

## Semiotic Analysis of Roland Barthes on Da'wah Content of *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus Through YouTube Channel

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** This research examines the semiotic construction of meaning in digital Islamic da'wah content through analysis of *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus's YouTube channel using Roland Barthes' three-level framework of denotation, connotation, and myth.

**Objective:** As female Islamic preachers increasingly utilize digital platforms to disseminate religious teachings, understanding how meaning is semiotically constructed becomes critical for comprehending contemporary religious communication.

**Method:** This qualitative study employs semiotic content analysis on eight selected videos representing diverse themes and high audience engagement.

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### Keywords:

roland barthes  
semiotics;  
digital islamic  
da'wah;  
youtube  
religious  
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**Findings and Implications:** At the denotative level, findings reveal consistent formal presentation through text-based visuals, voice-only audio, and structured discourse creating distinctive brand identity. Connotative analysis demonstrates how these elements activate cultural codes related to Islamic piety, feminine virtue, and religious authenticity, negotiating tensions between tradition and modernity through sophisticated symbolic communication. Mythological analysis uncovers how content naturalizes the "Pious Femininity Synthesis"—presenting conservative Islamic gender norms and contemporary women's aspirations as perfectly compatible—while constructing "maternal wisdom authority" through epistemological, genealogical, experiential, pedagogical, and moral positioning mechanisms.

**Conclusion:** Findings contribute theoretically by demonstrating Barthesian semiotics' effectiveness for religious discourse analysis, practically by revealing semiotic strategies for digital da'wah effectiveness, and critically by exposing ideological dimensions wherein female religious voice expansion coexists with naturalization of conservative gender hierarchies. The study provides comprehensive understanding of how digital Islamic content shapes contemporary religious identity and consciousness through layered meaning construction, offering insights valuable for preachers, religious institutions, media literacy educators, and scholars of digital religion.

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## INTRODUCTION

The digital transformation has fundamentally reshaped the landscape of religious communication, particularly in the realm of Islamic *da'wah* (preaching). Social media platforms, especially YouTube, have emerged as powerful channels for disseminating religious messages, creating unprecedented opportunities for Islamic preachers to reach diverse audiences across geographical boundaries ([Aydemir & Türkel, 2022](#)). Recent studies demonstrate that digital *da'wah* ideology on social media, particularly YouTube, has become a significant area of scholarly inquiry, with researchers examining how preaching actors utilize digital platforms to convey Islamic teachings. This transformation has democratized religious communication ([Valero-Garcés, 2022](#)), enabling preachers to engage with millions of viewers through carefully crafted content that combines traditional Islamic knowledge with contemporary digital media strategies.

YouTube has distinguished itself as a particularly effective platform for religious communication in Indonesia, with Islamic organizations adopting YouTube as a medium for religious propagation, offering content including Islamic lectures, Friday sermons, event documentation, and educational videos. The platform's accessibility and diverse content formats allow preachers to choose presentation styles based on audience interests and preferences. According to recent data, YouTube is accessed by 80.6% of internet users, making it one of the most frequently accessed platforms for digital content consumption RSIS International, thereby positioning it as a strategic medium for contemporary *da'wah* activities. This widespread accessibility has transformed how Islamic knowledge is transmitted, moving from traditional face-to-face *majelis ta'lim* ([Belyakova, 2022](#)) to virtual spaces that transcend temporal and spatial limitations.

Within this digital *da'wah* landscape, female Islamic preachers have emerged as influential voices, challenging traditional gender dynamics in religious discourse ([Basir et al., 2025](#); [Rosidi, 2021](#)). Among these voices, *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus stands out as a prominent figure whose YouTube channel has garnered significant attention from Indonesian audiences. Born in Indramayu, West Java, *Ustadzah* Halimah is a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad (Ba'Alawi lineage) who received her Islamic education at Daruz Zahro in Tarim, Hadramaut, Yemen. Her *da'wah* content is characterized by its gentle yet firm delivery style, addressing contemporary issues faced by Muslim women while maintaining theological authenticity. Despite never showing her face in her content, relying solely on her voice, she has successfully built a substantial following with hundreds of thousands of

subscribers and millions of views, demonstrating the power of content quality over visual presentation.

The proliferation of Islamic *da'wah* content on YouTube presents a complex communicative phenomenon that requires systematic analysis beyond surface-level observation. While numerous studies have examined the quantitative aspects of digital *da'wah* such as reach, engagement metrics, and demographic patterns there remains a significant gap in understanding the deeper layers of meaning embedded within *da'wah* content itself. Specifically, how do female Islamic preachers like *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus construct and convey religious messages through visual and verbal signs in their YouTube content? What symbolic meanings are encoded in their presentation styles, narrative structures, and thematic choices? Furthermore, how do these semiotic elements function to establish religious authority, build community, and transmit Islamic values in the digital space? ([Klymentova, 2022](#)).

These questions become particularly salient when considering the unique position of female preachers in Indonesian Islamic discourse. Traditional scholarship on *da'wah* has predominantly focused on male preachers, leaving female voices underexamined despite their growing influence ([Naicker & Mbengo, 2022](#)). Additionally, the application of semiotic analysis particularly Roland Barthes' framework to Islamic digital content remains underutilized in communication studies, despite its proven effectiveness in decoding cultural meanings in media texts. This research addresses these gaps by specifically examining how *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus's YouTube content operates as a system of signs that communicate not only explicit religious teachings but also implicit cultural values, gender perspectives, and contemporary Islamic identity formation ([Kim & Kim, 2022](#)).

The urgency of this research stems from several interconnected factors that demand scholarly attention. First, the digital era has created a networked society where information spreads quickly through digital technology, requiring the use of digital media as the main means of conveying Islamic messages ([Ispanovic, 2022](#); [Valero-Garcés, 2022](#)). As younger generations increasingly turn to digital platforms for religious knowledge, understanding how this knowledge is semiotically constructed becomes critical for assessing its impact on religious literacy and spiritual development. Second, the rise of female Islamic preachers represents a significant shift in Indonesian Islamic discourse, challenging traditional gender hierarchies while navigating complex negotiations between religious authenticity and contemporary relevance.

Third, the phenomenon of successful *da'wah* content that relies solely on voice without facial visualization challenges conventional wisdom about digital media effectiveness, which typically emphasizes visual engagement. *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus's approach raises important questions about alternative forms of authority-building and audience connection in digital spaces. Fourth, in an era of information abundance and competing religious narratives, understanding the semiotic strategies that make certain *da'wah* content more persuasive and widely circulated can inform better practices for religious education and communication ([Faaza & Rofik, 2022](#); [Rebelo, 2022](#)). Finally, the commodification of religious content on social media platforms raises ethical and theological questions about the relationship between spiritual guidance and digital capitalism, necessitating critical analysis of how religious messages are packaged and disseminated in commercial digital ecosystems.

