



FAIRCLOUGHFIANS SFL ANALYSIS OF ARABIC DISCOURSE

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Abstract

Arabic-language podcasts can play a significant role in shaping netizens' perceptions of social norms, including the role of language as a tool of communication, as they function as a primary source of knowledge and cultural values. This study seeks to fill this gap by applying Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis to an Arabic podcast. The analysis employs a Systemic Functional Linguistics approach drawing on Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional framework: textual analysis, discursive practice, and social practice. Data were collected from public comments on social media platforms and analyzed to identify linguistic patterns, discourse strategies, and the construction of ideology and cultural identity. By examining the podcast channel comment section, the findings highlight the importance of advancing critical sociolinguistic studies in the digital sphere, particularly within the context of Indonesia-Arab interactions, and open opportunities for broader research across other online platforms and communities.

Keywords: Fairclough; Systemic functional linguistic analysis; Arabic discourse

تجريد

تلعب البودكاستات العربية دورًا مهمًا في تشكيل تصوّرات مستخدمي الإنترنت للمعايير الاجتماعية، بما في ذلك دور اللغة كأداة للتواصل، لأنها مصدرًا أساسيًا للمعرفة والقيم الثقافية. يسعى هذا البحث إلى سدّ هذه الفجوة بتطبيق تحليل الخطاب النقدي لفيركلوف على أحد البودكاستات العربية. ويستخدم هذا التحليل مقارنة اللسانيات الوظيفية النظامية بالاستناد إلى الإطار الثلاثي الأبعاد لنورمان فيركلوف، المكوّن من التحليل النصي، والممارسة الخطابية، والممارسة الاجتماعية. جُمعت البيانات من التعليقات العامة على منصّات التواصل الاجتماعي، وحُلّلت للكشف عن الأنماط اللغوية، واستراتيجيات الخطاب، وبناء الأيديولوجيا والهوية الثقافية. وبدراسة قسم التعليقات في قناة البودكاست على اليوتيوب، تبرز النتائج أهمية تطوير الدراسات السوسiolسانية النقدية في الفضاء الرقمي، ولا سيما في سياق التفاعلات الإونيسية-العربية، كما تفتح آفاقًا لبحوث أوسع على منصّات ومجتمعات رقمية أخرى.

الكلمات المفتاحية: فيركلوف؛ تحليل اللسانيات الوظيفية النظامية؛ الخطاب العربي.



INTRODUCTION

The development and use of technology in this era of globalisation have advanced rapidly, supporting social interaction and communication, and enabling humans to communicate across civilisations (Mutiah, 2020).¹ Information technology helps humans create, transform, store, communicate, and/or disseminate information (Darsita, 2017).² As information technology becomes more advanced, the level of social interaction within Society increases (Kristiyono, 2015).³ Human reliance on technology has reached a highly urgent level in everyday life (Kevin, 2017).⁴

In the digital era, podcasts have emerged as one of the most influential platforms for intercultural communication. Through podcasts, speakers from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds can engage in meaningful dialogue that is accessible to a global audience. The presence of an Indonesian guest in an Arabic podcast creates a unique space of interaction between Indonesian and Arab communities. This interaction occurs not only verbally between the host and the guest but also in the comment section of digital platforms, where netizens express their opinions, ideologies, and cultural attitudes.

YouTube has become one of the most widely used social media platforms, especially on smartphones, by offering video content spanning genres such as podcasts, news, education, animation, and comedy. This platform provides users with easy access to audiovisual information and enables anyone to share their videos globally through uploads (Bambang, 2024).⁵

Netizens' comments, as spontaneous discourse, constitute a rich source for examining the relationships among language, culture, and power. These comments often reflect underlying social structures, collective identities, and cultural perceptions. The linguistic and cultural differences between Indonesian and Arab netizens make their responses a fertile ground for sociolinguistic analysis, particularly for understanding how language is used in the negotiation of identity, ideology, and power relations in online spaces.

Both internal and external factors influence politeness in language use. Internal factors relate to the language itself, which are typically reflected in the speaker's choice of words. Conversely, external factors involve the speaker's social context. Politeness is

¹Rahtika Diana, Tuty Mutiah, 2020. *Peran Kampanye Media Sosial dalam Perilaku Pemilih Muda di DKI Jakarta*: Jurnal Komunikasi dan Bahasa Vol: 4, No2.

² Darsita, 2017. *Bahasa dan Teknologi Informasi Studi Kasus Penggunaan Abreviasi*. Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab, 5(2), 123-135.

³ Kristiyono, J., 2015. "Budaya Internet: Perkembangan Teknologi Internet dan Komunikasi dalam Mendukung Penggunaan Media di Masyarakat." *Scriptura*, 5(1), 23-30. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.9744/scriptura.5.123-130>.

