

A STYLISTIC-SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF DICTION IN IMAM SHAFI'Ī'S *DA'IL AYYĀMA TAF'ALU MĀ TASYĀ'U* AND ITS MORAL EDUCATIONAL VALUES

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Abstract

This study examines the stylistics of diction in Imam Shafi'ī's poem *da'il ayyāma taf'alu mā tasyā'u* (leave the days to do as they will) through a semantic stylistic perspective. While previous studies have widely explored its moral teachings, limited attention has been given to the role of diction at the semantic level in constructing moral meaning. This qualitative study employs content analysis through documentary study and literature review. The analysis applies Syihabuddin Qalyubi's stylistic framework, particularly the semantic level (*mustawā al-dalālī*) focusing on lexical meaning (*dalālah al-lafẓ al-mu'jamī*) and its development through figurative stylistic elements at the imagistic level (*mustawā al-taṣwīrī*). The findings reveal that the lexical meaning develops into contextual meanings through stylistic devices such as metaphor, personification, hyperbole, and imagery, generating semantic effects that reinforce moral values, including patience, humility, resilience, and trust in God (*tawakkul*). The study also identifies moral values across personal, social, and metaphysical dimensions, highlighting the integration of linguistic analysis and moral education. This study contributes to Arabic stylistics by demonstrating how semantic diction systematically constructs moral meaning in classical Arabic poetry.

Keywords: Arabic poetry; Imam Shafi'ī; moral values; *mustawā al-dalālī*; stylistics.

1. Introduction

In the tradition of classical Arabic literature, poetry holds a significant position as a medium for expressing thoughts, emotions, as well as moral and religious teachings (Zahro et al., 2025). One of the prominent poets is Imam Shafi'ī, whose well known poem is *da'il ayyāma taf'alu mā tasyā'u* (leave the days to do as they will). Hasyim and Brilian (2023) state that this poem contains noble values and life lessons such as open mindedness, loyalty, integrity, generosity, and inner peace. In addition, Rosyidah (2024) argues that the poem reflects wisdom in facing life and conveys a strong religious nuance. These aspects make the poem particularly interesting to be examined through a stylistic approach, especially in terms of diction and semantic meaning in conveying moral messages.

Meaning in literary works is constructed through the use of language as the primary medium by which authors convey ideas, emotions, and values to readers. The use of

figurative language, whether consciously or unconsciously, can produce both aesthetic and semantic effects that enrich readers' understanding of literary texts (Ilmi, 2021). Therefore, literary studies require a scientific approach that not only focuses on content but also examines linguistic elements that contribute to the formation of meaning and aesthetic value. One relevant approach for analyzing the relationship between language and meaning in literature is stylistics, an interdisciplinary field used to analyze language style in literary works (Hasyim & Brilian, 2023). Through stylistic analysis, researchers can identify how language choices contribute to aesthetic effects and communicative meaning in literary texts.

From this perspective, stylistics becomes a relevant approach for examining Arabic poetry, which frequently employs figurative and symbolic language. Previous studies on Arabic stylistics and Imam Shafī'i's poetry, such as those by Idris and Abdurrohman (2025) and Hasyim and Brilian (2023), have mainly focused on phonological, morphological, and syntactic aspects of literary texts. Few studies have examined diction at the semantic level, leaving implicit moral meanings unexplored. In many cases, the meaning of Arabic poetry cannot be fully understood through literal translation alone, as literary meaning is often constructed through specific stylistic devices. Therefore, a deeper analysis of language use in literary texts is necessary (Ilmi, 2021). This condition indicates the need for a semantic stylistic analysis to uncover the implicit meanings embedded in the poem.

To address this gap, this study applies a semantic stylistic approach to analyze diction and reveal moral values in Imam Shafī'i's poem. The analysis focuses on *mustawā al-dalālī* (semantic level) to identify the characteristics and uniqueness of diction as well as the semantic effects that contribute to the expression of moral messages. This study aims to answer the following questions: (1) what are the characteristics of diction in the poem *da'il ayyāma taf'alu mā tasyā'u*, (2) how is semantic meaning constructed through diction in the poem, and (3) how are moral values represented through diction in the poem.