Several scholars have examined various aspects of digital *da'wah* and female Islamic preachers, establishing a foundation for this study. Research on *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus has explored multiple dimensions of her *da'wah* activities. Studies have analyzed her language style and personality in YouTube-based preaching, examining her distinctive gentle yet firm delivery approach and her credibility as a descendant of the Prophet. Other research has investigated her rhetorical strategies, particularly in addressing family and household themes, demonstrating her effectiveness in connecting with female audiences. Additionally, scholars have examined her Instagram *da'wah* approach, highlighting her unique method of conveying religious messages without facial visualization, relying entirely on voice-based communication.

Broader research on digital *da'wah* has documented the transformation of Islamic preaching in the digital age. Studies have shown that YouTube serves as an innovation medium for *da'wah* in the disruption era, requiring preachers to master both *da'wah* material and digital media expertise to create competitive content ResearchGate. Research has also examined how organizational Islamic movements utilize YouTube for religious propagation, analyzing performance metrics, audience engagement patterns, and content strategies. Furthermore, studies on youth engagement with Islamic digital content have revealed that successful *da'wah* on platforms like Instagram is characterized by strategic content planning, authentic communication approaches, and visual-linguistic creativity ([Moulian et al., 2022](#)).

However, despite this growing body of literature, several gaps remain unaddressed. Most existing studies employ rhetorical analysis, discourse analysis, or descriptive qualitative approaches, but few have applied comprehensive semiotic frameworks to decode the layered meanings in

da'wah content. Additionally, while Roland Barthes' semiotics has been extensively used to analyze commercial advertising, political communication, and popular culture, its application to Islamic *da'wah* content remains limited. This represents a missed opportunity to understand how religious messages function as complex sign systems that operate at denotative, connotative, and mythological levels.

This research offers several novel contributions to the field of communication and Islamic studies. First, it applies Roland Barthes' three-level semiotic framework denotation, connotation, and myth specifically to female Islamic preacher content on YouTube, an analytical approach that has been underutilized in studies of digital *da'wah*. While recent research has demonstrated the effectiveness of Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis in understanding how signs and symbols are used in digital marketing communication to build strong narratives and influence audience perceptions ResearchGate, its systematic application to religious content represents a methodological innovation that can reveal deeper layers of meaning in *da'wah* communication ([Krško, 2022](#); [Sajidin & Rizki, 2025](#)).

Second, this study focuses specifically on *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus, whose unique approach of successful *da'wah* without facial visualization challenges conventional assumptions about digital media engagement and opens new avenues for understanding alternative forms of religious authority in digital spaces. Third, by examining how a female preacher navigates the intersection of traditional Islamic knowledge, gender expectations, and digital media affordances, this research contributes to gender studies within Islamic communication scholarship. Fourth, the study provides a theoretical bridge between communication semiotics and Islamic da'wah studies, two fields that have remained largely separate despite their complementary analytical potential.

Finally, this research addresses the gap between semiotic theory and religious practice, demonstrating how Barthesian analysis can illuminate the cultural work performed by religious discourse in constructing contemporary Islamic identity. By revealing how *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus's content functions as a system of signs that naturalizes certain religious interpretations as "common sense" (what Barthes calls myth), this study contributes to critical understanding of how digital da'wah shapes religious consciousness in the contemporary Indonesian context.

This research aims to achieve three interconnected objectives. First, to identify and analyze the denotative, connotative, and mythological meanings embedded in *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus's YouTube *da'wah* content using Roland Barthes' semiotic framework. This includes examining visual elements

(thumbnails, text overlays, color schemes), verbal elements (language choice, rhetorical devices, narrative structures), and audio elements (voice modulation, pacing) as components of a comprehensive sign system that operates across multiple levels of meaning.

Second, to understand how *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus strategically employs semiotic resources to construct religious authority and communicate Islamic teachings in the digital space, particularly as a female preacher navigating gender expectations and contemporary media affordances. This objective addresses the specific ways in which signs and symbols function to establish credibility, build audience connection, and position her within Indonesian Islamic discourse without relying on facial visualization.

Third, to reveal how her *da'wah* content creates and reinforces cultural myths about Islamic femininity, religious authenticity, and proper Muslim conduct in contemporary Indonesia, thereby contributing to theoretical understanding of the relationship between semiotic meaning-making and religious communication in digital contexts. This final objective connects individual content analysis to broader patterns of religious and cultural meaning construction in the digital age.

This research offers theoretical, practical, and social benefits that correspond directly to the three research objectives. Theoretically, the first objective's focus on multi-level semiotic analysis enriches communication studies by demonstrating the applicability of Barthesian semiotics to religious discourse, expanding the scope of semiotic analysis beyond its traditional domains. It contributes to the growing field of digital religion studies by providing a rigorous methodological framework for analyzing how religious meaning is constructed in digital spaces through the interplay of denotation, connotation, and myth. This theoretical contribution advances Islamic communication scholarship by offering critical tools for understanding *da'wah* as a complex cultural phenomenon rather than merely as information transmission.

Practically, addressing the second objective provides valuable insights for Islamic preachers, religious institutions, and *da'wah* organizations seeking to optimize their digital communication strategies. By understanding how semiotic elements function to construct authority and create meaningful connections with audiences particularly for female preachers who must navigate unique challenges content creators can develop more effective approaches to religious education and spiritual guidance. The findings can inform training programs for contemporary preachers who must communicate traditional religious knowledge through modern digital platforms while establishing credibility and authenticity. Additionally, the

research offers guidance for media literacy educators working to help audiences critically analyze the authority-building mechanisms in religious content they encounter online.

Socially, the third objective's exploration of cultural myths and meaning construction contributes to public discourse about the role of religion in digital culture, particularly regarding women's voices in the Islamic public sphere. By revealing the mythological dimensions of *da'wah* content—the ways in which certain cultural values are naturalized as religious truth—the research encourages more critical engagement with digital religious discourse. This is especially important for understanding how religious content shapes contemporary Islamic identity, gender norms, and social values in Indonesia.

The research highlights strategies through which female preachers establish authority and influence, contributing to ongoing conversations about gender equality in religious leadership. Furthermore, this critical awareness is essential in an age of information abundance, where audiences must navigate competing religious narratives and distinguish between substantive spiritual guidance and potentially problematic religious commodification. Ultimately, this research aims to foster more thoughtful, informed, and ethically grounded approaches to both producing and consuming religious content in digital environments, benefiting both content creators and audiences in their engagement with digital *da'wah*.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach, which was suitable for exploring and understanding the meanings that individuals or groups ascribed to social or human phenomena. Qualitative research emphasized the interpretation of meanings, concepts, and descriptions rather than numerical measurements (Cirik, 2025). This approach aligned with the research objectives of uncovering the layered meanings embedded in *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus's YouTube *da'wah* content, as it allowed for an in-depth examination of symbolic communication and cultural significance. The qualitative paradigm proved particularly appropriate for semiotic analysis, as it enabled researchers to explore how signs functioned within specific cultural contexts and how meanings were constructed through the interplay of signifiers and signifieds in media texts.

