



Metaphor and Symbolism in the Language of the Quran: A Linguistic Study on the Concept of Tauhid (Analysis of Surah al-Fatihah)

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Abstract

This study aims to delve into the profound meanings and functions of metaphor and symbolism in Surah al-Fatihah, particularly in the context of the concept of tauhid (monotheism) in Islam. Given the urgency of comprehending a sacred text that is frequently recited yet not fully understood theologically by many Muslims, this research seeks to bridge the gap between ritualistic practice and deep theological understanding. The methodology employed is linguistic analysis, integrating Lakoff and Johnson's conceptual metaphor theory alongside Sperber and Wilson's relevance theory to interpret the theological symbolism and linguistic use in this surah. The findings indicate that Surah al-Fatihah employs metaphor and symbolism not only to convey the fundamental principles of Islam but also to strengthen Muslims' understanding and belief in the concept of tauhid. This surah contains profound linguistic layers that facilitate comprehension of the oneness of Allah, divine justice, and human dependence on divine power through its rich linguistic structure and careful word choice. The discussion reveals that the metaphor and symbolism in Surah al-Fatihah are not merely aesthetic elements but also serve as powerful educational tools to deepen spiritual and theological understanding. As a recommendation, it is suggested that Islamic religious education place greater emphasis on linguistic analysis in interpreting sacred texts. This would not only enhance theological understanding but also reinforce the spiritual and intellectual connection of believers to the teachings of Islam.

Keywords: Metaphor, Symbolism, Quranic Language, Linguistics, Tauhid

Introduction

Surah al-Fatihah, dubbed 'Ummul Kitab' or the mother of all chapters in the Quran, occupies a fundamental position in Islamic ritual practice and theology (Fadhilah & Nirwana, 2023). This surah not only forms the core of every unit of the prayer (salat) obligatory for Muslims, but it also serves as the epitome of Islamic teachings, crystallising the principles of tauhid (the oneness of God), servitude to Allah, and supplication for guidance on the straight path (Maksum et al., 2023). Through its concise yet rich linguistic structure, al-Fatihah invites Muslims to reflect upon and comprehend the essence of their faith, making it one of the most frequently recited and studied surahs in Islamic tradition. Every word and phrase in this surah is considered to carry profound and multi-layered meanings, offering continuous and diverse insights depending on the individual's level of understanding and contemplation.



This chapter uniquely intertwines theological and aesthetic aspects within its linguistic structure, demanding deep reflection and interpretation. Linguistic analysis reveals that this surah not only conveys the fundamental principles of Islam but also challenges readers to ponder and contemplate its message. This demonstrates that the Quran is not merely a holy scripture, but a dynamic text, inviting deep intellectual interaction from its readers (Okawa, 2019; Rizvi, 2020).

Research on metaphor and symbolism within Surah al-Fatihah reveals that many Muslims may recite this surah in their prayers without fully comprehending the theological essence it contains. This phenomenon is intriguing within religious studies as it highlights a gap between ritualistic practice and theological understanding. This study underscores the need for religious education to focus not only on the practical aspects of worship but also on deep comprehension of sacred texts (Widigdo & Bin Zakaria, 2021).

In a social and historical context, Surah al-Fatihah has played a crucial role in shaping Islamic identity since the early revelation of the Quran (El Khadrawy et al., 2023). A contextual analysis of the language used in this surah offers insight into how these verses were intended to be received by the early Islamic community and how their interpretations have adapted over time. The use of symbols and metaphors also provides evidence of how the Quran communicates with its audience across different eras, adjusting its messages to changing needs and challenges (Kusnadi et al., 2021).

In interfaith dialogue, understanding the use of symbolic language in Surah al-Fatihah can serve as a key to conveying Islamic principles to non-Muslims in a more inclusive and empathetic manner. Metaphor and symbolism often act as bridges across cultures, facilitating the understanding of concepts that may be unfamiliar to those outside the Islamic tradition (Arifin et al., 2019; Atabik, 2020; Sinthumule, 2023). By conveying Islamic principles through universal and accessible language, the author envisions a more inclusive and broad dialogue between Islam and various cultures and traditions around the world, while also exploring how Quranic metaphors and symbolism deepen spiritual understanding and foster intercultural empathy.

