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Anaphoric Stylistics of Sūrat Ar-Raḥmān [55]: Gorys Keraf's Framework on Repetition

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Abstract

This study aimed to analyze the forms and rhetorical functions of anaphoric stylistic devices in Sūrat *ar-Raḥmān* [55] through a modern stylistic approach. The research specifically examines the repetitive expression “*Fa-bi`ayyi ālā`i rabbikumā tukaẓẓibān*”, which appears thirty-one times throughout the sūrah and constitutes one of the most prominent examples of Qur’ānic repetition. This study employed a qualitative descriptive, this study applies textual analysis based on Gorys Keraf’s stylistic theory, particularly his framework of figurative language and rhetorical repetition, integrated with the classical concept of Qur’ānic rhetoric (*balāghah*). The scope of the analysis is limited to five major verse clusters in Sūrat *ar-Raḥmān* that contain dominant repetitive structures and thematic coherence. The findings reveal three principal forms of anaphora, namely lexical anaphora, clausal anaphora, and imperative-rhetorical anaphora. In total, thirty-one repetitive anaphoric structures were identified and systematically classified according to their linguistic and rhetorical characteristics. These repetitive forms function as instruments of *ta’kid* (semantic emphasis), generators of rhythmic and psycholinguistic effects, and rhetorical mechanisms that strengthen emotional engagement and spiritual reflection. The study confirms that repetition in the Qur’ān does not represent linguistic redundancy, but rather constitutes a deliberate divine rhetorical strategy that reinforces meaning, aesthetic harmony, and theological consciousness. This study contributes to the field of Qur’ānic stylistics by providing a systematic classification of anaphoric structures and by demonstrating the relevance of modern stylistic theory in analyzing classical Arabic sacred discourse.

Keywords: *Anaphoric, Qur’ānic Stylistics, Surat ar-Raḥmān, Gorys Keraf, Qur’ānic Rhetoric, Repetition.*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bentuk dan fungsi retorika gaya bahasa anaforis dalam Sūrat *ar-Raḥmān* [55] melalui pendekatan stilistika modern. Penelitian ini secara khusus mengkaji ungkapan repetitif “*Fa-bi`ayyi ālā`i rabbikumā tukaẓẓibān*” yang muncul sebanyak tiga puluh satu kali dalam surah tersebut dan menjadi salah satu contoh paling menonjol dari repetisi dalam Al-Qur’an. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan menerapkan analisis tekstual berdasarkan teori stilistika Gorys Keraf, khususnya kerangka gaya bahasa dan repetisi retorika, yang diintegrasikan dengan konsep retorika Al-Qur’an klasik (*balāghah*). Ruang lingkup analisis dibatasi pada lima kelompok ayat utama dalam Sūrat *ar-Raḥmān* yang mengandung struktur repetitif dominan dan koherensi tematik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya tiga bentuk utama anafora, yaitu anafora leksikal, anafora

klausal, dan anafora imperatif-retoris. Secara keseluruhan, ditemukan tiga puluh satu struktur repetitif anaforis yang diklasifikasikan secara sistematis berdasarkan karakteristik linguistik dan retorikanya. Bentuk-bentuk repetisi tersebut berfungsi sebagai instrumen *ta'kid* (penegasan makna), pembentuk efek ritmis dan psikolinguistik, serta mekanisme retorik yang memperkuat keterlibatan emosional dan refleksi spiritual pembaca. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa repetisi dalam Al-Qur'an bukanlah bentuk redundansi linguistik, melainkan merupakan strategi retorik ilahiah yang disengaja untuk memperkuat makna, harmoni estetis, dan kesadaran teologis. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi terhadap kajian stilistika Al-Qur'an melalui penyajian klasifikasi sistematis terhadap struktur anaforis serta menunjukkan relevansi teori stilistika modern dalam menganalisis wacana sakral klasik berbahasa Arab.

Kata Kunci: *Anaforis, Stilistika Al-Qur'an, Surat ar-Rahmān, Gorys Keraf, Retorika Al-Qur'an, Repetisi.*

Introduction

The Qur'ān has long been recognized as a linguistic and rhetorical masterpiece whose stylistic complexity continues to attract scholarly attention across the fields of linguistics, literary criticism, rhetoric, and Qur'ānic studies. Within contemporary stylistic scholarship, increasing emphasis has been placed on the relationship between textual form, communicative function, and persuasive meaning, leading researchers to re-examine Qur'ānic discourse not only as a sacred scripture but also as a sophisticated linguistic text characterized by aesthetic precision and rhetorical depth.¹ In this context, repetition (*takrār/tikrār*) emerges as one of the most distinctive stylistic features of the Qur'ān. Rather than functioning as mere redundancy, repetition serves as a deliberate rhetorical strategy that reinforces semantic emphasis, emotional resonance, rhythmic cohesion, and persuasion.²

