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# TACIM: A Comparative Analysis of AI-Assisted Qurʾānic Tafsir and Human Tafsir(1)

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## Abstract

In the digital age, Qurʾānic exegesis (tafsir) requires innovative approaches, and this study **explores** the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in transforming the field. **The importance** of this research lies in AI's potential to enhance Tafsir by accelerating data analysis and generating diverse interpretations. While AI offers speed and efficiency, it is acknowledged that it cannot replace human expertise in Islamic research. **The research problem** focuses on how AI can complement traditional Tafsir methods, especially in terms of speed and analysis, but also highlights its limitations

(1) Artificial intelligence has been used for grammar and spelling corrections, and to better express ideas.

(*) **Prof. Murat Kayacan** received his Ph.D. in Tafsir from Selçuk University in 2003. He completed his Master's degree in Religious Education from Selçuk University in 1997 and earned his Bachelor's degree in English Language and Literature in 1992. Since 2020, he has been serving as a faculty member in the Department of Tafsir at İzmir Kâtip Çelebi University's Faculty of Theology. Kayacan's research focuses on areas such as the Qur'an, Tafsir, and artificial intelligence. He has conducted various academic studies in the field of social sciences, particularly on Qur'anic topics. He has also published five books, with two being reprinted four times, two three times, and one twice.

**Research Interests:** Qur'an, Exegesis, Artificial Intelligence.

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in understanding deeper contextual and linguistic nuances. **The aim of the study** is to conduct a comparative analysis between AI-supported interpretations and traditional human Tafsir methods, assessing them on criteria such as speed, depth, and accuracy. The research looks at linguistic analysis and contextual interpretation to determine where AI aligns with or diverges from human interpretation. To achieve this, the **methodology** involves the use of the AI-Assisted Qur'anic Tafsir Model (TACIM), which compares AI-generated interpretations with established Tafsir literature for selected Qur'anic verses. Among **the key findings**, the study shows that AI can enhance Tafsir research by providing rapid preliminary analyses, though it lacks depth and contextual richness. AI is not viewed as a replacement for human scholars but as a tool to support their work by accelerating data processing. Therefore, the study **concludes** that a collaborative approach, where AI complements human scholars, could enrich Qur'anic interpretation. Future studies should also address ethical concerns, such as algorithmic bias, and explore how AI can be further integrated into Tafsir methodologies.

**Keywords:** Tafsir, Comparative Commentary, Artificial Intelligence, Multidisciplinary Research.

# TACIM: دراسة مقارنة بين التفسير القرآني المدعوم بالذكاء الاصطناعي والتفسير البشري

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## ملخص البحث

في العصر الرقمي، يتطلب تفسير القرآن الكريم (التفسير) نهجًا مبتكرًا، **وتستكشف** هذه الدراسة دور الذكاء الاصطناعي (AI) في تحويل هذا المجال. **أهمية البحث** تكمن في إمكانات الذكاء الاصطناعي لتعزيز التفسير من خلال تسريع تحليل البيانات وتوليد تفسيرات متنوعة. في حين يقدم الذكاء الاصطناعي السرعة والكفاءة، إلا أنه يُعترف بأنه لا يمكنه استبدال الخبرة البشرية في البحوث الإسلامية. **تتمثل الإشكالية** في كيفية تكامل الذكاء الاصطناعي مع أساليب التفسير التقليدية، خاصة من حيث السرعة والتحليل، مع تسليط الضوء أيضًا على محدودياته في فهم السياقات واللغويات العميقة. **هدف البحث** هو إجراء تحليل مقارن بين التفسيرات المدعومة بالذكاء الاصطناعي والأساليب التقليدية للتفسير البشري، وتقييمها بناءً على معايير مثل السرعة، العمق، والدقة. تبحث الدراسة في التحليل اللغوي والتفسير السياقي لتحديد نقاط الالتقاء أو الاختلاف بين التفسيرات البشرية والذكاء الاصطناعي. لتحقيق ذلك، المنهج المستخدم هو نموذج التفسير القرآني المدعوم بالذكاء الاصطناعي (TACIM)، الذي يقارن التفسيرات المستندة إلى الذكاء الاصطناعي مع الأدبيات التفسيرية القائمة لآيات قرآنية مختارة. **من أبرز النتائج** أن الذكاء الاصطناعي يمكنه تحسين البحث في التفسير من خلال تقديم تحليلات أولية سريعة، على الرغم من افتقاره للعمق والغنى السياقي. لا يُنظر إلى الذكاء الاصطناعي كبديل للعلماء البشريين، بل كأداة لدعم عملهم بتسريع معالجة البيانات. **لذلك يرى البحث** أن النهج التعاوني، حيث يكمل الذكاء الاصطناعي العلماء البشريين، قد يُثري التفسير القرآني. يجب أن تركز الدراسات المستقبلية أيضًا على معالجة المخاوف الأخلاقية، مثل التحيز الخوارزمي، واستكشاف كيفية دمج الذكاء الاصطناعي بشكل أكبر في مناهج التفسير.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** تفسير، التعليق المقارن، الذكاء الاصطناعي، الدراسات متعددة التخصصات.

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## Introduction

Specifically in the 21st century, the world is facing the phase of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4.0), also often referred to as the cyber physical system. This revolution focuses on automation and collaboration with cyber technology, which will affect all sectors of human life. The use of humans will be replaced a lot by the use of technological machines. Recent advancements in machine learning (ML) and artificial intelligence (AI) have greatly enhanced the capabilities of conventional technology. These developments are fuelled by the ability to analyze vast amounts of data, recognize patterns, and generate predictions. AI is driving technological innovation to new dimensions that were once unimaginable, and various sectors have proven their supremacy through the solutions provided by AI.