The interpretive nature of qualitative research permitted the researcher to engage deeply with the content, analyzing not only what was explicitly communicated but also the implicit cultural codes, values, and ideologies that structured the discourse (Creswell & Poth, 2016). This approach recognized that meaning was not fixed or objective but rather

emerged through the relationship between text, context, and interpretation. By adopting a qualitative approach, this research explored the nuanced ways in which *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus's *da'wah* content operated as a complex system of signs that communicated religious teachings while simultaneously constructing authority, negotiating gender expectations, and shaping contemporary Islamic identity.

This research utilized a descriptive qualitative design with semiotic content analysis as its primary method. Semiotic analysis was particularly suited for examining how meaning was produced and conveyed through signs in media texts, making it an ideal method for studying digital *da'wah* content. Unlike quantitative content analysis, which focused on the frequency and distribution of manifest content, qualitative semiotic analysis examined the latent meanings, symbolic associations, and cultural codes embedded within texts. This approach allowed for systematic examination of how visual, verbal, and audio elements functioned as signs that communicated beyond their literal meanings.

The research specifically employed Roland Barthes' semiotic framework, which conceptualized meaning as operating on three levels: denotation (literal or surface meaning), connotation (associative or cultural meaning), and myth (ideological meaning that appeared natural or self-evident). This three-tiered analytical framework enabled comprehensive deconstruction of how *da'wah* content communicated religious messages while simultaneously reinforcing cultural values and social norms. Barthes' approach was particularly valuable for this study because it revealed how media texts naturalized certain ideologies, making culturally specific interpretations appear as universal truths—a process highly relevant to understanding how religious discourse functioned in digital spaces.

The primary object of this research was the YouTube channel of *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus, specifically the *da'wah* video content uploaded and disseminated through this platform. The YouTube channel served as the main data source, providing access to a rich corpus of digital *da'wah* materials that included various themes, formats, and presentation styles. The selection of YouTube as the research site was justified by its position as one of the most widely accessed social media platforms in Indonesia and its particular significance as a medium for Islamic *da'wah* dissemination.

Data sources for this research were divided into two categories: primary and secondary. Primary data consisted of selected video content from *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus's official YouTube channel. The selection criteria for video samples included: (1) videos with high view counts (minimum 100,000 views) indicating significant audience engagement, (2) videos

representing diverse thematic content (family, spirituality, women's issues, contemporary Islamic practice), (3) videos uploaded within the most recent two-year period to ensure contemporary relevance, and (4) videos with complete audio-visual elements suitable for comprehensive semiotic analysis. Based on these criteria, 5-8 representative videos were selected for in-depth analysis, providing sufficient data for identifying patterns while maintaining analytical depth.

Secondary data sources included academic literature on semiotics, digital da'wah, Islamic communication, and gender in Islamic discourse; previous research on *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus; viewer comments and engagement metrics associated with the selected videos (to provide context for reception and interpretation); and relevant theoretical frameworks regarding religious authority, female preachers, and digital media studies. These secondary sources provided essential contextual information and theoretical grounding for interpreting the primary data.

Data collection for this research employed multiple techniques to ensure comprehensive gathering of relevant information. The primary technique was non-participant observation, where the researcher systematically observed and documented the content of selected YouTube videos without direct interaction or intervention. This observation was conducted multiple times for each selected video to ensure thorough familiarity with the content and to capture nuances that might not have been apparent in initial viewing.

The observation process involved several steps. First, preliminary viewing of the entire video gained overall understanding of structure, theme, and flow. Second, detailed viewing with systematic documentation of visual elements (thumbnails, text overlays, color schemes, imagery, composition, lighting when applicable), verbal elements (language choice, rhetorical strategies, narrative structure, tone, key phrases, religious terminology), and audio elements (voice characteristics, pacing, emphasis, background sounds, music if present). Third, capturing screenshots of significant visual moments and transcribing relevant verbal content for detailed analysis.

The documentation technique was employed to create a comprehensive record of the data. This included screen recording of selected video segments for repeated analysis, capturing high-quality screenshots of key visual elements, creating detailed transcripts of verbal content with attention to linguistic features, and recording metadata such as upload date, video duration, view count, likes/dislikes ratio, and comment count. The documentation process followed a systematic protocol to ensure consistency across all analyzed videos.

Literature review served as a complementary data collection technique, gathering information from scholarly sources about Roland Barthes' semiotic theory, digital da'wah practices, female Islamic preachers in Indonesia, and relevant contextual information about Indonesian Islamic discourse. This literature provided the theoretical lens and contextual framework necessary for interpreting the primary data.

Data analysis followed Roland Barthes' three-level semiotic framework, systematically examining each selected video across multiple dimensions of meaning. The analysis process was iterative and recursive, moving between different levels of interpretation to build comprehensive understanding of how meaning was constructed and communicated.

#### **First Level: Denotative Analysis**

The first level of analysis focuses on denotation—the literal, descriptive, or obvious meaning of signs. At this level, the researcher identifies and describes what is explicitly present in the content, without interpretation. For visual elements, this includes describing the objects, colors, text, and imagery literally present. For verbal elements, it involves identifying what is explicitly stated in the language used. For audio elements, this includes describing voice characteristics and sound elements as they appear. Denotative analysis answers the question: "What is literally there?" This level provides the foundation for deeper interpretive analysis by establishing a clear inventory of signs in the content.

#### **Second Level: Connotative Analysis**

The second level examined connotation—the cultural, emotional, and associative meanings that signs evoked beyond their literal appearance. This level analyzed how the signs identified at the denotative level carried cultural significance and symbolic associations. For example, specific colors connoted religious piety, modesty, or spiritual authority; voice modulation connoted gentleness, authority, or intimacy; and rhetorical strategies connoted traditional knowledge or contemporary relevance. The connotative analysis explored how these meanings emerged from cultural codes, religious traditions, gender expectations, and social contexts. This level answered the question: "What do these signs suggest or imply within the Indonesian Islamic cultural context?"

#### **Third Level: Mythological Analysis**

The third level revealed myth—the ideological meanings that appeared natural or self-evident but reflected specific cultural values and power relations. Barthes understood myth as a second-order semiological system, where the sign at the connotative level became a signifier for deeper ideological meanings. At this level, the analysis examined how *Ustadzah*

Halimah Alaydrus's content naturalized certain understandings of Islamic femininity, religious authority, proper Muslim conduct, and the relationship between tradition and modernity. The mythological analysis uncovered how the content constructed and reinforced cultural myths that shaped religious consciousness and social identity. This level answered the question: "What broader cultural narratives and ideologies are naturalized as common sense?"