The phenomenon of repetition carries not only linguistic significance but also profound social and cultural value. In classical Arab society, repetitive rhetorical patterns (*takrār/tikrār*) were widely employed in poetry and oratory to emphasize meaning and to create a captivating rhythm for listeners.³ A similar pattern is evident in the Qur'ānic text, where literary structure and communicative function are intricately combined to shape emotional response and religious consciousness.⁴ In the modern academic landscape, this

¹ Shady Hekmat Nasser, *Arabic, Qur'an, and Poetic License: Reciting the Word of God* (Taylor & Francis, 2025); Ishfi Mufhimatul Uliyah and Abd. Kholid, "Recontextualizing Tafsīr Lughawī: Bridging Linguistic Depth and Contemporary Qur'ānic Interpretation," *Bulletin of Indonesian Islamic Studies* 4, no. 1 (2025): 319–335.

² Awad Abdul Rahman Sayyah Al-Ruwaili, "Repetition in the Holy Qur'an. A Rhetorical Study. Surah Al-Rahman as a Model," *Journal of the Faculty of Arts* 80, no. 2 (2020): 5.

³ Ihssan Jabor Al-Muslimawi, "Repetition as a Persuasive Tool in Stylistics and Rhetoric," *International Journal of Social Science and Human Research* 7, no. 9 (2024): 7068–7074.

⁴ Wardah Nailul Qudsiyah et al., "Measuring the Influence of Philosophy on Arab Balaghah: A Critical Study of Amin Al-Khuli's Thought," *Thaqafīyyat : Jurnal Bahasa, Peradaban dan Informasi Islam* 23, no. 1 (2024): 1–17; Amin Al-Khuli, *Manāhij Al-Dirāsah Al-Balāghīyyah Fī Al-Qur'ān Al-Karīm* (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, n.d.).

phenomenon has become a central topic of discussion within Arabic linguistics, particularly in research on stylistic repetition, rhetorical rhythm, and anaphoric emphasis.⁵

Among the Qur'ānic chapters that prominently display this stylistic phenomenon is Sūrat ar-Raḥmān [55], particularly through the repeated verse *fa-bi'ayyi ālā'i rabbikumā tukaẓẓibān* ("So which of your Lord's favors will you deny?"), which appears thirty-one times throughout the sūrah.⁶ The repetitive structure creates a strong rhetorical rhythm while simultaneously linking descriptions of divine blessings with reflective moral interrogation addressed to both humankind and jinn.⁷ This recurring expression demonstrates how repetition in the Qur'ān operates simultaneously on aesthetic, semantic, and persuasive levels. Consequently, Sūrat ar-Raḥmān [55] provides an important textual site for investigating the relationship between linguistic structure and rhetorical function within Qur'ānic discourse.

Previous studies on Qur'ānic stylistics have examined repetition from theological, semantic, and rhetorical perspectives. Studies by Latifah and Badrish,⁸ for example, focus on the aesthetic and rhythmic dimensions of repeated verses, while Huda⁹ analyzes repetition as a strategy for semantic emphasis in al-Mu'awwidzatayn. From a more thematic perspective, Sholahudin and Sopian¹⁰ revealed that the stylistic devices employed in Sūrat *Aḡ-Zumar* (verses 71–74) serve not merely as aesthetic elements but as active and strategic theological instruments that shape the reader's understanding, emotional response, and spiritual experience of eschatological reality. Other studies on Sūrat ar-Raḥmān [55] mainly interpret the repeated verse as a theological reminder intended to strengthen faith and spiritual

⁵ Ibrahim Bani Abdo and Safa Abu Mousa, "A Thematic Study of Repetition in Taha Hussein's The Call of the Curlew," *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation* 2, no. 1 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.32996/ijlt.2019.2.1.3>; Hishomudin Ahmad, Norfarhana Ahmad Ghafar, and Fakulti Pengajian Bahasa Utama, "Stylistic Variation and Linguistic Strategies in Quranic Discourse: A Rhetorical, Phonetic, and Translational Analysis," *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science* 9, no. 4 (2025): 5957–64, <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.90400426>.

⁶ Salihin Salihin, "Hikmah Makna Pengulangan Fabi'ayyi Ālā'i Rabbikuma Tukaẓẓibān (Studi Komparatif Tafsir Al-Mishbah Dan Tafsir Al-Maraghi)" (IAIN Curup, 2018).

⁷ Nur Alim Hamzah, Moh Abd Azis, and Nurfadhillah Syam, "Makna Pengulangan Kalimat 'Fabi'ayyi Ālā'i Rabbikuma Tukaẓẓibān' Dalam Qs Ar-Rahman Di Al-Qur'an (Studi Komparatif Tafsir Al-Maraghi Dan Ibnu Katsir)," *Jurnal Ushuluddin Adab Dan Dakwah* 7, no. 1 (2024): 47–61, <https://journal.usimar.ac.id/index.php/juad/article/view/138>.

⁸ Umi Latifah and Moh. Badrih, "Gaya Bahasa Asonansi Dan Aliterasi Pada Q.S At-Takwir Juz 30: Kajian Fonologi Fungsional Estetik," *GHANCARAN: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia* 6, no. 2 (2025): 435–454.

