural Language Processing (NLP), and large-scale data processing. As a result, AI is increasingly being introduced into research environments that previously depended heavily on conventional methods of reading, searching, and organizing scholarly sources.

Within Qur’anic studies, the application of AI can assist researchers in carrying out several activities that traditionally require substantial time and effort. Digital systems can be used to locate Qur’anic verses according to particular themes,

examine Arabic vocabulary and linguistic patterns, translate textual materials, and organize large collections of tafsir literature. AI-based tools can also assist in comparing interpretations from different sources and producing preliminary summaries of lengthy exegetical discussions. Such functions are particularly useful when researchers have to deal with extensive collections of Qur'anic texts, classical tafsir, contemporary scholarship, hadith, and other supporting literature. Rather than replacing conventional scholarship, these technologies can facilitate the initial stages of research by helping scholars identify relevant materials and establish connections among large quantities of information (Ünal, 2024, 161–92).

The increasing use of AI consequently reflects a broader transformation in the way Islamic knowledge is studied in the digital era. Researchers are no longer limited to manually examining physical books and printed indexes, as digital technologies provide faster methods for accessing and organizing extensive bodies of literature. Nevertheless, the convenience offered by AI also requires critical awareness regarding the accuracy, context, and reliability of the information it produces. In Qur'anic scholarship, technological efficiency cannot be separated from the methodological principles that govern interpretation. AI may support searching, classification, translation, and textual analysis, but the interpretation and evaluation of Qur'anic meaning still require careful scholarly consideration. Therefore, the emergence of AI should be viewed as an important development in contemporary Islamic studies while its use remains guided by appropriate academic and methodological standards.

One of the main capacities of AI in Qur'anic studies is its ability to manage and connect vast amounts of data rapidly. AI systems can access thousands of classical and modern tafsir works in digital form and then organize this information into systematic responses. This capability provides significant benefits for researchers, academics, and the general public who seek practical access to Islamic knowledge. For example, AI-based applications can help users locate Qur'anic verses related to specific themes such as justice, the environment, education, or Islamic economics within seconds. The technology also enables more efficient searching of hadiths, *asbāb al-nuzūl*, and inter-verse correlations compared to manual methods. In addition, AI plays a major role in the digitalization of manuscripts and classical tafsir literature. Many tafsir texts that were previously difficult to access can now be scanned, translated, and analyzed through AI-based digital systems. In an academic context, this provides great opportunities for the development of interdisciplinary Qur'anic research. Researchers can use AI to conduct semantic analysis, word frequency studies, and mapping of conceptual relationships within the Qur'an. This technology significantly accelerates research processes that previously required years to complete (Little 2021, e12747).

AI's capabilities in the field of language also constitute an important factor in the development of digital tafsir. The Arabic language of the Qur'an has a complex

linguistic structure, featuring various figures of speech, symbols, and layers of meaning. Through NLP technology, AI is able to recognize syntactic and semantic patterns in Arabic more accurately than previous generations of computer systems. In some cases, AI can even provide alternative translations based on the context of specific sentences. This capability greatly assists non-Arabic speakers in understanding the content of the Qur'an more easily (Zellentini 2023).

In addition, AI has also begun to be used in the development of Qur'an learning applications. Various AI-based digital platforms can assist users in learning *tajwīd*, memorizing the Qur'an, and understanding tafsir in an interactive way. Speech recognition technology enables AI to detect users' recitation errors and provide automatic corrections. This situation shows that AI has made a significant contribution to expanding access to Islamic education in the digital era. Nevertheless, AI's capacity in Qur'anic interpretation still has fundamental limitations. AI operates based on statistical patterns and training data provided by humans. The system does not truly understand meaning in the way humans understand a text. AI only predicts possible responses based on linguistic patterns learned from previous data. Therefore, the interpretations generated by AI are essentially simulated and probabilistic in nature, rather than the result of conscious understanding of revelation (Gadamer 2019, 125).

