

Social Media Da'wah and Language Use: A Comparative Study of Indonesian Islamic Figures

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Abstract:

This research examines the use of language in the context of Islamic da'wah delivered by Indonesian Islamic figures through social media such as YouTube and TikTok. This research aims to (1) identify the types of speech acts used by each figure, (2) analyze the figurative language style used, and explore the situational influence on the applied da'wah communication strategy. This research used a descriptive qualitative method with a sociopragmatic approach, and data were obtained from 16 selected videos featuring four Islamic figures: Ahmad Anwar Zahid, Felix Siau, Husein Ja'far Al Hadar (Habib Ja'far), and Husain Basyaiban (Kadam Sidik). The study results show that the most frequently used speech acts are directive, assertive, and expressive, which focus on commands or invitations, conveying facts, and emotional expressions. Figurative language styles such as similes, metaphors, personifications, and hyperboles are also often used to strengthen the rhetorical power of da'wah. This research concludes that the effectiveness of da'wah in digital media depends on linguistic strategies that are adjusted to the platform, context, and characteristics of the audience. These findings contribute to further understanding of religious communication and support the development of contextual da'wah strategies in the digital era.

Keywords: sociopragmatic; sociolinguistic; social media; islamic figure; da'wah

INTRODUCTION

In this digital development era, technology has made our life easier. Technology has always been improving. This phenomenon has an impact on many sectors of human life, such as in the spread of Islamic religious understanding. In Indonesia, traditionally the spreading of Islamic understanding such as da'wah, was held offline by coming to a certain place. But in this era of social media, many Islamic public figures share their knowledge and understanding by only using their phone and share it on social media platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and others, so that many people can access it easily through their screens. But, sometimes their language has been influenced by social media and trends. One to another figures have their own language styles and speech acts regarding their targeted audience. The writers decided to choose four Islamic figures, such

as Ahmad Anwar Zahid, Felix Siauw, Husein Ja'far Al Hadar (Habib Ja'far), and Husain Basyaiban (Kadam Sidik), to be analyzed. In this context, the effectiveness of Da'wah not only comes from the content of the message, but also from how to deliver it.

Many researchers have already discussed about how social media can affect Islamic figures in their da'wah spreading Islamic religious understanding. Researchers, such as (Estrada & Swasono, 2022; Romdlon et al., 2024; Widayanti & Kustinah, 2019) discuss pragmatic analysis, especially the speech acts being used in many aspects, such as movies and video titles. Other researchers such as (Fitria, 2022; Harun et al., 2020; Harya, 2016) had discussed social media language style, such as figurative languages in millennials, novels, and poetry. But, there is still a gap in these researches, they do not discuss the language style used by Islamic figures in their da'wah of spreading Islamic religion on social media. (Ali & Budyastomo, 2021; Sukayat, 2023) also discuss how social media improves Indonesia Da'wah. However, this scope only focuses on the basis of social media effect. (Wardani & Muntazori, 2019) also discuss about islamic memes as media da'wah, but there is no discussion about the figures' utterances. (Briandana et al., 2020; Warsito & Faruq, 2023) also discuss about speech act in da'wah communication. From some research before, there is still limited scope in discussing sociopragmatic, such as speech acts and language styles used by Islamic figures in their da'wah for spreading Islamic understanding.

This gap has become our research basis. This research focuses on analyzing the use of language by four main Islamic figures in social media by analyzing types of Yule's speech acts such as assertive, commissive, declarative, directive, and expressive (Yule, 1996) also (Keraf, 1991) language styles, such as simile, metaphor, personification and hyperbole that they use to deliver their da'wah. This research aims to identify language used by every figure and analyze how situations can affect their language style change to find out their da'wah strategies for attracting their target audience.