The use of metaphor not only highlights the uniqueness of the Quranic linguistic style but also serves as evidence of the beauty and wonder of the Quran itself. In-depth analysis of linguistic elements within Surah al-Fatihah not only enriches the understanding of classical Arabic but also underscores its evolution and influence in literature and culture (Herawati & Ainil Mawaddah, 2023; Zarytovskaya & Al-Rahbi, 2023). This proves that the Quran is a living text, continuously inspiring and prompting new questions over time.

Teaching metaphor and symbolism in Surah al-Fatihah also has the potential to strengthen religious education, enabling educators to present material in a more analytical and creative manner. This knowledge could help transform the way the Quran is taught, making it more relevant and engaging for younger generations who may seek a deeper connection with their religion amidst modern social and technological challenges (Rachma, 2023).

Globally, understanding the linguistic usage in Surah al-Fatihah allows for the adaptation of Islamic messages to a wider audience, considering that the Quran is intended for all of humanity. By conveying Islamic principles through universal and accessible language, the author envisions a more inclusive and broad dialogue between Islam and various cultures and traditions around the world, as this fosters mutual understanding, reduces misconceptions, and promotes peaceful coexistence in an increasingly interconnected global society.

Finally, the study of Surah al-Fatihah and the use of its symbolic language is not only essential for academic and religious understanding but also serves as a means of supporting more effective and inclusive educational approaches in teaching religion. This offers opportunities for religious education that is not solely focused on memorising texts but also on



understanding, interpreting, and applying its principles in daily life, ensuring that the teachings of Islam remain relevant and resonant within a continually changing society.

Literature Review

This study explores how the Quran utilises figurative language, particularly metaphor and symbolism, to communicate the concept of tauhid through Surah al-Fatihah. The primary objective is to identify and analyse the use of linguistic elements that enrich the understanding of monotheism within the context of Islam. By applying linguistic analysis techniques, this research aims to uncover deeper layers of meaning and how these linguistic elements play a role in shaping and reinforcing the concept of tauhid in the minds of readers or listeners.

The specific focus on Surah al-Fatihah, often regarded as the essence of the entire Quran, allows this study to provide insights into how these verses specifically employ symbols and metaphors to illustrate and reinforce the oneness of God. Through this approach, the research seeks to offer a more nuanced understanding of how religious texts communicate their most fundamental teachings, while also contributing to broader religious studies by highlighting the richness and complexity of Quranic language. Furthermore, the author analyses several previous studies relevant to this research, as outlined below:

In his research, Ghozali (2020) adopts a qualitative approach with a focus on textual analysis to explore the relative linguistic influence in the Quran. The findings show that the Quran affects the conceptual understanding of time and space, often differing from other languages. This provides significant insight into studies examining the use of symbolism and metaphor in religious contexts, particularly in interpreting the concept of tauhid through Surah al-Fatihah, demonstrating how language can shape divine understanding.

Research by Ibrahim et al. (2018), employing comparative and corpus analysis, investigates the meanings of the word 'basar' and its synonyms in the Quran. The results reveal the rich polysemy of the words used, highlighting how similar words can carry significant variations in meaning. This offers a new perspective on understanding words within the context of tauhid, as discussed in studies on the use of linguistics in the Quran to convey divine concepts.

Markhamah (2020), in her study, adopts a sociolinguistic approach to examine the linguistic characteristics of Muhammad in the Quran. These findings provide a deeper understanding of how Muhammad's language reflects his personality and social context, which can be paralleled with how language is used to frame theological concepts in Surah al-Fatihah, particularly in relation to the representation and expression of divinity.