⁹ Nur Huda, "Uslub Al-Tikrar Fi Surah Al-Mu'awwizatain," *Indonesian Journal Of Islamic Literature and Muslim Society* 5, no. 1 (2020): 188–96.

¹⁰ Shofwan Sholahudin and Asep Sopian, "Stylistic Analysis of the Eschatological Narrative in the Qur'an," *Aphorisme is a journal of Arabic Language, Literature, and Education* 6, no. 1 (2025): 218–234.

consciousness.¹¹ Although these studies contribute significantly to understanding the rhetorical beauty of Qur'ānic language, most remain dominated by thematic interpretation and exegetical explanation. Methodologically, relatively little attention has been given to the systematic classification of anaphoric forms, their structural distribution, and their communicative functions within a modern stylistic framework.

This study seeks to address that gap by examining anaphoric repetition in Sūrat ar-Raḥmān [55] through a stylistic approach that combines contemporary linguistic analysis with the classical tradition of Qur'ānic rhetoric. The research positions itself within the field of Qur'ānic stylistics by focusing not merely on theological interpretation, but on how repetitive linguistic structures function as rhetorical devices that shape meaning, emotional engagement, and textual cohesion. In doing so, the study contributes to ongoing discussions in stylistics concerning the persuasive power of repetition in sacred discourse.

The novelty of this study lies in its systematic classification of anaphoric repetition in Sūrat ar-Raḥmān [55] and its analysis of the rhetorical and communicative functions generated by repetitive structures within the sūrah. Unlike previous studies that primarily emphasize theological interpretation, this research foregrounds the interaction between stylistic form, rhetorical emphasis, and persuasive meaning. By integrating Keraf's stylistic concepts with the classical Arabic rhetorical tradition (*balāghah*), this research offers a cross-disciplinary perspective that bridges modern stylistics and Qur'ānic linguistic studies. Therefore, this study is expected to contribute not only to the development of Qur'ānic stylistics, but also to broader discussions in Arabic linguistics, rhetoric, and stylistically oriented Arabic language and literary studies.

Method

This study employed a qualitative–descriptive design¹² based on textual analysis and interpretative inquiry to examine anaphoric repetition in Sūrat ar-Raḥmān [55].¹³ The qualitative approach was selected because the object of the study is a sacred literary text whose linguistic structures contain semantic, rhetorical, and theological dimensions that

¹¹ Khoerunnisa Isnaeni, “Pengulangan Fabiaayyi alai Rabbikuma Tukadzzibani dalam Surah Ar-Rahman (Studi Komparatif Tafsir al-Misbah dan al-Azhar)” (Institut Ilmu Al Quran (IIQ) Jakarta, 2021); Hamzah, Azis, and Syam, “Makna Pengulangan Kalimat ‘Fabi’ayyi Ala’i Rabbikuma Tukadzibaan’ Dalam Qs Ar-Rahman Di Al-Qur’an (Studi Komparatif Tafsir Al-Maraghi Dan Ibnu Katsir).”

¹² Darshini Ayton, *Qualitative Descriptive Research, Qualitative Research—a Practical Guide for Health and Social Care Researchers and Practitioners* (Monash University Library, 2023).

¹³ Norman Fairclough and Isabela Fairclough, “Textual Analysis,” in *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science* (Routledge, 2015), 186–198.

cannot be adequately explained through quantitative measurement alone. In the context of Qur'ānic stylistics, language is understood not merely as a grammatical system, but as a form of sacred discourse that operates persuasively through rhetorical patterns, sound harmony, semantic emphasis, and spiritual communication. Therefore, this study focuses on how repetitive structures function within the broader rhetorical architecture of the Qur'ānic text.

The theoretical framework of this study is primarily based on Gorys Keraf's stylistic theory, particularly his classification of repetition as a rhetorical device.¹⁴ Keraf's framework was selected because it provides systematic analytical categories for identifying repetitive linguistic patterns and explaining their communicative effects in discourse. Although Keraf's theory originated within the broader field of general stylistics, its analytical emphasis on repetition, emphasis, and rhetorical effect is considered relevant for examining Qur'ānic language structures. To ensure contextual appropriateness, Keraf's framework was integrated with classical Arabic rhetorical concepts (*balāghah*) and Qur'ānic stylistics. Through this interdisciplinary integration, the study combines modern stylistic analysis with the rhetorical tradition of classical Arabic sacred texts.

The primary data consisted of all thirty-one occurrences of the repeated expression *fa-bi`ayyi ālā'i rabbikumā tukaẓẓibān* in Sūrat ar-Raḥmān [55], including their surrounding verse contexts. The analysis was conducted on the Arabic text preserved in the standard 'Uthmānī muṣṣḥaf. The official Indonesian translation issued by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia¹⁵ and several English translations were used only as interpretative aids and not as primary analytical data. The stylistic analysis remained centered on the original Arabic text in order to preserve rhetorical, phonological, and semantic features that may not be fully represented in translation. Consequently, the study acknowledges that certain rhetorical nuances—particularly rhythm, sound symbolism, and phonetic harmony—cannot be completely transferred into English or Indonesian renderings.

