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Islamic Theolinguistics : An Extended Outline

Mansour Hashemi[1]
[1] University of Guilan, Iran ; 5JVR+C9X, Rasht, Gilan Province, Iran

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Abstract

This paper introduces and explores the concept of Islamic Theolinguistics, an epistemological framework that examines the relationship between language, human consciousness, and Divine revelation. Contemporary linguistic and philosophical paradigms have shifted away from simple referentiality, demonstrating that language operates as a self-referential, subjective "noumenal net" independent of mere sensory perception. Animals possess perception, but understanding is uniquely linguistic; language is what constructs human identity and reality. Utilizing these modern insights as a tool for text interpretation, this study returns to the Qur'an and Hadith to investigate how the Book of God outlines the nature of language and its relation to Being and Creation—a concept historically mirrored in classical Persian literature as "the world of meaning" ('alam al-ma'na). By analyzing key Quranic verses, this paper argues that human language is rooted in a primordial, Divine teaching framework: from the initial endowment of conceptual categories ("And He taught Adam all the Names", 2:31) to the faculties of expression ("He taught him speech", 55:4) and literacy ("by the pen and what they write", 68:1). Furthermore, the study explores the ontology of creation as a timeless, linguistic act of God ("Be and it becomes", 2:117). Ultimately, Islamic Theolinguistics posits that because God is Manifest Truth (Al-Haqq), language—emanating from the Divine Will prior to physical creation—inherently carries a potential connection to its spiritual Source. This framework provides a systematic approach to reading sacred texts, aligning modern epistemology with the timeless, ontological truth embedded in Islamic revelation.

Keywords Islamic Theolinguistics, Epistemology, Noumenal Net, Authorial Intention, Divine Creation, Quranic Exegesis, Self-Referentiality.

Abstract

Penelitian ini mengenalkan kerangka Islamic Theolinguistics yang mengkaji hubungan antara bahasa, kesadaran manusia, dan wahyu Ilahi. Dengan memanfaatkan pendekatan linguistik modern, studi ini meneliti Al-Qur'an dan Hadis untuk menunjukkan bahwa bahasa manusia berakar pada pengajaran Ilahi primordial—mulai dari pemberian kategori konseptual (QS 2:31), kemampuan ekspresi (QS 55:4), hingga literasi (QS 68:1)—serta penciptaan sebagai tindakan linguistik Allah (QS 2:117). Teolinguistik Islam menyimpulkan bahwa bahasa memancar dari Kehendak Ilahi dan terhubung dengan Sumber spiritualnya, sehingga memberikan pendekatan sistematis untuk menyelaraskan epistemologi modern dengan kebenaran wahyu Islam.

Keywords Teolinguistik Islam, Epistemologi, Jaring Nomena, Niat Kepenulisan, Ciptaan Allah, Tafsir al-Qur'an, Swareferensi

***Corresponding Author**

Mansour Hashemi, mansour_hashemi@hotmail.com

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Introduction

It is not possible to have a reading or interpretation of any text without epistemological presuppositions, as no mind is free of these inherent assumptions. Even if one believes that he or she starts from a neutral position to read a text, this belief is not within human possibility because primordial epistemological assumptions are always at work, whether or not one is consciously aware of them.[1] The very first of these assumptions concerns language and the non-referentiality of language; we must ask, do words actually "refer" to things,[2] or do they merely represent the "real" things outside one's linguistic net within the mind? For instance, does the word "moon" refer directly to the celestial body of matter staring everyone in the face? The obvious or evident responses to these questions have not necessarily proven to be the correct answer, and what appears evident in this case has turned out, upon systematic study, to be one hundred and eighty degrees different. The twentieth century was a critical time when the referentiality of language was definitely proved to be problematic, as it did not generally include the Humanities.[3] The introduction and explanation of the "Psyche" were against the positivist and empiricist tenets which announced that the only plausible object of scientific study is a sensible and measurable subject, yet the psyche cannot be observed with or without instruments. Later, it was also revealed that language, as a human potential, possesses the same status as the psyche and cannot be a direct object of the senses.[4] This issue, or rather re-discovery, of language shed light on many apparently diverse topics such as interpretation, authorial intention, the relevance of history as having a textual status, and teaching and research in general.

The fundamental questions of reading, understanding, and interpretation, as found in exegesis, are not mere social-historical issues in themselves, although the whole issue possesses a long genealogy of its own. In fact, through the ages, the true subject matter has been "human

[1] Mohammed Y. Nofal, "'I'm Praising God in the Language That He Loves': Language Use in Religious Discourse," *International Journal of Arabic-English Studies* 23, no. 2 (2023): 19–36, https://doi.org/10.33806/ijaes.v23i2.451.

[2] Mukhlisa Toshpulatova, "Theolinguistics and the Role of Religious Discourse in Contemporary Text and Discourse Linguistics," *Oriental Renaissance: Innovative, Educational, Natural and Social Sciences* 5, no. 8 (2025): 45–59.

[3] Ewere Nelson Atoi et al., "Dilemma of Religious Language: A Critique of Logical Positivists' Verification Ideology and Wittgenstein's Language Games Theory," *International Journal of Arts, Languages, Linguistics and Literary Studies* 15, no. 1 (2026): 1–12.

[4] Atoi et al., "Dilemma of Religious Language: A Critique of Logical Positivists' Verification Ideology and Wittgenstein's Language Games Theory."

consciousness",[5] prompting the relevant question: "how is it possible to explain that systematically?". The answer to this could be useful for different fields of knowledge since it is applicable to all human beings, hence its ontological status. The question depicts its full significance when one realises the extensions and functionality of such an inquiry in law, psychology, or teaching and research activities. In general, we now know more about the human condition, the processing of knowledge and its functions and boundaries, and about how a text is interpreted as correctly as possible or as closely as possible to the authorial intention, especially for texts which are meant to guide towards an important end such as Being and Law.[6] Through the ages, Muslims have referred to the Gracious Book of Allah to find out the answers that were also supported by Hadith. The Holy Book has acted for guidance and as a source from which people extract some answers for their questions about being, life, its meaning, and the purpose of creation. However, each time this is done according to the knowledge of the era in which they live. This knowledge is the common functional factor that actively participates in any act of interpretation, especially on intellectual questions such as Being, meaning, and the creation of human beings who possess language (words in the "mind").