In a study by Sardaraz et al. (2022), the methodology of conceptual metaphor analysis is used to understand the semantics of the preposition "alā" in the Quran. The results reveal that this preposition not only functions as a grammatical link but also contains metaphorical dimensions that enrich the texture of religious texts. This discovery provides an additional layer of interpretation for the study of metaphor and symbolism in the context of Surah al-Fatihah, illustrating how prepositions can add depth to meaning in religious discourse.

Methods

This research is qualitative in nature, adopting a literature study approach to explore the use of metaphor and symbolism in the Quran, particularly in Surah al-Fatihah, and how these elements communicate the concept of tauhid (Creswell, W. John & Creswell, 2018; Weyant, 2022). This approach enables the study to delve into religious texts in a systematic and structured manner, utilising various relevant literary sources as the basis for analysis and interpretation. This literature study not only includes primary sources in the form of the Quranic texts themselves but also a range of tafsir (exegesis) works that provide further context and explanations of these verses.



The primary data source in this research is the text of Surah al-Fatihah, which serves as the main focus of analysis. This surah was chosen due to its significant position in the Quran and its extensive use in the daily worship practices of Muslims. Secondary data comprises various tafsir works from prominent scholars, as well as academic literature discussing the use of figurative language in religious texts. The combination of these sources allows for a comprehensive analysis of the text and its various interpretations, aiding in understanding and evaluating how Surah al-Fatihah employs metaphor and symbolism to convey theological messages.

The data collection technique used is library-based, where data is gathered through extensive searches of primary and secondary texts (Matusiak et al., 2023; Schutz & Muis, 2023). This includes library research, online databases, and digital repositories containing tafsir works and previous studies relevant to this research. This process facilitates the collection of in-depth information about the text and its context, as well as the various interpretations that have been developed throughout the history of Quranic exegesis. For data analysis, this research adopts the technique of *tafsir tahlili*, which systematically evaluates the Quranic verses by exploring the various dimensions of the text's meaning (Arib & Mokodenseho, 2023; Rosalinda, 2020). Through this method, the study seeks to elucidate the use of metaphor and symbolism in Surah al-Fatihah and their implications for the understanding of tauhid. Data validity is ensured through source triangulation, involving comparisons between different scholars' interpretations and previous studies to verify the accuracy and reliability of the analysis results. This triangulation helps ensure that the resulting interpretations are valid and trustworthy, reflecting a broad and deep understanding of the text (Flick, 2020).

Results and Discussion

The Essence and Existence of God in Q.S. Al-Fatihah: A Tafsir Tahlili Study

This subsection elaborates on the essence and existence of God as reflected in Q.S. Al-Fatihah, utilising the tafsir tahlili approach to uncover the theological meanings contained within. Al-Fatihah, often referred to as the 'Mother of the Quran', offers rich insights into the divine nature and existence through the structure and content of its verses. This analysis aims to deepen the understanding of how this surah conveys concepts of God in a broader context, connecting the text with various applications and interpretations among Muslims. Below are some points regarding the essence and existence of God in Q.S. Al-Fatihah:

Table 1. The Essence and Existence of God in Q.S. Al-Fatihah

No.	Verse Meaning	Essence of God	Existence of God
1	All praise is for Allah, Lord of the worlds	Manifestation as Creator and Sustainer of all that exists in the universe.	Associated with universal reality and natural order reflecting His existence and governance.
2	The Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate	Affirmation of His abundant love and mercy.	Reflected through daily interactions of love and mercy, demonstrating His presence through His deeds.
3	Master of the Day of Judgment	Affirmation of His power, especially regarding judgment and recompense.	His existence as a just judge demonstrates His presence through the moral and justice system.
4	It is You we worship and You we ask for help	Centre of worship and supplication, affirming the relationship between humans and God as the core of spiritual life.	In the context of worship and prayer, His existence is felt by the faithful through their need for help and spiritual guidance.