The analytical procedure was conducted through four systematic stages. First, the identification stage involved locating all repetitive expressions in Sūrat ar-Raḥmān [55] and documenting their surrounding thematic contexts. Second, the reduction and classification stage involved selecting repetitive forms that fulfilled the criteria of anaphora and categorizing them into lexical, clausal, and imperative-rhetorical types. Third, the

¹⁴ Gorys Keraf, *Diksi Dan Gaya Bahasa* (Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2009).

¹⁵ Departemen Agama Republik Indonesia, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahannya*, Jakarta: Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, 2019.

comparative rhetorical analysis stage examined similarities, differences, and contextual shifts among repetitive structures in relation to themes such as divine blessing, cosmic order, warning, mortality, and eschatological reward. Fourth, the interpretative stage employed a linguistic-hermeneutic approach to explain the rhetorical, aesthetic, and spiritual functions generated by repetition within the overall structure of the sūrah.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, the study employed several validation strategies. First, theoretical triangulation was conducted by comparing Keraf's stylistic framework with classical Qur'ānic rhetorical interpretations found in authoritative tafsīr literature, including *Tafsīr al-Kashshāf* by al-Zamakhsharī,¹⁶ *al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr* by Ibn 'Āshūr,¹⁷ and *Tafsīr al-Mishbāḥ* by M. Quraish Shihab.¹⁸ Second, expert checking was undertaken through consultation with two scholars specializing in Arabic rhetoric and Qur'ānic linguistics to evaluate the consistency of the stylistic classifications. Third, coding consistency was maintained by repeatedly reviewing the classification process to minimize subjective interpretation in categorizing overlapping forms of anaphoric.

Result and Discussion

Overview of the Thematic and Rhetorical Structure of Sūrat ar-Raḥmān [55]

Sūrat *ar-Raḥmān* [55] occupies a distinctive position within the structure of the Qur'ānic muṣḥaf as a Makkī sūrah that explicitly integrates theological, cosmological, ethical, and eschatological dimensions within a highly coherent and carefully constructed rhetorical framework. The majority of Qur'ānic exegetes, including al-Qurṭubī¹⁹ and Ibn 'Āshūr,²⁰ concur that the central theme of this sūrah is the manifestation of divine mercy, encompassing creation, cosmic law, natural order, eschatological recompense, and the moral responsibility of humankind and jinn as rational beings. Quraish Shihab²¹ even characterizes this sūrah as “the most comprehensive representation of divine mercy in the Qur'ān.”

¹⁶ Maḥmūd ibn 'Umar Zamakhsharī, *Al-Kashshāf 'an Ḥaqā'iq Al-Tanzīl Wa-'uyūn Al-Aqāwīl Fi Wujūh Al-Ta'wīl* (Dār al-Fikr, 1977).

¹⁷ Muḥammad al-Tāhir Ibn 'Āshūr, *Tafsīr Al-Taḥrīr Wa-Al-Tanwīr* (al-Dār al-Tūnisīyah lil-Nashr, 1969).

¹⁸ Moh. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsīr Al-Mishbāḥ: Pesan, Kesan, Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*, Tafsīr Al-Mishbāḥ (Lentera Hati, 2012).

¹⁹ Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Qurṭubī, *Tafsīr Al-Qurtubī: Al-Jamī Li-Aḥkam Al-Quran* (Dar wa-Matabi al-Shab, 1999).

²⁰ 'Āshūr, *Tafsīr Al-Taḥrīr Wa-Al-Tanwīr*.

²¹ Shihab, *Tafsīr Al-Mishbāḥ: Pesan, Kesan, Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*.

The principal distinction of Sūrat *ar-Raḥmān* [55] lies in its rhetorical architecture, which is constructed through a highly dominant pattern of anaphoric repetition.²² Of its total seventy-eight verses, the phrase *fa-bi`ayyi ālā'i rabbikumā tukaẓẓibān* is repeated thirty-one times, making it one of the most systematic forms of repetition in the entire Qur'ān. According to al-Zamakhsharī,²³ this repetition functions as *taqrīr* (argumentative reinforcement), compelling the audience to internalize the divine message progressively. From the perspective of *balāghah*, this pattern generates *tawāẓun bayānī* (discursive equilibrium), integrating cosmological verses, natural laws, and eschatological promises into a coherent network of meaning.²⁴

Thematically, this repetition appears after clusters of verses that describe: (1) the blessings of creation and instruction (verses 1–13); (2) cosmic order and natural balance (verses 14–25); (3) the mortality of created beings and the eternity of God (verses 26–30); (4) warnings directed at deniers (verses 31–45); and (5) the delights of Paradise promised to the righteous (verses 46–78). As noted by Nasr,²⁵ this structure demonstrates that the repetition is not mechanical in nature; rather, it operates as a rhetorical محور (axis) that marks thematic transitions while simultaneously reinforcing the sūrah's central message concerning divine justice and mercy.

