

# An Exploration in Identifying and Critically Analysing the Punctuations in Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan by Syeikh Muhammad Said Umar

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## Abstract

Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan is a work in the field of Qur'anic interpretation written by Syeikh Muhammad Said Umar. This work complements the description and interpretation of the 30 juz of the Qur'an starting from surah al-Fatihah to surah al-Nasa and it becomes a reference, teaching and learning material as well as community reading material. However, based on the researcher's preliminary reading, it was found that the use of punctuation marks applied by the author when producing Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan was partly inaccurate. This causes the reader to be confused by the interpretation and commentary given by the author and at the same time makes this work less interesting to read and understand. Therefore, this study aims to reveal the matter as well as provide suggestions for punctuation marks that are more suitable to use. In terms of research methodology, this research applies textual studies and library research in identifying and revealing the punctuation marks in Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan. This study shows that the punctuation marks used by Syeikh Muhammad Said Umar in Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan are comma (,), period (.), hyphen (-), colon (:), question mark (?), exclamation mark (!), number 2, number 3 and parentheses ( ) which are partly used incorrectly. It is hoped that this study can provide recommendations for more appropriate punctuation marks as well as remove the confusion of the public when reading Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan.

**Keywords:** Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan, Syeikh Muhammad Said Umar, Study of the Text, Punctuation

## Introduction

The archipelago is famous for scholars who have mastered many fields of science. These fields of knowledge such as fiqh, tauhid, hadith, tajwid, tarannum, tasawuf and tafsir al-Quran (Mohd Sholeh, 2021a). In Indonesia, it is known for a classic work in the field of Quranic interpretation complete 30 constituents titled Tafsir Tarjuman al-Mustafid authored by al-Fansuri, A. R. (Nasyrudin, 2008). While in Malaysia, a well-known interpretation work that completes 30 constituents of the Quran titled Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan is well known and is a reference and reference of the community (Sholeh, 2021b). This work is not only read by the

public but also serves as the main reference of the Malay community in understanding the contents of the Quran. To date, this work continues to be used as a teaching and learning material in educational institutions especially in huts and mosques throughout Malaysia (Sholeh, 2021c). However, an issue that has always been raised by previous researchers where the author of Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan, Syekh Muhammad Said Umar did not clearly state the reference notes of each fact that he contained in his work. This causes some readers to be confused by the facts contained in it (Zaim, 2010). The writing of this work has a downside because there is a lack of writing style that does not specify the source of factual reference while some researchers think the author of this work uses many unfounded views in his interpretation (Zaim, 2010). The stories in this work are also dubious because the author does not describe the reference source in detail. Therefore, society needs to be careful when reading and referencing this work (Taib, 2003).

Based on the importance of Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan's work which is still and continues to be a reference to the community, efforts to purify this work should be made (Yusuff, 2020). One form of effort is through the study of the text which will examine each text contained in Tafsir Nur Ihsan to detect and identify the punctuation marks used by the author of the work. This study should be done as one of the initial efforts to complete Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan and also as an example of the application of text studies on works in the field of Quranic interpretation, especially Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan, which in turn can be developed in other parts that will certainly contribute towards the completeness of Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan's work.

### **Punctuation in Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan**

According to the fourth edition of the House Dictionary (2010), a sign is a symbol or symbol used in writing that has a certain meaning. Punctuation marks are defined as signs in the inscription such as vowels on Jawi letters, periods, commas, semicolons, and others. The skill of using punctuation is the ability to use periods, commas, etc. Nine punctuation marks are often used in writing which are a period or dot (.), a comma (,), a semicolon (;), a question mark (?), an exclamation mark (!), a colon (:), a binder or quotation mark ("..."), a dash (-), and parentheses ( ). Other commonly used signs of reading are single quotation marks ('...'), split marks (--), ellipsis marks (...), slash marks (/), and abbreviation marks (') (Mohd. Isa, 2001).