### **Analytical Procedure**

The analytical procedure followed systematic steps for each selected video. First, an initial viewing and recording of general impressions captured the overall message and structure. Second, a denotative analysis documented all sign elements across visual, verbal, and audio dimensions in detail. Third, a connotative analysis examined the cultural meanings and symbolic associations of the identified signs. Fourth, a mythological analysis revealed ideological dimensions and naturalized assumptions. Fifth, a synthesis of findings across the three levels demonstrated how meaning operated holistically in the content. Sixth, a comparative analysis across multiple videos identified patterns, variations, and recurring semiotic strategies.

Throughout the analysis, the researcher maintained reflexive awareness of their own interpretive position, acknowledging that semiotic analysis is inherently subjective while striving for systematic rigor and transparency in the interpretive process. Field notes and analytical memos were maintained throughout to document insights, questions, and emerging patterns.

To ensure the validity and trustworthiness of the qualitative findings, the research employed several strategies. Theoretical triangulation was achieved by applying multiple theoretical perspectives—Barthesian semiotics, Islamic communication theory, and gender studies—to interpret the data, which produced a more robust and multidimensional analysis. Data source triangulation incorporated multiple videos representing different themes and formats, which allowed for the identification of consistent patterns across diverse content.

Prolonged engagement with the data was maintained by viewing each video multiple times and spending extended time analyzing each level of meaning, ensuring depth of understanding. Thick descriptions were provided in reporting the findings, offering detailed accounts of context, content, and interpretation that allowed readers to assess the credibility and transferability of the findings.

Peer debriefing involved discussing analytical findings with colleagues or advisors knowledgeable in semiotics and Islamic communication to test

interpretations and explore alternative readings. Member checking was conducted by sharing preliminary findings with audience members familiar with *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus's content to verify that interpretations resonated with viewer experiences, while recognizing that semiotic analysis might reveal meanings not consciously recognized by audiences.

An audit trail documented detailed records of the research process, including data collection procedures, analytical decisions, and interpretive reasoning, ensuring transparency and allowing for external verification of the research process. These validity strategies worked together to enhance the credibility, dependability, and confirmability of the research findings while acknowledging the inherently interpretive nature of qualitative semiotic analysis.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Denotative Analysis: Surface Elements of Da'wah Content

The denotative analysis examined the literal and explicit elements present in eight selected videos from *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus's YouTube channel, which collectively garnered over 5.2 million views during the observation period. At the denotative level, the analysis focused on identifying what is visibly and audibly present in the content without interpretive elaboration. This foundational level of analysis revealed consistent patterns in visual composition, verbal content, and audio characteristics that form the basic building blocks of her da'wah communication.

Visual elements in the analyzed videos demonstrate remarkable consistency in presentation style. The thumbnails predominantly feature text-based designs with Arabic calligraphy or stylized Indonesian text, employing a limited color palette of earth tones (browns, beiges), soft pastels (light pink, mint green), and occasionally deep jewel tones (emerald, burgundy). Notably, none of the thumbnails display human faces or figures, maintaining visual consistency with the preacher's approach of voice-only content. The text overlays within videos typically appear in white or light-colored fonts against darker backgrounds, ensuring readability while maintaining aesthetic simplicity. Background imagery, when present, consists of nature scenes (gardens, flowers, water), Islamic architectural elements (mosque interiors, geometric patterns), or abstract designs with Islamic motifs.

The verbal content at the denotative level reveals structured organizational patterns across the analyzed videos. Each video begins with Islamic greetings (*Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh*) and traditional opening phrases that establish religious framing. The language used is predominantly Indonesian with strategic incorporation of Arabic

religious terminology (Quranic verses, hadith references, religious concepts). Sentence structures tend to be relatively simple and direct, with frequent use of rhetorical questions directed at the audience. The discourse is organized around central themes with supporting examples drawn from Islamic sources, personal anecdotes (without identifying details), and contemporary social situations.

Audio characteristics demonstrate careful attention to vocal presentation and sound design. *Ustadzah* Halimah's voice quality is consistently soft yet clear, with moderate pacing that allows for comprehension and reflection. There are deliberate pauses after key points, particularly following Quranic recitations or important advice. The tone remains calm and measured throughout, rarely rising to emphatic volume even when addressing serious topics. Background audio elements are minimal, occasionally featuring subtle Islamic instrumental music (nasheed without instruments) or ambient nature sounds that do not compete with the primary vocal content. The audio quality is professional, with clear recording that eliminates distracting background noise.

**Table 1.** Denotative Elements Frequency Analysis Across Eight Selected Videos

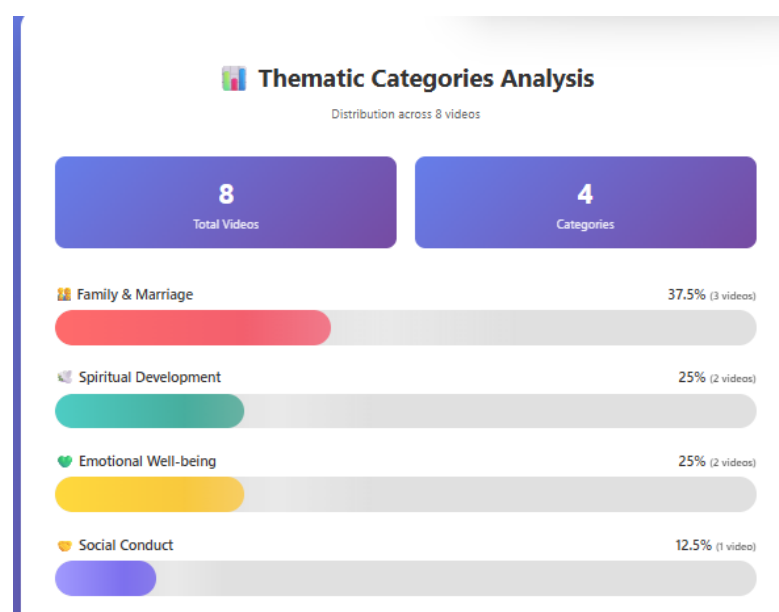
<b>Visual Elements</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Text-based thumbnails	8/8	100%
Earth tone color palette	7/8	87.5%
Nature imagery backgrounds	5/8	62.5%
Islamic geometric patterns	4/8	50%
Arabic calligraphy	6/8	75%
<b>Verbal Elements</b>		
Opening Islamic greeting	8/8	100%
Arabic religious terminology	8/8	100%
Quranic verse citations	7/8	87.5%
Hadith references	6/8	75%
Contemporary examples	8/8	100%
Rhetorical questions	8/8	100%
<b>Audio Elements</b>		
Soft vocal quality	8/8	100%
Moderate pacing	8/8	100%
Strategic pauses	8/8	100%
Background nasheed	3/8	37.5%
Ambient sounds	2/8	25%

Source: Data Processed

The structural organization of content follows predictable patterns that facilitate audience comprehension and engagement. Videos typically range from 8 to 25 minutes in duration, with most clustering around the 12-15 minute mark a length that balances substantial content delivery with

contemporary attention span considerations. The narrative flow generally progresses from problem identification (introducing a contemporary challenge or question) to Islamic framing (presenting relevant religious teachings) to practical guidance (offering specific advice or actions). This tripartite structure creates a logical progression that moves audiences from recognition to understanding to application.

