Islamic Communication Strategy in Gus Idham's Da'wah: Interpreting the Values of the Quran as a Foundation for Persuasion

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ABSTRACT

Islamic communication in da'wah is a persuasive approach that prioritizes ethics, politeness, and wisdom in delivering messages. It fosters understanding and respect, making Islamic teachings more accessible. Gus Idham, a well-known preacher, effectively applies Islamic communication strategies by using clear, relatable language and interactive dialogue. His approach ensures that messages resonate with audiences while maintaining ethical and spiritual values. This study analyzes Islamic communication strategies in Gus Idham's Da'wah, focusing on Quranic values as the foundation for persuasion. Using critical discourse analysis of Da'wah from digital platforms, the research explores how language and rhetorical techniques enhance audience engagement. Findings show that Gus Idham's Da'wah align with Leech's (2014) politeness maxims, emphasizing virtue, respect, and persuasive communication. His approach fosters harmony and open dialogue, making da'wah more effective and widely accepted.

Keywords: *Islamic communication; Gus Idham; Quranic values; persuasion; politeness; Leech 2014.*

INTRODUCTION

Islamic communication in Da'wah plays a crucial role in the persuasive dissemination of Islamic ideals. The preacher requires a proficient technique to ensure the message is effectively understood by the audience. Gus Idham, a renowned preacher in Indonesia, is recognized for his courteous and compelling lecturing style. His Da'wah encompassed not only theological concepts but also employed Islamic communication tactics rooted in Quranic ideals. Research on Islamic communication in da'wah has been conducted by several scholars (Fakhrurozi, 2021; Nurhadi, 2022), emphasizing the significance of communication ethics in da'wah. One pertinent approach for analyzing Islamic communication is the theory of politeness and Leech's maxims (2014), which underscores the pragmatic dimensions of social interaction. This article aims to analyze the Islamic communication strategies employed by Gus Idham in his Da'wah, interpret the values of the Quran as a foundation for persuasion in his Da'wah, and assess the applicability of politeness theory in Islamic communication based on Gus Idham's Da'wah.

Literature Review

The study of Islamic communication has developed from various academic perspectives. Several studies have discussed effective da'wah communication strategies based on linguistic, pragmatic and persuasive communication approaches.

1. Politeness and Da'wah Theory

Leech (2014) in The Pragmatics of Politeness emphasizes that politeness plays an important role in maintaining social harmony and increasing the effectiveness of persuasion. In da'wah, this theory is relevant because it helps the preacher convey religious messages without causing conflict or discomfort for the audience. Brown & Levinson (1987) explained that every individual has a face that they want to maintain in communication. Preachers need to avoid face-threatening acts (FTA) by implementing positive politeness strategies such as showing respect for the audience, as well as negative politeness which respects the audience's freedom in receiving messages.

Furthermore, Searle (1979) emphasizes the role of speech acts in persuasion, highlighting how strategic language use influences audience reception. Speech acts, particularly directives and commissives, play a critical role in da'wah communication, enabling preachers to guide their audiences effectively.

2. Islamic Communication in Da'wah

Fakhrurozi (2021) stated that Islamic communication in da'wah must prioritize the principles of wisdom, good advice, and wise discussion, as explained in QS. An-Nahl (16:125). This principle emphasizes the importance of conveying da'wah with wisdom, a gentle approach, and dialogue methods that do not trigger conflict. Additionally, Asrori (2019) highlighted that successful da'wah communication integrates ethical values with contemporary rhetorical techniques to engage modern audiences.

Nurhadi (2022) highlights the importance of communication strategies that adapt to the audience's background so that the da'wah message can be conveyed effectively. Effendy (2003) further elaborates that effective communication relies on understanding cultural and social dynamics, making it imperative for preachers to tailor their messages accordingly. Rahmat (2005) supports this by emphasizing that understanding the psychological aspects of communication can strengthen the impact of da'wah by appealing to emotions and cognitive engagement.

A crucial component of Islamic communication is its ability to bridge traditional religious teachings with contemporary issues. Sutrisno (2020) notes that modern preachers must integrate multimedia and digital platforms to effectively reach younger audiences. This adaptation ensures that da'wah remains relevant and accessible in an increasingly digital society.

3. Critical Discourse Analysis in Da'wah

Van Dijk (2008) in Discourse and Power emphasizes that the language used in public discourse, including da'wah, not only functions as a means of conveying messages but also has a role in forming broader social meanings. Language in da'wah not only conveys religious teachings but also reproduces values, ideology, and power relations in society. This aligns with Sutrisno's (2020) perspective that religious discourse serves as both a spiritual and social tool, reinforcing cultural norms while guiding ethical behavior.

Additionally, Fairclough (1995) introduced the concept of critical discourse analysis (CDA) as a means of understanding how power and ideology operate in communication. In the context of da'wah, CDA allows us to see how preachers construct their messages in ways that align with audience expectations and sociocultural norms. By analyzing Gus Idham's da'wah through CDA, we can better understand how he balances religious authority with contemporary social discourse, ensuring that his messages are persuasive and inclusive.