5	Guide us to the straight path	Goal and direction of life that humanity must follow, depicting God as the guide.	As the guide, His existence is felt in seeking and following truth and justice.
6	The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor	Reinforces recognition of those under His protection and guidance.	His existence is manifested through the history of those under His mercy and guidance.
7	Not (the path) of those who have earned [Your] anger nor of those who are astray	Affirmation of the exclusivity and consequences of choosing the right or wrong path.	His existence as the guide and judge who separates truth from falsehood through His fair judgment.

Surah Al-Fatihah, often called the 'essence' of the Quran, opens with the phrase, "All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds," which, according to the tafsir of the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, affirms Allah as the Creator and Sustainer of the universe (Kemenag, 2016). This verse underscores Allah's existence as the manifestation of the infinite order of the cosmos, directing all forms of praise solely to Him and demonstrating His governance over all creation. It also indicates that every event in the universe is under His will, reflecting His absolute power.

Following this, "The Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate," is explained in Tafsir Jalalain as highlighting the unparalleled tenderness of Allah. Allah's universal mercy ('Ar-Rahman') encompasses all of creation indiscriminately, while 'Ar-Rahim' signifies His special compassion towards the believers (As-Suyuthi & Al-Mahally, 2015). Tafsir Hamka adds that these two terms indicate the continuous nature of Allah's mercy and kindness, affirming His existence through acts of love in everyday life (Hamka, 2012).

In the verse, "Master of the Day of Judgement," Tafsir Al-Mishbah explains that Allah, as the just judge, emphasises His authority in determining the final destiny of all beings (Shihab, 2015). Tafsir Ibn Kathir adds that the Day of Judgement is the ultimate manifestation of divine justice, where every deed will be accounted for (Katsir, 2018). This verse affirms Allah's existence not only as the creator but also as the just judge, reinforcing the understanding of His existence as manifested through moral order and universal justice.

The phrase, "You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help," is a declaration of the personal and exclusive relationship between man and his Creator. This verse, as analysed by many, including Al-Maraghi (1910), illustrates humanity's total dependence on Allah, not only in worship but in every aspect of need and difficulty. It affirms Allah's role as the sole source of help and guidance, thereby demonstrating His constant presence in the spiritual life of Muslims. The next verse, "Guide us to the straight path," as interpreted by Aidh al-Qarni (2008), is a plea for Allah's guidance to follow the righteous path, which is the path of those who have received His blessings. According to Thabathabai, this supplication illustrates Allah's existence as the ultimate guide, reflecting His role in leading humanity towards true justice and righteousness (Thabathaba'i, 1991).

The phrase "The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favour" according to Tafsir Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (2012), strengthens the recognition of individuals who have successfully followed the path favoured by Allah. This includes prophets, martyrs, and righteous people who have exemplified living under Allah's guidance and protection, clarifying how Allah guides and blesses those who are dedicated and obedient to His commands.

Meanwhile, "Not those who have evoked Your anger or those who are astray," according to Tafsir Zamakhsyari (1995), identifies two groups to be avoided: those who know the truth but choose to ignore it, and those who have gone astray due to ignorance. Tafsir Al-Maraghi adds that this verse underscores the exclusivity of the right path that Allah shows, and clearly distinguishes between right and wrong, highlighting Allah's existence as the just judge who differentiates between righteousness and error with His perfect justice. All the verses in Surah Al-Fatihah, when viewed through the lens of metaphor and symbolism, not only reveal



theological principles, but also offer profound insights into how language is used to express and reinforce complex concepts of the essence and existence of God. This bridges theological understanding with spiritual experience, expanding how Muslims interact with their sacred text and uncover deeper, more applicable meanings in their religious practices.

Metaphors in Surah Al-Fatihah

Surah Al-Fatihah, known as the opening of the Quran, is a chapter that is not only crucial in the daily worship of Muslims but is also rich with profound metaphorical language. The metaphors within Surah Al-Fatihah play a crucial role in communicating complex theological concepts, illustrating the essential aspects of faith and the relationship between humans and the Creator. In the following table, the author explores several key metaphors found in this surah, providing explanations on how each metaphor works to emphasize specific aspects of Islamic teachings and offer deeper insights into the messages conveyed by this sacred text.