It is unthinkable that the field of theology, in general, and Tafsir, in particular, would remain indifferent to the technological advances above. For example, the difference between ChatGPT's output and human-authored writing on articles, including contextualization as a form of literacy practice, is essential. This gap in perception is logical because, as scholars have often observed, the human aspect of reading and writing involves a vulnerability that cannot be replicated, even in human-to-human interactions. Humans created AI; how AI treats us will depend on how we nurture it. AI is a tool; like any tool, it can be used for good or not we must ensure that AI is used ethically and equitably (Irvin, 2023, p. 5).

In recent years, significant progress in ML and AI has revolutionized traditional technology. These advancements

leverage data analysis, pattern recognition, and predictive modeling. However, concerns are rising regarding the potential adverse effects of these technologies, often referred to as 'weapons of math destruction.' In this context, a question is asked: "What impact will there be on society, politics, and everyday life when brilliant, non-conscious algorithms have a deeper understanding of us than we do of ourselves?" Many authors have argued that AI, relying on data processing and other associated concerns, is not neutral and may have adverse side effects. However, predicting how AI will affect human society and daily life isn't easy. The impacts of technological developments on social, political, and economic dynamics are complex and depends on various factors. Therefore, treating such claims with certainty ignores the uncertainty of the future and the difficulties in predicting the direction of technological developments.

Some believe that AI prevents students from developing their critical thinking skills (Vargas-Murillo et al., 2023, p. 131). Nevertheless, we do not need to be pessimistic about it. AI can analyze large datasets to identify complex relationships and patterns. This enables access to information that may escape human perception, thus supporting critical thinking. Additionally, AI can effectively solve complex problems through its fast data processing capability, which can enhance critical thinking skills. By relieving people from cognitive burdens, AI can provide more time and energy for critical thinking.

In conclusion, the Fourth Industrial Revolution, marked by the emergence of cyber-physical systems and automation, has spurred remarkable advancements in ML and AI. These

technologies offer unprecedented data analysis, pattern recognition, and predictive modelling capacities. However, concerns have emerged regarding the societal implications of AI, termed as “weapons of math destruction”. Despite apprehensions about its impact on critical thinking skills, AI presents opportunities to enhance cognitive abilities through its capacity to analyze complex data and streamline problem-solving processes. Thus, while acknowledging the uncertainties, exploring AI’s potential responsibly is imperative, ensuring ethical considerations guide its integration into various domains. The question is this: As AI continues to evolve, will we become passive observers, manipulated by its advancements, or can we actively participate in shaping its development and defining its overarching goals (Ashri, 2020, p. 175)?

To further clarify the structure and purpose of this study, the following sections will outline the key aspects of the research, including its objectives, methodology, and scope. This study explores the potential of AI in Qurʾānic exegesis, a field traditionally dominated by human scholarship. The topic was selected due to the increasing integration of AI in academic research, including theology, as outlined in the “Research Importance” section. The study aims to address the key questions outlined in the “Research Questions” section, particularly focusing on whether AI-generated interpretations can align with or enhance traditional human Tafsir. The specific objectives of this study, such as comparing the accuracy, depth, and theological relevance of AI-generated interpretations, are detailed in the “Research Objectives” section. In addition, previous research in AI and religious studies is

critically analyzed in the “Research Studies” section, identifying gaps in the literature that this study seeks to address. The “Research Limits” section defines the scope of the study, clarifying the selected Qurʾānic verses and the constraints of AI’s current capabilities. In the “Research Methodology” section, the methodology that will be used to compare AI and human interpretations is explained in detail. Lastly, the “Research Plan” outlines the step-by-step approach used in this study, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of AI’s potential in Qurʾānic exegesis.

## Research importance:

The UN General Assembly passed an important resolution on the promoting “safe, secure and trustworthy” AI systems that will also benefit sustainable development for everyone. Adopting a draft resolution led by the United States without a vote, the Assembly also highlighted the respect, protection, and promotion of human rights in designing, developing, deploying, and using AI.

Over 120 other Member States “co-sponsored” or supported the text. The General Assembly also acknowledged that AI systems can speed up and facilitate advancements in achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (General Assembly Adopts Landmark Resolution on Artificial Intelligence | UN News, 2024). This shows that AI’s growing influence is prompting the exploration of its potential applications across various disciplines. This research delves into the use of AI for Tafsir studies, a field traditionally reliant on human scholarship. By analyzing the Qurʾān with AI tools like ChatGPT, the model I aim to explore new avenues for interpreting scripture and contribute to the evolving landscape of Tafsir.

AI models can rapidly analyze vast amounts of data, including classical and modern period interpretations, providing efficient access to various scholarly perspectives. This can significantly reduce the time and effort required for manual analysis. Furthermore, AI models may offer fresh insights into Qurʾānic verses by identifying patterns, correlations, or interpretations that human scholars may overlook. These insights could enrich existing interpretations and contribute to ongoing scholarly discourse. In light of this ability to cross-reference interpretations, AI models can cross-reference multiple interpretations quickly, allowing for a comprehensive comparison of different academic viewpoints. This comparative analysis can highlight areas of consensus, divergence, or ambiguity within the interpretive tradition.

By standardizing the process of interpretation and analysis, AI models can help ensure consistency and rigor in scholarly research. This can mitigate subjective biases and errors that may arise in human interpretation. Beyond ensuring rigor, AI-generated interpretations can offer diverse perspectives and facilitate more profound engagement with Qurʾānic text and interpretation methodologies. However, the true potential of AI in Qurʾānic studies lies not just in standardized analysis, but in its ability to spark new avenues of inquiry. Discrepancies between AI-generated responses and human interpretations can highlight possible research gaps or areas where further investigation is needed. This can inform future research directions and contribute to advancing Qurʾānic studies. To unlock this potential for new discoveries, integrating AI technology with Qurʾānic interpretation can foster multidisciplinary collaboration between scholars of religious

studies, linguistics, computer science, and AI. This multidisciplinary approach has the capability to yield innovative methodologies and insights that transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries.