In brief, recent epistemological knowledge and facts tell us that the words of any language refer to themselves and make a noumenal net thrown upon the phenomenal, whilst the senses have a separate connection to the phenomenal world. Therefore, man has essentially been living a duality: "the life of senses and the objects of them, and the life of 'noumenal words' which is existential." Their harmony, correctness of the words, or truth, has proved to be helpful and constructive. For long, the dominant view was supposed to be limited to the world of senses; reality was believed to be, and equal to, what is "seen", and objects and discourses were arranged and categorised by what the sense of sight perceived. Seeing was knowing with certainty; what could not be seen, as they thought, had no value or place for studying. Then this epistemological arrangement of knowledge changed, and knowledge was known to exist independent of senses for any act of understanding at any present moment. This does not mean the senses and their phenomenal objects are disregarded, but that perception was realised to be separate from human

[5] Ali Reza Mohammad, "Intertwining Worlds: The Dynamics of Linguistic Religion and Religious Language," *Journal of Religion and Linguistics* 1, no. 2 (2024): 49–66, https://doi.org/10.31763/jorel.v1i2.6.

[6] Massimo Campanini, "Qur'an and Science: A Hermeneutical Approach," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 7, no. 1 (2005): 48–63, https://doi.org/10.3366/jqs.2005.7.1.48; Benjamin Hary and Martin J. Wein, "Religiolinguistics: On Jewish-, Christian- and Muslim-Defined Languages," *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 2013, no. 220 (2013): 85–108, https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl-2013-0015.

understanding. Perception and understanding are two different realms. Animals also possess perception, sometimes more evolved than that of human beings, but understanding is specifically linguistic. Furthermore, objectivity of the world of things is based upon linguistic subjectivity. Without language there is no civilised world, and no identity. To understand the world of things, to identify things, or to distinguish things from each other, and many other functions are all linguistic acts. Language makes the reality of the world of things possible and it gives identity to things and people who have no identity and meaning in themselves, as no animal can tell the difference between a book and a notebook or between two texts.[7] This self-referentiality of language, which is also explained under the title of rhetoric, considers any context, even historical, as a text to which some part of meaning is attached.

Considering these newly expounded epistemological issues, I refer to the Book of God to search for an understanding of language and its relation to Being and Creation. In classic Persian literature, this issue is raised by the name of "the world of meaning".[8] As this writing focuses on language and God's revelation of truth about that, this science can be called Theolinguistics. This term, perhaps relatively new in English, has a tradition in Islamic culture, and a number of Islamic scholars have referred to it as “the science of Words from the point of view of the God" that is carefully recorded and preserved in the Book.[9] There are a number of references to language and its functions in the Book. The direct reference can be found in Al-Baqara 2:31, "And He taught Adam all the Names". God teaches Adam the "names" which are the “building blocks” of language.[10] The development of language in human beings is made possible by God’s primordial creation then teaching him the noun category which later taught to be spoken or written as in holy Verses Ar-Rahmaan 55:4 "He taught him speech", and in Al-Qalaam 68:1: "by the pen and what they write". This takes a delicate mind to realise the actual process; however, the reality and immediacy can be distinguished by some deep thinking. As it is already known, the "words" that God teaches are truth. In fact, God is manifest Truth as written in Al-Hajj 22:62, Luqman 31:30 or An-Noor 24:25: God is manifest Truth. Moreover, in different Verses, it is clearly stated that bringing

[7] Richard Futrell and Kyle Mahowald, “How Linguistics Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Language Models,” *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 49 (2026): e198, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X2510112X.

[8] Ahmad Mohammadpour, “The Invention of Iran: From ‘Iranianness’ to ‘Persianness,’” *Asian Studies Review* 49, no. 1 (2025): 57–77, https://doi.org/10.1080/10357823.2024.2355110.

[9] Fariz Alnizar, “An Introduction to Religious Language Exploring Theolinguistics in Contemporary Contexts,” *Critical Research on Religion* 12, no. 1 (2024): 112–14, https://doi.org/10.1177/20503032241226969; Badia Turaxonova, “Theolinguistics As a Science of Language and Religion,” *The Lingua Spectrum* 6, no. 1 (2025): 185–90.

[10] Saqib Hussain, “Adam and the Names,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 88, no. 1 (2025): 1–26, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0041977X24000600.

into being or creation is also a linguistic act of God (Hakim), as in Al-Baqara 2:117, Al-Imraan 3:47 and also in other verses, God states: "Be and it becomes". By further attention, this is understood that there is no time between God's saying and the world of Being; thus the act of creation by Words is timeless. That is to say it is beyond the simplistic chronological understanding of creation; first the body was created, and it evolves until it is capable of learning the language. The Will of God (God's intention, desire or love) is accordingly the first act of creation before language (pure language, inner words, or truth) as in Al-Anaam 6:82: He primarily intends a thing then he says: "Be and it is".[11] Therefore, all that language, as a whole, ever implies is truth and soul that is potentially connected to God, its Source. The soul/truth refers to where it originally emanated from. That is to say, the other side of the phenomenal world or the world of senses where primarily the Self/Soul is experienced (again extra-sensory and transcendental).

Despite these profound Quranic indications of the linguistic nature of reality and continuous creation, a significant gap exists in contemporary scholarship, where creation is often analysed merely as a past material event or through the restrictive lenses of traditional metaphysics and modern scientific empiricism.[12] This material aspect of creation, because of the domination of philosophical Metaphysics, has mainly been the locus of attention, leaving the most powerful aspect of creation—Language—more or less unattended and hidden within academic spheres until the twentieth century. Even when considered within modern exegesis, the discussion rarely reaches the depth of an ontological inquiry that bridges divine revelation, the non-referential nature of language, and human conscious existence. [13]This paper addresses this lacuna by introducing and developing a rigorous concept of Islamic Theolinguistics. The novelty of this study lies in its distinct methodological approach: rather than viewing language in the Quran as a neutral representational tool, it interprets it as the very noumenal force that

[11] E. Dada Adelowo, "The Concept of Tauhid in Islam: A Theological Review," *The Islamic Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (1991): 23–41.

[12] Johanna Pink, "`Literal Meaning' or `Correct Aqīda'? The Reflection of Theological Controversy in Indonesian Qur'an Translations," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 17, no. 3 (2015): 100–120, https://doi.org/10.3366/jqs.2015.0213; Hary and Wein, "Religiolinguistics: On Jewish-, Christian- and Muslim-Defined Languages"; Campanini, "Qur'an and Science: A Hermeneutical Approach."