In the context of Qur'anic exegesis, this limitation becomes a significant issue because revelation contains not only linguistic information but also spiritual, moral, and existential dimensions. AI does not possess religious experience, awareness of the divine, or emotional engagement with the verses of the Qur'an. Technology cannot feel fear of Allah, does not undergo inner moral struggle when encountering verses about sin and reward, and has no intention of worship in the process of interpretation. Yet, in the Islamic tafsir tradition, the spiritual dimension is a fundamental part of understanding the Qur'an. In addition, AI is also vulnerable to producing interpretive bias. AI systems are highly dependent on the quality and diversity of the data used in their training. If the data is drawn only from certain schools of thought, the resulting interpretations will also tend to reflect those biases. In the context of Qur'anic exegesis, this can pose a serious problem because Islamic scholarly traditions include diverse schools of jurisprudence, interpretive approaches, and intellectual traditions. AI does not have the independent capacity to assess the validity of an opinion in moral and theological terms in the way humans do (Azhar et al. 2025, 121).

In a broader perspective, the presence of AI in tafsir studies can actually be viewed as a supportive tool that expands access to Islamic knowledge. This technology can be utilized to accelerate research, facilitate Qur'anic learning, and broaden the distribution of tafsir literature to the global community. However, the use of AI must remain under the supervision of *ulama* and academics who possess scholarly competence and moral integrity. Without such oversight, AI has

the potential to produce a shallow, overly textual understanding of religion that is detached from the methodological principles of Islamic tafsir. Thus, AI's capacity in Qur'anic interpretation is essentially instrumental and technical in nature. It has strong capabilities in data processing, linguistic analysis, and the rapid provision of Islamic information. However, it still lacks the spiritual dimension, moral consciousness, and existential experience that are central to the activity of Qur'anic interpretation. Therefore, AI is more appropriately positioned as a supporting instrument in digital tafsir studies, rather than as a replacement for human *mufassir* in understanding the revelation of Allah (Rohmah 2025, 58–67).

Table 3. Comparison of AI and *Mufassir* Capabilities in Qur'anic Exegesis.

Aspect of Competence	Human <i>Mufassir</i>	AI System
Mastery of the Arabic language	In-depth and contextual.	Strong in statistical-computational terms.
Understanding of <i>asbāb al-nuzūl</i>	Based on scholarly transmission (<i>sanad</i>).	Dependent on training data.
Capacity for <i>ijtihād</i>	Present; based on reason and Islamic law (<i>sharī'ah</i>).	Not present; only algorithmic patterning.
Spiritual dimension	Integral and authentic.	None
Moral Responsibility	Full; accountable.	None; mechanical in nature.
Scholarly Chain (<i>Sanad</i>)	Present and verifiable.	None
Social Context Sensitivity	High; based on empathy.	Limited; data-based.
Capacity for <i>tadabbur</i>	Present; involving heart and intellect.	Not present
Position in Tafsir	Primary interpretive subject.	Technical assisting instrument.

Critique of AI Hermeneutic Competence

The rapid development of artificial intelligence has created new possibilities for machines to perform intellectual tasks that were traditionally associated with human beings, including the interpretation of religious texts. In Qur'anic studies, AI can process large amounts of textual data, identify linguistic patterns, compare different interpretations, and generate explanations in a relatively systematic manner. These abilities make AI a useful tool for assisting researchers in searching for verses, examining tafsir literature, and organizing information. However, the ability to process and reproduce information should not automatically be understood as evidence that AI possesses hermeneutic competence in the same sense as a human interpreter. From the perspective of hermeneutics and *‘ulūm al-*

Qur'ān, interpretation involves dimensions that extend beyond linguistic analysis and data processing. Understanding the *Qur'an* requires attention to historical context, *asbāb al-nuzūl*, Arabic linguistic principles, the development of tafsir traditions, and the relationship between a text and the circumstances in which it is understood. Human interpretation is also influenced by historical consciousness, intellectual background, lived experience, and the interpreter's engagement with the spiritual meaning of the *Qur'an*. AI can process information concerning these aspects, but it does not possess personal experience, faith, spiritual awareness, or historical consciousness in the human sense. Therefore, an AI-generated explanation may appear coherent and persuasive while still lacking some of the deeper dimensions involved in human hermeneutical understanding (Hikmah and Ramdhani, 2026, 14–30).