Moreover, language choice in da'wah is not merely about religious instruction; it also reflects broader societal influences. According to Effendy (2003), religious communication is dynamic, shaped by historical, political, and social contexts. Preachers like Gus Idham must carefully select words and rhetorical strategies that resonate with diverse audience groups, from conservative to progressive listeners

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with critical discourse analysis methods. Data was obtained from transcripts of Gus Idham's Da'wah published on various digital platforms. The data analysis techniques used are:
1. Identify Islamic communication strategies in Da'wah.
2. Analyze the Quranic values used as a basis for persuasion.
3. Application of politeness theory and Leech's maxims (2014) in the Da'wah.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Islamic Communication Strategy in Gus Idham's Da'wah

Based on discourse analysis, Gus Idham's Da'wah presented several effective Islamic communication strategies, including:
• Use polite and empathetic language
• Utilize Humor to Convey a Message
• Contextualizing Islamic Teachings with Daily Life
• Using Quranic Verses as a Basis for Persuasion

2. Analysis of 5 Examples of Sentences and the Quranic Values Contained

The following are five examples of sentences taken from Gus Idham's (2024) da'wah, recorded on a YouTube channel, along with an analysis of the values of the Quran contained in them:

a. *'Islam itu rahmatan lil 'alamin, bukan untuk menakuti-nakuti, tapi untuk membawa kedamaian.'*
'Islam is rahmatan lil 'alamin, not to scare, but to bring peace.'

Analysis: This statement is in accordance with QS. Al-Anbiya (21:107) which states that Islam was revealed as a blessing for all nature:
"And We did not send you (Muhammad), but as a mercy for all the worlds."
This verse emphasizes that Islam exists to bring peace, love and prosperity, not to create fear or pressure. In da'wah communication, the approach used must be calming, persuasive, and avoid threats or coercion, so that the message can be well received by the audience.
According to Ibn Kathir (2003), Islam brings benefits to all creatures, both believers and non-believers. Therefore, preachers should present Islam with wisdom, gentleness and empathy, as emphasized in the QS. An-Nahl (16:125):
"Call (people) to the path of your Lord with wisdom and good teaching, and argue with them in a better way..."
With a gentle and non-judgmental approach, da'wah will be more effective in touching hearts, building understanding, and inviting people to goodness. This is also in accordance with Leech's theory of politeness (2014) which emphasizes the importance of communication that respects the audience. Thus, da'wah that prioritizes rahmatan lil 'alamin will be more influential in building harmony and spreading Islamic values universally.

b. *'Jangan mudah menghakimi orang lain, sebab Allah lebih tahu isi hati manusia.'*
'Don't judge other people easily, because Allah knows better what is in human hearts.'

Analysis: This statement is in line with QS. Al-Hujurat (49:12) which prohibits su'uzhan or bad prejudice:
"O you who believe, stay away from many prejudices, indeed some prejudices are sins..."
This verse emphasizes that bad prejudice and an easy judgmental attitude can give rise to misunderstandings and damage social relations. In Islamic communication, this principle is a guideline to always prioritize understanding, empathy and an open attitude, so that interactions run more harmoniously and da'wah messages can be well received.

According to Quraish Shihab (2000), humans can only judge from the outside, while Allah is the one who knows the contents of each individual's heart. Therefore, in preaching and communicating, it is best to avoid one-sided judgment and emphasize an approach full of wisdom and good advice, as explained in the QS. An-Nahl (16:125).

This approach is also in line with Leech's (2014) theory of politeness which emphasizes that communication that respects the audience will be more effective in building positive social relationships. By not easily judging and focusing more on understanding and kindness, da'wah will be more influential and accepted with an open heart.

c. *'Sedekah itu bukan soal jumlah, tapi soal keikhlasan hati kita kepada Allah.'*
'Alms is not about the amount, but about our sincerity towards Allah.'

Analysis: This statement is in accordance with QS. Al-Baqarah (2:267) which emphasizes the importance of giving alms with a clean heart and sincere intentions:
"O, you who believe, spend (in the way of Allah) some of the good results of your efforts..."
This verse shows that the value of alms is not measured by the amount, but by the sincerity and quality of the giver's intentions. Almsgiving done with a sincere heart will have greater blessings than giving done out of riya' or compulsion.

According to Al-Jassas (1994), Allah looks more at a person's sincerity and sincerity than the nominal value given. In Islamic communication, this concept can be applied in the way of conveying messages - where sincerity in speaking and interacting will be more easily accepted by the audience and create a strong emotional resonance.

Apart from that, this approach is also relevant to Leech's theory of politeness (2014) which emphasizes that sincere and empathetic communication will be more effective in building social ties and increasing the impact of the message conveyed. Therefore, in preaching and social interactions, sincerity is the main element that strengthens the relationship between humans and the values conveyed.

d. *'Mari kita bicara dengan lemah lembut, sebagaimana Nabi Musa berbicara kepada Fir'aun.'*
'Let us speak gently, as the Prophet Moses spoke to Pharaoh.'

