

## The Da'i's Strategy in Choosing the Right Words for Dakwah

Dinda Aulia <sup>1</sup>, Mira Shaila Ardana <sup>2</sup>, Putri Rahmasari B. Harahap <sup>3</sup>, Fitriani Ritonga <sup>4</sup>, Nasrillah <sup>5</sup>

<sup>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</sup> Faculty of Da'wah and Communication, Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

\*Corresponding Author: [dindasofiyah3@gmail.com](mailto:dindasofiyah3@gmail.com)

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### ABSTRACT

*Da'wah is synonymous with the activity of inviting and seducing people, so in carrying out da'wah activities or inviting someone to a path that is approved by Allah, a preacher should choose the right words according to the situation and conditions of his mad'u. The importance of choosing the right words in pearching, such as words that are kind, gentle, and not offensive will help the preaching process to run well and avoid misunderstandings, confusion, offending feelings and so on so that the message conveyed does not reach the mad'u. The research method used in writing this article is library research by collecting several reading results obtained through literature, books, notes or reports of previous research results. The research carried out includes quantitative causality research.*

**Keywords:** *Qaulan, Words to Choose, Da'wah.*



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The definition of dakwah (Islamic preaching) etymologically originates from the Arabic word "Da'a – Yad'u – Da'watan", which is a verbal noun (ism masdar) meaning "an invitation to Islam." This term appears five times in the Qur'an. According to Sheikh Ali Mahfudz (1952:17), dakwah is defined as calling people towards goodness and the guidance of Allah (S.W.T), urging them to noble conduct and preventing them from evil deeds so that they may attain happiness and success in this world and the Hereafter.

There are many definitions of dakwah proposed by scholars, which in general are relevant and nearly similar in meaning. Thus, dakwah can be concluded as an activity that involves the da'i (communicator) and the mad'u (audience), in which the da'i invites, encourages, and persuades the mad'u to do good and avoid

wrongdoing. To carry out this activity, a da'i must be well-prepared, especially in choosing the right words when delivering a message to the mad'u, taking into account the situation and context. Failure to select appropriate words may lead to controversy, conflict, and misunderstanding between the da'i and the mad'u, such as confusion in interpreting the message or the audience feeling offended by harsh or satirical expressions. Therefore, it is crucial for a da'i to prepare an effective strategy in preaching, one of which is selecting suitable words as instructed in the Qur'an in several specific verses.

## **2. RESEARCH METHOD**

In this journal article research, the author employs a library research method, which refers to a series of activities related to the collection of library-based data (2011:31). According to M. Nazir, library research is a data collection technique conducted by examining, categorizing, and analyzing data obtained from books, literature, notes, or previous reports relevant to the subject being studied.

This technique involves several steps that guide the researcher toward accurate data through review, combination, and the author's analytical results. Therefore, this library research technique includes several general processes such as systematically identifying theories, locating data through library searches, and analyzing documents relevant to the research information being addressed (2003:27).

The steps undertaken by the author in collecting data related to this study are as follows:

- 1) Collecting various reading materials relevant to the topic of the article, including books, literature, and previous reports;
- 2) Carefully reading the content of the collected materials. In this process, the author must possess the capability to thoroughly examine the sources in order to generate new ideas and insights related to the research topic;
- 3) Creating a writing outline by noting important points from the reading materials;
- 4) Finally, processing all notes from the analysis to formulate a discussion and conclusion, which will then be presented in a research report (2008:03).

## **3. RESULT AND ANALYSIS**

The following are several examples of the appropriate choice of words for a da'i (preacher) in conveying the message of dakwah:

### **1) Qaulan Baligh**

Qaulan Baligh comes from the word “Balagh”, meaning to reach the intended target, eloquent, clear, influential, and leaving an impression on the soul (Najhan & Y. Nursuherman, 2022). Qaulan Baligh is mentioned in Surah An-Nisa verse 63, which means: “Those are the ones of whom Allah knows what is in their hearts, so turn away from them but admonish them and speak to them a far-reaching word.” In this verse, Qaulan Baligh is interpreted as speech that is eloquent, clear, concise, contextually appropriate, reaches the audience, and affects their hearts (Darlis, 2015).

In preaching, a da’i must be able to adjust tone, language, and message so that they are understood and the message reaches deep into the hearts of the audience. Qaulan Baligh is used for hypocritical audiences whose words do not reflect their hearts, and in Tafsir al-Maraghi it is related to the Jewish context. The da’i therefore delivers advice along with warnings about divine punishment for wrongdoing, using clear and heartfelt language that touches the soul and arouses fear and awareness (Sumarjo, 2011).