Accordingly, AI should be positioned as a supporting instrument rather than an independent authority in *Qur'anic* interpretation. Its ability to search, classify, compare, and summarize information can significantly assist researchers, particularly when dealing with extensive *Qur'anic* and tafsir literature. Nevertheless, the evaluation and interpretation of the information produced by AI remain dependent on human scholarly judgment. Researchers must verify sources, consider historical and linguistic contexts, and assess interpretations according to established principles of *‘ulūm al-Qur’ān*. Thus, the use of AI in *Qur'anic* studies is more appropriately understood as a form of technological assistance that expands research capabilities while preserving the human role in hermeneutical responsibility and interpretation (Uriawan et al. 2025; Schleirmacher 2019, 47).

In philosophical hermeneutics, understanding a text is a dialogical process between the reader and the text, shaped by human lived experience, social conditions, and historical horizons. Hans-Georg Gadamer explains that understanding emerges through a fusion of horizons between the text and the reader. In other words, interpretation is not merely a technical activity of reading words, but an existential process that involves the full consciousness of the human being. AI does not possess such lived experience or historical consciousness. AI systems operate based on mathematical algorithms and statistical patterns, rather than through inner reflection on textual meaning.

In the context of the *Qur'an*, this issue becomes even more important because revelation has a sacred dimension that cannot be reduced merely to linguistic data. The *Qur'an* is not only a text of information, but also a guide for life that touches the spiritual and moral aspects of human beings. Allah says in Q.S. Al-Isrā' [17]: 9:

إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا
كَبِيرًا

“Indeed, this Qur'an guides to that which is most upright and gives good news to the believers who

do righteous deeds that they will have a great reward."

The Qur'an describes itself as a source of guidance that directs human beings toward the most upright path. This function indicates that the Qur'an is not merely a collection of textual information that can be examined through linguistic or analytical methods, but a revelation intended to guide human conduct, morality, and spiritual life. Consequently, understanding its message requires more than the ability to identify words, patterns, and relationships between texts. It also involves religious awareness and a sincere engagement with the values conveyed by revelation. Within Islamic scholarship, the process of interpreting the Qur'an is therefore closely connected to the spiritual consciousness of the interpreter. This dimension becomes an important point of distinction when the capacity of artificial intelligence to interpret Qur'anic texts is compared with the role traditionally performed by a human *mufassir*. A human *mufassir* approaches the interpretation of the Qur'an with an awareness that the activity carries a religious responsibility. Interpreting revelation is understood as an *amānah*, meaning that the interpreter is accountable for the explanation presented to others. This awareness encourages the *mufassir* to exercise caution, verify sources, consider the context of revelation, and avoid making unsupported claims about the meaning of divine verses. Spiritual consciousness can also encourage humility, because the interpreter recognizes the limitations of human understanding when dealing with the word of Allah. Thus, Qur'anic interpretation involves not only intellectual competence but also an ethical orientation that influences how knowledge is obtained, evaluated, and communicated to the Muslim community (Sahimi et al., 2025, 325–44).

Artificial intelligence operates within a fundamentally different framework. AI can analyze Qur'anic texts, identify linguistic patterns, retrieve relevant sources, and formulate explanations based on information available within its computational system. However, it does not possess faith, personal religious consciousness, intention to worship, or an awareness of accountability before Allah. An AI system can reproduce statements concerning morality and spirituality, but such production should not be equated with experiencing or embodying those values. It also does not independently bear moral responsibility for the consequences of an interpretation generated through its system. Therefore, AI may provide valuable assistance in the technical and informational aspects of Qur'anic research, but the responsibility for assessing and communicating its interpretations must remain with human scholars. This distinction reinforces the importance of human intellectual, ethical, and spiritual judgment in the contemporary use of AI for Qur'anic interpretation (Putten 2023, 305–30).

Another critique of AI's hermeneutic competence relates to the issue of data bias. AI is highly dependent on the training data used in its machine learning process. If the data is unbalanced or dominated by certain perspectives, then the

interpretations produced by AI will also tend to be biased. In the field of tafsir studies, such bias can be particularly dangerous because it may influence the public's understanding of Islamic teachings. AI does not possess the independent capacity to carry out epistemological critique of the data it learns from. In addition, AI also lacks the ability to comprehend the symbolism and depth of spiritual meaning in the Qur'an. Many Qur'anic verses employ metaphorical and symbolic language that requires spiritual intuition to understand properly. Sufi scholars, for instance, explain that certain meanings of the Qur'an can only be grasped through purification of the soul and closeness to Allah. In this context, AI clearly does not possess the spiritual capacity to understand the inner layers of meaning within revelation (Ahmad 2026, 60–79).