Analysis: This statement is in line with QS. Taha (20:44) who emphasizes the importance of speaking gently, even to those who oppose the truth:
"So, speak to him (Pharaoh) with gentle words, hopefully he will remember or be afraid."
This verse shows that in communication, politeness and gentleness in speaking have the power to touch the hearts, even of stubborn people. If the Prophet Moses was commanded to speak softly to Fir'aun—a tyrannical ruler—then even more so must we apply this principle in everyday communication, both in preaching and social interactions.

According to Ibn Kathir (2003), speaking with gentleness can reduce resistance, open up opportunities for constructive dialogue, and avoid unnecessary conflict. In Islamic communication, this principle applies not only in interactions with fellow Muslims, but also with those who have different views or beliefs.

This is also in accordance with Leech's theory of politeness (2014) which emphasizes that effective communication requires strategies that respect the audience and avoid direct confrontation. By prioritizing gentleness in speaking, messages will be more easily received, create an atmosphere of harmonious dialogue, and strengthen the values of Islam as a religion that brings mercy to all of nature.

e. *'Kesabaran adalah kunci keberhasilan, karena Allah selalu bersama orang yang sabar'.*
  'Patience is the key to success, because Allah is always with those who are patient.'

Analysis: This statement is in line with QS. Al-Baqarah (2:153) which confirms that Allah is always with those who are patient:
  "O you who believe! Ask for help with patience and prayer. Indeed, Allah is with those who are patient."

This verse shows that patience is the key in facing various life challenges, including in preaching and conveying messages of goodness. Da'wah does not always get an instant or positive response; sometimes there is rejection, criticism, or even resistance. Therefore, a preacher must have patience in conveying the message of Islam, as exemplified by the prophets in dealing with their people.

According to Quraish Shihab (2000), patience in communication is not only about refraining from anger, but also about consistency in conveying messages in a good and polite way. In da'wah communication, patience is an important element so that the message can be well received by various levels of society, including those who may have different understandings or are still doubtful of Islamic teachings.

This is also in line with Leech's theory of politeness (2014) which emphasizes the importance of using communication strategies that are not pushy and respect the audience's position. With patience, da'wah can be carried out more persuasively, build open-heartedness, and create a more harmonious and effective dialogue atmosphere.

Implications

Implications for Islamic Da'wah

The findings of this research offer significant contributions to the practice of Islamic da'wah. The communication strategy employed by Gus Idham serves as a compelling model for contemporary preachers in delivering Islamic messages with persuasion, politeness, and effectiveness. His approach, rooted in Qur'anic values, illustrates how ethical and respectful communication can enhance the appeal of da'wah, particularly in a diverse and dynamic society. By emphasizing courtesy and contextual sensitivity, preachers can broaden their reach and foster a deeper connection with varied audiences, including those less familiar with Islamic teachings.

Implications for Society

Beyond the realm of da'wah, the study holds broader relevance for societal interaction. A deeper understanding and application of Islamic communication principles—especially those centered on politeness and empathy—can significantly contribute to social harmony. When individuals adopt these values in their daily communication, they are more likely to reduce interpersonal conflicts, promote tolerance, and nurture inclusive, respectful relationships. These principles can serve as a foundation for strengthening social cohesion in pluralistic societies, where constructive dialogue is essential.

Implications for Linguistics and Communication Studies

From an academic standpoint, this research contributes to the fields of linguistics and communication studies by expanding the application of politeness theory within a religious framework. The study not only demonstrates how Islamic values intersect with modern communication theories but also enhances the discourse on critical discourse analysis (CDA) by incorporating elements of religious ethics. It highlights how language, power, and ideology operate within religious communication, offering a unique lens through which scholars can analyze the interaction between belief systems and communicative practices.

Implications for Islamic Education

Lastly, this study provides valuable insights for the development of Islamic education. Its findings can be integrated into the curriculum of Islamic educational institutions, particularly in courses related to Islamic communication and da'wah. By incorporating effective and ethical communication strategies into formal education, institutions can better prepare future preachers and educators to engage with their audiences thoughtfully and respectfully. Such integration supports the cultivation of communicators who are not only knowledgeable but also sensitive to the ethical dimensions of their messaging.

CONCLUSION

This research shows that the Islamic communication strategy in Gus Idham's Da'wah is based on Quranic values which prioritize politeness, wisdom and empathy. His Da'wah reflected a communication approach that not only focuses on the content of the message, but also on the way it is delivered so that it is more easily accepted by audiences with various backgrounds. Leech's (2014) use of politeness theory and maxims also strengthens the effectiveness of his Da'wah in conveying persuasive preaching messages. By applying the maxims of wisdom, generosity and sympathy, Gus Idham succeeded in creating communication that was more inclusive and less patronizing. Apart from that, this approach also has a wider impact in building dialogue between religious leaders and society, creating a more harmonious environment in the spread of Islamic values. This communication strategy can be a

reference for other preachers in conveying Islamic teachings more effectively and efficiently in the current digital era.

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