This study is expected to contribute to Arabic stylistics by applying Qalyubi's stylistic framework to the analysis of semantic diction. Furthermore, it is expected to provide insights into the relationship between language, meaning, and moral expression in Arabic literary works, as well as to support the development of moral education through literary learning.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Stylistics in Literary Studies

Stylistics is a highly interdisciplinary and eclectic field of study (Urbanová 2005, in Perveen & Farid, 2022). From this perspective, stylistics functions as a bridge between linguistic form and communicative function, mediating between grammatical structure and literary aesthetics (Ahmad & Ghafar, 2025). The primary focus of stylistics is to identify the distinctive features of language in literary works that contribute to their uniqueness, while also reflecting the author's identity and the aesthetic effects produced for the reader (Alshamiri & Murshed, 2025). In addition, stylistics aims to provide a deeper understanding and critical perspective on literary texts through the exploration of linguistic features, style, and textual function within specific contexts (Perveen & Farid, 2022).

In literary studies, stylistics is used to analyze various linguistic devices such as diction, sentence patterns, and rhetorical strategies, which not only enhance the form of a

text but also perform communicative functions and convey implicit meanings (Maulana et al., 2025). This analysis encompasses multiple linguistic levels, including phonology, morphology, syntax, lexis, semantics, and discourse, all of which interact in constructing the overall meaning of a text (Alshamiri & Murshed, 2025). For instance, sound patterns may reinforce the nuances of meaning shaped by word choice, resulting in both aesthetic effects and deeper contextual meanings. Therefore, stylistics is understood as an approach that positions language use as a central means in the construction of meaning and aesthetic effect in literary works (Januarti, 2019; Sopian, 2017; Aulia et al., 2025).

2.2 Syihabuddin Qalyubi's Theory of Stylistics

Building on this broader perspective, stylistic analysis becomes essential for achieving a deeper understanding of textual meaning (Fayez & Arya, 2024). Stylistics is considered capable of revealing how authors deliberately and systematically use language to construct meaning in their works (Leech & Short, 2024, in Sopian et al., 2025). Syihabuddin Qalyubi defines stylistics as a discipline grounded in specific principles, rules, and levels of analysis (Qalyubi, 2017). He systematizes Arabic stylistics into five analytical levels: *al-mustawā al-ṣawtī* (phonological level), *al-mustawā al-ṣarfī* (morphological level), *al-mustawā al-tarkībī* (syntactic level), *al-mustawā al-dalālī* (semantic level), and *al-mustawā al-taṣwīrī* (imagery level) (Harnida, 2022). Each level contributes to the construction of meaning in literary texts.

This framework demonstrates that sound, word formation, sentence structure, meaning, and imagery do not operate independently; rather, they interact and reinforce one another in producing aesthetic effects and deeper meaning. Therefore, this study adopts Qalyubi's model by focusing on the *mustawā al-dalālī* (semantic level), particularly on *dalālah al-lafẓ al-mu'jamī* (lexical meaning) and its development through the use of *majāz* (figurative language) at the *mustawā al-taṣwīrī* (imagery level), which together construct contextual meaning in the analyzed text.

2.3 Previous Research and Novelty of the Study

Several previous studies have examined Arabic poetry through stylistic and semantic analysis approaches. Hasyim & Brilian(2023) state that the poem *da'il ayyāma taf'alu mā tasyā'u* conveys moral values such as openness of heart, integrity, and inner peace. Maulana et al. (2025), using a hermeneutic-stylistic approach, identify character education values in the same poem, including *tawakkul* (trust in God), patience, perseverance, generosity, and the preservation of personal dignity. Meanwhile, Hajar et al. (2025), through semantic analysis, demonstrate that the use of verbs, nouns, and adjectives in Imam Shafi'i's poetry extends beyond literal meaning to convey moral and spiritual messages such as *tawakkul*, patience, sincerity, and awareness of the transience of worldly life.

However, these studies have not specifically examined diction at the semantic level within a systematic stylistic framework. Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in its focused analysis of diction at the *mustawā al-dalālī* (semantic level) based on Syihabuddin Qalyubi's stylistic theory. In addition, this study connects the findings to their relevance in moral education, thus moving beyond purely linguistic analysis to contribute to the field of educational studies.

