



THE USE OF ARABIC LANGUAGE IN DELIVERING DA'WAH THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the use of the Arabic language in conveying Islamic da'wah through social media in the rapidly evolving digital era. Arabic, as the language of the Qur'an and Hadith, plays a central role in the structure of Islamic teachings and religious communication. Alongside the transformation of da'wah media from conventional platforms to digital ones, there arises a need to adapt Islamic messages to digital formats, including language use. Social media offers an expansive interactive space that can reach cross-generational audiences. In this context, Arabic serves not only as a symbol of religiosity but also as a strategic component in reinforcing the authority of da'wah messages. This research employs a qualitative descriptive method, utilizing literature studies and observations of Arabic-language digital da'wah content. The findings indicate that using Arabic on social media enhances the credibility and attractiveness of da'wah content when presented creatively, adaptively, and contextually. Moreover, Arabic language usage reflects a strong Islamic identity and creates emotional connections with religiously inclined audiences. The study recommends equipping digital preachers with training to master Arabic functionally and communicatively while ensuring a socially relevant and user-friendly digital approach.

Keywords: *Arabic Language, Da'wah, Social Media, Islamic Communication*



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Introduction

The development of information and communication technology has influenced various aspects of life, including the practice of delivering Islamic da'wah. Media refers to the various means used in the process of transmitting and receiving information that can be heard, seen, read, manipulated, and utilized optimally. In other words, media is a manifestation of information communicated through diverse methods and channels adapted to the available media (Nurfitria & Arzam, 2022). Da'wah is a religious obligation imposed on Muslims. Every Muslim is responsible for carrying out da'wah according to their individual ability. The essence of da'wah is to touch, embrace, and unite humanity especially Muslims in goodness (Hasani, Huda, Soleh, Zainul, & Jamil, 2025).

Previously, da'wah was predominantly delivered through mosque pulpits, direct sermons, or print media. Today, its practice has increasingly expanded through digital media. Social media has become one of the primary channels for conveying religious messages, particularly to younger generations who are active on digital platforms. This development has encouraged preachers and da'wah institutions to adapt to new communication patterns without losing the substance of Islamic teachings sourced from the Qur'an and Sunnah. The use of online media as an educational tool has also become an alternative approach in contemporary education.

Educators delivering educational content may have accounts on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LINE, WhatsApp, Path, or other online media like YouTube, weblogs, LinkedIn, and so on. In addition to serving educational purposes, social media applications are also used as tools for da'wah, business, news dissemination, mobilization, and other forms of communication (Makarima, 2019). Language is a means of communication used to express ideas, thoughts, and feelings. Because of this function, language holds a vital position in society, particularly as a tool for communication.

Arabic holds an important place in delivering da'wah because it is the original language of the Qur'an and Hadith. In the Islamic tradition, Arabic is not only seen as a means of communication but also as a symbol of scholarly authority and sacredness. Communication can be categorized as nonverbal and verbal. Nonverbal communication occurs without sound, while verbal communication uses language as its medium, whether spoken or written (Inderasari, Lestari, & Achsani, 2020). One application of language as a communication tool is its use in social media. Many Islamic terms and concepts such as taqwa, ikhlas, rahmah, and syura are difficult to translate fully into other languages without losing their nuanced meanings. Therefore, the use of Arabic in da'wah including on social media carries both

symbolic and substantive value that cannot be ignored in Islamic communication studies.

However, social media has characteristics that differ from conventional da'wah media. Social media audiences are highly heterogeneous, rapidly changing, and tend to prefer visual and concise forms of communication. In this context, the use of Arabic can be either a strength or a weakness, depending on how and in what context it is delivered. If used inadaptively, Arabic can become a barrier to understanding. Conversely, if presented in an engaging and communicative way, Arabic can enhance the appeal and authenticity of da'wah messages in digital spaces (Sahkholid Nasution, Asari, Al-Rasyid, Dalimunthe, & Rahman, 2024). The use of Arabic on social media often appears in the form of Qur'anic verses, hadith quotations, prayers, or distinctive Islamic terms inserted into captions, short videos, or digital illustrations. This not only demonstrates the preacher's ability to reference the sources of Islamic teachings but also reinforces the religious image of the da'wah content being shared.

Nonetheless, challenges arise when the target audience does not have a deep understanding of Arabic. This condition demands translation and adaptation strategies capable of bridging the original meaning with the audience's context of reception. Preachers and digital da'wah practitioners are required to have proficiency in using Arabic contextually. They must not only understand its grammar and vocabulary but also be sensitive to the dynamics of social media, such as communication trends, message visualization, and audience interaction. This necessitates an integration of linguistic competence and digital skills. A well-crafted strategy for using Arabic will determine how well da'wah messages are received, understood, and internalized by an increasingly broad social media audience.