TACIM, which I suggest provides a framework to assess how well AI models understand and interpret the complexities of the Qurʾānic text, thus identifying strengths and weaknesses of AI in religious text interpretation and guiding future advancements in AI for religious studies. By comparing AI interpretations to human Tafsir, TACIM can reveal areas of convergence and divergence, which can lead to a more comprehensive understanding of the Qurʾān, incorporating both traditional scholarship and the potential of new approaches. With the potential of AI models to analyze vast amounts of Tafsir literature, key insights become more accessible to a wider audience, and AI could personalize interpretations based on user needs and backgrounds, fostering deeper engagement with the Qurʾān. Consequently, TACIM can open doors for further research into the application of AI in Qurʾānic studies, potentially sparking questions about the role of AI in theological discussions and the nature of religious interpretation itself. Furthermore, with adaptations, TACIM could be used to analyze and compare interpretations across different religious texts, thereby facilitating interfaith dialogue by fostering a deeper understanding of diverse perspectives on sacred texts.

This study outlines how AI could impact the future of Qurʾānic commentary. AI has contributed to creating new knowledge techniques that are currently being researched across a wide range of fields (Dong et al., 2022, p. 10935). It is also recommended that a multidisciplinary approach must be taken, incorporating

the perspectives of religious scholars, social scientists, and computer experts when dealing with AI issues (Mohadi & Tarshany, 2023, p. 99). This research aims to fill the mentioned gap.

ChatGPT systems can benefit learners by acting as a tutor (Chang et al., 2024, p. 225). The AI's capability in various languages, including Arabic, Persian, and Azerbaijani proved valuable in overcoming linguistic barriers (El Ganadi et al., 2023). Studying the Qurʾānic interpretations in different languages is helpful as AI has nearly no problems with them.

## Research questions:

1 - What are the roles and potential benefits of AI in Qurʾānic exegesis?

2 - How can comparative analyses between AI and human interpretations contribute to a deeper understanding of the Qurʾān?

3 - What methods can determine the accuracy and depth level of AI-based interpretations compared to human interpretations?

4 - What predictions can be made about how AI technology will affect classical Qurʾānic interpretation approaches?

5 - What are the contributions of AI-supported exegeses compared to human exegeses, and how can these contributions be utilized in the development of future AI models?

## Research objectives:

The study aims to examine how AI can contribute to the field of Tafsir by analyzing its possible applications and limitations. Additionally, it investigates how the integration of AI into Tafsir

methodologies can enhance the interpretation process, and facilitate cross-referencing of Qurʾānic verses with relevant historical and linguistic contexts.

Specifically, the research seeks to quantify AI's performance in Qurʾānic interpretation by comparing AI-generated interpretations to those from established Tafsir scholars. It will identify areas where AI excels, struggles, or complements human approaches. The study also highlights AI's potential to enhance access to Tafsir resources, making them more accessible to people with different levels of religious knowledge.

The study addresses the broader theological dimensions of using AI for Qurʾānic interpretation. It aims to facilitate discussions on the role of AI in shaping our understanding of sacred texts, the potential for bias or misinterpretation, and the balance between human expertise and AI-driven analysis.

Therefore, this research aims to put forward a commentary model: the "Tafsir-AI Comparative Interpretation Model (TACIM)."

## Previous studies:

Previous studies have shown that advances in information technology significantly impact corporate organization, management roles, and research methods. It was predicted that "progress in information technology will have an impact on many levels of the business world." (H. Takahashi, 2018, p. 50). This foresight has indeed materialized, particularly in the realm of research methods. Information technology advancements have revolutionized data collection, analysis, and interpretation in various fields. For example, big data analytics, machine learning

algorithms, and sophisticated software tools have enabled researchers to handle larger datasets more accurately and efficiently than ever before. Nevertheless, human skills are still required in creative problem-solving, as AI alone struggles to determine the problem and then find an approach to solve it (T. B. Takahashi, 2018, p. 221).

While it is a true that we cannot entirely rely on digital interaction, our dependence on it is increasing (Han, 2022, p. 126). AI has been discussed from the perspectives of privacy, manipulation, opacity, bias, autonomy and responsibility, and singularity (Han, 2022, p. 122). It is claimed that AI can minimize the problem of subjectivity in interpretation (Putra & Yusuf, 2021, p. 2). Text mining techniques will undouptedly improve accuracy and more penetrating analysis (Jotaki et al., 2018, p. 93) AI will bring beneficial results for Qurʾānic studies. While some see that the aim of AI work is just automation (Sutherland, 1972), we should acknowledge that the broad application of AI techniques in every aspect of our lives will be transformative. However, it is our responsibility to ensure that this change is beneficial (Ashri, 2020, p. 171).

In the context of religious and ethical considerations, several studies have explored the intersection of AI with theology and philosophy. It has been argued that AI robots will never acquire free will or believe in God (Çevik, 2017), and the future of society and religion about AI has been examined (Kafalı, 2019). The application of AI in hadith studies (Çakır, 2023) and the potential issues of AI regarding faith and knowledge in Kalam (Genç, 2019) have also been discussed. Moreover, the relationship between AI and transhumanism has been explored (Acar, 2023; Bal & Berat

Sarıkaya, 2022), as well as the ethical and legal status of AI robots in Islamic law and ethics (Görgülü, 2021). Discussions have also covered the contributions of AI to Islamic finance (Abbas & Muhammad Hafeez, 2021) and the intersection of AI with the psychology of religion (Çinici & Muhammed Kızılgeçit, 2023).

As seen above, AI is effective across a wide range. This impact is also relevant for studies in the field of theology. In this research, I will try to reveal the impact and contribution of AI in the Tafsir field. I would provisionally offer a different starting point as a way to interpret the Qurʾān. While previous studies have not extensively explored the use of artificial intelligence in Tafsir, this research breaks new ground by introducing TACIM. This study not only fills a gap in the existing literature but also provides a framework for systematically comparing AI-generated interpretations with human scholarship, thereby advancing discussions on the integration of technology in Islamic studies.