⁴ Kevin Daughy & Anne Livingstone, (2017). *The Role of Technology in Addressing Health and Social Care Needs and Opportunities in a Rural Environment*. "The Journal of Corporate Citizenship Issue. DOI: [10.9744/T&F.4700]

⁵ Syarif, H., Vivi Candra, Bambang, A., et al. 2024. *Studi Fenomenologi Media Sosial dan Perilaku Konsumerisme Generasi Z*. Strategic: Journal of Management Sciences, Vp: 4 No. 3, ISSN: 2798-0049..

closely connected to the social and cultural values of a community, which can be understood as the environment in which individuals interact. This research offers novelty by integrating Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework and Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) in the analysis of YouTube podcast comments in Arabic involving Indonesia-Arab intercultural interactions—specifically in the reproduction of Islamic nationalism, symbolic power relations, and the global vs. local Islam discourse in digital spaces. The novelty lies in focusing on podcast media as a site of hybrid identity negotiation, an area that has not been deeply explored in the Indonesia-Arab context. In contrast, previous studies have focused on news texts, advertisements, or general social media discourse, without the bilingual Arab-Indonesian dimension. The following is a comparison with five recent (2021–2025) Q1 Scopus journal studies to highlight this research's unique contribution:

KhosraviNik (2025) – *Discourse, Context & Media* (Q1): This study discusses four approaches to Social Media Critical Discourse Studies (SMCDS) for analyzing general digital discourse. Novelty of this research: Unlike KhosraviNik's general focus on SM-CDS methodologies, this study specifically integrates SFL metafunctions into Arab-Indonesian podcast comments, revealing the real-time negotiation of Islamic nationalism. Bouvier & Machin (2024) – *Review of Communication* (Q1): Highlights the challenges and opportunities of CDA in social media, including visual ideology.

Novelty of this research: While Bouvier & Machin focus on general CDA in social platforms, this study adds an analysis of Arab vs. Indonesian symbolic power through bilingual loanwords. This topic has not been explored in intercultural podcast contexts. Pujiati et al. (2025) – *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics* (Q1): Analyses the representation of Arab-Indonesian identity through linguistic and cultural narratives on social media. Novelty of this research: Unlike Pujiati et al., who emphasise general social media narratives, this study focuses on specific podcast comments to uncover how global Islamic discourse enriches local identities, such as Islam Nusantara, through negotiation. Rosita & Solihati (2024) – *Social Media + Society* (Q1): Utilises CDA to uncover ideologies behind digital advertising in Indonesia. Novelty of this research: While Rosita & Solihati are limited to commercial advertisements, this study extends to religious discourse in podcasts, showing how ummah solidarity does not negate local identity but is hybridized through digital interactions. Nagao (2025) – *Applied Linguistics* (Q1): Explores the sociolinguistics of Islam, including language adaptation in global contexts. Novelty of this research: While Nagao focuses on general Islamic sociolinguistics, this study applies SFL to empirical podcast comment data, revealing symbolic power relations in the negotiation of Islamic nationalism in the Indonesia-Arab digital context.

To achieve this objective, the study employs Norman Fairclough's framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which emphasizes the relationships among language, ideology, and power. This approach enables a deeper understanding of how discourse operates both linguistically and socially. By examining how Indonesian and Arab netizens



express agreement, disagreement, admiration, criticism, or ideological stances, this study highlights sociolinguistic behaviour patterns within an online intercultural interaction space.

The purpose of this study is to analyse and compare the discourse strategies employed by Indonesian and Arab netizens in commenting on an Arabic podcast featuring an Indonesian guest, using Fairclough's CDA framework. This study also aims to identify the sociolinguistic and ideological factors underlying these interactions.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) model. This approach is used because it can reveal the relationships among language, ideology, and power in cross-cultural communication practices in digital spaces. According to Fairclough, language is not merely a means of communication, but also a social practice that constructs power relations and ideology (Fairclough, 1995; Fairclough, 2010).⁶ The qualitative approach enables the researcher to explore the hidden meanings embedded in netizens' utterances in depth and in context (Creswell, 2014).⁷

The data for this study were obtained from the comment section of an Arabic podcast featuring an Indonesian guest, uploaded to YouTube. The analyzed comments include Arabic language use from two types of speakers: native Arabic speakers and non-native Arabic speakers. The selection of this source is based on the high level of cross-cultural interaction between Arab and Indonesian netizens in digital spaces (Androutsopoulos, 2015).⁸ The data collection technique employed in this study is online documentation, which includes: identifying the relevant podcast episode, retrieving all public comments posted during the first 30 days after the upload, filtering the comments based on language (Arabic, Indonesian, or mixed), and transferring the selected comments into a research worksheet for analysis. This technique was chosen because it is effective for accessing authentic netizen discourse directly (Page, 2012).⁹ The data analysis technique employed in this study uses the three main metafunctions of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), namely the ideational metafunction (experiential and logical meanings), the interpersonal metafunction, and the textual metafunction. The analysis of social practice is also conducted to interpret how discourse reflects ideology, cultural identity, and power relations within intercultural interactions. The validity of the

⁶ Fairclough, 1995. *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*. London: Longman, 1995. Pp XIII, 265.