From the perspective of modern stylistics, the repetitive language in Sūrat *ar-Raḥmān* [55] frequently forms a cognitive and emotional rhythm that strengthens the listener's memory and enhances the persuasive force of the text.²⁶ Linguistically, the recurring phrase functions as lexical anaphora, creating textual cohesion and deepening the relationship between the divine message and its recipients, namely humankind and jinn.²⁷ Pragmatically, the repeatedly employed rhetorical question positions the audience within a dialogical relationship with the text, thereby encouraging an intense process of spiritual reflection.²⁸

²² Odeh Alhatim and Khatmeh Elgoudman, "The Speech of the Repetition of Rhetorical Question "Then Which of the Favours of Your Lord Will You Deny? In Surat AL Rahman," *International Journal of English Language and Linguistics Research* 11 (2023): 10–16.

²³ Zamakhsharī, *Al-Kashshaf 'an Ḥaqā'iq Al-Tanzīl Wa-'uyūn Al-Aqāwīl Fī Wujūh Al-Ta'wīl*.

²⁴ Zubair, *Stilistika Arab: Studi Ayat-Ayat Pernikaban Dalam Al-Quran* (Amzah, 2022).

²⁵ S H Nasr et al., *The Study Quran: A New Translation and Commentary* (HarperCollins, 2015).

²⁶ Bruce B Lawrence, "The Spirituality of the Qur'a'n," in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Islamic Spirituality*, 2022, 1–43, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118533789.ch1>.

²⁷ Ahmad, Ghafar, and Utama, "Stylistic Variation and Linguistic Strategies in Quranic Discourse: A Rhetorical, Phonetic, and Translational Analysis."

²⁸ Nesaem Mehdi Al-Aadili and Taif Hatam Shardaghly, "A Pragmatic Manifestation of Monologic and Dialogic Argumentation in the Holy Qur'an," *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics* 9, no. 3 (2023): 1–9.

Accordingly, Sūrat *ar-Raḥmān* [55] does not merely convey theological teachings concerning the vastness of God’s mercy; rather, it demonstrates how the linguistic architecture of revelation serves as the primary medium for constructing and transmitting meaning. The systematically organized pattern of anaphoric repetition in this sūrah simultaneously operates as an aesthetic element that embellishes discourse, an argumentative instrument that reinforces divine communication, and a pedagogical mechanism that guides the reader’s spiritual consciousness. The integration of these three functions establishes Sūrat *ar-Raḥmān* [55] as one of the most powerful representations of Qur’ānic rhetorical excellence, in which formal beauty and depth of meaning converge within a coherent and persuasive linguistic structure.

Classification of Anaphoric Stylistic Devices in Sūrat ar-Raḥmān [55]

The following table presents a representative classification of anaphoric stylistic devices identified in Sūrat *ar-Raḥmān* [55]. Although the refrain *fa-bi`ayyi alā`i rabbikumā tukaẓẓibān* appears thirty-one times throughout the sūrah, this study selectively analyzes five major verse clusters because they represent the principal thematic progression of the chapter: creation, cosmic order, existential awareness, divine warning, and eschatological reward. These clusters were purposively selected to provide a balanced stylistic representation of the sūrah’s rhetorical movement while avoiding repetitive exposition of structurally identical verses. Therefore, the selected examples function as analytical models through which the broader rhetorical architecture of the sūrah can be understood.

Table 1. Types of Anaphoric Stylistic Devices in Sūrat *ar-Raḥmān* [55]

No	Verse Group & Thematic Context	Verse Rendering (Translation)	Anaphoric Form	Rhetorical and Aesthetic Function
1	Verses 13–16 — The blessing of the creation of humankind and jinn	“He created humankind from dry clay like pottery, and created the jinn from smokeless fire. <i>So which of your Lord’s favors will you deny?</i> ”	Lexical Anaphora (fixed refrain)	Emphasizes the equal moral responsibility of humans and jinn in acknowledging divine creation; functions as <i>ta’kid</i> (semantic emphasis) and an existential reminder.
2	Verses 17–25 — Cosmic beauty and the orbits of the sun and moon	“He subjected the sun and the moon, each running according to calculation... <i>So which of your Lord’s favors will you deny?</i> ”	Clausal Anaphora	Connects cosmic order with divine majesty; establishes thematic rhythm between celestial and terrestrial creation.
3	Verses 26–30 — The finitude of creation and the absolute sovereignty of God	“All that is on earth will perish, and there will remain only the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor. <i>So</i>	Imperative-Rhetorical Anaphora	Awakens metaphysical awareness of human mortality; repetition functions as an invitation

				<i>which of your Lord's favors will you deny?"</i>		to humility and contemplation.
4	Verses 31–36	—	Warning to those who deny divine favors	“We shall attend to you, O two assemblies [of humans and jinn]. <i>So which of your Lord's favors will you deny?"</i>	Lexical Anaphora	Repetition is employed in a warning context; functions as <i>tanbih</i> (strong admonition).
5	Verses 46–78	—	Description of Paradise for the righteous	“For those who fear standing before their Lord are two gardens... <i>So which of your Lord's favors will you deny?"</i>	Clausal & Imperative-Rhetorical Anaphora	Concludes each depiction of heavenly reward with reflective repetition; reinforces gratitude and spiritual hope.