TACIM can contribute to the science of Tafsir in many ways. These contributions are essential for enriching widely known methods and advancing the understanding of Tafsir: This research adds a nuanced understanding of the comparative strengths and weaknesses of AI-generated interpretations and human interpretations of Qurʾānic verses. By employing this method, the study reveals that while AI can provide rapid, aesthetic, and focused interpretations, it sometimes lacks the depth and contextual richness human scholars bring to Tafsir. Human interpretations excel in offering comprehensive analyses that incorporate linguistic nuances, historical and cultural contexts, and theological insights, which are crucial for a fuller understanding

of the verses. This research highlights the potential of AI to complement human scholarship by handling large datasets and identifying broad patterns, thus supporting and enhancing the efficiency of Tafsir research. However, it also underscores the indispensable role of human expertise in providing detailed, contextually rich, and nuanced interpretations, suggesting a collaborative approach where AI serves as a valuable tool rather than a replacement for human scholars.

### 1. Supporting Widely Known Methods:

TACIM helps systematically evaluate the existing body of knowledge by classical and modern period Tafsirs. With its data processing power, AI can scan a wide range of Tafsir literature, saving researchers time. Consequently, researchers can examine the interpretations of a specific verse more comprehensively.

### 2. Evaluating AI's Interpretative Ability:

TACIM offers a chance to assess how well and thoroughly AI models can understand Qurʾānic verses by comparing them with widely known methods. This allows us identify both the strong and weak points of AI and future AI models can be developed based on this information.

### 3. Generating New Research Questions:

The interpretations generated by AI encourage researchers to think from different perspectives, opening the door for new research questions to arise. These questions can spark new conversations in fields such as Tafsir methodology, the relationship between AI and religion, and beyond.

### 4. Facilitating Access to Tafsir:

AI models can browse and summarize Tafsir sources in various languages, offering users easy access. Morover, AI can generate personalized interpretations based on users' queries, making Tafsir knowledge more readily available.

### 5. Comparing Different Interpretative Schools:

TACIM can compare classical and modern period Tafsirs and include the analyses of diverse sectarian interpretations. This allows for more explicit recognition of the similarities and divergences between various interpretative schools.

### 6. Encouraging Dialogue:

The core concept behind TACIM can be applied to the interpretations of various religious texts. This would enable the comparison of interpretations of sacred texts from diverse faiths, promoting conversation among followers of different religions.

## Research Limits:

Applying TACIM may encounter several challenges:

### 1. Accuracy and Reliability:

The reliability of AI systems is affected by data quality and the specific algorithms used (Hong & Jiayi Lian, Li Xu, Jie Min, Yueyao Wang, Laura J. Freeman, and Xinwei Deng, 2023, p. 69). That means the accuracy and reliability of AI-generated responses cannot always be guaranteed. AI models may misunderstand or deliver faulty results. As experts in Tafsir, these mistakes can be overseen and rectified. Currently, AI cannot be specialists in Tafsir, and its errors are acceptable.

## 2. Quality of Training Data:

The quality of training data labeled by humans has critical impact on the performance of learning-to-rank algorithms (Xu & Chuanliang Chen, Gu Xu, Hang Li, Elbio Renato Torres Abib, 2010, p. 171). AI models perform based on the quality of their training data. If the training data is inadequate or incorrect, the model's responses may also be imprecise. Since AI models are mainly trained on English literature, this presents a challenge for the field of Tafsir, which primarily relies on Arabic sources.

## 3. Linguistic and Cultural Diversity:

The richness of languages and cultural backgrounds in Qurʾānic texts and Tafsirs can influence the generalizability and effectiveness of the AI model. Translation issues and linguistic diversity can impact the model's precision. However, these challenges are also present for human interpreters, though AI's limitations may be slightly greater.

## 5. Interpretation and Meaning:

Deciphering Qurʾānic verses demands comprehending the vocabulary but also considering the context, reasons behind revelation, and historical background. AI models may struggle to fully grasp and interpret these complex linguistic and semantic layers. However, well-designed AI training can largely lessen this limitation.

## 6. Bias Issues:

In AI systems, bias can arise from factors such as data collection, algorithm design, and representation deficiencies, leading to unfair and inaccurate outcomes for specific groups

(Ferrara, 2024, p. 3). The inherent biases within an AI model's training data can influence the impartiality and fairness of its interpretations. For this reason, it is important to guarantee that the training data used for AI is as unbiased as possible, and to develop the model's awareness of these biases. This can contribute to more objective interpretations by human experts.

### 7. Lack of Statistics:

The limited use of AI in the field of Tafsir means few statistics are available, which restricts the scope of research.

## Research Methodology:

Comparative research provides the opportunity for us to look 'through different eyes' at a familiar situation and uses two or more subjects to study (Matthews & Ross, 2010, pp. 131, 475). The study employs a comparative analysis methodology by selecting specific verses of the Qurʾān and comparing AI-generated interpretations with human interpretations. The selected verses are those that have been subject to different interpretations throughout history. Through this, the study assesses the accuracy and depth of AI's interpretations by comparing them with human interpretations. They will be commented in the light of classical (like Ṭabarī (d. 310/923), Rāzī (d. 606/1210), Qurṭubī (d. 671/1273), Bayḍāwī (d. 685/1286) etc.) and modern period Tafsirs (Bursawi (1137/1725), Elmalili (d. 1942) etc. Those verses and their human interpretations will be transformed into a dataset AI can interpret. In the comparative analysis phase, the interpretations generated by AI will be compared with comments based on classical and modern period exegesis interpretations, and similarities, differences, and

emphasized points will be identified. In this analysis, a thorough examination will be conducted, taking into account each interpretation's textual, historical, and cultural context.

The qualitative aspects of comparative analyses will assess the depth, accuracy, and comprehensiveness of AI-generated interpretations. The AI's ability to identify innovative approaches in exegesis literature will also be evaluated. Findings from these analyses will be reviewed to discuss the contributions and limitations of AI-based exegesis interpretations to the literature. The potential impacts of these findings on exegesis studies and multidisciplinary research will also be considered.