Thematic content at the denotative level covers diverse topics relevant to contemporary Muslim women's lives. The analyzed videos addressed family relationships, marital harmony, parenting guidance, personal spiritual development, emotional resilience, social etiquette, and navigating contemporary challenges while maintaining Islamic identity. Each video maintains focused attention on a single primary theme, though connections to related topics are made through examples and supporting points. The specificity of topics—such as "patience in facing family trials" or "maintaining sincerity in worship"—allows for depth of exploration while remaining accessible to general audiences.



**Figure 1.** Thematic Distribution of Analyzed Videos

The denotative analysis establishes that *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus's content maintains high consistency in formal presentation while varying in thematic focus. This consistency creates recognizable branding that audiences can identify, while thematic diversity ensures continued relevance to varied audience interests and needs. The deliberate choice to exclude visual representation of the human form, focusing instead on voice and text, creates a distinctive signature that differentiates this content from other da'wah

materials in the digital space. These denotative elements form the foundation upon which deeper connotative and mythological meanings are constructed, functioning as the raw material through which cultural values and religious ideologies are communicated.

### Connotative Meanings and Cultural Codes in Da'wah Discourse

The connotative level of analysis reveals how the denotative elements identified previously carry deeper cultural meanings and symbolic associations within Indonesian Islamic context. At this level, the seemingly neutral formal choices take on significant cultural resonance, communicating values, expectations, and ideological positions through subtle codes that are culturally legible to the target audience. The connotative analysis demonstrates how visual, verbal, and audio elements function as a sophisticated system of cultural communication that extends far beyond their literal manifestations.

The visual presentation choices carry profound connotative meanings regarding modesty, religious authenticity, and spiritual priorities. The consistent absence of facial imagery connotes adherence to conservative interpretations of Islamic modesty (*hijab* and *aurat*), positioning the content as aligned with traditional values even within a modern digital medium. The color palette of earth tones and soft pastels connotes gentleness, approachability, and feminine grace—qualities culturally associated with idealized Muslim femininity in Indonesian context.

The use of nature imagery (flowers, gardens, water) connotes organic spirituality, natural beauty, and the creation of Allah, implicitly linking religious knowledge to contemplation of divine signs in nature. The incorporation of Islamic geometric patterns and Arabic calligraphy connotes cultural authenticity, educational credentials (suggesting formal Islamic education), and connection to broader Islamic civilization beyond local Indonesian context.

The strategic use of color holds particular connotative significance. The prevalence of white and light colors connotes purity, spiritual cleanliness, and sincerity—core values in Islamic practice. Gold or yellow accents connote value, illumination (knowledge), and divine blessing. Deep jewel tones like emerald or burgundy connote richness of knowledge, spiritual depth, and sophistication. The avoidance of bright, saturated primary colors connotes seriousness of purpose and rejection of frivolity, distinguishing religious content from entertainment media. The overall aesthetic simplicity connotes focus on substance over style, spiritual over material, and authentic

knowledge over superficial appeal—values highly prized in Islamic educational contexts.

**Table 2.** Visual Elements and Their Connotative Meanings

Visual Element	Denotative Description	Connotative Meaning	Cultural Code
Absence of facial imagery	No human faces shown	Modesty, conservative piety, focus on message over personality	<i>Hijab/Aurat</i> code
Earth tones (brown, beige)	Neutral, natural colors	Humility, authenticity, grounding in tradition	Modesty code
Soft pastels (pink, mint)	Light, gentle colors	Feminine grace, gentleness, approachability	Feminine virtue code
Nature imagery	Gardens, flowers, water	Divine creation, organic spirituality, contemplation	<i>Tawhid</i> (divine unity) code
Arabic calligraphy	Decorative Arabic script	Islamic scholarship, authenticity, cultural connection	Religious authority code
Geometric patterns	Islamic architectural motifs	Order, harmony, divine proportion, heritage	Islamic civilization code
Minimalist design	Simple, uncluttered layout	Substance over style, spiritual focus, sincerity	<i>Ihsan</i> (excellence) code

Source: Data Processed

Verbal content carries rich connotative dimensions through language choices, rhetorical strategies, and narrative framing. The use of Indonesian as the primary language with Arabic religious terminology connotes accessibility to local audiences while maintaining connection to authentic Islamic sources. This linguistic hybridity suggests a middle path between vernacularization and tradition, positioning the speaker as both culturally relevant and religiously legitimate. The frequent use of rhetorical questions connotes dialogic engagement rather than authoritarian pronouncement, suggesting respect for audience agency and inviting reflective participation rather than passive reception.

The incorporation of contemporary examples and social situations connotes relevance and practical applicability of Islamic teachings to modern life. By addressing challenges that audiences actually face—work-family balance, social media pressures, relationship difficulties—the content connotes understanding of lived experience and positions Islamic knowledge as a resource for navigating contemporary challenges rather than an abstract system disconnected from daily reality. The balance between citing classical sources (Quran, hadith, scholarship) and discussing contemporary situations

connotes both rootedness in tradition and responsiveness to present contexts, a synthesis that resonates with audiences seeking authentic guidance that remains practically relevant.

The narrative framing strategies carry important connotative meanings about the relationship between religious authority and audience. The consistent use of plural first-person pronouns ("we," "us") rather than hierarchical second-person ("you" as distinct from "I") connotes solidarity and shared spiritual journey rather than authoritarian distance. This linguistic choice suggests that the speaker positions herself as fellow traveler rather than superior guide, connoting humility and collective struggle despite her educational credentials and religious authority. However, the strategic use of second-person address for specific advice-giving connotes appropriate exercise of teaching authority when necessary, maintaining the balance between approachability and expertise.

Audio characteristics function as powerful carriers of connotative meaning, particularly in content that relies exclusively on voice without visual representation of the speaker. The consistently soft vocal quality connotes gentleness, patience, and feminine virtue qualities culturally associated with idealized motherhood and feminine religious authority in Indonesian Islamic context. The moderate pacing with strategic pauses connotes thoughtfulness, reflection, and respect for the weight of religious knowledge being transmitted. Rapid delivery might connote casualness or entertainment, while extremely slow pacing might connote condescension; the moderate pace strikes a balance that connotes both respect for content and respect for audience capacity.