This research is important for deeper understanding about the dynamics of religious communication, especially in Islamic da'wah in this social media era. Furthermore, the result of this research is expected to contribute in adding more discussion of sociopragmatic, especially in the context of language used by Islamic figures in Indonesia on social media. The writers want this research to become a significant influence on all

Indonesian Islamic figures, so that they can use the correct language style based on the situation and interesting to their target audiences.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The development of digital technology today has changed the way of delivering islamic da'wah, which was initially done face-to-face or directly, changing to online, especially through social media such as Tiktok and YouTube. Along with this change, various studies have examined how language is used strategically in conveying religious messages through digital media. In this section, writers will discuss several previous studies related to the use of speech acts and language styles in da'wah content, which studies are an important basis for this study.

Speech Act

Estrada & Swasono (2022), Romdlon et al. (2024), and Widayanti & Kustinah (2019) all studied types of speech acts in different media contexts. Romdlon et al. (2024) analyzed the titles of Islamic da'wah videos from two YouTube channels, namely Cinta Quran TV and Islam Populer, and found that the most dominant types of speech acts were assertive, directive, and expressive, while commissive and declarative were not found. Meanwhile, Estrada & Swasono (2022) studied the dialogue of the main characters in the film *The Man from Toronto* using Searle's theory, and from 418 speech data, the order of speech act dominance was found as follows: representative, expressive, directive, commissive, and declarative. Meanwhile, Widayanti & Kustinah (2019) studied animated children's films produced by Disney and identified four main types of speech acts, namely representative, expressive, commissive, and directive, which describe various expressions and communication functions in character conversations. Warsito & Faruq (2023) had discussed speech acts in islamic imperatives in hadith *Hajj Al-Wada'*. These four studies show that aspects of speech acts play an important role in forming messages and communication goals, both in the context of da'wah, adult films, children's shows and hadist.

Language Style

Fitria (2022) Harun et al. (2020), and Harya (2016) all examined the use of figurative language in novels, focusing primarily on the types of figures of speech used and their frequency. Fitria (2022) analyzed Kahlil Gibran's novel *The Broken Wings* and found that

the most dominant figure of speech was simile (43.8%), followed by personification, metaphor, synecdoche, hyperbole, paradox, symbol, and proverb. In a local context, Harun et al. (2020) analyzed Arafat Nur's novel *Burung Terbang di Kelam Malam*, set in the Aceh conflict, and found ten types of figures of speech, with simile as the most prominent, followed by satire, hyperbole, metonymy, sarcasm, metaphor, irony, and litotes. Meanwhile, Harya (2016) in his analysis of Paulo Coelho's novel *The Alchemist*, also found that simile is the most widely used figure of speech (42.9%), followed by personification (38.6%), metaphor (17.1%), and hyperbole (1.4%). These three researchers concluded that figurative language, especially simile, play an important role in enriching narrative meaning, strengthening emotional expression, and helping readers imagine situations and characters in the story.

Media Dakwah

Ali and Budyastomo (2021), Sukayat, 2023; Wardani & Muntazori, 2019) all studied the role of digital media in Islamic da'wah activities in the modern era. Wardani and (Wardani & Muntazori, 2019) studied the use of Islamic memes as a da'wah medium for the millennial generation and found that messages were conveyed through a combination of text and visual illustrations, with figurative language styles such as metaphors, personifications, and hyperboles that strengthen the emotional and aesthetic dimensions. (Ali & Budyastomo, 2021) studied the influence of social media such as YouTube and Facebook in supporting the widespread and efficient dissemination of da'wah, but also highlighted challenges such as misuse by teenagers and negative social impacts. (Briandana et al., 2020) examined how the millennial generation in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei interpret da'wah communication through social media, especially YouTube. The results show that social media, especially YouTube, is considered a flexible, interactive, and easily accessible da'wah medium anytime and anywhere. Meanwhile, (Sukayat, 2023) emphasized the importance of effective communication and digital da'wah ethics, which include three main aspects: time of delivery, age of the audience, and content of the message. These four studies emphasize that digital media is a powerful means of da'wah, but it needs to be used strategically, ethically, and contextually.