[13] Tehseen Thaver, "Language as Power: Literary Interpretations of the Qur'an in Early Islam," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 28, no. 2 (2018): 207–30, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1356186317000633; Bilal Gökkır, "The Application of Western Comparative Religious and Linguistic Approaches to the Qur'an in Turkey," *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations* 14, no. 3 (2003): 273–91, https://doi.org/10.1080/09596410305260; Campanini, "Qur'an and Science: A Hermeneutical Approach"; Halim Calis, "The Theoretical Foundations of Contextual Interpretation of the Qur'an in Islamic Theological Schools and Philosophical Sufism," *Religions* 13, no. 2 (2022): 188, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13020188; Hary and Wein, "Religiolinguistics: On Jewish-, Christian- and Muslim-Defined Languages."

constitutes and continuously creates reality—a level of Creation here identified as “Haades”. By synthesising newly expounded epistemological and linguistic data from the twentieth century with the eternal truths preserved in the Quran, this research seeks to reveal how primordial Creation recurs timelessly through divine and human words.

Result and Discussion

The term "theolinguistics" constitutes a relatively recent addition to the complex architecture of the academic lexicon, yet it describes a field of inquiry as ancient as theological speculation itself. It represents the formalised intersection of two of humanity’s most fundamental and pervasive phenomena: language and religion.[14] While the foundational impulses of this discipline can be traced back millennia to scribes, exegetes, and philosophers who wrestled with the translation of divine will into human speech, the structuralisation of theolinguistics as a self-aware academic subset belongs distinctly to the twentieth century. The exact provenance of the term remains a subject of engaging scholarly debate, yet there is a general consensus that it began to gain conceptual traction in the West during the latter half of the 19th century, with its usage accelerating rapidly throughout the latter decades of the 20th. In current pedagogical discourse, it is widely attributed to, or at least inextricably linked with, the Belgian linguist Jean-Pierre van Noppen, whose seminal work in the 1980s did much to popularise and define its initial contours.[15]

Van Noppen did not merely introduce a term; he envisioned a "theolinguistics" that function as a multifaceted, multi-disciplinary approach designed to bridge the epistemological chasm that often separates linguistic science from religious studies.[16] His vision was primarily concerned with the exhaustive study of the "language of faith"—the mechanisms by which the transcendent is domesticated through human semiotics. This involved the pragmatic and semantic analysis of theological discourse and a sociological examination of how diverse religious communities employ language to externalise, express, and maintain their core beliefs, values, and experiences.[17] Van Noppen’s definition sought to apply the rigorous, empirically grounded

[14] Turaxonova, “Theolinguistics As a Science of Language and Religion”; Toshpulatova, “Theolinguistics and the Role of Religious Discourse in Contemporary Text and Discourse Linguistics.”

[15] Jean-Pierre van Noppen, “Critical Theolinguistics vs. the Literalist Paradigm,” *Sociolinguistica* 25, no. 1 (2011): 28–40, https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110238808.28; Jean-Pierre van Noppen, “ETP: Prolegomena to a Course of English for Theological Purposes,” *Revista de Lenguas Para Fines Específicos* 1 (1994): 133–50.

[16] van Noppen, “ETP: Prolegomena to a Course of English for Theological Purposes.”

[17] Jean-Pierre van Noppen, “Spatial Theography,” *Revista de Lenguas Para Fines Específicos* 2 (1995): 125–38.

methodologies of modern descriptive linguistics to the seemingly subjective and symbol-heavy domain of religious expression.[18] This methodological synthesis marked a turning point, offering a structural framework through which scholars could approach texts that were previously analyzed purely through hermeneutics or dogmatics.

However, a strict focus on van Noppen and the 1980s risks oversimplification and overlooks the profound "pre-history" of theolinguistic thought. Long prior to any formalised conceptualisation or nomenclature, the intellectual foundations for theolinguistics were being laid by diverse groups of scholars working, often in isolation, within vastly different cultural and theological traditions.[19] In the West, particularly within Christian theology and phenomenology, this groundwork became highly evident in the early twentieth century. Key figures such as Paul Tillich pioneered an exploration into the symbolic nature of religious language.[20] Tillich argued that a strict literalism was insufficient to grasp the divine; rather, religious language functions on a symbolic plane, where the symbols themselves point beyond their physical constraints to an ultimate reality, participated in the power of that which they signified.[21] For Tillich, the language of religion was not merely descriptive but participative, a concept that sits at the very heart of theolinguistic inquiry.[22]

Simultaneously, a rich and powerful lineage of scholarship in the East, particularly within the vast Islamic intellectual tradition, had been engaged for centuries in sophisticated analyses that modern scholars would instantly classify as theolinguistic. The very nature of Islamic revelation, centred on the uncreated Word of God (the Quran) conveyed in a specific and sublime Arabic, made linguistic analysis an essential component of theological duty.[23] Scholars such as Al-Ghazali and the pre-eminent Sufi philosopher Ibn Arabi spent their lives unravelling the profound and inextricable connection between divine

[18] Jean-Pierre van Noppen, "In the Beginning Was the Word, and the Word Became Song," in *Tools of the Sacred, Techniques of the Secular: Awakening, Epiphany, Apocalypse and Doubt in Contemporary English-Language Verse*, ed. Franca Bellarsi (P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2015).

[19] van Noppen, "Spatial Theography"; van Noppen, "Critical Theolinguistics vs. the Literalist Paradigm."

[20] Paul Tillich, "Relation of Metaphysics and Theology," *The Review of Metaphysics* 10, no. 1 (1956): 57–63.

[21] Paul Tillich, "The Problem of Theological Method: II," *The Journal of Religion* 27, no. 1 (1947): 16–26, https://doi.org/10.1086/483540.

[22] Tyron Inbody, "Paul Tillich and Process Theology," *Theological Studies* 36, no. 3 (1975): 472–92, https://doi.org/10.1177/004056397503600305.

[23] Calis, "The Theoretical Foundations of Contextual Interpretation of the Qur'an in Islamic Theological Schools and Philosophical Sufism."

revelation, human language, and the nature of existence itself.[24] For these thinkers, language was not a mere arbitrary system of human convenience; it was a divine endowment, a tool for both comprehending creation (*wujud*) and communicating with the Creator (*Al-Haqq*). Their contributions to rhetoric (*balagha*), semantics (*'ilm al-ma'ani*), and the philosophy of the Name (*'ilm al-asma*) remain incredibly relevant to the current parameters of the discipline, demonstrating that the conceptual core of theolinguistics was being nurtured long before its western nomenclature emerged.