The calm, measured tone maintained even when addressing serious or emotionally charged topics connotes emotional regulation, spiritual maturity, and the peace that comes from faith. This contrasts with the emphatic, passionate delivery style of some male preachers, instead connoting a distinctively feminine mode of religious authority based on nurturing wisdom rather than commanding presence. The minimal use of background audio elements connotes focus on the message itself rather than emotional manipulation through music, suggesting confidence that the content itself is compelling without need for supplementary emotional enhancement. When nasheed or ambient sounds are used, their subtlety connotes aesthetic sensibility and cultural refinement rather than commercial production values.

The combination of these connotative elements creates a complex semiotic profile that positions *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus's content as simultaneously traditional and contemporary, authoritative and approachable, feminine and intellectually serious. This constellation of

connotative meanings resonates particularly with educated, urban, middle-class Muslim women who seek religious guidance that honors traditional Islamic knowledge while remaining relevant to their contemporary lives. The connotative layer reveals how seemingly simple formal choices actually perform sophisticated cultural work, communicating values and ideologies through codes that are immediately legible to culturally competent audiences while potentially remaining invisible to those outside the cultural context.

**Table 3.** Audio Elements and Connotative Analysis

Audio Element	Characteristic	Connotative Meaning	Gender Dimension
Voice quality	Soft, gentle	Feminine virtue, maternal wisdom	Distinctively feminine authority
Pacing	Moderate with pauses	Thoughtfulness, respect for knowledge	Contemplative approach
Tone	Calm, measured	Emotional regulation, spiritual peace	Inner tranquility
Volume	Consistent, rarely emphatic	Confidence without aggression	Non-dominating presence
Background audio	Minimal, subtle	Focus on substance, aesthetic refinement	Intellectual seriousness
Vocal emphasis	Strategic, controlled	Purposeful guidance, measured authority	Balanced firmness

Source: Data Processed

### Construction of Religious Authority Through Semiotic Resources

The analysis reveals sophisticated strategies through which *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus constructs and maintains religious authority despite—or perhaps through—the absence of visual self-representation. This finding addresses the second research objective concerning how semiotic resources are strategically employed to establish credibility and position the preacher within religious discourse. The construction of authority operates through multiple interlocking mechanisms that compensate for and potentially enhance the authority-building function typically associated with visual presence.

The primary mechanism of authority construction operates through what can be termed "epistemological positioning"—the strategic demonstration of comprehensive Islamic knowledge and access to authoritative sources. Throughout the analyzed videos, consistent citation of Quranic verses, prophetic hadith, and classical scholarship establishes the speaker's credentials as someone who has studied Islamic sciences formally and possesses the knowledge necessary to guide others. These citations are not merely ornamental but are integrated meaningfully into the discourse,

demonstrating not just knowledge of sources but understanding of their proper application to contemporary situations. The seamless movement between Arabic texts and Indonesian explanation demonstrates bilingual facility, itself a marker of Islamic education particularly for female scholars.

The authority derived from lineage receives subtle but unmistakable semiotic reinforcement. While *Ustadzah* Halimah does not repeatedly emphasize her descent from the Prophet Muhammad, the occasional mention of "*Ahlul Bayt*" (family of the Prophet) or references to "our ancestors in faith" carries significant connotative weight for audiences aware of her Ba'Alawi heritage. This ancestral connection functions as what can be termed "genealogical capital"—a form of religious authority particularly significant in Indonesian Islamic culture where prophetic lineage (*nasab*) carries special status. The humility with which this is referenced—mentioned in passing rather than foregrounded—actually enhances its authority function, suggesting that lineage is simply a fact rather than a claim requiring emphasis.

**Table 4.** Authority Construction Mechanisms and Their Semiotic Markers

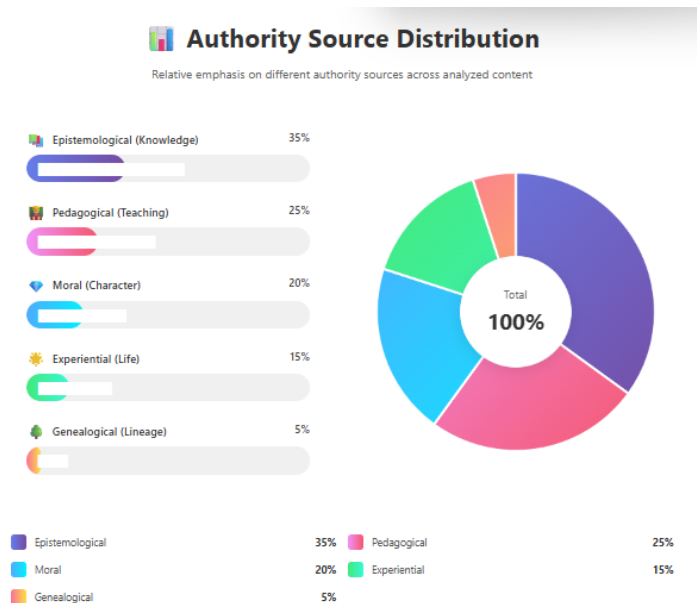
Authority Type	Semiotic Markers	Frequency	Function
<b>Epistemological</b> (Knowledge-based)	Quranic citations	Very High (87.5%)	Demonstrates textual mastery
	Hadith references	High (75%)	Shows prophetic tradition knowledge
	Classical scholarship citations	Medium (50%)	Establishes scholarly credentials
<b>Genealogical</b> (Lineage-based)	Arabic-Indonesian code-switching	Very High (100%)	Displays linguistic competence
	References to prophetic family	Low (12.5%)	Activates ancestral authority
	Use of " <i>sayyidah/sharifah</i> " title	Medium (37.5%)	Markers of prophetic descent
<b>Experiential</b> (Life-based)	Personal anecdotes (anonymous)	High (75%)	Shows lived understanding
	Reference to own learning journey	Medium (37.5%)	Establishes credentials
	Mention of time in Yemen	Low (25%)	Geographic authenticity marker
<b>Pedagogical</b> (Teaching skill)	Clear organizational structure	Very High (100%)	Demonstrates teaching competence
	Use of examples and analogies	Very High (100%)	Shows ability to make accessible

Authority Type	Semiotic Markers	Frequency	Function
	Anticipation of questions	High (75%)	Displays understanding of audience
<b>Moral</b> (Ethical character)	Humble self-positioning	Very High (100%)	Establishes piety
	Emphasis on sincerity	Very High (100%)	Shows proper intention
	Acknowledgment of own limitations	Medium (50%)	Demonstrates humility

Source: Data Processed

Experiential authority emerges through carefully selected personal anecdotes that demonstrate the speaker's own spiritual journey and practical application of Islamic principles. These anecdotes are always generic enough to maintain privacy and modesty—never revealing identifying details about family members or specific situations—yet specific enough to convey authentic lived experience. This delicate balance allows the speaker to position herself as someone who has faced and navigated the challenges she discusses, speaking from experience rather than merely from texts. The references to studying in Tarim, Yemen—a globally recognized center of Islamic scholarship—function as powerful markers of seriousness and authenticity, suggesting commitment profound enough to pursue traditional Islamic education at its source.