Note: The table presents representative clusters rather than all thirty-one occurrences individually. The selected clusters were chosen because they represent the dominant thematic transitions and rhetorical variations within the *sūrah*. A complete inventory of the repeated verses may be consulted in the digital Qur'anic text: <https://corpus.quran.com/translation.jsp?chapter=55>

Table 1 showed that anaphoric stylistic devices in *Sūrat ar-Raḥmān* [55] are not randomly distributed, but systematically organized in accordance with the thematic development of the *sūrah*. The repeated refrain, *fa-bi`ayyi ālā'i rabbikumā tukaẓẓibān*, functions as a rhetorical axis that binds the discourse into a coherent stylistic structure. However, although the same lexical expression is repeated thirty-one times, its rhetorical function does not remain entirely identical across all contexts. The meaning and persuasive force of the repetition shift depending on the thematic environment in which it appears.

In verses 13–16, lexical anaphora emphasizes the blessings associated with the creation of humankind and jinn. Here, repetition primarily functions as *ta'kid* (semantic reinforcement), reminding both categories of beings of their equal obligation to acknowledge divine creation. The rhetorical effect is contemplative and affirmative, directing the audience toward existential awareness and gratitude. By contrast, in verses 17–25, the repetitive refrain accompanies descriptions of cosmic harmony, including the movement of celestial bodies and the balance of nature. In this cluster, repetition serves not merely as emphasis, but as a structural connector linking cosmological signs to theological reflection. The refrain acquires a rhythmic and aesthetic role that strengthens the musicality of the discourse and intensifies the sense of divine order.

A significant rhetorical shift emerges in verses 26–30, where repetition follows statements concerning mortality and the eternal sovereignty of God. In this context, the refrain no longer functions predominantly as an expression of gratitude, but rather as an existential interrogation that confronts the reader with the impermanence of worldly existence. The anaphora here operates persuasively and philosophically, generating reflective tension and metaphysical awareness. This demonstrates that identical repetitive structures

may carry different communicative intentions depending on the semantic environment of the surrounding verses.

Another important variation appears in verses 31–36, where the repeated refrain occurs in a context of warning and divine judgment. Unlike earlier verses that foreground blessing and contemplation, repetition in this section functions as *tanbih* (admonition) and rhetorical intimidation. The interrogative structure becomes sharper and more confrontational, producing emotional pressure upon the audience. This represents an anomalous shift within the sūrah's repetitive architecture because the same refrain transitions from a persuasive reminder into a form of eschatological warning. Consequently, the study finds that Qur'ānic repetition is dynamically multifunctional rather than semantically fixed.

The most extensive and rhetorically complex use of anaphora appears in verses 46–78, which describe the rewards of Paradise. In this section, repetition combines clausal and imperative-rhetorical functions. Each depiction of heavenly pleasure concludes with the repeated interrogative refrain, thereby reinforcing emotional anticipation, spiritual longing, and ethical motivation. Unlike the warning passages, repetition here creates a soothing and persuasive rhythm that evokes hope rather than fear. This contrast reveals that the rhetorical value of repetition in Sūrat *ar-Raḥmān* [55] is highly context-sensitive and operates differently according to thematic progression.

The findings indicated that the thirty-one repetitions may be grouped into three dominant rhetorical orientations: contemplative repetition associated with divine blessings, confrontational repetition associated with warning and judgment, and motivational repetition associated with eschatological reward. This comparative dimension demonstrates that anaphoric repetition in the Qur'ān functions not as mechanical recurrence but as a flexible rhetorical strategy capable of adapting its persuasive force according to discursive context.

Nevertheless, this study also acknowledges several theoretical limitations. First, Keraf's stylistic framework²⁹ was originally developed within the context of general and modern linguistic stylistics rather than classical Arabic sacred discourse. As a result, some dimensions of Qur'ānic rhetorical uniqueness—particularly aspects related to phonetic miracle (*i'jāz ṣawti*) and theological semiotics—cannot be fully captured through Keraf's categories alone. Second, because this research focuses specifically on five representative thematic clusters, the analysis does not exhaustively examine every micro-context

²⁹ Keraf, *Diksi Dan Gaya Bahasa*.

surrounding the thirty-one repetitions individually. Therefore, future research may expand the analysis by integrating classical Arabic rhetorical theories such as *balāghah*, discourse analysis, or cognitive stylistics in order to produce a more comprehensive understanding of Qur'ānic repetition.