This research is relevant given the need to strengthen digital da'wah capacities that not only follow media trends but also preserve the authenticity of Islamic messages. In this regard, Arabic can serve as a key to maintaining the depth of meaning and spiritual values of Islam while also posing its own challenges in adapting to social media characteristics. Therefore, this study seeks to examine how the use of Arabic can be optimized in delivering da'wah through social media in an effective, engaging, and Islamically rooted manner. By combining linguistic and digital communication approaches, this research aims to contribute scholarly insights to the development of contemporary da'wah models. Its primary focus is on strategies for using Arabic, audience responses, and the relevance of da'wah messages in the digital era. This study is also expected to provide a foundation for training and developing digital preachers capable of conveying Islamic teachings authentically while remaining responsive to contemporary developments.

Research Method

This study employs a library research method with a descriptive qualitative approach. The aim is to collect data and references from various relevant literature sources, such as books, journals, scholarly articles, and other documents. The data sources include excerpts from academic works that support the theoretical framework and the development of new ideas related to the research topic. The data collection process is carried out systematically through stages of information organization, data processing, and drawing conclusions. Data analysis involves three main steps: data reduction, structured data presentation, and conclusion drawing. This approach not only serves to gather information but also helps formulate comprehensive solutions to the research issues.

Result And Discussion

A. The Development of Arabic Language Use in the Digital Context

According to the Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), language is defined as an arrangement of words commonly used by humans to interact within society. Terminologically, language can be understood as speech or utterance used in communication, both verbal and non-verbal. Around the world, there are many languages; UNESCO records 7,117 languages spread across the globe. Among these, several languages are recognized as international languages. One of them is Arabic, spoken by 274 million people. Arabic is one of the international languages used by communities to communicate with one another (Burhanuddin, Ahmad Ridho, 2023).

Arabic is a language with a rich historical legacy and a significant role in the culture, religion, and knowledge of the Arab and Islamic world. It has distinct phonological, morphological, and syntactic features that differentiate it from other languages. Originating from the Semitic language family, its roots trace back to the civilizations of Babylonia and Assyria long before the advent of Islam. Semitic languages reflect a history and culture stretching from Akkadian in Babylonia to Aramaic in the time of Prophet Isa, and Hebrew in Israel. Despite this diversity, Arabic stands out as the most widely used and central language in its region of origin.

The development of Arabic is integrally tied to the evolution of Islam and the cultural progress predating the Islamic era. Before Islam, Arabic served as a means of communication among the tribes of the Arabian Peninsula. Pre-Islamic poetry (Jahiliyyah) was one of its most esteemed literary forms, showcasing the linguistic richness and cultural depth of the Arabs of that period (Ridwan, 2023).

The arrival of Islam marked a fundamental shift in the use of Arabic. The Qur'an, as the sacred text of the Muslim community, was revealed in Arabic, establishing the

foundation for its development in both written and oral forms. The use of Arabic then spread widely through da'wah efforts and the dissemination of Islam. The Arabic Language notes that Arabic is the native or daily language of more than 274 million people, and although it is often claimed to be among the oldest languages, it is difficult to determine precisely whether it is the oldest or youngest among world languages. To date, there is no definitive research pinpointing when the learning of Arabic began and developed in Indonesia. It is generally assumed that Arabic became known in Indonesian society alongside the spread and acceptance of Islam by much of the population.

If Islam spread to our region in the 13th century, then Arabic education has likely persisted for over seven centuries. Indonesians' encounter with Arabic parallels their encounter with Islam itself. As a result, Arabic in Indonesia is much "older" than other foreign languages such as Dutch, English, Portuguese, Mandarin, and Japanese. The development of Arabic in Indonesia's digital context has followed an interesting trajectory. Initially, Arabic was used primarily in print media such as books, Islamic magazines, and pesantren newspapers. However, with the advent of the internet in the late 1990s and the increasing public access to online media, Arabic began to appear in the form of Islamic websites, e-books, and online discussion forums.

Digital da'wah content has also diversified from Qur'anic verses and hadith quotations to popular articles and audio or video lectures. This phenomenon signifies that Arabic is no longer exclusive to classical religious texts but has become part of Muslims' digital literacy. On social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter, for example, many preachers and Islamic scholars have begun to embed Arabic texts in their posts, both to assert scholarly authority and to enhance the religious tone.