AI's limitations are also evident in its inability to fully understand human social context. Qur'anic interpretation is often related to complex social issues such as justice, poverty, conflict, and human ethics. A *mufasssir* must be able to understand social realities and consider the societal impact of their interpretations. Although AI can analyze social data, it does not possess empathy or lived experience that would enable an authentic understanding of social reality. Therefore, despite its highly advanced technical capabilities, AI still cannot replace the role of humans in Qur'anic hermeneutic activity. AI can only imitate interpretive language patterns, but it does not truly understand the meaning of revelation in a spiritual and existential sense. Thus, AI is more appropriately positioned as a supporting tool in the development of digital tafsir studies, while interpretive authority remains with human *mufasssirs* who possess scholarly competence, moral integrity, and deep spirituality (Miller 2020, 125–58; Annisa et al. 2025, 331–40; Budi 2021, 133–43; Saifunnuha et al. 2020; Thaib et al. 2025, 1–17).

Conclusion

The utilization of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has opened new avenues in the development of Qur'anic and tafsir studies. This technology can assist researchers in tracing references, processing data, analyzing linguistic elements, and accessing tafsir literature in a relatively short time. This convenience demonstrates that AI has potential as a supporting tool in Qur'anic research. However, these capabilities do not automatically make AI an agent of interpretation in the same sense as humans. AI operates based on data and computational patterns, and therefore does not possess religious experience, spiritual awareness, moral consideration, or personal responsibility for the meanings it produces. In the tradition of *'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, interpretation requires broader abilities than merely understanding linguistic structures or identifying relationships between texts. A *mufasssir* is required to master various disciplines of Qur'anic studies while also being able to consider the context, objectives, and consequences of an interpretation. Therefore, the results provided by AI need to be understood as information or analytical material that still requires examination. Based on the findings of this study, AI is more appropriately used to support human intellectual work, rather than taking over the

authority of scholars or replacing the position of the *mufassir*.

The first practical implication concerns fatwa institutions and religious authorities. These institutions need to have clear regulations regarding the use of AI in the preparation of religious materials. Answers obtained from AI should not be directly used as the basis for issuing fatwas. Such information needs to be reexamined through primary sources, such as the Qur'an, hadith, tafsir works, and reliable Islamic literature. After that, the results must be reviewed by scholars or experts who possess competencies relevant to the issue being discussed. This step is necessary to reduce the possibility of misinformation, contextual errors, or the use of inappropriate sources. Transparency regarding AI involvement is also important so that the public understands the boundary between technological output and decisions produced through a scholarly process. The next implication is directed toward Islamic educational institutions. The use of AI in Qur'anic learning should be accompanied by strengthening verification and critical thinking skills. Students should not merely be taught how to obtain answers through AI but should also be guided to examine the origins of sources, compare answers with tafsir works, understand the context of verses, and assess the arguments provided. The integration of technology with *'ulūm al-Qur'ān* learning is important so that the use of AI does not create a learning pattern that relies solely on instant answers. Through this approach, AI can be utilized as a learning medium while also serving as a means of improving students' analytical abilities.

In the practice of tafsir research, a human-in-the-loop oversight pattern can also be applied. AI can take part in tasks that are technical in nature, such as finding references, grouping verses by theme, assisting with language analysis, translating texts, or comparing a number of sources. Meanwhile, processes that require scholarly judgment should remain the responsibility of humans, especially when they involve determining the context of verses, selecting tafsir methods, assessing the validity of arguments, and drawing conclusions. Such a working model makes it possible to utilize the advantages of technology without fully handing over the interpretive process to AI systems. Thus, the main issue in the use of AI for tafsir does not lie in the absolute acceptance or rejection of technology, but rather in how technology is positioned within appropriate boundaries of authority. AI has strategic value as a tool for research and learning, but authority in understanding and determining religious meaning still requires human competence. Therefore, the development of technology-based tafsir needs to proceed alongside the strengthening of *'ulūm al-Qur'ān* methodology, academic ethics, source verification skills, and religious responsibility. This framework can serve as a basis for a more critical, measurable, and responsible use of AI in the development of tafsir studies in the digital era.

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