During the recommendations for the future stage, suggestions will be provided for the enhancement and improvement of AI-based exegesis interpretations, and possible methods and approaches for future research in this field will be discussed. Furthermore, integrating AI in Tafsir necessitates thoroughly examining ethical and legal considerations. Issues such as data privacy, the potential for biased interpretations, and the ethical implications of relying on AI for religious scholarship need to be addressed. Establishing a framework for the ethical use of AI in religious studies is crucial. This includes developing guidelines for AI training data, ensuring transparency in AI processes, and creating oversight mechanisms to monitor and evaluate AI-generated content.

## Research plan:

The research plan for TACIM is provided in the table below (see Table (1)).

## Table. (1)

## Tafsir Al Comparative Interpretation Model (TACIM)

| | Section | Section Description |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Verse Selection | Select a Qurʾānic verse to be interpreted |
| 2. | Classical and Modern Period<br>Tafsir Interpretations | Analyze the verse using classical and modern period Tafsir (interpretation) scholarship. |
| 3. | Question Formulation | Identify the questions that the Tafsir interpretations address. |
| 4. | Task Assignment to ChatGPT | Ask the ChatGPT model to generate answers to the questions based on its understanding of the verse. |
| 5. | Comparative Analysis | Compare ChatGPT's answers to the Tafsir interpretations, evaluating depth, accuracy, uniqueness, and overall understanding. |
| 6. | Result | Conclude the ChatGPT model's capabilities in the Qurʾānic interpretation and identify areas for improvement. |

**Verse Selection:** The TACIM process begins with the careful selection of Qurʾānic verses for analysis. These verses are chosen based on their significance, complexity, and relevance to the objectives of the study. The selected verses serve as the focal points for the comparative analysis between classical and modern exegesis approaches.

### Classical and Modern Period Tafsir Interpretations:

TACIM integrates both classical and modern Tafsir interpretations to provide a comprehensive understanding of the selected Qurʾānic verses. Classical period Tafsirs offer insights from early Islamic scholars, while modern period Tafsirs bring contemporary perspectives and methodologies to the table. By examining a diverse

range of sources, TACIM aims to capture the evolution of Qurʾānic interpretation over time.

**Question Formulation:** Upon identifying the selected verses, TACIM determines which questions, based on data obtained from classical and modern period commentaries, have answers available. It asks ChatGPT these questions. The formulated questions serve as a framework for evaluating the responses generated by the AI model.

**Task Assignment to ChatGPT:** ChatGPT AI model is assigned the task of analyzing the selected Qur'anic verses and responding to the formulated questions. Leveraging its natural language processing capabilities, ChatGPT interprets the verses and provides responses compared with interpretations from classical and modern period Tafsirs.

**Comparative Analysis:** TACIM conducts a comparative analysis of the interpretations generated by the AI model and those found in classical and modern period Tafsirs. This analysis evaluates the consistency, coherence, and insights offered by each interpretation. Factors such as depth of analysis, accuracy of information, uniqueness of perspective, and overall understanding ability are considered during the comparison.

**Result:** The results of TACIM will be evaluated to draw conclusions about the Qurʾān interpretation ability of the AI model and identify areas for improvement. This Qurʾānic interpretation model can offer a new perspective on understanding and interpreting the Qurʾān, and it can help explore the potential of AI technology in this field.

If I demonstrate the TACIM model in practice, I hope to make what I am suggesting more concrete:

## 1. Verse Selection

In accordance with TACIM model, I have chosen the first three verses of the chapter Yūsuf in the Qurʾān. These verses have been selected because they highlight both the clarity of the Qurʾān's message and the reasoning behind its revelation in Arabic, as well as explain why the story of Yūsuf is described as 'the most beautiful of stories.' These verses emphasize the miraculous and clear nature of the divine book while drawing attention to the instructive value of Qurʾānic narratives. Furthermore, these verses have been extensively commented upon in classical and modern Tafsir literature, underscoring their depth and central role in exegesis. Therefore, they are ideal for analysis due to their frequent discussion in Tafsir traditions and their encapsulation of the Qurʾān's linguistic and thematic essence:

١- ﴿الٓرۚ تِلۡكَ ءَايَٰتُ ٱلۡكِتَٰبِ ٱلۡمُبِينِ ١﴾

٢- ﴿إِنَّآ أَنزَلۡنَٰهُ قُرۡءَٰنًا عَرَبِيّٗا لَّعَلَّكُمۡ تَعۡقِلُونَ ٢﴾

٣- ﴿نَحۡنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيۡكَ أَحۡسَنَ ٱلۡقَصَصِ بِمَآ أَوۡحَيۡنَآ إِلَيۡكَ هَٰذَا ٱلۡقُرۡءَانَ وَإِن كُنتَ مِن قَبۡلِهِۦ لَمِنَ ٱلۡغَٰفِلِينَ ٣﴾

*Alif Lam Ra. These are the verses of the perspicuous Book.*

*We have sent it down as an Arabic Qurʾān so you may learn wisdom.*

*We do relate unto you the most beautiful of stories, in that We reveal to you this (portion of the) Qurʾān: before this, you too were among those who knew it not.*

## 2. Classical and Modern Period Tafsir Interpretations

I analyzed the verses above in the light of the classical and modern period commentaries as follows:

When Arabs wanted to draw attention to a matter, they used to mention letters.(al-Māturīdī, 1426/2005, p. 2/297) This style has occasionally found its place at the beginnings of chapters in the Qurʾān: “Alif Lam Ra. These are the verses of the perspicuous Book.” (Yūsuf 12/1). It has been said that the first three letters at the beginning of the verse are the name of the Yūsuf chapter. (Qurṭubī, 1384/1964, p. 9/118) After drawing attention by saying “Alif, Lam, Ra” the book that is said to be clear could also be the chapter of Yūsuf in the Qurʾān. Yūsuf’ story was probably asked about, and information about this story was given to those who asked. The Qurʾān, or this chapter, is primarily a clear book from the perspective of Arabs because it was revealed in their language. One aspect of the book mentioned as “perspicuous (مُبِين)” in the verse being “clear” is also that it comes from Allah, meaning it is not human speech. Just as attention is drawn to the fact that the book is “clear” in the verse, it is also possible that emphasis is placed on it being an “explaining” book. If it is said that the book that is “clear” or “explaining” is the Qurʾān, then the Qurʾān would be a book that explains necessary things in terms of beliefs and actions (permissible and impermissible things, situations of previous societies, etc.) and answers fundamental questions that come to the human mind about the meaning of life. If it is said that it refers to the chapter of Yūsuf, in that case, the “perspicuous” book would explain what is curious about the Yūsuf’s story.