This transition has also been driven by the public's demand for easily accessible Islamic content. On platforms such as YouTube and Instagram, Arabic has become an essential element in visually appealing da'wah, including digital calligraphy, short videos featuring Qur'anic verses, and brief lectures with Arabic text reinforcing the message. Some da'wah organizations even have dedicated Arabic-language content divisions responsible for producing educational and inspirational materials.

This process demonstrates that Arabic has not merely survived but has evolved into new formats suited to the characteristics of digital media. This evolution also requires preachers to have digital competence to deliver religious messages in engaging formats without losing the essence of Islamic teachings.

Arabic-language da'wah content on YouTube comes in various forms and approaches tailored to the target audience's characteristics. Common content types include Qur'anic exegesis (tafsir), hadith commentary (syarah), spiritual lectures,

Qur'anic recitation (tilawah), scholarly discussion podcasts, and interactive Q&A sessions addressing contemporary religious issues. Each content type has its own delivery style but consistently features Arabic as a central element in communicating Islamic messages (Alhaq, 2025).

With Arabic's entry into the digital realm, there has been a paradigm shift from one-way communication to interactive engagement. Users are not only recipients of messages but also actively share, comment on, and even remix Arabic-language da'wah content. This dynamic has created a kind of "virtual community" that consistently interacts through religious symbols in Arabic. For example, Instagram users create da'wah reels featuring Qur'anic recitations and translations, directly introducing Arabic vocabulary to their followers. Such communities serve as cultural and social agents for spreading Arabic in the online space.

However, not all users have a deep understanding of Arabic, creating risks of misinterpretation or manipulation of meanings in the content they share. Therefore, the role of educational institutions and religious authorities remains crucial in providing education and clarification on the use of Arabic in the context of digital da'wah. These efforts are also a form of responsibility for preserving the authenticity of Islamic teachings conveyed through Arabic as the language of revelation.

Thus, synergy between technology, language competence, and religious understanding is necessary to ensure that da'wah dissemination remains authentic and free from distortion. In conclusion, the historical development of Arabic in the digital world shows a dynamic pattern of adaptation from print media to digital platforms, from long texts to interactive visualizations. Arabic has become an integral part of the transformation of Islamic da'wah in the modern era. This change offers new opportunities as well as challenges in maintaining the quality and accuracy of da'wah messages. Therefore, it is essential for preachers and digital da'wah practitioners to continuously strengthen their linguistic competence and technological literacy as essential assets in responding to the changing times.

B. Challenges of Da'wah in the Social Media Era

Linguistically, da'wah derives from the Arabic root da'a, which means to call, invite, urge, appeal, or offer. In the Qur'an, da'wah has meanings similar to tabligh (conveying), nasihah (advice), tarbiyah (education), tabshir (giving good news), and tandhir (warning). However, when examined more deeply, these terms have distinct meanings and uses. Abdul Wahid, in his book *Gagasan Dakwah*, explains that etymologically da'wah comes from the Arabic da'a yad'u da'watan, which shares meaning with an-nida', signifying to call, invite, or summon (Fajrussalam, Farhatunnisa, Realistiya, & Rosyani, 2023).

To achieve the goals of Islamic da'wah, a strategic concept is required. Da'wah strategy involves planning activities to determine the methods, messages, and media to be used in delivering the da'wah (Ghazali, 2017). Today, technology has become an inseparable part of our lives. In the modern context, this refers to information and communication technology, including software, hardware, networks, and the internet. The development and application of this technology also occur in the education sector (Sahkholid Nasution, 2012).

As stated in Government Regulation No. 17 of 2010, Articles 48 and 59, there is an emphasis and recommendation to develop education information systems based on information technology (Priantiwi & Abdurrahman, 2023). Nevertheless, the use of Arabic in digital da'wah must consider the diversity of public understanding. For this reason, the use of subtitles or explanations in Indonesian remains necessary to avoid making content exclusive to certain groups. Combining two languages has proven more effective in broadening the reach of da'wah on social media.

In the social media era, da'wah has undergone a significant shift in form and delivery. Whereas it was once dominated by sermons in mosques, religious gatherings, or traditional pulpits, da'wah now needs to reach the ummah through digital platforms like YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and others. This shift requires preachers not only to master religious knowledge but also to develop digital communication skills and content packaging that can attract the attention of millennials and Gen Z.

Da'wah on social media cannot rely solely on rhetoric but must be designed to be visually appealing and concise, as audiences prefer quick and brief content. One of the biggest challenges in this era is the proliferation of unverified religious information. The phenomenon of "instant ustadz" or public figures delivering religious messages without strong scholarly backgrounds has become a concern (Fadlan, 2023).