METHOD

This research used a descriptive qualitative approach to analyze social events factually and accurately based on data obtained from the object under study. This approach was chosen because it was suitable for examining the meaning of utterances and communication styles of Islamic figures on social media, especially YouTube and TikTok. This method allowed writers to explore in depth the various linguistic aspects of these utterances (Ishtiaq, 2019).

The main data source came from videos of speeches or da'wah content published by popular Islamic figures, namely Ahmad Anwar Zahid, Felix Siauww, Husein Ja'far Al Hadar (Habib Ja'far), and Husain Basyaiban (Kadam Sidik). These figures were selected purposely by considering a number of criteria, such as popularity and existence on social media, number of followers, engagement with the younger generation, and communicative delivery style relevant to the current context. After the writers find the suitable data, writers identify their utterance using relevant references from theory of pragmatism.

In the first stage, the writers conducted early observations of a number of Islamic figures who were active on social media. The aim was to identify figures who were considered the most influential and often used as references in Islamic discussions. The type of data collected was qualitative data in the form of verbal utterances taken from videos of short to medium duration. The total data consisted of 16 videos, 9 from YouTube and 7 from TikTok. The videos were selectively chosen based on content relevance and quality of delivery. Here is the data that writers have collected.

Table 1. List of Videos

Figures	Anwar Zahid	Felix Siauww	Habib Ja'far	Husain Basyaiban
Tiktok	-	-	https://vt.tiktok.com/ZShUqo89j/	https://vt.tiktok.com/ZShVTTLJk/ https://vt.tiktok.com/ZShUo6JvU/ https://vt.tiktok.com/ZShAHGHXT/ https://vt.tiktok.com/ZShAxarNc/ https://vt.tiktok.com/ZShVMmGDM/ https://vt.tiktok.com/ZShYUHUoU/

Youtube	https://youtu.be/2AzqAXds5BU?si=arl89RES16RR0kTP	https://youtu.be/VAc2mLG2Ygw?si=ApOfdk011MaFxAr8	https://youtu.be/Gghiz_hL9vA?si=CMA7SYcnfzjxI6YC	https://youtu.be/r4DvLDNYNHM?si=vvLtN71MZQ9Oho6K
	https://youtu.be/4pBCNw3E2xg?si=s7-kV0zlhWS991Z6	https://youtu.be/9F4Ff3ADaBM?si=S71Ph2c0JH-Q1f00	https://youtu.be/qEf03-T2_4?si=e7jVOrrzmpD-9veE	
	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PpeHOHt1Oo		https://youtu.be/0pplSs6M0i4?si=XnEuiEJfAzBelBg-	

The data collection instrument used was an observation sheet designed to note speech acts, language styles, and strategies between Islamic figures to approach their audience. The data collection technique was performed using the non-participatory observation method, in which writers were not directly involved in communication but only observed the content of each video (Racman et al., 2024).

Data analysis was conducted using the technique of comparative analysis, which compared patterns of language use between characters and examined the appeal of the utterances used. This analysis focused on the linguistic elements of pragmatics and the social context that influenced the effectiveness of the da'wah message delivery. The writers also considered audience response as an indicator of the acceptability and reachability of each character's utterances.

RESULT

This research found that Islamic figures da'wah on social media using various forms of speech acts and language styles that are adjusted to the situation (platform used). Based on the observations results of a number of video contents from several figures on social media, it was found that they consciously or unconsciously apply various types of speech acts, such as assertive, directive, expressive, commissive, to declarative, with varying intensity and frequency. The use of these speech acts is often combined with a variety of language styles, including figurative styles such as similes, metaphors, personifications, and hyperboles which function to strengthen the rhetorical power of the message of preaching. In many cases, the language style used also shows the ability to adapt to the development of digital communication trends and the characteristics of the younger generation as one of the main targets of da'wah in the era of social media. As well as, with

the 4 figures writers have chosen, they use speech acts and language styles that vary according to the situation and context.