3. Research Method

This study employs a qualitative method with a content analysis approach to examine diction choices and semantic effects in the poem *da'il ayyāma taf'alu mā tasyā'u* by Imam Shafī'i. This approach is selected because it enables an in depth exploration of implicit meanings embedded in poetic diction, which cannot be adequately captured through quantitative methods.

The object of this study is the text of the poem as the primary data source. This is supported by secondary data sources, including relevant journal articles on Arabic stylistics and semantic analysis of poetry, classical and contemporary references in Arabic stylistics and literary criticism, literature on moral education based on the thought of Al-Ghazali, and previous studies related to the poem. These supporting sources are selected based on their relevance, academic credibility, and publication in reputable journals or academic publishers.

Data collection techniques involve documentation study and literature review, namely close reading of the poem and supporting literature (Yakin & Al-Haq, 2023). The data collection process includes an in depth reading of the text to grasp its overall meaning, followed by a gradual translation into Indonesian by combining literal and interpretive translation to capture stylistic nuances and semantic context. This is followed by identifying diction with distinctive meanings, as well as recording and categorizing the data based on semantic features.

Data analysis is conducted using a qualitative descriptive approach grounded in Syihabuddin Qalyubi's stylistic framework and Al-Ghazali's theory of moral education. The analysis focuses on the *mustawā al-dalālī* (semantic level) to examine *dalālah al-lafz al-mu'jamī* (lexical meaning) and its development through figurative language, which contributes to contextual meaning. The stylistic findings are then mapped onto the three dimensions of moral education according to Al-Ghazali: (1) personal dimension, (2) social dimension, and (3) metaphysical dimension. Thus, each identified semantic pattern and effect is reinterpreted to reveal moral values across these dimensions.

The data analysis process includes coding relevant diction, categorizing it based on semantic and stylistic features, conducting interpretive analysis, presenting findings descriptively, and drawing conclusions. To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, this study applies four criteria: (1) credibility, achieved through data triangulation by comparing analytical findings with relevant literature, as well as peer discussion and expert validation; (2) transferability, ensured through detailed descriptions of the data and analytical procedures to allow applicability in similar contexts; (3) dependability, maintained through systematic and transparent analytical procedures; and (4) confirmability, achieved by documenting the entire analytical process and minimizing researcher bias through reflective interpretation.

4. Results and Discussion

Based on the analysis of the poem *da'il ayyāma taf'alu mā tasyā'u*, the findings indicate that the diction employed reflects lexical meaning alongside various forms of deviation, including *majāz* (figurative expression), personification, metaphor, paradox, hyperbole, and metonymy, all of which collectively construct meaning through their semantic effects. This analysis is conducted using a stylistic approach based on Syihabuddin Qalyubi's framework, with a focus on the *mustawā al-dalālī* (semantic level) and its

interrelation with the *mustawā al-taṣwīrī* (imagery level). Furthermore, these linguistic findings are mapped onto moral educational values based on the theory of Al-Ghazali, encompassing the personal, social, and metaphysical dimensions.

Table 1.*Word choice*

The following table presents an analysis of the diction in the poem, covering literal meaning, forms of deviation, and the meanings contained within.

Diction in the Poem	Literal Meaning	Figures of Speech	Meaning
(1A) <u>دع الأيام</u> <u>تفعل ما تشاء</u>	The days do	Personification	Time is depicted as if it possesses human like abilities.
(1B) <u>ولا تجزع</u> <u>لحادثة الليالي</u>	The events of the nights	Metonymy	The word "night" is used to symbolize a time of hardship or life's trials.
(1C) <u>فما لحوادث</u> <u>الدنيا بقاء</u>	Eternity or continuity	Emphasis of meaning	The world as something impermanent and ever changing.
(1D) <u>وكن رجلاً</u> <u>على الأهوال جلدًا</u>	Horror or something extremely frightening	Hyperbole	Difficulty is described as something extremely frightening.
(1E) <u>تستر</u> <u>بالسقاء فكل عيب</u>	To cover physically	Metaphor	Generosity is likened to a "cover" for human shortcomings.
(1F) <u>يغظيه – كما</u> <u>قيل – السقاء</u>	To physically cover something	Metaphor	A generous nature can cover up a person's shame.
(1G) <u>فإن شماتة</u> <u>الأعداء بلاء</u>	A calamity or trial	Emphasis of meaning	The enemies' joy at someone's suffering is a calamity.
(1H) <u>فما في النار</u> <u>للظمآن ماء</u>	Water for the thirsty in the fire	Paradox	It is impossible to expect kindness from a miser.
(1I) <u>إذا نزل القضاء</u> <u>ضاق الفضاء</u>	Space becomes narrow	Metaphor	When fate strikes, people feel as though they are crushed and have no room to escape.
(1J) <u>دع الأيام</u> <u>تغدر كل حين</u>	The days are treacherous	Personification	Time is depicted as an entity capable of bringing about change.