This study shows that there are certain punctuation marks used by Umar, M. S in the text of Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan. The signs were first used by the author in the first volume starting on the 73rd page, but he did not use them regularly in all texts. At the beginning of the third volume, the author began to use it regularly so it also placed a sign in an inappropriate place. For example, the author in telling the story of Ashab al-Kahf has placed a colon (:) between the words "dead" and "alternating" in his text, whereas the appropriate punctuation mark in that place is a comma (,) as the following text

"Then how long did King Diqyanus and his people die out: alternating centuries and changing kings. Until it came to a righteous Muslim king the name Bidrus of the order of the land" (Umar, 1977).

### Discussion

The punctuation marks found in Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan are commas (,), full stops (.), hyphens (-), colons (:), question marks (?), exclamation marks (!), numerals two (2), numerals three (3) and brackets ( ). This can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1

#### *Punctuation in Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan*

Bill	Punctuation	Symbol	Volume & Page	Use	Frequency	%
01	Commas	(,)	Jld.1, p. 73, Jld.2, p. 107, 233 and 273, Jld.3, p. 5, 6, 7, 28 and 36	isolate consecutive words in a sentence	9	8.91
02	Period	(.)	Jld.1, 204, 223, 224, 227, 229 and 252, Jld.2, p. 100, 222 and 233, Jld.3, p. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 18 and 19, Jld.4, p. 18, 32, 59, 65 and 83	end of sentence	24	23.76
03	dash	(-)	Jld.2, p. 106, 107, 114, 115, 116, 148, 234 and 287, jld.3, p. 3, 12 and 65, and jld.4, p. 16.	for the meaning of "is", before the reason of the nuzul sentence, substitute the brackets for Arabic words, before translation, for the meaning of "and", and in places that do not give any use	12	11.88
04	colon	(:)	Jld.2, p. 162, jld.3, p. 23, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 31, 38, 41, 45, 47, 48, 57 and 150, and Jld.4, p. 38.	before the verse of the Quran, for the meaning of "i.e.", the translation is between the two, the Arabic word is between the two, the opinions of which differ between the two, before the translation, before the Hadith of the Prophet, before the Matan of the Hadith, and in a place that does not give any use	32	31.68
05	question mark	(?)	Jld.3, p. 6, 8, 9, 55, 67 and 74.	to question	6	5.94
06	exclamation mark	(!)	Jld.3, p. 59	On the exclamation	1	0.99
07	Number Two	(2)	Jld.2, p. 162, 171, 264 and 266,	shows the word repeated twice	7	6.93

			Jld.4, p. 36, 42 and 70			
08	number three	(3)	Jld.2, p. 350, Jld. 3, p. 141	shows the word repeated three times	2	1.98
09	parentheses	( )	Jld.1, p. 167, Jld.2, p. 162, Jld. 3, p. 67, 121 and 125	there is another example @ placed Arabic word @ there is an insertion element	6	5.94
<b>Overall</b>					<b>99</b>	<b>100</b>

Through Table 1 above, Umar, M. S when writing Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan used nine punctuation marks. The use of commas (,) is in nine places representing 8.91%, one in the first volume, three in the second volume, and five in the third volume. These commas are used to separate consecutive words in a sentence. For example, the author notes: "The beast escapes from its harms seeking its benefits, so this man seeks harm" (Umar, 1970). The period (.) is used in 24 places equal to 23.76%, this period is used by the author as a sign at the end of the sentence. There are six-period marks on the first volume, three on the second volume, 10 on the third volume, and five on the fourth volume. For example, the author notes; "For it is so greedy that you love for their faith. That is, do not grieve and perish yourselves." (Umar, 1970).

The use of hyphens (-) used by Umar, M.S. in 12 places represents 11.88% i.e. eight in the second volume, three in the third volume, and one in the fourth volume. This hyphen the author uses for six conditions which are used for the meaning of "is", before the reason for the nuzul of the sentence, instead of parentheses for Arabic words, before translation, used for the meaning of "and" and in places that do not give any use. For example, Syekh Muhammad Said Umar stated: "And for them, the eyes do not see them with them – obedient and sinful – and for them, it is the ear" (Umar, 1970).