Table 2. Table Speech Act

Figures	Speech Act				
	Assertive	Commissive	Directive	Declarative	Expressive
Anwar Zahid	8	4	53	1	14
Felix Siauww	13	1	2	2	2
Habib Ja'far	8	2	9	1	6
Husain Basyaiban	19	1	9	1	7
TOTAL	48	8	73	5	29

Based on the table above, writers have collected the data from social media platforms, especially in TikTok and Youtube. Writers have identified five speech acts that are used by figures. The most used speech act by figures is directive with a total of 73 times, while the least used speech acts are commissive and declarative with total only 5 times. So, public figures are really likely to use command to persuade their audiences.

Table 3. Table Language Styles (Figurative Language)

Figures	Language Styles (Figurative Language)			
	Simile	Metaphor	Personification	Hyperbole
Anwar Zahid	2	1		2
Felix Siauww	5	1		1
Habib Ja'far	1	6	1	1
Husain Basyaiban	1	1	2	2
TOTAL	9	9	3	6

Based on the table above, writers have identified seven figurative languages that are used by figures. The most used figurative language by figures is simile and metaphor with a total of 9 times, while the least used speech acts is personification with total only 3 times. So, public figures really often use language terms to compare two things.

DISCUSSION

After all the data has been collected and classified into different types of speech acts and language styles, the writers found that the most language use is speech acts rather than figurative languages. This indicates that the Islamic figures above tend to use language

more as a means of performing communicative actions directly toward their audience. In other words, these figures are not only conveying information, but also performing various actions through language, such as stating opinions, giving commands or invitations, expressing feelings, making promises, and declaring changes in condition.

Speech Act

According to (Yule, 1996), a speech act is an action carried out by someone through speech or utterance. The speech act is divided into 5, namely:

Assertive

Speech act assertive is a type of speech act used by speakers to state something that is believed to be true. This utterance reflects the speaker's views or beliefs about a situation or fact. Assertive forms include statements of fact, claims, conclusions, and descriptions. According to (Yule, 1996), in this speech act, the speaker "makes words fit the world" as he believes.

Commissive

Speech act commissive is a type of speech act used by speakers to express commitment to an action in the future. Forms of commissive speech acts include promise, threat, refusal, and pledge. As explained by (Yule, 1996), this type of speech act shows the speaker's active involvement in planning or promising an action to be taken in the future.

Directive

Speech act directive is a type of speech act used by speakers to ask or direct the interlocutor to take an action. This speech act expresses the speaker's desire or will, and aims to influence the listener's behavior. Forms of directive include command, order, request, suggestion, and so on. As explained by (Yule, 1996), directive speech acts can be positive (for example, recommending doing something) or negative (for example, prohibiting or warning not to do something).

Declarative

Speech act declarative is a type of speech act that changes the state or social reality through the utterance itself. This speech act can only be carried out legally by speakers who have a special institutional role or authority, and must be uttered in a certain context

to be socially legitimate or appropriate. As explained by (Yule, 1996), a declaration is an act of speaking that directly creates a change in status, condition, or situation.

Expressive

Speech act expressive is a type of speech act used to express the feelings or psychological state of the speaker. This speech act is not intended to provide information or give orders, but rather to express what the speaker feels about a situation or event. According to (Yule, 1996), expressive includes expressions of pleasure, sadness, pain, like, dislike, joy, or disappointment.

Language Style

This research used the language style theory from Gorys Keraf in 1991. In his book, (Keraf, 1991) explains that figurative language is a language style that contains figurative meaning, not pointing directly to the real meaning, but using certain comparisons or symbols. Writers take 4 figurative language styles, there are simile, metaphor, personification, and hyperbole.

Simile

According to (Keraf, 1991), simile is a style of language that compares two different things explicitly by using conjunctions such as *seperti*, *bagai*, *laksana*, *umpama*, and so on.

This comparison is intended to explain or emphasize a situation by comparing it to something else that has similarities.

Metaphor

(Keraf, 1991) states that metaphor is a style of language that compares two different things directly, without using conjunctions. In a metaphor, an object or idea is replaced by another object or idea that has similar properties or characteristics.