Table 2.*Moral education values*

The following table presents an analysis of the verses, including moral values and their descriptions.

Poem	Moral Value	Description of the Value
(2A) <u>دع الأيام تفعل ما تشاء</u> <u>وطب نفساً إذا حكم القضاء</u>	Tawakal and sincerity	Describes the attitude of accepting Allah's decree with an open heart.

(2B) ولا تجزع لحادثة الليالي	Patience	Teaches the importance of patience and not losing hope in the face of life's difficulties.
(2C) فما لحواث الدنيا بقاء	Awareness of the transience of the world	Emphasizing that the world is temporary.
(2D) ولكن رجلاً على الأهوال جلداً	Resilience	Guiding individuals to be strong in the face of trials
(2E) وشيمتك السماحة والوفاء	Generosity and loyalty	Teaching the importance of generosity and loyalty in social relationships.
(2F) تستر بالسخاء فكل عيب يغطيه كما قيل السخاء	Generosity	Emphasizing that generosity can cover a person's shortcomings.
(2G) ولا تر للأعادي قط ذلاً	Preserving dignity	Reminding us not to show weakness to our enemies
(2H) ولا ترج السماحة من بخيل	Wise in social interactions	Teaching an understanding of human nature
(2I) ورزقك ليس ينقصه التأني	Contentment	Teaching that sustenance is not determined by anxiety or exhaustion.
(2J) إذا ما كنت ذا قلب قنوع	Contentment	Teaches that contentment of the heart is more important than material wealth.
(2K) وأرض الله واسعة ولكن إذا نزل القضاء ضاق الفضاء	Awareness of destiny	Reminding us that humans are limited in the face of Allah's destiny.
(2L) فما يغني عن الموت الدواء	Being aware of one's appointed time (death)	Reminding us that death cannot be rejected or avoided.

The analysis of the above findings is based on Syihabuddin Qalyubi's theory of stylistics at the *mustawā al-dalālī* (semantic) level to identify lexical meaning (*dalālah lafziyyah*) and contextual meaning in the poetry of Imam Shafi'i. Additionally, the *mustawā al-taṣwīrī* level (imagery level) was identified in the analysis data, contributing to the stylistic elements of the diction and verses.

4.1 Diction

Based on the analysis presented in the table above, the selected diction reflects *dalālah al-lafz al-mu'jamī* (lexical meaning) (Qalyubi, 2017), namely the basic meaning contained in the dictionary (Puspita & Ratini, 2024). Key lexical items, as listed in the table, such as الأيام , الليالي , بقاء , الأهوال , تستر , يغطيه , بلاء , serta verba maupun frasa seperti في النار , للظمان ماء , ضاق الفضاء , تغدر , الأيام initially carry lexical meanings which are then developed into contextual meanings through the *mustawā al-taṣwīrī* (imagery level) embedded in the verses.

For instance, the word الأيام (days), which literally refers to units of time, when combined with the verb تفعل (to act/do), portrays time as if it were capable of human action. In Arabic stylistics, this falls under *majāz* (figurative expression) at the *mustawā al-taṣwīrī*, specifically in the form of personification. At the level of *mustawā al-dalālī* (semantic level), this construction conveys the meaning that the course of life lies beyond human control and is entirely governed by God. This interpretation differs from the study by Hajar et al. (2025),

which views the expression as a reminder of the limited nature of time that should be used for good deeds and devotion to God. This difference indicates that a semantic stylistic approach does not merely reveal general moral meanings but also demonstrates how linguistic construction shapes the reader's perception of the relationship between humans and God. The semantic effect of this expression leads the reader to an awareness of human limitations and the importance of *tawakkul* (trust in God), aligning with the view that all power belongs to God and that human actions ultimately depend on Him (Amiruddin, 2021).