Religious information spread on social media often lacks a solid scientific basis and is frequently presented out of context. This can mislead the public, reinforce stereotypes, or even foster radical ideologies. Therefore, there is a need for caution in selecting sources of da'wah, and preachers face a heavier task as they must compete with viral content that is not necessarily correct from a shari'ah or scholarly perspective.

In addition, the social media algorithm, which prioritizes popularity and engagement, poses its own challenge. Da'wah content must compete with entertainment, gossip, and other viral material (Nurfitria & Arzam, 2022). Many preachers are ultimately encouraged to adapt their content to follow trends or even use sensational approaches to reach a wider audience. Unfortunately, this risks

diluting the essence of da'wah, which should convey truth and noble values wisely and deeply.

Da'wah that overly chases likes and views can lose its spiritual soul and the quality of the message being delivered. Moreover, social media interactions are often one-directional and superficial. Da'wah is not just about conveying information but also about guiding, advising, and nurturing the ummah personally. In the digital context, spiritual mentoring becomes highly limited. Preachers struggle to fully understand their audience's character, and the ummah does not always have space to ask questions or engage in meaningful discussion. As a result, da'wah messages often remain at the surface level without leading to significant changes in behavior or spirituality.

Another important challenge is the emergence of polarization and conflict among religious groups on social media. The digital space often becomes an arena for heated debates even personal attacks against preachers with differing views. Some preachers face cyberbullying, cancel culture, or digital slander simply for expressing moderate or non-mainstream opinions. In this situation, da'i must possess mental resilience, digital skills, and a commitment to maintaining da'wah that is polite, calming, and unifying. Social media should serve as a platform for da'wah that builds, not destroys, ukhuwah islamiyah (Islamic brotherhood).

The main challenge in digital da'wah is the flood of information that forces Islamic messages to compete with all kinds of other content. In this ecosystem, da'wah content can be drowned out if it is not packaged attractively. Moreover, social media algorithms tend to prioritize viral over educational content, making da'wah messages less visible.

As a result, preachers are required to be more creative in crafting messages that remain relevant and appealing to users. Another aspect is the potential for spreading da'wah content that is misleading or divorced from scholarly context. Many da'wah messages are oversimplified for social media, leading to public misunderstanding. In fact, individuals without scholarly backgrounds often participate in delivering da'wah on social media, risking bias or distortion of meaning (Nasucha et al., 2021).

Therefore, validating da'wah content is essential to maintain the authenticity of Islamic teachings. Audience responses also present their own challenges. Negative comments, hate speech, and slander frequently appear in interaction sections. Preachers need to have strong mental resilience and wisdom in responding to unconstructive criticism. Moreover, the open nature of social media interactions can spark conflicts among groups if not handled carefully.

This highlights the need for strong digital da'wah ethics, including the ability to use social media in a moderate and balanced way. Finally, using social media for

da'wah can create dependency on digital visibility. Some preachers may focus more on follower or view counts than on the substance of the message. This risks turning da'wah into mere entertainment content. Therefore, it is important to constantly remember the core purpose of da'wah as a means of inviting to goodness and conveying the truth of religion.

CONCLUSION

The use of Arabic in digital da'wah by preachers on social media demonstrates a transformation in the methods of conveying Islamic messages that is adaptive to contemporary developments. The contextual, narrative, and visual use of Arabic terms enriches the meaning of da'wah content and enhances its sense of religiosity. Preachers employ translation strategies, innovative calligraphy, nasyid, and Arabic quotations to effectively expand the reach of da'wah. When used appropriately, Arabic has been shown to increase audience engagement and add authority to the Islamic message.

Nevertheless, challenges remain in ensuring public understanding of Arabic terms, which must be anticipated through simple and accessible explanations. The combination of aesthetics, clear messaging, and adaptation to digital platforms makes da'wah in the social media era more dynamic, inclusive, and creative. Therefore, the success of digital da'wah is largely determined by the preacher's ability to manage the use of Arabic in a functional, communicative, and educational manner.

In the digital era, Arabic is not only a symbol of Islamic identity but also a strategic medium for bridging the public's understanding of authentic Islamic sources. However, its use on social media also faces specific challenges, such as the general public's limited understanding, the potential for misinterpretation, and the need for adaptive and communicative delivery.

Therefore, preachers and Muslim content creators need to present Arabic in a contextualized manner, accompanied by translations and explanations that are easy for general audiences to understand. This approach not only improves the linguistic and scholarly quality of da'wah but also broadens its reach to a more diverse audience. Thus, Arabic remains relevant and strategic in the era of digital da'wah, provided it is used wisely, with clear targeting, and in a spirit of moderate and inclusive tabligh.

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