Personification

According to (Keraf, 1991), personification is a style of language that attaches human characteristics to inanimate objects, animals, or abstract things, so that it seems as if the object is alive or has feelings like humans.

Hyperbole

(Keraf, 1991) explains that hyperbole is a style of language that contains statements that are exaggerated from reality with the aim of giving a stronger, more dramatic, or emotional impression.

Below is a more detailed explanation of each figure:

Ahmad Anwar Zahid

Speech Act

Anwar Zahid often uses directive speech acts as his way of communicating with the audience. This directive speech act is used to encourage behavioral changes and shape the religious awareness of the community. The dominant use of directives reflects a persuasive communicative strategy, where Anwar Zahid actively directs the audience to religious actions that are considered important. Evidences of the utterances:

“ayo sekarang man ana”

“ayo tirokno al-naasu niyaam, idzaa maatuu intabahuu...”

The utterances above explains that Anwar Zahid uses the word ‘ayo’ to give orders to his audience using a mixture of Javanese and Arabic. Javanese is also used in his da’wah method as his characteristic.

Language Style

Ahmad Anwar Zahid often uses simile and hyperbole in his da’wah. This simile refers to something that compares two different objects directly. While hyperbole is a figure of speech that exaggerates something. The use of this figure of speech adds a strong impression of distinctiveness to his da’wah. Evidences of the utterances:

“la kancane plungkar plungker koyok uler keket ngunu o”
“suruh mangap kiro-kiro kepelane tanganmu kelebu cangkemmu”

The utterances above explain that Anwar Zahid uses the figurative language to express a comparison of an audience acting the same as a snake. In addition, the use of a ‘kepalan tangan masuk mulut’ is also considered excessive. This figure of speech adds a strong distinctiveness to Anwar Zahid in every da’wah.

Felix Siauw

Speech Act

Felix Siauw often uses assertive speech acts in his da’wah. This assertive speech act is used to state the truth and facts to emphasize something. The dominant use of assertives reflects a firm and knowledge-rich delivery strategy. Evidence of the utterances:

“Allah tidak pernah mengajarkan bahwa api itu lebih bagus daripada tanah, Allah tidak pernah mengajarkan tanah itu lebih rendah daripada api”

The utterance above explains that Felix Siauw uses wise sentences according to the knowledge he has to provide an explanation to his audience. The language used by Felix Siauw is very rich in knowledge.

Language Style

Felix Siauw often uses simile language style in his da’wah. This simile language style refers to something that compares two different objects directly. The use of this language style adds a beautiful linguistic impression to his da’wah. Evidence of the utterances:

“Al-Qur’an itu kayak ladang yang hasilnya berpengaruh pada akhirat”

The utterances above explain that Felix Siauw uses the figurative language to express the comparison of the Qur'an as our field in the world that affects our afterlife. This style of language adds a beautiful and interesting impression to the audience who hears it.

Husein Ja'far Al Hadar (Habib Ja'far)

Speech Act

Husein Ja'far Al Hadar (Habib Ja'far) often uses directive speech acts as his way of communicating with the audience. This directive speech act is used to encourage behavioral change and shape the religious awareness of the community. The dominant use of directives reflects a persuasive communicative strategy, where Habib Ja'far often uses prohibitive words to add humor to his preaching. Evidence of the utterance:

“jangan suruh gua nyanyi”

The utterance above explains that Habib Ja’far uses the word ‘jangan’ to prohibit his audience from telling him to do something. Slang and humor are his characteristics to reach a wide audience.

Language Style

Habib Ja’far often uses metaphorical language style in his da’wah. This metaphorical language style refers to something that compares two different objects indirectly. The use of this language style adds a strong linguistic impression to his da’wah. Evidence of the utterances:

“cinta dalam islam itu selalu segitiga tahu, segitiga yang diatas itu Allah, yang di kiri suami, yang di kiri istri”

The above Utterances explain that Habib Ja’far uses the figurative word to express the concept of love in Islam. The use of metaphor here compares love with the concept in Islam.