Similarly, the words الليالي (nights) and حادثة (event), which literally denote time and occurrence, are used metonymically in the poem, where "night" symbolizes periods of hardship and trials. This semantic shift intensifies the emotional tone and constructs a vivid imagery of difficult experiences.

The word بقاء (eternity) literally refers to something permanent and unchanging (Rosyidah, 2024). At the semantic level, however, it signifies the awareness of the transient nature of worldly life. Meanwhile, the word الأهوال (terrors) is presented hyperbolically to depict severe and frightening life challenges (Rosyidah, 2024), which in turn directs the reader toward adopting a stance of جلدأ (steadfastness and resilience). This aligns with Hajar et al. (2025), who interpret the term as encouraging individuals not to be overwhelmed by fear but to maintain hope and surrender to God. However, this study further demonstrates that the use of hyperbole at the stylistic level serves a more specific function, namely to intensify emotional pressure, thereby facilitating the internalization of perseverance and patience. Thus, the diction functions not only as a carrier of meaning but also as a means of shaping the reader's emotional and moral response.

The diction يغطي and تستر (to cover/conceal) are used metaphorically to represent generosity as a means of covering one's flaws. While these terms literally refer to physical acts of covering, within the poetic context they construct the idea that kindness can conceal human shortcomings in social interactions, thereby relating directly to moral values. This is consistent with Hajar et al. (2025), who interpret these terms as representing protection and the moral virtue of concealing others' faults. However, this study shows that metaphor functions not merely to convey moral messages but also as a stylistic strategy that softens their delivery, making them more readily accepted and internalized by readers. In this way, diction serves not only as a vehicle of meaning but also as a rhetorical tool that shapes social awareness and ethical attitudes.

Another example is the expression فما في النار للظمان ماء, which constructs a paradox between fire and water to emphasize the impossibility of obtaining goodness from a miserly person. Here, the literal meaning of "water" shifts into a symbol of unattainable hope, reinforcing the moral message regarding misplaced expectations.

Overall, these examples demonstrate that lexical meaning at the *mustawā al-dalālī* is consistently developed through personification, metaphor, metonymy, paradox, and hyperbole at the *mustawā al-taṣwīrī*, resulting in contextual meanings that carry moral messages. This indicates that the interaction between semantic and imagery levels in Qalyubi's framework functions as a mechanism for constructing and conveying moral values.

4.2 Ethical Education Values

Based on the table, the moral values identified in this poem are classified into three dimensions in accordance with Al-Ghazali's framework of moral education: the personal, social, and metaphysical dimensions (Laili & Sofa, 2024). These values are interconnected

through diction at the semantic level and imagery, resulting in moral messages that are implicit and contextually constructed.

The first group, the personal dimension, concerns the relationship between humans and God, as noted by Sabila in Asy'arie et al. (2023). The values within this dimension include *tawakkul* (trust in God) and sincerity (2A), patience (2B), perseverance (2D), and *qana'ah* (contentment) (2I & 2J). These moral values are not expressed explicitly but are constructed through representations of life's uncertainty conveyed through personification, metaphor, and hyperbole. Semantically, this construction emphasizes human limitations in controlling life, ultimately guiding the formation of inner stability. Moreover, these values reflect the cultivation of key virtues, such as patience, courage, purity, and justice, which are regarded by Al-Ghazali as the foundation of moral character (Rahman, 2019). Thus, the moral values in this dimension do not appear as normative instructions but as outcomes of meaning constructed through language. This finding aligns with studies on *Al-Qaul Al-Jaliy*, which also emphasize sincerity and patience as core values in moral education (N. Aulia & Fattah, 2025), as well as moral values toward God as discussed in *Al-Barzanji* (Hayaturrohman et al., 2020). Accordingly, the poem reflects a classical ethical tradition that links personal virtue with spirituality and social responsibility.