⁷ Cresweel (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

⁸ Androutsopoulos (2015). *Networked Multilingualism: Some Language Practices on Facebook and Their Implications*. International Journal of Bilingualism, Vo. 19 (2), 185-205.

⁹ Page, 2012.

data in this study is ensured through theoretical and researcher triangulation, as well as member checking of the interpretative results (Creswell, 2014).¹⁰

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Indonesian Arab Identity in Linguistic Strategies

The Arab–Indonesian community actively utilizes social media platforms such as YouTube—particularly through podcasts—to express and negotiate their unique cultural identity. A key aspect of this digital engagement involves specific linguistic strategies that blend elements of Arabic and Indonesian, reflecting their rich cultural heritage as well as their integration into contemporary Society.

Reproduction and Negotiation of Islamic Nationalism

Islamic nationalism is reflected in comments that express pride in Indonesia as the world's largest Muslim-majority country, often combined with prayers and hopes for national unity based on religion. Netizens frequently align their religious identity with national pride, often emphasizing Muslim solidarity in the Indonesian context. According to Pujiati et al. (2025), linguistic strategies such as code-switching between Arabic and Indonesian on social media can strengthen community solidarity, with the hashtag #ArabIndonesian serving as a unifying tool for Islamic nationalism in digital and social media spaces.¹¹

Therefore, reproduction has occurred through visual and textual elements that emphasize cultural heritage, such as the use of religious signs or symbols that blend Arab and local Indonesian contexts, creating a hybrid narrative that can strengthen a country's national identity.¹² Bouvier and Machin (2024) state that the challenges of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) on social media can further reinforce Islamic nationalism as a response to globalization. However, this nationalism can also be negotiated, as seen in subtle comments that critique the government or politics by referencing Islamic values, indicating that true nationalism should align with religious norms. In intercultural interactions, Arab netizens often praise Islamic practices in Indonesia, thus reinforcing global Muslim solidarity that complements rather than contradicts Indonesian nationalism.¹³ According to Nagao (2025) in his scholarly work, "Sociolinguistics of Islam," this negotiation involves linguistic adaptation to navigate the tension between

¹⁰ Creswell, 2014. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

¹¹ Pujiati, L. A. T. I. (2025). *Representing Arab-Indonesian Identity: Language and Cultural Narratives on Social Media*. Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics, Vol. 14, No. 3, January 2025, pp. 653–666, <https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v14i3.78286>

¹² Bouchier, G., & Machin, D. (2024). *Critical Discourse Analysis and the Challenges and Opportunities of Social Media*. Review of Communication, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2025.2463622>

¹³ Bhatt, I., Barnawi, Z., O., Ahmad, R. (2025). *Exploring a Sociolinguistics of Islam*. Applied Linguistics, 2025, XX, 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amaf043>



national loyalty and the global ummah, as seen in podcasts where Indonesian comments emphasize local tolerance.

This digital reproduction reflects trends in Indonesian social media, where Islamic nationalism is mobilized through hashtags and campaigns that blend piety with political narratives.¹⁴ Tamassy and Gering, in their research, argue that various Discourse Analysis approaches in digital spaces often reveal how nationalism is reproduced through repeated interactions, including in multicultural contexts such as Indonesia-Arab relations and vice versa. Furthermore, this Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) perspective shows that the ideational metafunction in these comments presents material and relational processes that construct the narrative of Islamic nationalism as a shared social experience.¹⁵ Webster (2020) emphasizes SFL as a means of negotiating national cohesion amid global influences.

Symbolic Power Relations: Arab vs Indonesia

The data reveals subtle dynamics of symbolic power, in which Arabic holds prestige as the language of the Qur'an and a marker of religious authenticity. Arab netizens' direct comments and use of pure Arabic expressions position Arab Islamic discourse as a point of reference, potentially exercising symbolic power (in Bourdieu's sense) over Indonesian interpretations. Indonesian netizens, on the other hand, incorporate Arabic loanwords and express admiration for Arab guests or podcasts, reflecting a respect for Arab cultural capital in religious matters.¹⁶ This symbolic power resembles the ideological manipulation seen in Western media, where Arab culture is frequently positioned as an authoritative source—a dynamic extended into the Indonesian context, where the use of Arabic further reinforces symbolic hierarchies.¹⁷

However, this is not complete hegemony: Indonesian comments emphasise local adaptation (for example, the moderate, tolerant form of Islam known as Nusantara), rejecting the perception of "Arabization" associated with more rigid interpretations.¹⁸ Royani et al. (2024), in their mapping of Arab discourse in Indonesian education theses, found that underrepresented themes such as local adaptation indicate resistance to Arab power, with education becoming a site of negotiation to maintain Indonesian identity. The podcast space thus becomes a site of negotiation where Indonesian netizens assert their

¹⁴ Tamassy, R., Gering, Z. (2021). *Rich Variety of DA Approaches Applied in Social Media Research: A Systematic Scoping Review*. Discourse Study. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17504813211043722>

¹⁵ Webster, J. J. (2020). *New Directions of Systemic Functional Linguistics*. Journal of World Languages. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21698252.2020.1769916>

¹⁶ Elewa, A. (2019). *A Critical Discourse Analysis of Ideological Translations of Arabic Quotations in English Language Newspapers*. Language and Intellectual Communication.