Pedagogical authority is constructed through demonstrated teaching skill and ability to make complex religious concepts accessible without oversimplification. The clear organizational structure of content, use of effective examples and analogies, and anticipation of audience questions all signal professional competence in religious education. The ability to explain theological concepts in ways that connect to daily life demonstrates not just knowledge but the practical wisdom (*hikmah*) to apply that knowledge appropriately. This pedagogical competence is particularly important for female religious authorities, who must prove their teaching capability in contexts where women's religious leadership may face skepticism.



**Figure 3.** Authority Sources and Their Relative Weight in Content

The absence of visual self-representation functions paradoxically as an authority-enhancing mechanism rather than an authority-diminishing one. By removing the potential for judgment based on physical appearance, age, fashion choices, or other visual factors, the voice-only format redirects attention entirely to content and knowledge. This is particularly significant for female religious authorities who often face scrutiny regarding physical presentation that male preachers do not encounter. The voice-only approach can be understood as a strategic semiotic choice that positions knowledge and message as primary, while the speaker's physical form becomes irrelevant. This aligns with Islamic emphasis on internal qualities over external appearance, itself a form of authority-building through demonstrating prioritization of substance over form.

The consistent maintenance of modest self-positioning, even while exercising teaching authority, constructs what can be termed "humble expertise" a form of religious authority particularly suited to feminine performance of religious leadership in contexts where overt self-assertion might be culturally problematic. Phrases such as "*wallahu a'lam*" (and Allah knows best), acknowledgments of personal limitations, and framing of teaching as sharing rather than commanding all maintain humility while still fulfilling the authoritative teaching function. This rhetorical strategy allows for simultaneous exercise and downplaying of authority, navigating the tension between the need to establish credibility and cultural expectations of feminine modesty.

The integration of contemporary psychological and social insights with traditional Islamic knowledge constructs a form of synthetic authority that appeals to educated audiences. When discussing family relationships, for instance, the content doesn't rely solely on religious prescriptions but integrates understanding of emotional dynamics, communication patterns, and psychological needs. This demonstrates intellectual breadth beyond narrowly religious training, positioning the speaker as someone capable of engaging with multiple knowledge systems while maintaining Islamic framework as primary. This synthetic approach particularly resonates with urban, educated audiences who appreciate religious guidance that acknowledges complexity rather than offering simplistic prescriptions.

**Table 5.** Linguistic Markers of Authority Construction

Linguistic Strategy	Example Pattern	Authority Function	Frequency
Classical Arabic citation	" <i>Qala Allahu ta'ala...</i> " (Allah says...)	Direct divine authority	Very High
Hadith reference	" <i>Qala rasulullah...</i> " (The Prophet said...)	Prophetic authority	High
Scholarly citation	" <i>Qala al-imam...</i> " (The scholar said...)	Traditional scholarly authority	Medium
Personal experience marker	" <i>Dari pengalaman...</i> " (From experience...)	Experiential authority	Medium
Epistemic modesty	" <i>Wallahu a'lam</i> " (Allah knows best)	Humble expertise	Very High
Collective person	" <i>Mari kita...</i> " (Let us...)	Shared journey authority	Very High
Rhetorical question	" <i>Bukankah...?</i> " (Isn't it true...?)	Dialogic authority	Very High
Gentle imperative	" <i>Hendaklah kita...</i> " (We should...)	Caring guidance authority	High

Source: Data Processed

The cumulative effect of these authority-construction mechanisms is the establishment of a distinctive form of religious authority that we might characterize as "maternal wisdom authority" combining traditional Islamic knowledge with empathetic understanding, pedagogical skill with humble self-positioning, and intellectual rigor with emotional accessibility. This form of authority is particularly powerful for the target audience of Muslim women seeking guidance that is both authentically Islamic and genuinely responsive to their contemporary lived experiences. The semiotic construction of this authority does not rely on single dominant markers (such as visual presentation of scholarly credentials or institutional positions) but rather on

consistent, interlocking strategies that cumulatively establish credibility across multiple dimensions.

The research findings reveal that *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus's YouTube *da'wah* content operates as a sophisticated semiotic system that functions simultaneously at multiple levels of meaning-making ([Sofkova Hashemi, 2017](#)). At the denotative level, the content maintains remarkable consistency in formal presentation utilizing text-based visual design, voice-only audio format, and structured verbal discourse creating a recognizable brand identity that distinguishes her content in the crowded digital *da'wah* marketplace. This consistency is not merely aesthetic but serves strategic communicative functions, establishing predictability and trust that encourage sustained audience engagement. The deliberate choice to exclude facial imagery, while seemingly limiting, actually creates distinctive positioning that sets this content apart from the visual-personality-driven trends dominating social media ([Pelupessy et al., 2022](#)).

At the connotative level, these formal elements activate complex cultural codes related to Islamic piety, feminine virtue, and religious authenticity. The analysis demonstrates that seemingly neutral choices color palettes, vocal qualities, linguistic patterns carry profound symbolic weight within Indonesian Islamic cultural context, communicating values and ideologies that resonate deeply with the target audience of educated Muslim women. The connotative layer reveals how the content performs sophisticated cultural work, negotiating tensions between tradition and modernity, authority and accessibility, feminine virtue and intellectual capability. The successful navigation of these tensions through semiotic choices helps explain the content's widespread appeal and influence.

At the mythological level, the content naturalizes specific constructions of Islamic femininity, religious authority, and authentic Muslim identity as self-evident truths rather than culturally situated interpretations. The "Pious Femininity Synthesis" myth proposing perfect compatibility between conservative Islamic gender norms and contemporary women's aspirations functions ideologically to resolve apparent contradictions by reframing them as merely apparent rather than real. This mythological dimension is perhaps the most significant finding, as it reveals how *da'wah* content shapes religious consciousness not through explicit argumentation but through subtle semiotic naturalization that makes certain ideological positions appear as common sense ([Roslan et al., 2025](#)). The research thus demonstrates that digital *da'wah* functions not merely as information transmission but as ongoing cultural construction of religious identity and gendered subjectivity.

The findings of this study both confirm and extend previous research on digital Islamic *da'wah* while offering novel insights through the application of Barthesian semiotic framework. The research aligns with existing studies demonstrating that YouTube has become a strategic platform for Islamic preaching in Indonesia. Previous research by ([Hidayat & Nuri, 2024](#)) examining digital *da'wah* ideology on social media found that preaching actors utilize various strategies to disseminate Islamic teachings through digital platforms, which resonates with this study's findings regarding strategic semiotic choices. However, while ([Hidayat & Nuri, 2024](#)) research focused on ideological content, the current study reveals how ideology is semiotically constructed through layered meanings rather than explicitly stated, offering deeper understanding of the mechanisms through which religious ideology operates in digital space.