The second group, the social dimension, relates to human interactions within society, governance, and interpersonal relations, as described by Suryadarma and Haq in Asy'arie et al. (2023). In this dimension, values such as generosity and loyalty (2E & 2F), maintaining personal dignity (2G), and wisdom in social interaction (2H) are constructed through metaphor and semantic relations that position moral actions as mechanisms for shaping social order. For example, the metaphor of generosity as a "cover" for human flaws suggests that moral values function protectively in maintaining social harmony. In addition, the use of paradox and semantic contrast in portraying human relationships reinforces the importance of understanding social character realistically. This demonstrates that poetic language not only represents moral values but also shapes perspectives on social ethics.

The third group, the metaphysical dimension, encompasses beliefs and fundamental principles related to faith (Asy'arie et al., 2023). This dimension is constructed through the use of metaphor and paradox related to destiny (2K), the transience of life (2C), and death (2L). Expressions such as the "narrowing of space" when confronted with destiny illustrate the human condition as limited before divine will. From a stylistic perspective, these devices reinforce theological dimensions by transforming abstract concepts into emotionally perceptible experiences. Thus, the values within the metaphysical dimension function not merely as spiritual teachings but as forms of awareness constructed through the structure of meaning.

4.3 The Relationship between Stylistics and Moral Education

This study demonstrates that moral values in the poem are not only conveyed through explicit messages but are also subtly encoded within linguistic structures and imagery. Unlike previous studies that tend to identify moral values thematically, this research shows that such values are constructed through semantic configurations and stylistic devices at the levels of *mustawā al-dalālī* (semantic level) and *mustawā al-taṣwīrī* (imagistic level).

These findings systematically explain how each stylistic element is mapped onto the dimensions of moral education according to Al-Ghazali, thereby clarifying the relationship between linguistic analysis and moral education. In this way, the study contributes to Arabic

stylistics by demonstrating the concrete interaction between the semantic and imagistic levels in the construction of moral educational values.

This is significant because it indicates that understanding moral values in literary texts cannot rely solely on thematic reading, but requires in depth linguistic analysis. Furthermore, these findings carry pedagogical implications for the teaching of Arabic literature, where stylistic analysis can be employed as an approach to instill moral values contextually. Therefore, this study not only enriches stylistic scholarship but also reinforces the role of semantic analysis as a methodological bridge between literary studies and moral education.

5. Conclusion

This study aims to analyze the diction in the poem *da'il ayyāma taf'alu mā tasyā'u* through the level of *mustawā al-dalālī* (semantic level) and to reveal the moral educational values contained within it based on Al-Ghazali's theory. The findings indicate that the poem, which is rich in figurative language, conveys meaning and intention in each stanza. The diction employed is predominantly lexical, or what is referred to as *dalālah al-lafz al-mu'jamī* at the semantic level. These lexical choices are further developed through stylistic devices that produce broader meanings and evoke emotional responses in the reader.

Furthermore, the poem encompasses comprehensive moral values in accordance with Al-Ghazali's framework of moral education, which includes personal, social, and metaphysical dimensions. This demonstrates that moral values in the poem are not only expressed explicitly but are also implicitly constructed through linguistic patterns and stylistic features. In this regard, the integration of Qalyubi's stylistic framework and Al-Ghazali's moral education theory illustrates how language functions as a medium for conveying moral messages.

This study contributes to Arabic stylistics by specifically focusing on the analysis of diction at the semantic level, an area that has received relatively limited attention in previous research, which has tended to emphasize thematic or general stylistic analysis. In addition, the findings suggest that classical Arabic poetry can serve as a valuable resource for moral education, where literary texts function as a medium for character formation.

However, this study has certain limitations, particularly in that it does not comprehensively capture the full range of stylistic patterns within literary works. Therefore, future research is recommended to examine a broader corpus of poetry and to incorporate comparative approaches or mixed methods in order to deepen the understanding of stylistic and moral dimensions in literary texts.

Overall, the findings of this study highlight the continued relevance of Imam Shafi'i's poetry in contemporary contexts, particularly in discussions of ethics, spirituality, and education, and demonstrate that moral messages can be effectively conveyed through stylistic interaction.

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