Table 2. Metaphors in Surah Al-Fatihah

No.	Metaphor	Explanation
1	"Rabb al-'Alamin" (Lord of the Worlds)	This metaphor depicts Allah as the ruler and sustainer of everything that exists in the universe, emphasizing His power and presence at all places and times.
2	"Ar-Rahman Ar-Rahim" (The Most Merciful, The Most Compassionate)	These two attributes are used metaphorically to describe the depth and breadth of Allah's mercy. "Ar-Rahman" indicates mercy that encompasses all creatures, while "Ar-Rahim" is more specifically mercy towards the faithful.
4	"Maliki yawmi ad-din" (Master of the Day of Judgment)	This metaphor highlights Allah as a just judge on the Day of Judgment, depicting His absolute justice and His role in determining the fate of every soul.
5	"Iyyaka na'budu wa iyyaka nasta'in" (It is You we worship and You we ask for help)	This phrase uses linguistic structure to show total dependence and submission to Allah, visualizing the concept of worship and help as central elements in the human relationship with God.
6	"Ihdinas siratal mustaqim" (Guide us to the straight path)	'The straight path' is used metaphorically to describe a life that is right and in accordance with Allah's command, indicating guidance and truth that come from Him.
7	"Siratal-ladzina an'amta 'alayhim" (The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor)	This refers to the life path of prophets, martyrs, and the righteous, using 'path' metaphorically to represent a lifestyle or choice that is desired by Allah.
8	"Ghairil maghdubi 'alayhim wa laḍ-ḍallin" (Not [the path] of those who have earned [Your] anger nor of those who are astray)	This metaphor contrasts 'the straight path' with those who deviate from Allah's command, depicting a life full of wrath and misguidance as paths to be avoided.

Surah Al-Fatihah opens with the acknowledgment of Allah as "Rabb al-'Alamin," marking Him as the ruler and sustainer of the entire universe. The use of the term "Rabb," which encompasses meanings such as lord, educator, and sustainer, highlights Allah's dominant existence and governance over all, from the macro to the micro cosmos. This reflects a divine governance that is not only extensive but also intimate in its interaction with its creations (Firmansyah & Efendi, 2022).

The metaphor "Ar-Rahman Ar-Rahim," which describes Allah as the Most Merciful and Most Compassionate, expresses the duality of Allah's mercy that extends to all creatures with "Ar-Rahman" and more specifically to the faithful with "Ar-Rahim." The repetition of these words depicts the depth and breadth of Allah's mercy, teaching that His existence is actively



manifested through acts of compassion every day (Al-Majali, 2020; Khalaf & Shehab, 2023; Salih & Marhoon, 2023).

In the context of the Last Day, "Maliki yawmi ad-din" highlights Allah as a just judge on the Day of Judgment. The focus on the word "Malik" or owner affirms Allah's absolute authority over the day when every soul will be accounted for, emphasizing the concept of divine justice that underpins moral and justice concepts in Islam (Ali, 2023).

"Iyyaka na'budu wa iyyaka nasta'in" indicates the total dependence of humans on Allah, expressing that worship and the seeking of help should be directed only towards Him. The linguistic structure of this verse emphasizes the exclusivity of the relationship between the creator and creation, teaching about total surrender in worship and in seeking help in adversity (Tittensor et al., 2018).

"Ihdinas siratal mustaqim," a request for guidance on the straight path, reflects the desire of humanity to live a life guided by the truth that comes from Allah (Arroisi et al., 2022; Latifah et al., 2021). The metaphor of the 'straight path' is used to describe the life desired by Allah, indicating that this life is not just mere existence but a journey to be navigated with divine guidance.

"Siratal-ladzina an'amta 'alayhim" continues the theme of the 'path' by referring to the life path of those who have received blessings and guidance from Allah, such as prophets, martyrs, and the righteous. This indicates that this path is not only desired but has also been tested throughout history as a route that leads to spiritual and moral success (Abdurahman, 2018; Kirabaev, 2023).