Overall, these findings confirm that anaphoric repetition in *Sūrat ar-Raḥmān* [55] constitutes a sophisticated rhetorical architecture that governs the movement of meaning throughout the *sūrah*. The repetition progresses from expressions of divine blessing to cosmic reflection, existential warning, moral admonition, and eschatological promise. Consequently, repetition in the Qur'ān should not be understood as linguistic redundancy, but as a deliberate divine communicative strategy that integrates aesthetic beauty, emotional persuasion, and theological depth within a cohesive discursive structure

Stylistic and Rhetorical Analysis of Sūrat ar-Raḥmān [55]

Based on Keraf's theoretical framework, anaphora is defined as a form of repetition that reinforces an idea by repeating a word or phrase at the beginning of successive linguistic structures. In *Sūrat ar-Raḥmān* [55], this repetition forms a kind of linguistic ritual that continuously intensifies the theological message. The repetitive pattern observed in this *sūrah* is not passive but progressive in nature—each recurrence adds a new layer of meaning in accordance with the context of the preceding verses. For instance, the initial repetition (verses 13–16) functions as an affirmation of creation, the subsequent repetitions in the middle sections serve to emphasize God's sovereignty, and the final repetitions reinforce the promise of reward and the delights of Paradise.³⁰

From a stylistic perspective, this repetitive structure generates a strong effect of sound and rhythmic symmetry.³¹ The phonemic similarity at the end of the phrase *tukāṣṣibān* produces an internal rhyme that evokes a sense of musicality and spiritual resonance.³² This phenomenon corresponds to what Leech and Short³³ describe as “sound parallelism” in modern rhetorical theory, wherein phonetic patterning and syntactic structure work together to elicit specific emotional responses from the reader or listener.

³⁰ Muhammad Yunus and Uswatun Hasanah, “Rahasia Pengulangan (Repetisi) Ayat Dalam Surah Ar-Rahman: Kajian Kitab Tafsir Ruh Al-Ma'ani Karya Al-Alusi,” *Al-Irfani: Journal of Al Qur'anic and Tafsir* 1, no. 2 (2020): 1–19, <https://doi.org/10.51700/irfani.v1i2.78>.

³¹ Sholahudin and Sopian, “Stylistic Analysis of the Eschatological Narrative in the Qur'an.”

³² Fadela Messaoudi, Meryem Mansouri, and Hanane RABAHI, “The Phonetic Miracle in the Quran,” *أطراس* 6, no. 1 (2025): 19–33.

³³ G N Leech and M Short, *Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose*, English language series (Pearson Longman, 2007).

Rhetorically, the repetition of the interrogative phrase functions as a strategy of theistic persuasion. The repeated question does not seek a verbal response; rather, it serves to awaken moral consciousness.³⁴ Within the psychology of religious communication, such repetition is described as rhetorical reactivation, a technique through which meaning is internalized through repeated exposure.³⁵ Accordingly, each recurrence of the phrase renews the reader's awareness of God's benevolence and reiterates the obligation of gratitude.

From a semantic perspective, the use of anaphora in *Sūrat ar-Raḥmān* [55] plays a crucial role in consolidating the communicative relationship between the divine subject (God) and the two primary audiences of revelation, namely humankind and jinn.³⁶ The employment of the dual grammatical form in the expression *rabbikumā* ("your Lord, both of you") underscores the dialogical character of the text, situating the reader within a space of direct interaction between the Creator and His creatures.³⁷ The repetition of this dual structure not only intensifies audience engagement but also manifests a conceptual balance between *rahmah* (divine mercy) and *taklīf* (moral responsibility). Consequently, the anaphoric style in this *sūrah* fulfills a dual function: as a form of *ta'kīd* that reinforces theological meaning and as a continuous *tadhkirah* that reminds both humankind and jinn of their spiritual and ethical obligations.

The findings of this study are consistent with the results of Isnaeni³⁸ as well as Hamzah, Aziz, and Syam,³⁹ who emphasize the functions of *ta'kīd* (semantic emphasis) and *tanbīh* (strong admonition) in the repetitive verses of *Sūrat ar-Raḥmān* [55]. However, unlike previous studies that primarily interpret the meaning of repetition from a theological perspective, the present research systematically classifies the forms of anaphora and analyzes them in terms of linguistic structure, rhetorical function, and stylistic effect. This approach offers a novel contribution to Qur'anic stylistics by positioning repetition not merely as a literary feature, but as a mechanism of thematic and emotional cohesion.

³⁴ Ahmad Dzaky Mubarak and Maimun Muzaka, "Taysbih Dalam Kajian Linguistik Arab: Telaah Semantik Dan Retorika Dalam Al-Qur'an Surat Ar-Rahman," *Ta'bir Al-'Arabiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab dan Ilmu Kebahasaaraban* 3, no. 1 (2025): 34–40.