The eventual emergence of theolinguistics as a distinct, acknowledged field of study in the contemporary academic landscape was not a random event; it can be understood as a necessary and inevitable academic response to several converging, powerful intellectual trends of the mid-twentieth century. Perhaps the most significant catalyst was the "linguistic turn" that swept through Anglo-American philosophy and subsequently permeated all Humanities disciplines. This profound philosophical shift underscored the pervasive, almost dictatorial role that language plays in shaping, and perhaps even constructing, human thought, experience, and reality. This paradigm shift naturally and logically led to a renewed and reinvigorated academic interest in the specific, unique language used within religious contexts. Scholars began to realise that to understand religion, they had to move beyond analyzing dogmatic content to analyzing the very linguistic medium in which that content was encoded and transmitted.

Furthermore, a parallel and equally influential trend was the growing recognition among sociologists, anthropologists, and historians of the profound cultural and social embeddedness of religion. Religion was increasingly viewed not merely as a set of abstracted dogmas or private psychological experiences but as a dynamic, lived social phenomenon. This sociolinguistic reality prompted a strong desire within the academy for robust methodologies that could adequately, and with some measure of scientific rigour, account for the crucial linguistic dimension of religious life. The olinguistics, therefore, arose to meet this specific need, positioned to analyze how language serves as the circulatory system of a religious community—shaping its rituals, maintaining its boundaries, defining its hierarchies, and articulating its transcendent aspirations in the messy, concrete world of social interaction.

[24] Ahmad Fazeli and Hediyeh Omidzamani, "A Review of the Theory of 'The Spirit of Meaning' with Emphasis on Al-Ghazali's Point of View," *Journal of Philosophical Investigations* 17, no. 45 (2023): 147–58, https://doi.org/10.22034/jpiut.2023.57948.3582; Ben Hardman, "God on the Isthmus: Ibn 'Arabi and the Dynamic Nature of Faith," *The Heythrop Journal* 65, no. 4 (2024): 421–33, https://doi.org/10.1111/heyj.14321.

These converging historical threads—ancient theological concern, early modern philosophical symbolism, centuries of sophisticated non-Western scholarship, and the methodological rigour of modern linguistics—have woven the present tapestry of theolinguistics. This convergence has established that any serious investigation into the religious life of humanity must inevitably begin by confronting the complex medium through which that life is expressed and experienced.[25] This realisation naturally propels the discipline towards its most fundamental inquiry: an examination of the precise mechanisms through which raw belief is translated into meaningful semiotics, and how those semiotics, in turn, reinforce, refine, and perpetuate the very beliefs that created them. It is this profound and inescapable interdependence that defines the core ontological question of theolinguistics: the nature of the intrinsic bond between them.

The Intrinsic Bond Between Language, Belief, and Religion

The reasons why humanity began to perceive a deep, almost symbiotic connection between language and belief, and ultimately the structured expression of that belief in religion, are multifaceted, ancient, and deeply rooted in the very nature of human consciousness and social interaction. Language is not merely a tertiary tool for communication; it is foundational to how humans conceptualize their place within the cosmos and articulate their relationship with the transcendent.[26] Within theolinguistics, this bond is recognized not as an accidental historical occurrence but as an intrinsic necessity for religious existence. If religion is a system of meaning seeking to connect the human with the Divine, language is the primary apparatus through which that meaning is constructed, preserved, and enacted.[27] To understand this bond requires disaggregating the distinct yet overlapping functions of language as the medium of articulation, the architect of identity, the interpreter of experience, and the constructor of ultimate meaning.

Primarily, language serves as the essential medium through which beliefs are articulated, shared, and transmitted across generations and geographies. No mind is a sealed vessel, and for an internal thought, conviction, or value to gain social currency—a prerequisite for any organized religion—it must be codified linguistically. Beliefs, which are often abstracted internal states, only take on a concrete and actionable form when they are expressed as propositions or narratives. Whether it is through sacred texts

[25] Hary and Wein, "Religiolinguistics: On Jewish-, Christian- and Muslim-Defined Languages."

[26] van Noppen, "Critical Theolinguistics vs. the Literalist Paradigm"; van Noppen, "ETP: Prolegomena to a Course of English for Theological Purposes"; Hary and Wein, "Religiolinguistics: On Jewish-, Christian- and Muslim-Defined Languages."

[27] Adelowo, "The Concept of Tauhid in Islam: A Theological Review."

containing codified doctrines, the standardized formulas of liturgical prayers, the rhetorical structure of sermons, or everyday conversations about faith among adherents, language serves as the indispensable vehicle for expressing and reinforcing religious convictions.[28] Without language, doctrine cannot exist, nor can the essential rituals of faith be directed or understood. A ritual requires a script, and that script, even when non-verbal, is interpreted through a framework already built by words.

Furthermore, language plays a crucial and powerful role in the formation and maintenance of religious identity. The bond between language and community is widely recognized in sociolinguistics, but within a religious context, this takes on a sacred dimension.[29] The specific vocabulary, specialized idioms, and unique discourse patterns used within a religious community—such as the liturgical use of Latin in historical Catholicism, the specialized terminology of Sufism, or the distinct language of the English Puritans—foster an intense sense of belonging and solidarity among its members.[30] This specialized register, or "sacred dialect," creates a shared mental space. Furthermore, language is often a primary tool used to distinguish one religious tradition from another, acting as a potent signifier of boundary reinforcement.[31] By knowing the correct way to speak, bless, or pray, an adherent signals their membership within the group, preserving a unique sense of identity that is often more durable than ethnic or national affiliations. To learn a religion is, in a very real sense, to learn a new language or a new way of speaking existence into being.

Third, and perhaps most profoundly from a psychological perspective, language is intimately intertwined with the very architecture of religious experience. The most intense moments of religious life—mystical encounters, prophetic revelations, or deep spiritual conversions—are often described by individuals in terms that are inherently linguistic. Adherents consistently report "hearing" a voice (audulatory revelation), "feeling" a presence that can only be named, or, conversely, having an intense experience that is defined precisely by its being "ineffable" or difficult to articulate—a state that

[28] van Noppen, "In the Beginning Was the Word, and the Word Became Song"; Calis, "The Theoretical Foundations of Contextual Interpretation of the Qur'an in Islamic Theological Schools and Philosophical Sufism."