¹⁷ Kopf, S. (2024). *Unravelling Social Media Critical Discourse Studies (SM-CDS): Four Approaches to Studying Social Media Through the Critical Lens*. Critical Discourse Studies. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2025.2463622>

¹⁸ Royani, et.al. (2024). *Mapping Arabic Discourse: A Substance Analysis of a Master's Thesis on Arabic Education in Indonesia*. Ijaz Arabi Journal of Arabic Learning (Q1 in regional indexing, highly cited).

agency by blending Arab elements with national identity, rejecting total subordination while acknowledging Arab symbolic authority in global Islam.¹⁹ KhosraviNik (2025) outlines four SM-CDS approaches that highlight how symbolic power on social media is negotiated through user agency, as seen in Arab-Indonesian interactions, where visual symbols such as traditional clothing become tools of resistance. Pujiati et al. (2025) add that visual elements such as robes and Arabic calligraphy on social media navigate these power relations by affirming cultural visibility without total subordination.²⁰

Furthermore, this relationship is influenced by platform algorithms that promote Arab content as "authentic," thereby reinforcing power dynamics.²¹ Bouvier and Machin (2024) discuss the potential of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) on social media to reveal how this symbolic power creates imbalances, especially in intercultural contexts where Indonesia is often positioned as the "recipient" of Arab influence.

The Discourse of "Global Islam" Negates Local Identity

The discourse of global Islam—such as expressions of solidarity, collective prayers, and references to Palestine or Yemen—does not negate Indonesia's local identity; instead, it integrates and strengthens it. Comments often express universal Muslim brotherhood while also praising Indonesia's unique role as a large, moderate Muslim-majority nation. This aligns with concepts such as Islam Nusantara, which harmonizes global Islamic values with local cultural traditions, promoting tolerance and pluralism. Bhatt and Wang (2024), in their study of Chinese Muslim heritage literacy, draw a parallel: global discourse enriches the transmission of local knowledge rather than erasing it, much like how Indonesian comments blend global prayers with national context.²²

Far from erasing local identity, the discourse of the global ummah actually reinforces local pride—for example, by positioning Indonesia as a model for the world. However, tensions arise in critical or off-topic comments that hint at the perceived rigidity of "Arabization."²³ Rosita and Solihati (2024), in their CDA of digital advertising, show how global ideologies—such as those present in ads—can influence local perceptions, with global Islamic discourse in Indonesia often negotiated to avoid negating local identity. Overall, the comments portray a hybrid identity: global Islam enriches rather than sidelines the local Indonesian Muslim experience, fostering digital

¹⁹ Kopf, S. (2025). *Unravelling Social Media Critical Discourse Studies (SM-CDS): Four Approaches to Studying Social Media Through the Critical Lens*. Critical Discourse Studies. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2463622>

²⁰ Pujiati, L. A. T. I. (2025). *Representing Arab-Indonesian Identity: Language and Cultural Narratives on Social Media*. Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics, Vol. 14, No. 3, January 2025, pp. 653–666. <https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v14i3.78286>

²¹ Bouchier, G., & Machin, D. (2024). *Critical Discourse Analysis and the Challenges and Opportunities of Social Media*. Review of Communication, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2025.2463622>

²² Bhat, I., & Wang, X. (2024). *Heritage Literacy in the Lives of Chinese Muslims*. Applied Linguistics.

²³ Rosita, E., & Solihati, N. (2024). *Revealing Ideology Behind Taste: Critical Discourse Analysis of Digital Advertisements*. Social Media + Society



ukhuwah that connects rather than divides.²⁴ Nagao (2025) emphasizes that the sociolinguistics of Islam involves adapting global discourse to local contexts and preventing negation through linguistic negotiation.

Tamássy and Géring (2022) found, in their review, that Discourse Analysis (DA) on social media often reveals global-local tensions.²⁵, where such discourse does not necessarily negate but rather hybridizes identity. Meanwhile, the application of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) demonstrates how the textual metafunction in these comments creates cohesion between the global and the local.