Conversely, "Ghairil maghdubi 'alayhim wa laq-dallin" presents the path to be avoided, namely the path of those who have incurred Allah's wrath and those who are astray. This metaphor contrasts with the 'straight path,' underscoring that the moral and spiritual decisions of each individual significantly impact the ultimate outcome of their lives.

Through this series of metaphors, Surah Al-Fatihah not only presents a prayer but also a framework for understanding life and existence in a broader context. These metaphors teach about the attributes of Allah, His role in human life, and how humans should navigate their existence in this world by following the principles outlined in Islamic teachings, all conveyed to the believer through the use of rich and meaningful language.

Theological Symbolism in Surah Al-Fatihah

Surah Al-Fatihah, known as the essence of the Quran, contains profound layers of theological symbolism. Each verse in this chapter not only acts as a component of the prayer repeated in daily worship but also serves as a medium conveying fundamental theological teachings. This symbolism teaches about the attributes of Allah, the expected moral and spiritual structure from humanity, and the framework for the relationship between humans and their Creator. Through the choice of words and the rich structure of the verses, Al-Fatihah communicates core principles about existence, purpose, and the ultimate destiny of humans according to Islamic views.

To further understand how this symbolism works in a theological context, it would be beneficial to investigate each element conveyed in its verses. From acknowledging the universal sovereignty of Allah to emphasizing total surrender to Him, the symbols in Surah Al-Fatihah provide a pathway for a deeper understanding of how Islamic teachings are articulated through sacred texts. The following table outlines significant theological symbolism contained within this surah, offering an overview of how each symbol shapes theological understanding and religious practice in Islam.

Table 3. Theological Symbolism in Surah Al-Fatihah

Verse	Symbolism	Explanation
1	"Lord of all the worlds"	Symbolises the concept of Tauhid, depicting Allah as the creator and regulator of all that exists, emphasising the universality and divine authority over all creations.
2	"The Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate"	Symbolises Allah's boundless compassion, indicating that Allah bestows mercy upon all creatures, and specifically, upon the believers.
3	"Master of the Day of Judgment"	Symbol of divine justice, underlining the role of Allah as a just judge in the hereafter, where each human will receive recompense according to their deeds in the world.
4	"It is You we worship and You we ask for help"	Symbolises total surrender and absolute dependence on Allah, showing that worship and requests for help should only be directed towards Allah alone.
5	"The straight path"	Symbol of guidance and truth, depicting the life path Allah desires for humanity, a path leading to salvation and reward in the afterlife.
6	"The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favour"	Symbolises spiritual and moral success, referring to the life path of prophets, martyrs, and the righteous who have received Allah's blessings and guidance.
7	"Not [the path] of those who have earned [Your] anger nor of those who are astray"	Symbolises a warning and rejection, identifying the life paths to be avoided, namely those who turn away from Allah's commands and follow their own misleading desires.

Surah Al-Fatihah begins by identifying Allah as "Lord of all the worlds," a profound symbolism that underscores the concept of Tauhid (Anzaikhan, 2023; Ertürk, 2022). This symbol reflects the belief that Allah is the creator and regulator of all that exists, positioning Him as the divine authority over every creation. Through this symbol, the universality and power of Allah are affirmed, instilling an understanding that all events and existence in the universe are under His perfect control and planning. Including such as war, crime, and famine are encompassed within Allah's divine plan, not as direct intentions of harm, but as tests, consequences of human actions, and opportunities for spiritual growth and moral accountability in the framework of His ultimate wisdom and justice.

Following this, the surah portrays Allah with two loving attributes, "The Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate" (Al-Majali, 2020; Sairally, 2023). This symbolism highlights the gentleness of Allah and His boundless mercy, which is bestowed upon all creatures without discrimination. Furthermore, this symbol indicates that Allah's compassion is not only universal but also specific, with particular emphasis on those who believe. It teaches humanity about the kindness and care of Allah that extends widely, inviting reflection on the personal relationship between humans and their Creator.