The previous verse it was suggested that the “book” could refer to the chapter of Yūsuf. In this verse, the chapter of Yūsuf could also be meant by the term “Qurʾān”: “We have sent it down as an Arabic Qurʾān, in order that you may learn wisdom.” (Yūsuf 12/2). There is no obstacle to using the term “Qurʾān” to refer to a part of the Qurʾān.(Rāzī, 1420/1999, p. 18/416) When the chapter of Yūsuf was revealed, the entire Qurʾān had not been revealed yet, and the portion revealed up to that point was also considered part of the Qurʾān. Based on this verse, it has been stated that all the words in the Qurʾān are Arabic. According to this approach, even if there are words that entered Arabic later, since Arabs accepted those words into their language, those words are also considered Arabic (e.g., firdaws sijjīl, istabraq etc.). The verse (Yūsuf 12/2) mentions that the Qurʾān was revealed in Arabic for understanding.” Another verse addresses this issue: “Had We sent this as a Qurʾān (in the language) other than Arabic, they would have said: Why are not its verses explained in detail?” (Fuṣṣilat 41/44). Therefore, the Arabic nature of the Qurʾān was intended to be understood by its first recipients (the Arabs). Those who do not know Arabic will understand the Qurʾān through translations. However, it should be noted that translations represent the meaning of the Qurʾān, not the Qurʾān itself.

When Allah narrates something, He narrates it beautifully, or the story of Yūsuf is the most beautiful: “We do relate unto you the most beautiful of stories, in that We reveal to you this (portion of the) Qurʾān: before this, you too were among those who knew it not.” (Yūsuf 12/3). If it is said that the style of narration used in the Qurʾān is meant by the “beautiful” thing (Qurṭubī, 1384/1964, p. 9/119)

mentioned in the verse, attention is drawn to the eloquence of the Qurʾān. The other possibility is that the beauty of the story of Yūsuf is being referred to. If the second possibility is considered correct, it can be said that the verbal noun (masdar) has been nominalized, meaning that it has been used in place of the word "story." In the story of Yūsuf, there are many wisdoms and lessons. Some stories contain events that happened, while others do not. Those based on real events are more valuable for drawing lessons. In the verse, the term "Qurʾān" has also been interpreted as referring to the chapter of Yūsuf.

## 3. Question Formulation

Questions formulated by Gemini AI based on three paragraphs I prepared regarding three verses (Yūsuf 12/1-3) using classical and modern period interpretations are as follows:

**Gemini produced 7 questions for Joseph (Yūsuf) 12/1[1]**

1 - According to the passage, what is one way Arabs used to draw attention to something important?

2 - What is an example of this style being used in the Qurʾān?

3 - What are some possible interpretations of the meaning of the first three letters ("Alif, Lam, Ra") at the beginning of the chapter of Joseph?

4 - From whose perspective is the Qurʾān considered a "clear book"?

5 - What are two possible meanings of the word "perspicuous" (مُبِين) used to describe the book in the verse?

6 - If the "clear" or "explaining" book refers to the entire Qurʾān, what kinds of things might it explain?

(1) https://g.co/gemini/share/56eeebd662d6

7 - If the “clear” or “explaining” book refers specifically to the chapter of Joseph, what might it explain?

**Gemini produced 6 questions for Joseph 12/2.**[1]

1 - Can the term “Qurʾān” in this verse refer specifically to the chapter of Joseph, even though the entire Qurʾān wasn’t revealed yet?
2 - According to this explanation, what makes a word Arabic in the context of the Qurʾān?
3 - Why does the chapter of Joseph 12/2 emphasize that the Qurʾān was revealed in Arabic for understanding?
4 - How does the chapter of Fuṣṣilat 41/44 connect to the idea of the Qurʾān being in Arabic for understanding?
5 - If the Qurʾān is meant for understanding, how do those who don’t speak Arabic access its meaning?
6 - What is the relationship between translations and the original Arabic text of the Qurʾān?

**Gemini produced 5 questions for Joseph 12/3.**[2]

1 - What does the chapter of Joseph 12/3 mean by referring to the “most beautiful of stories”?
2 - If the verse refers to the story of Joseph, how does the Qurʾān achieve this “beauty”?
3 - What is the significance of using a verbal noun (“the most beautiful of stories”) instead of simply saying “story of Joseph”?
4 - How does the verse connect the story of Joseph to the concept of wisdom and lessons learned?

(1) https://g.co/gemini/share/1d9fb22efce1

(2) https://g.co/gemini/share/18f381e9a158

5 - Can the term “Qurʾān” in this verse be interpreted as referring specifically to chapter Joseph?