Indonesian–Arabic Loanwords or Arabic–Indonesian Loanwords

The incorporation of loanword meanings and expressions of admiration for Indonesia are prominent features in the social media uploads of the Arab Post Podcast, which include comments from Arab–Indonesian netizens. Commonly used terms include *Masha Allah* (everything happens by the will of God), *Barakallah* (may God grant blessings), *Subhanallah* (an expression of praise and amazement toward Allah SWT), *Ustadz* (teacher), *Duktur* (a person holding a doctoral/PhD degree), and *Masjid* (a Muslim place of worship). For instance, one comment on the Arab Post YouTube Podcast expresses the admiration of Arab–Indonesian netizens for Indonesia, which means:

إندونيسيا بلد جميل جدا من حيث الطبيعة وشعبها طيبون يحبون العمل وعلى أخلاق، أتيت إلى إندونيسيا فوجدت الإسلام والمسلمون، زر إندونيسيا كي تعيش التجربة، حفظ الله هذا البلد شعبا وقيادة ♥.

"Indonesia is a wonderful country—both in its natural landscape and in the kindness, diligence, and noble character of its people. I came to Indonesia and found Islam and the Muslim community there. Visit Indonesia so that you may experience it for yourself. May Allah protect this country, its people, and its leaders." ♥ This statement is a highly positive expression of praise and prayer for Indonesia, describing the country's natural beauty, the kindness of its people, and the religious values found within it. The spread of Arabic loanwords in Indonesian has been widely documented, with many terms naturally integrated into everyday communication (Al-Jarf, 2021).²⁶ This linguistic phenomenon reflects the historical interactions between Indonesia and Arab traders, as well as the spread of Islam. According to Habil & Abd A'la (2017), the assimilation of Arabic

²⁴ Bhatt, I., Barnawi, Z., O., Ahmad, R. (2025). *Exploring a Sociolinguistics of Islam*. Applied Linguistics, 2025, XX, 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amaf043>

²⁵ Tamassy, R., Géring, Z. (2021). *Rich Variety of DA Approaches Applied in Social Media Research: A Systematic Scoping Review*. Discourse Study. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17504813211043722>

²⁶ Aljarf, R. (2021). "Mobile Audiobooks, Listening Comprehension and EFL College Students." International Journal of Research Granthaalayah, Vol. 9 No. 4 (2021): Volume 9 Issue 4: April 2021.

vocabulary into the Indonesian language signifies a deeply rooted cultural and religious connection.²⁷

In the context of podcasts, the use of these loanwords enables the Arab–Indonesian community to maintain a connection with their ancestral heritage while simultaneously engaging with the broader Indonesian audience.

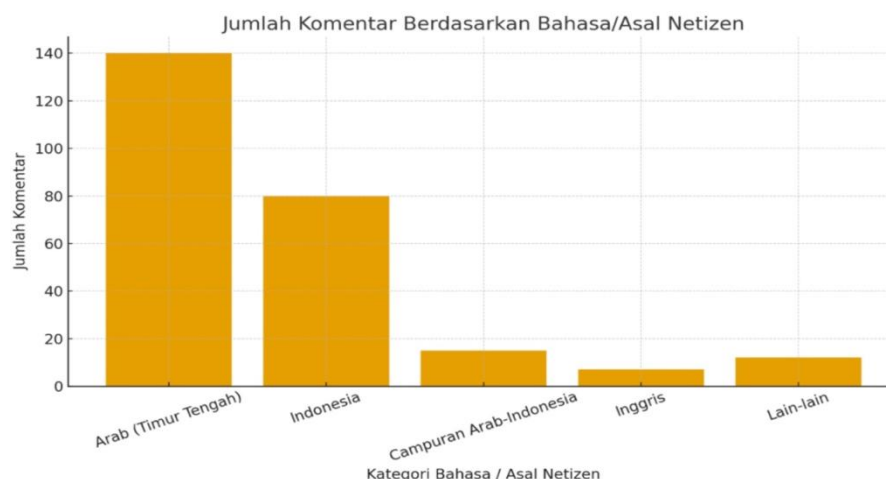


Figure 1. Bar Chart of the Number of Comments and the Origin of Netizens

Analysis Based on SFL Metafunctions

1. Ideational Meaning

Ideational meaning refers to the notion that meaning results from mental representation—that is, the ideas, concepts, or cognitive images formed in the mind when a person understands or uses language (Chitszar et al., 2011).²⁸ This analysis reveals that the comments of Arab–Indonesian netizens on the Arab Post YouTube Podcast featuring an Indonesian speaker on themes of Islam and nationalism reflect three main ideational processes: material, relational, and mental (Halliday, 1994).²⁹

- a) **The material process** represents actions or concrete events in the physical world—‘goings-on’ that involve observable physical changes (Gwilliams, 2015).³⁰ In semantics, the material process illustrates the changes or actions performed by a participant upon something. This is also clearly reflected in the comments of Arab–Indonesian netizens, which demonstrate concrete actions or expressions of national pride, as seen in statements such as: ‘I am proud to be an Indonesian citizen.’

²⁷ Habil, Abd A’la., 2017. “*The Relationship Between Language Attitudes and Self-Concept and Arabic Writing and Speaking Ability Among University Students in Indonesia.*” Disertasi pada Universitas Leipzig.

²⁸ Chitszar (2011).