In the context of the hereafter, "Master of the Day of Judgement" introduces the symbolism of divine justice. This verse places Allah as the unquestionable judge whose justice prevails on the Day of Judgement (Enghariono, 2021; Hossain, 2018). This symbolism not only underscores the sovereignty of Allah but also His perfect justice, where every human will receive just recompense for their deeds in the world. It reminds humanity of their moral responsibility and the end of their mortal journey.

The phrase "It is You we worship and You we ask for help" is crucial. It emphasizes complete submission and absolute dependence on Allah, illustrating that all forms of worship and requests for help should be exclusively directed to Him (Kasiono et al., 2023; Setiani & Syauqi, 2020). This symbolism educates the faithful about the essence of true worship and the



relationship that must be forged with Allah, teaching the importance of total reliance on His power and guidance (Masturin, 2019).

The requested "straight path" in the prayer is a symbol of guidance and truth (Malik & Maslahah, 2021). This symbolism depicts the life path Allah desires for humanity, one that leads to salvation and reward in the afterlife. Through this symbol, the understanding that life is a journey to be navigated with guidance from Allah is clarified, teaching the faithful the correct way to live according to Islamic teachings (Abdullah, 2022).

Furthermore, "The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favour" carries a special nuance. This symbolizes spiritual and moral success, referring to the lives led by prophets, martyrs, and the righteous. Through this symbol, Surah Al-Fatihah shows that there are real-life examples of lives to be followed, those who have been under the guidance and protection of Allah (Ismail et al., 2017; Mukhtar, 2018).

Finally, "Not (the path) of those who have earned [Your] anger nor of those who have gone astray" serves as a stern warning. It identifies and rejects the life paths that do not align with Allah's teachings, clarifying about the paths that should be avoided. This symbol is crucial in educating the faithful about the importance of following correct teachings and the consequences of deviating from the truth.

The overall symbolism in Surah Al-Fatihah serves not only as an aid in teaching Islamic concepts but also as a reinforcement of the spiritual experience of the faithful. By integrating this symbolism into daily prayers, Muslims are continually reminded of the basic principles of their teachings, deepening their relationship with Allah and enhancing their understanding of the life path that should be pursued.

Discussion

Surah Al-Fatihah is often interpreted as the core of Islamic thought, inviting its followers to contemplate the concept of the oneness of Allah through language rich in metaphors and theological symbolism. Through phrases such as "Lord of all the worlds" and "Master of the Day of Judgment," this symbolism reveals the authority and unlimited sovereignty of Allah, painting a picture of divine power that transcends all. This approach ties the familiar concepts of power and governance experienced in daily human life with the infinite majesty of Allah, providing a deeper understanding of His transcendent existence (Abraham & Purnama, 2023; Marhamah et al., 2022).

In the use of the phrase "The Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate," there is an application of relevance theory developed by Sperber and Wilson (2015), which highlights how language is directed to optimize the relevance of the message for the receiver. This verse specifically emphasizes the mercy and compassion of Allah, not only providing comfort but also enhancing the emotional and spiritual connection of the text for individuals in the context of worship or personal reflection. This shows how the language in the Quran is designed to resonate maximally with the needs and experiences of the message's recipient.

In the verse "It is You we worship and You we ask for help," a linguistic structure is used that demonstrates absolute dependence on divine power, prioritizing Allah above all else. This exclusive structure underscores monotheism as the essence of Tauhid, affirming that all forms of worship and requests for help should only be directed towards Allah (Cole, 2019; Zarkasyi et al., 2020). This demonstrates how language can shape and strengthen religious practices, binding the faithful in an inseparable relationship with the divine.

The symbolism of the "straight path" used in the prayer articulates a life that is right according to Islamic teachings. This road metaphor is not just a geographical guide but a symbol of spiritual life that aligns with truth and morality. It encourages Muslims to follow the life



examples of the prophets and the righteous, who not only provide inspiration but also guide the faithful towards spiritual and moral success.