[29] Ali Alsaawi, "The Use of Language and Religion from a Sociolinguistic Perspective," *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication* 32, no. 2 (2022): 236–53, https://doi.org/10.1075/japc.00095.als.

[30] Bernard Spolsky, "Religion as a Site of Language Contact," *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 23 (2003): 81–94, https://doi.org/10.1017/S026719050300021X.

[31] William Safran, "Language, Ethnicity and Religion: A Complex and Persistent Linkage," *Nations and Nationalism* 14, no. 1 (2008): 171–90, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-8129.2008.00323.x.

paradoxically uses language to describe the limits of language.[32] This suggests that language does not merely express post-hoc reflections on religious experiences but actually pre-configures and shapes the very way those experiences are perceived, categorized, and interpreted in the moment they occur. A Christian mystic interprets their encounter through the language of the Trinity,[33] while a Buddhist meditator utilizes the vocabulary of Emptiness (*Sunyata*), demonstrating that language provides the semantic template for spiritual realization itself.[34]

Finally, language is an unparalleled and powerful tool for the construction, interpretation, and ongoing transformation of religious meaning. The core of most major world religions rests upon sacred texts. These texts, with their rich layers of symbolism, complex allegories, poetic structures, and sweeping narrative arcs, do not simply describe a prior reality; they provide the comprehensive semiotic framework within which adherents understand the world, their moral responsibilities, and the nature of ultimate reality. The meaning of a sacred text is rarely static; it is unlocked through the ongoing, millennia-long linguistic process of interpretation, exegesis (*Tafsir*), and commentary.[35] This dynamic interpretative process allows for the continuous creation and re-creation of religious meaning, enabling ancient texts to address modern realities. Language, in this sense, makes the Divine eternally present and conversational, ensuring that a religion remains a living tradition rather than a historical artifact. This intricate and foundational bond demonstrates that the separation of religion from its linguistic embodiment is intellectually impossible.[36] Any study of faith must inevitably become a study of the Word.

This profound realization of the intrinsic and sacred bond between language and religion, which has dominated both Islamic scholarship and pre-modern Christian theology, has not, however, escaped challenge. While theolinguistics often seeks to reclaim the metaphysical and ontological

[32] van Noppen, "In the Beginning Was the Word, and the Word Became Song"; Tillich, "The Problem of Theological Method: II."

[33] Tillich, "Relation of Metaphysics and Theology"; van Noppen, "In the Beginning Was the Word, and the Word Became Song."

[34] Johan Blomberg and Przemysław Żywiczyński, "Language and Its Limits: Meaning, Reference and the Ineffable in Buddhist Philosophy," *Topoi* 41, no. 3 (2022): 483–96, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11245-021-09787-w; Federico Divino, "Language and Consciousness in Early Buddhist Thought: On the Early Reflections on the Theme of Language and the Perception of Reality in the Pāli Canon," *Philosophies* 10, no. 2 (2025): 31, https://doi.org/10.3390/philosophies10020031.

[35] Campanini, "Qur'an and Science: A Hermeneutical Approach"; Calis, "The Theoretical Foundations of Contextual Interpretation of the Qur'an in Islamic Theological Schools and Philosophical Sufism."

[36] Thaver, "Language as Power: Literary Interpretations of the Qur'an in Early Islam."

dimensions of the sacred text, a vastly different approach has dominated within the modern intellectual history of the West. This competing paradigm, heavily influenced by Enlightenment rationalism, positivism, and a growing skepticism toward traditional authority, sought to scrutinize the foundational claims of faith.[37] The resulting tension has profoundly shaped contemporary global academia, forcing a serious confrontation with western secularist perspective.

Western Secularist Perspectives on Language and Revealed Religion.

Historically, certain dominant strands of Western scholarship, particularly those forged during the Enlightenment and subsequently influenced by secularist, positivist, and rationalist ideologies, have raised profound and systematic objections to linking language directly with revealed religion. Within this paradigm, the concept of "revealed language"—where the linguistic form itself is considered divine, immutable, or a direct emanation from a transcendent source—is frequently met with skepticism or outright rejection. These objections are not merely procedural but are deeply rooted in a foundational worldview that perceives language, culture, and religion as purely human, immanent constructs, devoid of any demonstrable transcendent or divine origins. This perspective has fundamentally altered the terrain of religious studies, particularly concerning theolinguistics, by asserting that religious language must be analyzed using the same tools applied to all other human discourses.

One major point of contention and methodological divergence stems from the rise of the historical-critical method. This approach, which emerged as a formidable force in the West during the 19th century and has since become the dominant institutional methodology for the study of sacred texts, applied rigorous historical and philological analysis to documents previously considered untouchable by secular scrutiny. The historical-critical method emphasizes the absolute necessity of understanding texts—whether the Bible or later, through comparative study, the Quran—strictly within their original historical, political, and cultural contexts. It often views these scriptures primarily as the products of specific human authors, redactors, and historical processes, rather than as seamless, static disclosures of divine will. Consequently, critics from religious traditions argue that this approach effectively reduces revealed religion to a socio-political phenomenon. By emphasizing human authorship and contextual determination, it appears to systematically fail to account for, or even acknowledge, the supernatural or

[37] van Noppen, "Critical Theolinguistics vs. the Literalist Paradigm"; Hary and Wein, "Religiolinguistics: On Jewish-, Christian- and Muslim-Defined Languages."

divine dimensions that adherents believe constitute the very essence of the text.

Furthermore, a substantial proportion of Western scholarship since the mid-19th century has been deeply influenced by a positivist view of knowledge. Positivism, as pioneered by figures like Auguste Comte, prioritizes empirical observation, scientific inquiry, and verifiable data as the sole legitimate pathways to truth.[38] From this perspective, religious claims, including those related to the ontological status of revealed language or the transcendent efficacy of sacred formulas, are classified as metaphysically speculative, unverifiable, and therefore lying outside the proper realm of academic discourse. While individuals might maintain personal faith, the institutional academic apparatus has often demanded a methodological atheism.[39] This viewpoint has led to a noticeable tendency within many academic circles to marginalize, ignore, or dismiss religious perspectives in theolinguistics, particularly those traditions that emphasize the unique, objective status of sacred language. In essence, sacred language is treated merely as a sociological signifier rather than a medium of transcendent truth.

