

THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF ISLAMIC DISCOURSE IN AL- IKHLAS BOARDING SCHOOL: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF ONLINE TEACHING (KITAB KUNING) VIA ZOOM

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Abstract

This paper examines how Islamic discourse at a pesantren in South Sulawesi has adapted to digital technology, particularly through the use of Zoom in religious classes. At Pondok Pesantren Al Ikhlas, religious instruction is traditionally held after Maghrib and Subuh prayers, while a special online session is conducted every Sunday morning. Employing a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach, the study observes and analyzes discourse shifts in terms of language use, delivery methods, and interaction dynamics. The analysis shows that despite the change in platform, core interaction patterns remain consistent due to the presence of structured Q&A sessions. However, discourse delivery, tone, and visual engagement differ slightly between offline and online settings. These insights offer a valuable look at how traditional Islamic pedagogy continues to evolve in response to digital transformation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Pesantren have long served as bastions of Islamic education in Indonesia, fostering character and religious literacy through close interaction between kyai and santri. Traditionally, knowledge transmission occurs orally, emphasizing live, personal engagement. However, recent developments in digital communication have shifted the mode of learning delivery.

One such institution, Pondok Pesantren Al Ikhlas in South Sulawesi, now incorporates Zoom for weekly Sunday morning sessions, complementing the daily offline teachings after Maghrib and Subuh. This development presents an opportunity to explore how the shift to digital tools, particularly Zoom, affects religious discourse.

Several studies have addressed the digitalization of Islamic education. However, few have analyzed the linguistic and discursive transformations that occur during such adaptation.

This research aims to answer the following questions: (1) What characterizes the discourse structure of online pengajian via Zoom? (2) How does the digital platform influence communication styles and authority dynamics? (3) What does this shift suggest about the future of Islamic pedagogy?

2. RESEARCH METHODS

In general, this section explains how the research was conducted. The his study employs a qualitative method using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to explore how discourse is shaped across digital and traditional learning settings. Data were collected from three Zoom-based religious classes and two in-person sessions at Pondok Pesantren Al Ikhlas.

Participants included one kyai and a group of santri involved in both teaching modes. Additional insights were gathered through semi-structured interviews with the kyai and five students. The analytical model used follows Fairclough's three-layered approach: (1) textual analysis, (2) discursive practice, and (3) sociocultural practice.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

Results The results highlight several notable distinctions and consistencies between the online and offline learning environments:

1. **Language Economy:** Online classes featured shorter, more structured utterances. The kyai used simplified explanations and emphasized key points through repetition. Screen sharing and visual slides were common, supporting clarity.
2. **Interaction Modes:** In Zoom sessions, santri interacted primarily via chat and controlled audio responses. Despite the digital barrier, engagement levels were strong, with students appearing more alert due to being visually monitored on-screen.
3. **Classroom Discipline:** While online sessions encouraged focus due to camera presence and recorded lectures, offline sessions were more prone to distractions. The kyai reported instances of students losing focus, becoming sleepy, or engaging in side conversations during in-person classes.
4. **Teaching Depth:** The offline environment allowed for richer elaboration on the interpretation of classical texts and hands-on practice with Arabic gundul script. This depth was somewhat constrained in the online format, though core lessons remained intact.

3.2. Discussion

The integration of Zoom into pesantren pedagogy demonstrates that while the mode of delivery may change, the structure of religious teaching can adapt with minimal loss of authority or interaction quality. The digital medium supports punctuality and time efficiency, as noted by the kyai, while also offering expanded access to students beyond the pesantren walls.

Nonetheless, the change in format introduces new linguistic strategies and classroom dynamics. The kyai's discourse becomes more deliberate and technologically supported, compensating for the absence of non-verbal cues. Additionally, santri tend to display greater responsibility in online settings, possibly due to heightened individual visibility and recorded content.

Digital learning platforms also pose limitations, especially regarding the depth of interpretation and engagement with classical Arabic texts. These require physical presence for

optimal comprehension and pronunciation practice. Therefore, a hybrid learning model could offer the best of both worlds.

4. CONCLUSION

Islamic discourse at Pondok Pesantren Al Ikhlas has successfully transitioned into digital form without compromising pedagogical structure. The study reveals that Zoom facilitates efficient learning while maintaining the essential kyai-santri relationship. However, differences in focus, interaction styles, and content delivery suggest that each format carries unique strengths. The future of pesantren education may well lie in the thoughtful integration of both traditional and digital methods.

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