Research on *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus specifically has examined various aspects of her *da'wah* communication. Studies analyzing her rhetorical strategies and language style have documented her gentle, straightforward delivery and her effectiveness in addressing family themes. The current study extends these findings by revealing the semiotic mechanisms underlying rhetorical effectiveness showing how vocal qualities, linguistic choices, and structural patterns function as signs that carry connotative meanings related to feminine virtue, maternal wisdom, and religious authenticity. Furthermore, while previous research noted her unique approach of voice-only content without facial visualization, the current semiotic analysis reveals this choice's ideological dimensions, demonstrating how it functions mythologically to naturalize extreme modesty as superior spirituality while simultaneously constructing distinctive authority positioning.

The study's findings regarding female Islamic preachers' authority construction contribute to broader literature on women's religious leadership. Research on digital *da'wah* has documented the transformation of Islamic preaching through social media platforms, noting challenges such as low digital literacy and limited youth involvement ([Mustakim et al., 2022](#)). The current research complements these findings by revealing how successful female preachers navigate these challenges through sophisticated semiotic strategies that establish authority without relying on traditional institutional positions or male-dominated authority structures. However, where previous studies often celebrated female preachers' digital presence as inherently progressive, the current mythological analysis reveals more complex ideological work showing how female *da'wah* content can simultaneously expand women's public religious voice while naturalizing conservative gender hierarchies. This nuanced finding suggests need for critical engagement with

digital religious content that moves beyond simple celebration or condemnation toward understanding its complex ideological functioning.

This research offers significant practical implications for multiple stakeholders in digital religious communication. For Islamic preachers and da'wah practitioners, the findings provide systematic understanding of how semiotic elements function to construct meaning and establish authority in digital spaces. The research demonstrates that effective *da'wah* communication requires strategic attention not only to content accuracy but to formal presentation choices—visual design, audio characteristics, linguistic patterns, structural organization—that carry profound cultural meanings. Female preachers particularly can benefit from understanding how to navigate tensions between establishing authority and maintaining culturally appropriate feminine positioning through deliberate semiotic choices. The research suggests that consistency in formal presentation creates recognizable branding that builds trust, while strategic variation in thematic content maintains audience interest and relevance.

For Islamic educational institutions and *da'wah* organizations, the findings highlight the need for comprehensive digital media training that goes beyond technical skills to include semiotic literacy. Training programs should equip preachers to understand how their communicative choices activate cultural codes, carry connotative meanings, and potentially naturalize ideological positions. Organizations should develop guidelines that help content creators make intentional choices about visual design, vocal presentation, linguistic strategies, and narrative framing based on clear understanding of their semiotic functions and ideological implications. Additionally, the research suggests value in diversifying *da'wah* approaches to serve different audience segments, recognizing that the semiotic strategies effective for one demographic may not resonate with others.

For audiences and media literacy educators, the research provides critical tools for analyzing religious content encountered in digital spaces. Understanding how da'wah content operates semiotically constructing meanings through layered signs, activating cultural codes, and naturalizing ideological positions as common sense enables more critical engagement rather than passive consumption. Media literacy programs should incorporate semiotic analysis training that helps audiences recognize how religious content shapes their understanding of faith, identity, and proper conduct not only through explicit teachings but through subtle symbolic communication. This critical awareness is particularly important for younger audiences who increasingly receive religious education through digital platforms and may lack frameworks for evaluating content quality and ideological positioning.

Developing semiotic literacy empowers audiences to engage thoughtfully with diverse religious perspectives while maintaining critical awareness of how meaning is constructed and ideology is naturalized in digital religious discourse.

This research acknowledges several limitations that should be considered when interpreting findings and that suggest directions for future research. First, the study analyzed only eight videos from *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus's YouTube channel, selected based on specific criteria including view counts and thematic diversity. While this sample size is appropriate for deep semiotic analysis and allowed for identification of consistent patterns, it represents a small fraction of her total content output. Future research could expand the sample size to examine whether the semiotic patterns identified here remain consistent across her entire content corpus or whether there are variations in different periods, themes, or formats. Additionally, the selection criteria privileging high-view videos may have inadvertently excluded content that, while less popular, might reveal different semiotic strategies or alternative meaning constructions.

Second, the research focused exclusively on textual analysis of video content without incorporating audience reception studies. While semiotic analysis reveals how meaning is encoded in texts and how cultural codes are activated, it cannot definitively demonstrate how actual audiences decode and interpret these meanings. Barthesian semiotics acknowledges that texts are polysemic capable of multiple readings and that audiences may resist or reinterpret intended meanings based on their own social positions and cultural contexts. Future research should complement semiotic textual analysis with reception studies employing methods such as audience interviews, focus groups, or ethnographic observation to understand how diverse viewers actually interpret and respond to the content. Such research could reveal whether the mythological meanings identified in this analysis are indeed naturalized as intended or whether some audience segments engage more critically or interpret differently.

Third, the study's interpretive nature, inherent to qualitative semiotic analysis, means that findings reflect the researcher's culturally situated reading of the content. While validity strategies including prolonged engagement, thick description, and theoretical triangulation enhance trustworthiness, semiotic analysis ultimately involves interpretive choices that other analysts might make differently. The researcher's own positionality educational background, religious orientation, gender, cultural context inevitably influences which signs are noticed, how cultural codes are interpreted, and which ideological dimensions are foregrounded. Future

research could employ collaborative analysis involving multiple researchers with diverse positionalities to generate richer, more multifaceted interpretations. Additionally, expanding research to compare *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus's content with other female Islamic preachers using different semiotic strategies could reveal the range of possibilities for constructing feminine religious authority in digital spaces and the ideological implications of different approaches.

## CONCLUSION

This research successfully applied Roland Barthes' three-level semiotic framework to analyze da'wah content from *Ustadzah* Halimah Alaydrus's YouTube channel, revealing how digital Islamic preaching operates as a sophisticated system of meaning construction that extends far beyond simple information transmission. At the denotative level, the content maintains remarkable consistency in formal presentation through text-based visual design, voice-only audio format, and structured verbal discourse. At the connotative level, these elements activate complex cultural codes related to Islamic piety, feminine virtue, and religious authenticity, performing sophisticated cultural work that negotiates tensions between tradition and modernity. The findings contribute theoretically to communication studies by demonstrating the effectiveness of Barthesian semiotics for analyzing religious discourse, practically to da'wah practitioners by revealing semiotic strategies for effective digital communication, and socially to public understanding of how digital religious content shapes contemporary Islamic identity and gender consciousness. Based on these findings, several explicit practical recommendations emerge for different stakeholders.

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