²⁹ Halliday (1994). *An Introduction to Functional Grammar (2nd ed)*. London: Replikas Press.

³⁰ Laura Gwilliams & Lise Fontaine, (2015). “*Indeterminacy in Process Type Classification.*” *Functional Linguistic*, 2(8), DOI. 10.1186/240554-0021-x.



أنا من سكان إندونيسيا أفرح عندما أشاهد هذا إندونيسيا أكبر دولة إسلامية في العالم،“

الفديو، وما زلت أتعلم اللغة العربية حتى الآن. This expression demonstrates that language is not only a tool for communication but also a means of representing social experiences and religious nationalism. Similar to the findings of Pujiati et al. (2015), it reveals that Arab–Indonesian discourse on social media is rich in narratives grounded in nationalism and religious identity.³¹ This theory is further supported by the study of Sulis et al. (2025), which states that expressions such as ‘yuk hijrah bareng, ukhti’ or ‘barakallah akhi’ indicate an adaptation of Arab Islamic values into the language, expressed through Indonesian forms. These expressions contribute to the creation of a distinctive digital Islamic national narrative.³²

- b) **The relational process**, emerges when the speaker or commenter seeks to construct identity connectivity, for example

نحن اندونيسيا، نحب or الشعب الاندونيسي هو أطيب شعب مسلم،

وقد اوجب علينا باللغة العربية ليفهموا من تدريس الاسلامية .بقوه الاسلامية والخليفة❤

This statement constructs the social meaning that Indonesian and Arab Islamic identities cannot be separated. According to Eggins (2004), the relational process involves defining, classifying, and explaining the characteristics and attributes of a particular ethnic group in relation to another.³³

- c) **The mental process** can be seen in the comments of Arab–Indonesian netizens, expressed as prayers, hopes, or emotional evaluations, which are influenced by their linguistic intuition and cognitive language abilities. This enables them to express their linguistic attitudes toward themselves, others, and the wider community (JG Herder, 1803; WV Humboldt, 1835).³⁴ In the study, there are examples of expressions conveyed through the comment section of the podcast

اللهم رد المسلمين اليك ردا جميلا❤ . Hopefully, Indonesian اللهم احفظ إندونيسيا

subtitles or English subtitles can be added soon. This form illustrates how language, as a tool of spirituality and collective awareness, reinforces the concept of shared identity within the global Muslim community (Darvin & Norton, 2015).³⁵

³¹ Pujiati, 2019. “Indeks Kultural pada Penerjemahan Novel Eclipse: Sebuah Pendekatan Semiotik.” Al-Turas, Vol. 25 No. 2 November 2019, 323–342.

³² Sulis, A., Mursid, I. (2025). “Digital Human Capital Strategy: Improving Company Performance.” Journal of Information Systems, Applied, Management, Accounting, and Research. Vol. 9 No. 2, ISSN: 2598-8700.

³³ Eggins (2004). “An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL).” London: Continuum.

³⁴ G. Herder (1803).

³⁵ Darvin, N. (2015). *Identity and a Model of Investment in Applied Linguistics*.” Cambridge University Press, DOI. 10.1017/S0267190514000191.

2. Interpersonal Meaning

At the interpersonal level, this study finds that Indonesian netizen comments tend to display politeness, empathy, and expressions of prayer. In contrast, comments from Arab netizens are direct and emotionally expressive, particularly when they discuss Indonesia. This is because, on a personal level, individuals exhibit a high degree of loyalty in their personal relationships (Craig, 2015).³⁶

a) Mood and Modality

Indonesian netizens' comments tend to employ declarative mood and positive modality, such as: 'Barakallahu fiikum... May all Muslims unite, support one another in goodness, and lead the world with mercy for all creation. Aamiin

🙏. السلام عليكم من إندونيسيا، جزاك الله،” This indicates that Indonesian netizens possess strong social and religious solidarity. As noted in Wicaksono's (2024) study, Indonesian netizens tend to adopt a communal approach, readily mirror group emotions, and are easily influenced by the sentiments of the majority.³⁷

b) Social Relations (Tenor)

Indonesian speakers display deference politeness (politeness aimed at avoiding conflict), for example:

في هذا البلاد، ولكن نشعر الآن أنّ بلادنا أنا من اندونيسيا، ارحب واشكر الله خلقي في ليس بلدة طيبة كما دعانا في كل دعواتنا في بعض العبادات، رئيسنا وأرباب المناصب المركز وبعض المناطق ما عندهم فكرة قليلة في مصلحة شعب، ولكن عندهم مصلحة بل: أو شر ما نالو أنفسهم و اهلهم فقط وتسابق في زيادة المال لا يحتاجوا صالح وبثرواتها.... واحفظ اللهم أفغانستان وباكستان.... بحفظك اللهم، وقد تركت على أعدائك وأعدائهم 🙏🌍🙏.