Another foundational objection arises from the view prevalent in Western structuralist and post-structuralist linguistics, which sees language essentially as a conventional, arbitrary, and symbolic system constructed through social agreement, systemic differences, and purely historical, immanent processes. Influenced by Ferdinand de Saussure, this view posits that the relationship between a word (the signifier) and its concept (the petanda) is arbitrary, cemented only by societal usage.[40] From this perspective, all languages, including the classical Arabic of the Quran or the Biblical Hebrew and Greek used in sacred texts, are essentially human inventions—products of systemic social negotiation and linguistic evolution.[41] Critics from traditional religious backgrounds argue that this systemic, conventionalist view undermines any claim that sacred language possesses a special intrinsic authority, divine origin, or ontological priority over other languages.

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[38] Walter B. Bodenhafer, "Comte's Theory of Language," *The Southwestern Political and Social Science Quarterly* 5, no. 2 (1924): 138–47.

[39] Michiel Van Dam, "Sociology as Institution and as Spiritual Authority: Languages of Belief in the Work of Auguste Comte," in *Languages of Belief and Early Sociology in Nineteenth-Century France: The Elementary Forms of Sociological Life* (Springer Nature Switzerland, 2024), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-64582-2_6.

[40] Figen Akay, "From Title to Religious Symbolism: A Saussurean and Peircean Semiotic Reading of Ghassan Kenefâni's Umm Sa\textcacd," *Religions* 17, no. 3 (2026): 311, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel17030311.

[41] Hary and Wein, "Religiolinguistics: On Jewish-, Christian- and Muslim-Defined Languages"; Tillich, "Relation of Metaphysics and Theology."

These robust Western secularist perspectives often clash profoundly with religious traditions such as Islam. In the Islamic worldview, language is recognized as a divine gift bestowed upon Adam (*`allama Adam al-asma'*), and the Quran, specifically in its exact Arabic verbal form, is revered as the *ijtihad* (uncreated and literally spoken) word of God.[42] This divine language is not viewed as culturally contingent or arbitrary but as an ontologically superior form of discourse. The tension resulting from these irreconcilable ontological assumptions has fueled ongoing and often sharp debates within global academia about the appropriate relationship between language, religion, and the legitimate methodologies for the academic study of sacred texts. The modern academic enterprise has, to a large extent, universalized this secularist framework, often forcing non-Western theological traditions to defend the legitimacy of their own definitions of language.[43]

This sustained critique and the methodological imposition of secular frameworks have created a severe epistemological crisis for Islamic scholarship, which must now navigate a global academic environment that frequently strips sacred texts of their metaphysical reality. The Western domination of linguistic theory has ensured that language is studied as a strictly psychological or sociological phenomenon, divorced from its divine origins. This crisis necessitates a critical re-evaluisation of the entire discipline of linguistics. It is not merely a question of different interpretation but a question of fundamentally different understandings of what language *is*. Addressing this requires a direct confrontation with the language secularization.

The Secularization of Language and the Urgency of the Islamization of Language Studies

The phenomenon of the secularization of language constitutes one of the most pervasive, yet often unexamined, influences of modern secularist ideologies on the contemporary academic study and understanding of human communication. This trend is not merely a shift in methodological preference but represents a fundamental ontological reframing, evidenced primarily in the systematic separation of language from its traditional theological and metaphysical dimensions.[44] Historically, language was viewed in most civilizations as having a divine origin or at least a connection to a transcendent reality; modern secularization, however, has reduced it to a strictly immanent

[42] Hussain, "Adam and the Names."

[43] Campanini, "Qur'an and Science: A Hermeneutical Approach."

[44] Turaxonova, "Theolinguistics As a Science of Language and Religion"; Nofal, "'I'm Praising God in the Language That He Loves': Language Use in Religious Discourse"; Mohammadpour, "The Invention of Iran: From 'Iranianness' to 'Persianness.'"

phenomenon—a merely human tool created and utilized solely for communication, social utility, and cognitive representation. In the established context of modern language studies, this secularization manifests predominantly as a purely descriptive, empirical, and analytical approach.[45] Under the banner of scientific objectivity, linguistics has focused intensely on the structural, functional, and acoustic aspects of language—phonology, syntax, and semantics—approaching them as phenomena existing entirely within the natural world. While this has yielded significant technological and analytical advances, this rigid approach often inherently neglects, or explicitly dismisses, the deeper, spiritual, and existential dimensions of language.[46] These dimensions, which treat language as a vehicle for truth, a medium of revelation, and a reflection of the Divine Name, are central to religious traditions but are rendered invisible or irrational within a secularized framework.

Furthermore, secularized language studies, by confining their analysis to the physical or sociological, frequently overlook or facilitate a shallow understanding of the profound role language plays in shaping human consciousness, identity, and ultimate meaning. These aspects are deeply intertwined with religious belief and practice. Language is not a neutral container; it is the architect of the conceptual framework within which human beings experience reality.[47] By stripping language of its sacred character, secularist linguistics implicitly promotes a secularized consciousness, wherein reality is perceived as exclusively material and human identity is defined solely by worldly horizontal relationships (social, political, or psychological), ignoring the vertical relationship between the human soul and its Creator.[48] This ontological reductionism presents a profound challenge to religious worldviews, particularly Islam, where language is understood as intimately connected to fitrah (the innate human nature) and the covenant with God.

Given this background, the urgency of the Islamization of language studies arises from a critical, existential need to counteract this dominant secularizing trend and to develop an authentic Islamic perspective on human communication.[49] This urgency is not born of a desire to impose dogma upon science, but rather from the necessity to liberate language studies from the

[45] van Noppen, "ETP: Prolegomena to a Course of English for Theological Purposes."

[46] Inbody, "Paul Tillich and Process Theology"; Bodenhafer, "Comte's Theory of Language."

[47] Khairudin Aljunied, "Deformations of the Secular," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 80, no. 4 (2019): 643–64, https://doi.org/10.1353/jhi.2019.0034.

[48] Akay, "From Title to Religious Symbolism: A Saussurean and Peircean Semiotic Reading of Ghassan Kenefâní's Umm Sa\textcacd"; Hardman, "God on the Isthmus: Ibn 'Arabi and the Dynamic Nature of Faith."

[49] Aljunied, "Deformations of the Secular."

restrictive limitations of materialistic dogmas that fail to account for the full spectrum of the human linguistic experience. This endeavor involves the complex process of integrating Islamic theological, philosophical, and metaphysical insights into the very foundational study of language. It requires a paradigm shift that recognizes language not just as a cultural convention, but primarily as a divine gift (*allama al-insan ma lam yalam*) and the Quran as the ultimate, immutable embodiment of revealed language.[50] To re-sacralize language studies is to reclaim human communication as a potential pathway to Divine knowledge, rather than merely a means of horizontal transactional exchange.