Husain Basyaiban (Kadam Sidik)

Speech Act:

Husain Basyaiban more often uses assertive speech acts in his da’wah. This assertive speech act is used to state the truth and facts to emphasize something. The dominant use of assertives reflects a firm delivery strategy. Evidences of the utterances:

“setiap individu ini selain para nabi dan rasul pasti memiliki dark side”
“saya sejarahang itu mau diajak sholat berjamaah di airport, station..”

The above Utterance explains that Husain Basyaiban uses very firm sentences according to the knowledge he has to provide an explanation to his audience. He often inserts personal experiences that are accurate according to him. The language used by Husain also often uses a mixture of languages, for example Indonesian to English.

Language Style

Husain Basyaiban more often uses personification and hyperbole language styles in his da’wah. This personification language style uses human analogies to an object, while

hyperbole is an exaggerated language style. The use of this language style adds a strong impression to his da'wah. Evidences of the utterances:

“ekspektasi yang lahir dari kebergantungan”

“robek bos. Dan setiap robekan itu keluar darah yang begitu seram luar biasa”

The above Utterances explain that Husain Basyaiban uses the figurative language to express human behavior, namely giving birth to existing expectations. The use of hyperbole is also there to exaggerate something in order to make his audience engage with his da'wah.

Through the explanation and analysis above, it can be concluded that the four Islamic figures use different speech acts according to their respective characters and strategies. Anwar Zahid has similarities in his speech act with Habib Ja'far, namely that they both use directives more often, while Felix Siauw has similarities with Husain, namely that he often uses assertives. Meanwhile, in language style, Anwar Zahid has similarities with Felix Siauw, they both use similes more often, Anwar Zahid also often uses hyperbole like Husain, while Habib Jafar uses metaphors more often, and only Husain often uses personification in his da'wah.

CONCLUSION

Islamic Da'wah has always been changing in terms of the medium. While social media has a huge impact in society, currently, da'wah has also penetrated that real. Based on the results of research on four popular da'wah figures, namely Ahmad Anwar Zahid, Felix Siauw, Husein Ja'far Al Hadar (Habib Ja'far), and Husain Basyaiban (Kadam Sidik), it can be concluded that the form of language used in da'wah is greatly influenced by the context of the situation, the characteristics of the audience, and the communication strategies of each figure.

First, in terms of the type of speech act, this study found that directive speech acts were the most dominant, used 73 times. This shows that da'wah tend to use language that is inviting, commanding, and recommending as the main strategy to influence audience behavior. In addition to directives, assertive and expressive speech acts are also widely used to convey religious statements, knowledge, and emotions.

Second, in terms of figurative language style, it was found that similes and metaphors were the most frequently used types, each 9 times. This style of language is used to

strengthen rhetorical power and provide visual or emotional effects in delivering da'wah, although the intensity of its use is still lower compared to speech acts.

Third, in terms of situational influence on communication strategies, each figure shows a different approach according to the social context and platform used. Anwar Zahid uses code mixing (Javanese, Arabic, and Indonesian) as his local characteristic. Felix Siauw combines Indonesian, Arabic, and English with an intellectual style. Habib Ja'far uses humor and slang, while Kadam Sidik uses a reflective style and often inserts personal experiences. These four figures adjust their da'wah strategies to the characteristics of the audience, which is dominated by the younger generation who prefer a relaxed and relaxed communication style.

Thus, it can be concluded that the effectiveness of da'wah on social media is highly dependent on the selection of types of speech acts and language styles that are appropriate to the situation and target audience. These figures who are able to adjust their communication strategies to the digital context are able to build better closeness with the audience and convey religious messages more effectively. For further research, the author recommends that a study be conducted on paralinguistic elements (such as intonation, facial expressions, and gestures) and analysis of audience engagement (through comments or interactive responses) as a complement to measuring the effectiveness of digital preaching.

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