³⁵ Eko Harianto et al., "Repetition In Educational Psychology: A Study Of The Qur'an Surah Ar-Rahman," *Ulumuddin: Jurnal Ilmu-ilmu Keislaman* 14, no. 2 (2024): 295–316.

³⁶ Muhamad Mahsun, "Nuansa Balāḡī Surat Ar-Raḥmān Perspektif Wahbah Al-Zuhailī Dalam Tafsir Al-Munir," *Undergraduate (S1) Thesis, UIN Walisongo Semarang*, 2022.

³⁷ Aisyah Juniarti, "Dialog Antara Tuhan Dan Malaikat Tentang Penciptaan Adam (Analisis Makna Kontekstual)." (IAIN Parepare, 2024).

³⁸ Isnaeni, "Pengulangan Fabiaayyi Alai Rabbikuma Tukadzzibani Dalam Surah Ar-Rahman (Studi Komparatif Tafsir Al-Misbah Dan Al-Azhar)."

³⁹ Hamzah, Azis, and Syam, "Makna Pengulangan Kalimat 'Fabi'ayyi Ala'i Rabbikuma Tukadzibaan' Dalam Qs Ar-Rahman Di Al-Qur'an (Studi Komparatif Tafsir Al-Maraghi Dan Ibnu Katsir)."

Overall, these findings substantiate Keraf's⁴⁰ view that repetition is not simply a stylistic ornament, but a strategic rhetorical instrument operating simultaneously within aesthetic and semantic domains. In the context of the Qur'ān, repetition functions as a divine mechanism that progressively structures the message of revelation,⁴¹ deepens meaning,⁴² and strengthens its persuasive power upon the reader's consciousness.⁴³ Accordingly, repetition cannot be understood as a form of linguistic redundancy, but rather as an intensification of meaning that systematically guides the reader toward deeper spiritual reflection.

Based on the comprehensive analysis, it can be firmly asserted that the anaphoric style in Sūrat *ar-Raḥmān* [55] serves as a central pillar of the sūrah's stylistic construction. Through structured and consistent patterns of repetition, the verses establish a dynamic rhetorical dialogue between God and His creation, integrating the themes of mercy, power, and moral responsibility into a coherent unity of meaning. These findings reaffirm that the beauty of Qur'ānic language arises not only from its careful lexical choices, but also from its architecture of repetition, which generates semantic resonance, emotional force, and enduring spiritual depth.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that anaphoric repetition in Sūrat *ar-Raḥmān* [55] functions as a central stylistic mechanism that contributes to the rhetorical coherence, semantic emphasis, and persuasive structure of the sūrah. The analysis identifies three dominant forms of anaphora—lexical anaphora, clausal anaphora, and imperative-rhetorical anaphora—which operate differently according to their thematic contexts. The findings indicate that the repetition of the phrase *fa-bi`ayyi alā'i rabbikumā tukaẓẓibān*, which occurs thirty-one times, is not a meaningless recurrence, but rather a rhetorical manifestation that constructs the thematic and semantic architecture of the sūrah as an integrated whole. From a theoretical perspective, this study confirms the relevance of integrating modern stylistic theory with classical Qur'ānic rhetoric in examining repetitive structures within sacred texts. Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. First, the analysis is limited to a single sūrah,

⁴⁰ Keraf, *Diksi Dan Gaya Bahasa*.

⁴¹ Muhammad Syairozi Dimyathi, Inayah Elmaula, and Hananah Muhtar Tabroni, "Repetition in the Qur'an the Perspective of Badi'uzzaman Sa'id Nursi," *Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an* 18, no. 2 (2022): 149–180.

⁴² Dalia Abo Haggag, "Repetition: A Key to Qur'ānic Style, Structure and Meaning" (University of Pennsylvania, 2010).

⁴³ Mahmoud Ali Ahmed Omar and Maitham Tariq Gumar, "The Technique of Repetition Is a Cohesive Device in the Glorious Quran," *Journal of the College of Basic Education* 26, no. 107 (2022): 1–14.

namely Sūrat *ar-Raḥmān* [55], and therefore does not represent the broader stylistic diversity of repetition across the Qur'ān. Second, the study relies primarily on Keraf's stylistic framework, which may not fully capture all dimensions of Qur'ānic rhetorical uniqueness, particularly aspects related to phonetic *i'jāz* and cognitive reception. Third, the research focuses on textual analysis and does not include empirical investigation regarding readers' psychological or emotional responses to repetitive Qur'ānic structures. Future studies are therefore encouraged to conduct comparative stylistic analyses between Sūrat *ar-Raḥmān* [55] and other Qur'ānic sūrahs that contain repetitive rhetorical patterns, such as Sūrat al-Mursalāt or Sūrat al-Qamar. Further research may also integrate cognitive stylistics, discourse analysis, or psycholinguistic approaches to examine how repetitive structures influence readers' comprehension, emotional engagement, and spiritual perception. Such interdisciplinary exploration would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of repetition as both a linguistic and rhetorical phenomenon within Qur'ānic discourse.

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