The practical application of the Islamization of language studies would necessarily entail a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach. First, it requires a thorough and rigorous critical analysis of dominant secularist linguistic theories—ranging from Saussurean structuralism to Chomskyan transformational grammar and contemporary sociolinguistics. This critique must move beyond surface-level application to identify the latent epistemological limitations, hidden secularist biases, and materialistic assumptions embedded within these theories from an Islamic perspective.[51] For instance, the absolute arbitrariness of the sign, a cornerstone of structuralism, must be re-evaluated alongside the Islamic concept of the intrinsic truth (*haqq*) potentially contained within language revealed by God.[52]

Second, this initiative involves the creative development of entirely new linguistic methodologies and frameworks that are authentically rooted in, and organic to, Islamic thought. These new frameworks must emphasize the profound ontological connection between language, belief, and reality, recognizing that the words we utilize do not merely describe the world but actively shape our spiritual perception of it and our responsibilities within it.[53] This requires constructing a linguistics where meaning is not understood solely through intra-linguistic difference or cognitive processing, but also through its potential for moral guidance and its relationship to metaphysical truth.[54]

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[50] Hussain, "Adam and the Names."

[51] Michael F. Duggan, "On Evolution and Exceptionality: Nietzsche and Chomsky, or Philosophers, Artists, Saints, and Syntax," *Symposion* 12, no. 1 (2025): 7–24, https://doi.org/10.5840/symposion20251211.

[52] Aljunied, "Deformations of the Secular."

[53] Mohammad, "Intertwining Worlds: The Dynamics of Linguistic Religion and Religious Language."

[54] Ibrar Bhatt et al., "Exploring a Sociolinguistics of Islam," *Applied Linguistics* 46, no. 6 (2025): amaf043, https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amaf043.

Third, the Islamization of language studies demands a serious, renewed engagement with the vast and sophisticated Islamic scholarly traditions in fields that were historically theolinguistic in nature. Scholars must leverage the rich, deep insights found in *Ushul al-Fiqh* (the principles of jurisprudence, which deals heavily with semantic interpretation), *Tafsir* (exegesis), and *Ijaz al-Quran* (the inimitability of the Quran).[55] These traditions offer sophisticated tools for analyzing discourse, intentionality, ambiguity, and the transformative power of language that are often more profound than contemporary secular equivalents but remain largely utilized only within traditional seminary settings.

Furthermore, the successful Islamization of language studies would have significant and transformative implications for how we interpret the Quran and other sacred texts within the academy.[56] It would facilitate a shift away from approaches exclusively concerned with historical-critical, philological, or comparative analysis—which, while useful, often bracket out the text's claim to Divine authority—and lead to an approach that prioritizes the theological, spiritual, and existential dimensions of the text as its most defining characteristics.[57] This approach would treat the linguistic structures of the Quran not as cultural static but as the deliberate, potent choices of a Divine Speaker, intended to transform the consciousness of the reader. Ultimately, the Islamization of language studies must be recognized as a crucial, non-negotiable step towards reclaiming the sacred dimension of human communication and developing an authentic Islamic vision for the study of human meaning, identity, and our ultimate return to the Source of all speech.[58]

The development of this Islamization framework is not merely an alternative academic methodology; it is a fundamental requirement for maintaining intellectual and spiritual consistency within Islamic scholarly discourse.[59] Without it, Muslim scholars risk interpreting their most sacred texts and concepts through a linguistic matrix that is inherently predisposed towards secularism.[60] The successful establishment of this discipline is

[55] Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi, *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan*, 2nd ed., ed. AbdulHamid AbuSulayman, Islamization of Knowledge Series 1 (International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), 1989); Tasnim Abdul Rahman, "The Works and Contributions of Isma'il Raji Al-Faruqi in Islamization of Knowledge," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 5, no. 1 (2015): 31–41, https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.51.03; Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, "Islamization of Knowledge: A Critical Overview," *Islamic Studies* 30, no. 3 (1991): 387–400.

[56] al-Faruqi, *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan*, 40.

[57] Aljunied, "Deformations of the Secular."

[58] Syamsuddin Arif, "Preserving the Semantic Structure of Islamic Key Terms and Concepts: Izutsu, al-Attas, and al-Rāghib al-I\textcasfahānī," *Islam & Science* 5, no. 1 (2007): 7–16.

[59] al-Faruqi, *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan*, 33, 58, 60.

[60] al-Faruqi, *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan*, 67.

therefore critical for any truly independent and faithful analysis of communication, proving the importance of the Islamization framework in language studies.

The Importance of the Islamization Framework in Language Studies

The project of the Islamization of Knowledge (IOK), as conceptualised in the latter half of the twentieth century, arose not as a reactive attempt to reject modern science, but as a proactive intellectual response to the perceived crisis facing the Muslim *Ummah*.[61] This crisis was diagnosed by leading Muslim thinkers as fundamentally epistemological, stemming from the dichotomous education systems that separated religious knowledge from the so-called "secular" sciences, the latter being heavily steeped in Western, materialistic worldviews.[62] Central to this project is the Islamization of language studies, a critical endeavour that recognizes language not merely as a tool for transactional communication, but as the very vehicle of epistemology, world-constructing metaphysics, and culture.[63] The importance of applying the Islamization framework to language studies is underscored when one understands that to accept a secularized linguistic theory is to implicitly accept the secularised worldview embedded within it.[64]

The foundational theoretical imperative for this undertaking can be traced to the works of prominent scholars like Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas and Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi, who established the metaphysical and methodological parameters of the IOK project. Al-Attas, in his seminal work *Islam and Secularism*, diagnostically identifies that the central problem facing contemporary Muslims is the "loss of adab" and the subsequent corruption of knowledge, largely due to the pervasive influence of Western secularism.[65] He argues that modern knowledge is not neutral; it is imbued with the philosophical and religious presuppositions of the culture that produced it. Al-Attas emphasizes that language is crucial in this process because it is through key terms and concepts that worldviews are maintained.[66] In the context of language studies, this implies that adopting Western linguistic frameworks—which often treat language as an arbitrary, human convention divorced from transcendent truth—contributes to the further secularization of the Muslim mind. The Islamization framework is, therefore, essential to critically evaluate

[61] Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism* (1978; ISTAC, 1993), 93–94.
[62] Al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism*, 16–18.
[63] Al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism*, 45–46, 124.
[64] Al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism*, 25.
[65] Al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism*, 105–6, 110, 118, 123–24, 126, 129.
[66] Al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism*, 133, 163.

and reclaim the key vocabulary of human existence from a materialistic matrix.[67]

Methodologically, Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi provided a structured approach to this task. In his defining work, *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan*, al-Faruqi articulated that the goal was to recast the whole legacy of human knowledge from the standpoint of Islam.[68] For language studies, this means a rigorous "re-reading" of linguistic theory, structuralism, sociolinguistics, and psycholinguistics through the prism of the Islamic worldview, ensuring that all concepts are compatible with the principle of *Tawhid* (the oneness of God).[69] This structured framework is vital for moving beyond mere reactive criticism to the constructive creation of an authentic Islamic science of language.