The use of Colons (:) is used by authors in 32 places in Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan representing 31.68%, one in the second volume and the fourth volume and 30 places in the third volume. This colon is used for nine circumstances which are before the verse of the Quran, used for the meaning of "i.e.", the translation is between the two, the Arabic word is between the two, a different opinion regarding a matter is placed between the two, before the translation, before the Hadith of the Prophet, before the Matan of the Hadith and in a place that does not give any use. For example, the author states: "Then down: *ومن هم من عاهد الله*" (Umar, 1970).

In addition, question marks (?) are also used by the author in the text of his work. This mark is seen in six places representing 5.94% of which are all in the third volume. Only one purpose of this sign is used by the author which is to question. For example, the author raises a question: "Is there a state that he ran away from yesterday or not?" (Umar, 1970).

While the use of exclamation marks (!) is also found in the text of Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan. However, only one place was found in the work in the third volume, representing 0.99%. The author uses this sign for the usual obscurity which is to call out the one that can be seen in the following text: "says it: O my people!" (Umar, 1970).

In the meantime, the number two (2) and the number three (3) appear to be used by the author to say that a word needs to be repeated twice or three times. There are seven places

where the number two is used by Umar, M. S represents 6.93% which is four in the second volume three in the fourth volume and two places representing 1.98% of the figures three used i.e. one in the second volume and the third volume. For example, the author notes: "and came down during the prayer of the Messenger of Allah on one night read on his prostration O Allah ya Rahman 3" (Umar, 1970).

The last punctuation used by Syeikh Muhammad Said Umar when writing Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan is bracket ( ). This sign is used when there is an insertion element in a sentence or an Arabic word, but there is one place where the author puts a row of periods (.....) to signal that there are other examples besides the examples that have been given. These punctuation marks were found in six places representing 5.94%, one in the first volume and in the second volume, and four in the third volume. The use of this punctuation can be seen in the following example: "(O our Lord) what is it because You did not tell us that it is the apostle that we follow Your law" (Umar, 1970).

### **Findings, Suggestions, and Conclusions**

Based on the studies that have been carried out it was found that the author has used seven punctuation marks accurately and following the context of the sentence. The punctuation marks in question are commas (,) to separate consecutive words in a sentence, a period (.) at the end of a sentence, a question mark (?) to a question, an exclamation mark (!) for exclamation, a number two (2) and a number three (3) to say a word is repeated twice or three times and parentheses ( ) when there is an insertion element in the text. However, two punctuation marks (-) and colons (:) are not used accurately in certain places. The author uses a hyphen for the meaning of "is", before the reason for the nuzul of the sentence, substitutes the brackets for Arabic words, before translation, for the meaning of "and", and in places that do not give any use. While the colon is used before the Quranic verse, for the meaning of "i.e.", the translation is between the two, the Arabic word is between the two, the opinions of which differ between the two, before the translation, before the Hadith of the Prophet, before the Matan of the Hadith, and in a place that does not give any use. Whereas, the proper use of hyphens is to connect repeated words and double words, for example, disciples and boisterous lows, to separate words to and numbers, 10th examples, and to separate lowercase letters with capital letters, e.g. Your grace. While piercing points are used at the end of a statement when followed by a network, for example, the requirements in a book are as follows: introduction, description, and conclusion, and to clarify or introduce something, for example, the date of the conference: June 11, 2023.

In addition, the study also found that the most used punctuation by the author is the colon (:), but it is widely used in the third volume only and in the fourth volume the researchers found it in one place only on page 38. The period (.) although the author uses it not as often as the colon overlaps, is visible until the last sheet of the work especially at the end of the Quranic surahs.

Based on the explanation given, the researchers think that the author of Tafsir Nur al-Ihsan, Syeikh Muhammad Said Umar is not proficient with the use of punctuation because he also uses them in inappropriate places as well as sightings of punctuation that does not give any use. That is why the reader will occasionally be confused by the text read. The style of the Hall states

"The punctuation mark is as important as spelling because both determine the effectiveness of the presentation of the author's message to the reader. Inaccurate use of punctuation will confuse the reader" (Dewan, 1995).

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