In contrast, Arab speakers tend to exhibit solidarity politeness (honesty as a form of care). This perspective differs from the principles of cultural politeness patterns described by Brown and Levinson (1987) in their cross-cultural politeness theory. Brown and Levinson identify three main factors that influence the level of politeness: Power (P), Distance (D), and Rank of Imposition (R) (Brown & Levinson, 1987)³⁸.

³⁶ James Craig, 2015.

³⁷ Wicaksono, 2024. "Mengembangkan Ekosistem Seni dan Budaya di Ibu Kota Baru Indonesia tanpa Jawanisasi dengan Mengintegrasikan Budaya Paser." Jurnal Masyarakat Indonesia, Vo. 50 No. 2 Tahun 2024.

³⁸ Brown, P., S. Levinson (1987). "Politeness," Cambridge University Press.

**c) Islamic Solidarity**

In the comments of both Indonesian and Arab netizens, greetings, prayers, and well-wishes are include, such as:

حفظ الله إندونيسيا والشعب، الاندونيسى الشقيق تحياتي من السلام عليكم من اندونيسيا عاشت الله يحفظ جميع المسلمين والمسلمات في أي مكان. تحياتي لكم من إندونيسيا مصر

اتمنى تغير المذيع، اندونيسيا وأمل لهم التطور الدائم، This suggests that the interpersonal function operates as a means of fostering digital ukhuwah Islamiyyah, consistent with the findings of Millie & Baulch (2024), who discuss 'Islamic digital discourse' in Southeast Asia.³⁹ Therefore, there is a convergence between digital spaces and offline social practices in the study of ethics, piety, and identity within Indonesian digital culture.

3. Textual Meaning

The text structure in these netizen comments exhibits a theme-rheme pattern that strongly focuses on 'Indonesia, Islam, Arab, and Allah.' Textual meaning relates to how clauses are optimally organised as messages—that is, how specific sub-themes within the clauses are emphasised to align with the flow of discourse (Eggins, 2004).⁴⁰ Therefore, Halliday (1994) illustrates how speakers organise experiences within a message structure consisting of the principal Theme, lexical and grammatical cohesion, and the structure of digital text.⁴¹

a) Main Theme

In the results of this study, 'Indonesia' or 'Allah' is consistently placed at the beginning of sentences to emphasize the identity or religious values of the netizens. For example:

جهمورية إندونيسيا هي أكبر دولة مسلمة تنتشر فيها دعوة التوحيد في المستقبل إن شاء الله فتكون دورها في العالم أكبر وأكثر، أنا من إندونيسيا ارحب واشكر الله خلقني في هذا البلاد، ولكن نشعر الآن أنّ بلادنا ليس بلدة طيبة، كما دعانا في كل دعواتنا في بعض العبادات، رئيسنا وأرباب المناصب في المركز وبعض المناطق ما عندهم فكرة قليلة في مصلحة شعب، ولكن عندهم مصلحة أنفسهم وأهلهم فقط وتسابق في زيادة المال لا

³⁹ Millie, J., Baulch. (2024). "Beyond the Middle Classes, Beyond New Media: The Politics of Islamic Consumerism in Indonesia." Monash University, Vol. 48, No. 1, 1–18.

⁴⁰ Eggins (2004). "An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)." London: Continuum.

⁴¹ Halliday (1994). *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (2nd ed). London: Replikas Press.

يحتاجوا صالح أو شر ما نالو. السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته هي لغات ليس بلهجات
♥♥ حفظ الله إندونيسيا والشعب الإندونيسي الشقيق تحياتي من مصر^{٤٢}

The use of religious expressions at the beginning of sentences functions as a semantic cohesion strategy (Eggins, 2004). Religious clauses appearing at the beginning of a sentence serve not only a syntactic role but also textual and interpersonal functions, as they reflect the attitudes, ideologies or ideas, and faith of the netizens (Alfraidi, 2021).⁴³

b) Lexical and Grammatical Cohesion

In the process of analyzing netizen comments on the Arab Post YouTube platform, certain words such as Islam, Indonesia, prayer, Allah, and Palestine are repeatedly mentioned, indicating discourse cohesion. Kress & Van Leeuwen (2006), in their book *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*, which discusses visual grammar, reveal that images, colours, symbols, emojis, and layout all have grammatical functions similar to those of verbal language.⁴⁴

c) Digital Text Structure

The comments tend to be brief, to the point, and expressive, reflecting the characteristics of fragmented discourse typical of social media (Fairclough, 2003).

اتمنى تغير المذي

انشاء الله نشوفها قوة عظمة

دا في بطرول

هذا اندونيسي بس ليش يتكلم بلهجة يمنية

This structure illustrates that digital text is not solely written; rather, it is a combination of multiple multimodal elements (language, images, expressions, intonation, emojis, and digital context), encompassing narrative and verbal utterances, multimodal interactions, comments and responses among participants on the YouTube digital space, as well as the dynamics of linguistic politeness that emerge in the digital context (Keysa, 2025).⁴⁵ Wicaksono & Rahmah (2023) also

⁴² Eggins (2024). *An Introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)*. London: Continuum.