The profound necessity of an Islamized framework becomes evident when examining the "language of revelation." The Quran, in the Islamic worldview, is not merely a text inspired by God but is the literal, inimitable word of God (*Kalamullah*), revealed in a specific Arabic tongue (*lisānun 'arabiyyun mubīn*) or *ghayr dzi 'iwaj*.[70] This unique ontological status means that the Arabic language of the Quran cannot be fully understood through the lenses of secular philology, which treats all sacred texts solely as historical, culturally contingent documents. As al-Attas notes, the Quranic vocabulary possesses a certain permanence and precision that defies the arbitrary nature ascribed to language by modern structuralists. For example, key terms such as *Rabb* (Lord), *Allah*, *Insan* (Human), and *Fitrah* (Innate nature) are not merely historical labels but are imbued with permanent ontological truths that anchor reality.[71] If a Muslim linguist utilizes a modern sociolinguistic framework that reduces religious terminology to mere "identity markers" within a specific discourse community, they have functionally stripped the text of its claim to transcendent, universal truth.[72] The Islamization framework is important because it provides the theological and metaphysical prerequisite for a "faithful" reading—one that respects the text's own definition of its nature.

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[67] Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam* (International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), 1995), 138–42.

[68] al-Faruqi, *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan*, xiii, 19–20, 34, 51, 61, 63, 77.

[69] Muhammad Saleem and Karim Dad, "Linguistic Analysis: The Distinctiveness Text of the Qur'an," *Saudi Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 1, no. 1 (2016): 32–35; Mahmudul Hasan, "Islam's Encounter with English and Ismail al-Faruqi's Concept of Islamic English : A Postcolonial Reading," *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, 2014.

[70] Al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism*, 176–77.

[71] Al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism*, 61–63, 75.

[72] Al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism*, 93–94.

Furthermore, language acts as the primary architect of consciousness and identity. Scholars like Seyyed Hossein Nasr have often written on the traditional view of language as a reflection of the Divine Word.[73] Within the secularist paradigm, language is studied through empirical, horizontal relationships: how language reflects social class (sociolinguistics) or how it is processed by the brain (psycholinguistics). While these are useful data points, they neglect the vertical dimension—the relationship of language to the human soul and to the Divine.[74] An Islamized framework of language studies integrates these horizontal studies into a hierarchical structure that prioritizes the vertical dimension. It understands language as a crucial element in the cultivation of *adab*, which al-Attas defines as the recognition and acknowledgement of the right and proper place, station, and condition of things and people, and of the self.[75] An Islamized approach to language studies would therefore investigate how linguistic choices affect moral character (*akhlaq*) and spiritual awareness, moving beyond simple grammar and usage to the moral implications of discourse. Without this framework, language is reduced to a secular transactional skill, devoid of its potential to guide the soul towards truth.[76]

Finally, the Islamization framework is necessary to re-engage with the sophisticated Islamic classical tradition in language-related disciplines, which were historically intertwined with theology and exegesis.[77] Fields such as *'Ilm al-Balagha* (rhetoric), *'Ilm al-Ushul* (principles of jurisprudence, which relies heavily on semantic theory for interpretation), and *Tafsir* (exegesis) contain advanced understandings of discourse, context, and meaning.[78] Modern linguistic departments in the Muslim world, often modelled after Western institutions, frequently neglect this heritage or treat it as a relic of the past. The Islamization framework acts as a bridge, facilitating the retrieval and integration of this classical legacy with relevant modern insights.[79]

Conclusion

In conclusion, the application of the Islamization framework to language studies is not an academic luxury; it is a critical necessity for

[73] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *The Need for a Sacred Science* (State University of New York Press, 1993), 8–10.

[74] Nasr, *The Need for a Sacred Science*, 3, 82, 98.

[75] Al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism*, 105–6.

[76] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, ed., *Islamic Spirituality: Foundations*, vol. 19, World Spirituality: An Encyclopedic History of the Religious Quest (Routledge, 1987), 23–24, 26, 33–34, 54–55.

[77] Mohammad, "Intertwining Worlds: The Dynamics of Linguistic Religion and Religious Language."

[78] al-Faruqi, *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan*, 18, 51, 53, 55.

[79] Abdul Kabir Hussain Solihu, "Semantics of the Qur'anic Weltanschauung: A Critical Analysis of Toshihiko Izutsu's Works," *American Journal of Islam and Society* 26, no. 4 (2009): 1–23, https://doi.org/10.35632/ajis.v26i4.1378.

maintaining epistemological sovereignty and spiritual integrity within Islamic scholarship. By acknowledging, as al-Attas argued, that knowledge is not neutral, and by utilizing the methodological work plan outlined by al-Faruqi, Muslim scholars can begin to build an authentic Islamic science of language. This science is important because it protects the divine nature of revelation, recharges language with its vertical moral dimension, and integrates Horizontal empirical studies into a Tawhidic hierarchy. Without this framework, Muslims risk interpreting their faith and their reality through a linguistic lens that is predisposed towards secularism, ultimately resulting in an unfaithful reading of the Self, the World, and the Word of God.

Author

Mansour Hashemi is a Professor Emeritus of English Studies at the University of Guilan in Rasht, Gilan Province, Iran. He completed his academic training at both the University of Guilan and the University of Birmingham. His teaching experience encompasses poetry, fiction, literary theory and criticism, and language teaching methodologies. As a scholar, Hashemi specializes in linguistic epistemology, ontology, literary theory, and advanced literature and philosophy. His work particularly emphasizes teaching methods for reading and precise textual interpretation aligned with the original author's intention.

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