## 4. Task Assignment AI

I provided the verses (Yūsuf 12/1-3) and their interpretations considering classical and modern period Tafsirs as three paragraphs to Gemini AI and obtained questions based on this. After this stage, I gave the verses in question to ChatGPT and then asked it to write a paragraph answering those questions. ChatGPT wrote three paragraphs. I made some formatting changes in those paragraphs that will never affect the meaning of the text. They are as follows:

The chapter of Yūsuf 12/1 begins with “Alif, Lam, Ra” which exemplifies a style used in the Qurʾān to draw attention to something important. An instance of this stylistic device in the Qurʾān is found in the chapter of Yūsuf 12/1. The interpretation of the letters “Alif, Lam, Ra” varies; they may be seen as a divine code, an assertion of the Qurʾān’s miraculous nature, or a means to intrigue the listener. The Qurʾān is considered a “clear book” from the perspective of those who seek guidance and truth within its teachings. The term “perspicuous” (مُبِين) in this context can mean “clear” or “explaining,” suggesting both the transparency of its message and its role in elucidating truths. If the “clear” book refers to the entire Qurʾān, it explains theological, moral, and legal principles. Specifically, in the context of Chapter Yūsuf, it may elucidate the narrative of Yūsuf, offering insights into faith, patience, and divine wisdom.(1)

(1) https://chatgpt.com/share/70ed45d1-9d0f-4f43-be92-9ef82dfb31b1

The term “Qurʾān” in the chapter of Yūsuf 12/2 can indeed be interpreted to refer specifically to this chapter, even though the entire Qurʾān had not yet been revealed. This understanding aligns with the incremental nature of the Qurʾānic revelation. In this context, a word is considered Arabic in the Qurʾān due to its linguistic form, rooted in the classical Arabic language spoken and understood by the audience at the time of revelation. Yūsuf 12/2 emphasizes the Qurʾān’s revelation in Arabic to ensure the immediate audience can comprehend its message directly, promoting clarity and understanding. This idea is reinforced by the chapter of Fuṣṣilat 41/44, which highlights the significance of the Qurʾān being in Arabic by stating that if it had been in a foreign language, the people would have struggled to understand it. For non-Arabic speakers, accessing the Qurʾān’s meaning involves relying on translations. These translations serve as interpretative bridges, allowing broader audiences to engage with the Qurʾān’s teachings. However, translations are seen as interpretations of the original text rather than replacements, preserving the sanctity and precise meanings of the original Arabic verses.(1)

In the chapter of Yūsuf 12/3, the verse refers to the “most beautiful of stories” (أَحۡسَنَ ٱلۡقَصَصِ) as the narrative of Yūsuf, emphasizing its profound beauty and moral depth. This beauty is achieved through the Qurʾān’s unique storytelling style, which combines eloquence, intricate plot development, and profound emotional and spiritual lessons. The use of the verbal noun “the most beautiful of stories” instead of simply stating “story of Yūsuf” underscores the universal and timeless appeal of the narrative,

(1) https://chatgpt.com/share/f0ebd9ac-0ccc-4ac1-b734-f5f1d0637ee7

inviting readers to appreciate its aesthetic and ethical dimensions beyond a mere historical account. This phrasing enhances the impact by highlighting the narrative's exemplary nature among other stories. The verse connects the story of Yūsuf to the concept of wisdom and lessons learned by portraying his life experiences as a source of guidance and reflection, illustrating themes of patience, trust in God, and the triumph of virtue. While the term "Qurʾān" in this verse broadly refers to the recitation or reading of the divine message, it can be interpreted as explicitly highlighting the chapter of Yūsuf, thereby drawing attention to its particular significance and role in conveying divine wisdom.(1)

## 5. Comparative Analysis

This section undertakes a comprehensive comparative analysis of human-generated interpretations and those produced by the ChatGPT AI model. This analysis elucidates the variances and congruities between widely known exegesis and AI-assisted interpretations. Through a meticulous comparison of these interpretations, each approach's depth, accuracy, and contextual richness are assessed. The following tables present these comparisons across multiple dimensions, highlighting the distinctive contributions and potential limitations of integrating AI into Qurʾānic exegesis. This comparative framework enhances our understanding of AI's potential role in supporting and enriching widely known Tafsir methodologies.

To better understand the distinct differences and similarities in interpretations provided by human scholars and the AI model, the following comparative analysis of the chapter of Yūsuf (12/1) is conducted.

(1) https://chatgpt.com/share/5ff4c633-9ee3-4e94-b51d-7411067ee6b3

## Table (2)

## Comparative Analysis of Human and ChatGPT Interpretations of the Chapter of Yūsuf 12/1

| | Comparison of Verse Interpretations | Human Interpretation | ChatGPT Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Emphasis on the book coming from Allah | Clearly emphasized | Not mentioned, possibly adopting a neutral stance due to AI training |
| 2. | Possibility of "Alif Lam Ra" referring to the chapter of Yūsuf | Addressed | Not mentioned |
| 3. | Emphasis on the Qurʾān being understandable for Arabs | Highlighted | Shifted towards people, using a more ambiguous expression |
| 5. | Scope of the "Clear Book" content (theology, ethics, law) | Not specified in the text | Stated that the book includes theology, ethics, and law topics |

The following table further examines the differences in interpretations, focusing specifically on the context of verse 12/2.

## Table. (3)

## Comparative Analysis of Human and ChatGPT Interpretations of the Chapter of Yūsuf 12/2

| | Comparison of Verse Interpretations | Human Interpretation | ChatGPT Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Qurʾān term | Commentaries suggest that the term "Qurʾān" can be interpreted as referring to the chapter of Yūsuf, without delving into details. | It is possible to interpret the term "Qurʾān" as referring to the chapter of Yūsuf without delving into details. |

| | Comparison of Verse Interpretations | Human Interpretation | ChatGPT Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2. | Examples of the Qurʾān being in Arabic and containing words borrowed from other languages (e.g., firdaws sijjīl, istabraq etc.). | Words from other languages have been entered into Arabic. There are examples of this in the Qurʾān as well. | The importance of the Arabic language is highlighted, but the topic of words being borrowed from other languages is not addressed. |
| 3. | Using the same Qurʾānic reference | Highlighting the significance of the Arabic nature of the Qurʾān, referencing Fuṣṣilat 41/41 verse. | Highlighting the significance of the Arabic nature of the Qurʾān, referencing Fuṣṣilat 41/41 verse. |
| 4. | Detail and context presentation | Provides more detailed and contextual interpretation of the verse in the chapter of Yūsuf. | Does not provide detailed context specific to the Chapter of Yūsuf verse in its interpretation. |

To further illustrate the comparative interpretations, the analysis for the chapter of Yūsuf 12/3 is now presented.