⁴³ Affraidi (2021). "A Systemic Functional of Theme in Modern Standard Arabic Texts." ALLS, ISSN: 2203-4714.

⁴⁴ Kress, Van Leeuwen., 2006. *Reading Images: the Grammar of Visual Design*. London: New York, Routledge.

⁴⁵ Keisya Thahirah, Mujid Farihul Amin, (2025). *Strategi Kesantunan Berbahasa dalam Percakapan Video Youtube Najwa Shihab: Kajian Pragmatik*. Jurnal Sastra, Bahasa, dan Budaya. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14710/wjsbb.2025.27544>.



explain that language variation on social media arises from the development of digital technology, which shapes communication forms.⁴⁶

4. Figure and Other Illustrations

Table 1. Results of Comment Analysis on the Arab Post Podcast

No.	Language Category	Number of Comments	Estimated Origin of Netizens	Percentage	General Description
1.	Arabic (Arab Netizens)	±140 Comments	Yaman, Arab Saudi, Mesir, Suriah, Kuwait, Oman, UEA, Maroko.	55%	Many praise Indonesia and refer to historical connections.
2.	Indonesian (Indonesian Netizens)	±80 Comments	Indonesia	32%	Predominantly offers greetings, prayers, historical clarifications, and Islamic nationalism.
3.	Arabic-Indonesian (Bilingual)	±15 Comments	Indonesia-Yaman, Mahasiswa Internasional	6%	Expressions of solidarity, prayers, and cultural-linguistic mixing.
4.	English (Global Netizens)	±7 Comments	Indonesia, Asia Selatan, Eropa	3%	International greetings and neutral comments.
5.	Others/Unidentified	±12 Comments	Not specified (anonymous account)	4%	Mix of emojis, non-thematic comments, or off-topic remarks.
Total Identified Comments			±254 Comments		

The table above details that, on average, comments on the Arab Post YouTube Podcast were made by Arab netizens (from the Middle East and North Africa) at 55%, Indonesian netizens at 32%, and mixed/global netizens at 13%. Based on the table, it can

⁴⁶ Wicaksono & Rahmah, 2023. *Analisis Variasi Bahasa (Alih Kode & Campur Kode) Kanal Youtube "Nihongo Mantappu"*. BASINDO: Jurnal Kajian Bahasa, Sastra Indonesia, dan Pembelajarannya. Vol. 7 No. 2, ISSN: 2579-3799.

also be mapped that most discussions focused on Islam and the history of Islamic da‘wah in Indonesia (25%), Muslim brotherhood and solidarity with Palestine/Yemen (20%), prayers and greetings (18%), criticism of politics and colonialism (15%), appreciation of the speakers and Arabic language in Indonesia (12%), and humor, emotions, and off-topic remarks (10%).

CONCLUSION

Based on an analysis of Arab Post Podcast comments from the first 30 days (approximately 100–200 comments), this study demonstrates how language constructs identity, power, and intercultural relations within Indonesian–Arab digital discourse. While the limited dataset constrains broader generalization, the findings reveal consistent patterns within this specific context. Islamic nationalism is reproduced through hybrid religious–national expressions, most notably the representation of Indonesia as the world’s largest Muslim-majority country, accounting for 25% of Islam/da‘wah-related comments. Discursive negotiation emerges in 15% of comments that critique local politics through Islamic ethical frameworks.

From an SFL perspective, 60% of ideational processes are relational, reinforcing the linkage between national and religious identities, while 20% are mental processes (e.g., prayers) that mediate tensions between nationalism and transnational Islamic solidarity. Power asymmetries are reflected linguistically: Arabic functions as a prestige religious language in 55% of Arab netizens’ comments, frequently positioning Arab interpretations as authoritative (e.g., formulaic expressions such as *Allahu Akbar*). In contrast, Indonesian netizens (32%) display symbolic resistance through localized hybridity, with 70% of their comments blending Arabic loanwords with Indonesian; however, only 13% of mixed comments remain ideologically neutral.

The discourse of “global Islam” does not displace local identity but is integrated in 20% of comments addressing Muslim solidarity (e.g., references to Palestine or Yemen), reinforcing Indonesia’s self-positioning as a moderate Islamic model. Hybrid identities such as *Islam Nusantara* are further supported by 18% of cohesive prayers and greetings. Cultural differences are also evident in politeness strategies, with deference dominating Indonesian comments (70%) compared to greater directness in Arab comments (50%), alongside the fragmented nature of digital discourse, including 10% off-topic or emotive content.

Theoretically, these findings extend CDA and SFL applications to podcast comment analysis by foregrounding intercultural power dynamics in digital religious discourse. Practically, they underscore the importance of intercultural digital literacy, culturally sensitive content production, and cultural diplomacy between Indonesia and the Arab world. Future research should expand the dataset across platforms and employ more extensive linguistic quantification to test the robustness of these patterns.

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