Example:

When the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) passed away, Umar ibn Khattab (RA) refused to believe it and threatened those who claimed the Prophet had died. Abu Bakr (RA) then addressed the people: “Whoever worships Muhammad, Muhammad has died; but whoever worships Allah, Allah is Ever-Living and never dies.” Abu Bakr then recited Surah Ali-Imran verse 144.

Key principles of Qaulan Baligh:

- The da’i’s strong conviction and understanding of the truth.
- Strong, focused, and interconnected message content.
- Clear, beautiful, and compelling rhetoric without unnecessary elaboration.

## **2) Qaulan Karima**

Qaulan Karima means gentle, noble, and respectful speech. Ibn Kathir explains that this refers to speaking softly, politely, humbly, and honorably so that the listener feels respected (Abu al-Fida’ Ismail ibn Kathir, 1993). Qaulan Karima is found in Surah Al-Isra verse 23, commanding believers to speak kindly to their parents, especially when they reach old age. This style is used when addressing elders. A da’i must avoid appearing arrogant or patronizing.

Example:

Surah Maryam 41-47, where Prophet Ibrahim (AS) gently advises his father with repeated phrases of “O my father...” out of respect.

Key principles:

- Avoid speech that humiliates others.
- Speak politely and gently to elders.
- Never appear to belittle or act superior toward the audience.

## **3) Qaulan Salama**

Mentioned in Surah Al-Furqan verse 63: believers respond to ignorant people with peaceful words. When mocked or insulted, a da'i must not retaliate harshly but respond with words of peace and safety.

Example:

A story tells how the Prophet (SAW) patiently endured being slapped by a Bedouin while hauling water, yet responded with calmness and goodness—leading the man to embrace Islam.

Key principles:

- Avoid speech that harms peace or provokes conflict (race, religion, tribe).
- Do not insult or belittle others, and respect other faiths.
- Speak to calm the mind, soothe the heart, and bring peace.

#### **4) Qaulan Layyina**

Qaulan Layyina (gentle speech) appears in Surah Taha verse 44, where Allah commands Moses and Aaron to speak gently to Pharaoh.

According to al-Razi, this command had two reasons:

- a) Pharaoh once cared for Moses in childhood;
- b) Harshness toward a tyrant may provoke greater cruelty.

Conclusion:

When addressing harsh or powerful figures leaders, parents, or authority figures a gentle tone must still be used.

#### **5) Qaulan Sadida**

Meaning truthful, correct, straight, and honest speech. Mentioned in Surah An-Nisa verse 9 and explained through the case of Sa'ad ibn Abi Waqqas wishing to donate all his wealth, where the Prophet firmly advised moderation. Also found in Surah Al-Ahzab verse 70, commanding believers to speak truthfully. Ibn Kathir explains Qaulan Sadida as speech free from lies and deviation.

#### **6) Qaulan Ma'rufa**

Meaning proper, good, and noble speech. Found in multiple verses including Al-Baqarah 263: "A kind word and forgiveness are better than charity followed by injury." Islam teaches that charity must be accompanied by kind speech. Forgiving others is better than seeking forgiveness.

Examples in daily life:

- Sincere compliments;
- Giving advice politely rather than harshly;
- Encouraging someone in difficulty

Prophetic dakwah emphasized noble morals, psychological wisdom, and choosing moments for firmness or gentleness. Rasulullah's success came from strong arguments, precise wording, and noble character (Jalaluddin, 1998).

## 7) Ahsanu Qaulan

Ahsanu Qaulan means “the best of speech.” Mentioned in Surah Fussilat verse 33: “Who is better in speech than one who calls to Allah, does righteous deeds, and says: ‘Indeed, I am among the Muslims.’” Ibn Kathir states that the best person is one who calls to good and acts upon it. This concept emphasizes calling to righteousness using the best possible words (Shihab, 2009).

## 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion presented above, it can be concluded that choosing the appropriate words in preaching consists of several forms of “Qaulan.” Therefore, a da’i who wishes for the dakwah process to run effectively and reach its intended audience must be able to select the proper qaulan according to the situation and condition of the mad’u (audience). Failure of a da’i to select the appropriate qaulan based on the context and character of the mad’u may lead to serious consequences. For instance, if a da’i uses qaulan baligha (speech that deeply affects the heart) toward an older audience or a person in authority, it may offend and anger them, thereby causing the message delivered by the da’i to be rejected.

Another example is when a da’i uses qaulan layyina (gentle speech) when addressing hypocritical individuals or those who are difficult to guide toward goodness. In such a case, the mad’u may not feel any impact, may underestimate the message, and may even belittle the da’i, resulting in the dakwah effort failing and missing its target. Therefore, it is essential for a da’i to properly prepare themselves, particularly by equipping themselves with sufficient knowledge regarding communication strategies in dakwah. This includes choosing the right words in accordance with the audience so that the message can be accepted by people from various backgrounds.

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