**Table. (4)**

**Comparative Analysis of Human and ChatGPT Interpretations of Chapter Yūsuf 12/3**

| | Comparison of Verse Interpretations | Human Interpretation | ChatGPT Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Linguistic analysis | Provides detailed grammatical analysis and different interpretative possibilities. | Less grammatical analysis |

| | Comparison of Verse Interpretations | Human Interpretation | ChatGPT Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2. | Term “Qurʾān” in the chapter of Yūsuf | Mentions the interpretation that the word “Qurʾān” in the verse may refer to the chapter of Yūsuf. | Does not address this interpretation. |
| 3. | Addressing controversial Issues | More substantial in addressing controversial topics. | Does not delve into controversial topics. |
| 4. | Focus on story’s aesthetics | There is less emphasis on the aesthetic aspect of the chapter of Yūsuf. | Highlights the aesthetic nature of the chapter of Yūsuf, making it more engaging for those already familiar with the story. |
| 5. | Emphasis on universality | Does not emphasize the universality and timeless nature of the story. | Emphasizes the universality and timeless nature of the story, which is not present in the first paragraph. |

This detailed comparison highlights the strengths and limitations of both human and AI-generated interpretations and emphasizes the potential for their integration. By leveraging the unique capabilities of AI in processing and analyzing large volumes of text and combining this with the deep contextual understanding of human scholars, a more enriched and efficient Tafsir methodology can be developed. The following section will delve into the conclusions drawn from this comparative analysis and propose recommendations for future research and practical applications in the field of Tafsir.

## Conclusions and Recommendations:

The quality of interpretations between human interpretations and ChatGPT interpretations is quite close. Human interpretations clearly emphasize the divine origin of the book, explicitly stating that it comes from Allah. In contrast, ChatGPT's interpretation does not mention this, likely adopting a neutral stance due to AI training. Furthermore, the possibility of "Alif Lam Ra" referring to the chapter of Yūsuf is addressed in human interpretations but not mentioned by ChatGPT. Human interpretations highlight that the Qurʾān is understandable for Arabs, whereas ChatGPT shifts this towards a more ambiguous expression, referring to people in general. Lastly, while human interpretations do not specify the content scope of the "Clear Book," ChatGPT states that the book includes theology, ethics, and law topics. These differences demonstrate that human and AI-based interpretation processes have distinct priorities and approaches (see Table. (2)).

The comparative analysis of human and ChatGPT interpretations of the chapter of Yūsuf 12/2 verse reveals significant differences. Human interpretations suggest that the term "Qurʾān" can refer to the chapter of Yūsuf without delving into details, and ChatGPT similarly mentions this possibility without further elaboration. Human interpretations highlight the importance of the Arabic language in the Qurʾān and provide examples of words borrowed from other languages. At the same time, ChatGPT emphasizes the significance of the Arabic language but does not address the topic of borrowed words. Both interpretations reference Fuṣṣilat 41/41 to underscore the importance of the Qurʾān being in Arabic. However, human

interpretations provide a more detailed and contextual analysis of the verse in the chapter of Yūsuf. These variations highlight the unique priorities and differing levels of depth between human and AI-generated interpretations (see Table. (3)).

The comparison of human interpretations and ChatGPT interpretations of the three verses has yielded exciting results. Human interpretations of the verses appear to be more comprehensive and in-depth. Human interpretations provide detailed emphasis on the verse being from Allah, linguistic analysis, and historical and cultural context, helping the reader understand the verse better. For instance, the first paragraph discusses the possibility that the letters “Alif, Lam, Ra” could refer to the name of the chapter Yūsuf and emphasizes that the Qurʾān is understandable for Arabs. In contrast, AI interpretations adopt a more neutral and general tone, focusing on aesthetic and ethical dimensions and highlighting the universality and depth of the story. Additionally, AI interpretations give less space to controversial topics and linguistic details, leading to some gaps in the interpretations. Consequently, in terms of providing more qualitative interpretations of the verses, human interpretations, with their detailed analyses and contextual information, seem to be superior to AI interpretations, at least in the current process (see Table (4)).

In terms of answering questions set within the context of three verses, there has been no significant difference in the quality level of human and AI interpretations. It should never be expected that one would render the other unnecessary, especially when questions are asked from different perspectives in the field of

Tafsir. Indeed, human and AI interpretations will invigorate the field of Tafsir in particular, and Islamic sciences in general. Just as human interpretations of the verses are not limited to what we have presented, the AI's interpretations are also not confined to those provided in this study. Therefore, by asking more questions, AI can be prompted to offer insights on the aesthetic, spiritual dimensions of Tafsir, and the historical contexts of the verses.

The role of the commentator (mufassir) in Qurʾānic exegesis never ceases, as AI is a supportive tool rather than a final decision-maker in the field of Tafsir. Human expertise remains essential for deep, contextual, and nuanced interpretation. For instance, the commentator may request AI to conduct sentiment analysis on chapters or stories, interpreting verses in line with the Qurʾān's encouragement to reflect. They then reanalyze the results, taking into account the history of exegesis. This implies new developments in the field of Tafsir. AI operates faster than the human mind. This will inject dynamism into the science of exegesis. AI's creativity is inspiring.

In addition to these findings, it is essential to incorporate training programs for both scholars and students on effectively using AI tools in Tafsir studies. Workshops and seminars could be organized to educate users on the strengths and limitations of AI interpretations. Such educational initiatives would ensure that AI is used responsibly and effectively, maximizing its benefits while mitigating its shortcomings.

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مجلة الشريعة والدراسات الإسلامية

فصلية علمية محكمة تصدر عن مجلس النشر العلمي - جامعة الكويت

# دراسة مقارنة بين التفسير القرآني المدعوم بالذكاء الاصطناعي والتفسير البشري

أ. د. مراد قاياجان

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