A deep linguistic analysis of Surah Al-Fatihah opens new insights into how every word and phrase is not just an element of prayer, but a key component in religious education and identity formation. This study demonstrates how the Quran uses language to depict and at the same time shape the spiritual reality of Muslims. Through the language employed, Surah Al-Fatihah becomes one of the most fundamental and transformative texts in the Islamic tradition, influencing not only understanding but also the religious practices of its followers.

This study, integrating conceptual metaphor theory and relevance theory, proves the effectiveness of the Quran in using language as a powerful unifying tool. It shows how the sacred text successfully communicates complex and abstract messages through careful selection of words and phrase structures, making them accessible yet profound for a wide audience.

In this study, metaphor theory is not just a linguistic phenomenon but also conceptual, where human thought is largely shaped by metaphorical structures (Kövecses, 2020; Zhang, 2021). In the context of Surah Al-Fatihah, this theory explains how abstract concepts, such as the oneness of God (Tauhid), are understood through more concrete terms, such as "the straight path" and "Lord of all the worlds." Metaphors in Al-Fatihah make it easier for Muslims to understand complex theological principles by framing them in terms more accessible to everyday experience. Thus, metaphors serve as cognitive tools that allow humans to deeply comprehend and reflect on spiritual concepts without losing the abstract dimensions of religious teachings.

Relevance theory emphasizes that human communication aims to optimize relevance, where the messages delivered must have significant cognitive impact and be easily accessible to the receiver (Guendouzi et al., 2023). In Surah Al-Fatihah, the simple yet rich linguistic structure enables the faithful to grasp the essence of Tauhid and faith teachings, while also responding to theological messages emotionally and spiritually. The use of words such as "The Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate" not only functions as descriptions of God's attributes but also is designed to maximize the emotional and reflective effect on the reader. This theory explains how the sacred text seeks to reach its audience through personally relevant word choices, allowing the messages of Al-Fatihah to continually resonate in daily worship.

This study presents a novel and new approach in analyzing religious texts by focusing on the use of metaphors and symbolism in Surah Al-Fatihah to explore how these linguistic elements facilitate a deeper understanding of the concept of Tauhid. Although many studies have explored the linguistic aspects of the Quran, this approach is essentially unique in integrating conceptual metaphor theory and relevance theory within the same framework to show how both work synergistically to enhance the religious experience of readers. This research not only expands understanding of language mechanisms in sacred texts but also offers new insights into how conceptual understanding of the oneness of God is shaped through narrative structure and word choices in the Surah.

Furthermore, this research further challenges current knowledge boundaries by investigating how repetition and word choices in Surah Al-Fatihah affect and strengthen religious beliefs and practices. It opens new perspectives in theological and linguistic studies by showing that text comprehension is not only directed by semantic content but also by linguistic structures that trigger reflection and meditation. The outcomes of this study are expected to encourage more interdisciplinary dialogue among linguists, theologians, and religious practitioners, enriching ways to understand and teach ancient texts in a modern context.



Conclusion

This research has demonstrated how Surah Al-Fatihah, often referred to as the 'essence' of the Quran, uses rich metaphors and symbolism to convey the concept of Tauhid and other faith principles to its readers. Through the application of conceptual metaphor theory and relevance theory, this study has successfully revealed how the linguistic structure and word choices in the Surah not only enrich its textuality but also strengthen its spiritual and theological understanding. As a result, Surah Al-Fatihah serves not only as a component of worship but also as a source of theological education that invites Muslims to contemplate and deepen their understanding of Islamic teachings. As a recommendation, it is advised that Islamic religious education make greater use of linguistic analysis to interpret sacred texts. This will help educators develop teaching methods that focus not only on memorization but also on a deep understanding of the text content. Further, this research should be expanded to include other chapters of the Quran, to see how metaphors and symbolism are widely used in the sacred text. This would provide broader insights into the linguistic richness of the Quran and its potential in educating and strengthening the faith of Muslims worldwide.

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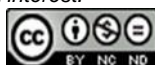
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