



The Transformation of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's Rhetoric: A Discourse Analysis of the Narrative of Qoul Qodim to Qoul Jadid

Muh.Mahsya Nawaffani

e-mail : nawaffani@iim.ac.id

Institut Islam Mambaul Ulum Surakarta, Indonesia

Muh.Fajar Shodiq

e-mail : muh.fajarshodiq@staff.uinsaid.ac.id

UIN Raden Mas Said Surakarta, Indonesia

Faruq Alhasbi

e-mail : alhasbi@iim.ac.id

Institut Islam Mambaul Ulum Surakarta, Indonesia

Wan Mohd Yusof Wan Chik

e-mail : wanmohdyusof@unisza.edu.my

Universitas Sultan Zainal Abidin Trengganu, Malaysia

Abstract: *This research examines the transformation of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's da'wah rhetoric from the qoul qodim narrative that rejects Pancasila to the qoul jadid that accepts and internalizes the country's core values. This topic was chosen because the paradigm shift in the da'wah of a figure who has been stigmatized as radical, even by the international community, reflects the dynamics of religious communication in the context of Islam Nusantara and the challenges of integrating religious values with national identity. The research was conducted using a descriptive-analytical qualitative method, employing a corpus of lectures, video recordings, and in-depth interviews with Ba'asyir and his family as primary data, supported by symbolic observation at the Al-Mukmin Ngruki Islamic boarding school. Critical discourse analysis and thematic analysis were applied to identify shifts in ethos, pathos, and logos strategies, as well as contemporary ijtihad processes that recontextualize religious argumentation. The research findings indicate that the legitimacy of da'wah is shifting from exclusive theological authority to historical-cultural authority, emotional language is moving from moral threats to collective empathy narratives, and rational arguments are being recontextualized thru references to the historical background of the nation's founding scholars. The combination of these three aspects strengthens the effectiveness of da'wah communication in a pluralistic society. In conclusion, Ba'asyir's rhetorical transformation demonstrates the importance of contextualizing and inculturating religious messages to bridge monotheism and Pancasila values without losing theological substance. Research recommendations include developing adaptive da'wah communication training for scholars and da'is, integrating the study of ulama history into the da'wah curriculum, and utilizing local symbols and digital media to strengthen the legitimacy and appeal of da'wah messages within the local cultural context.*

Keyword: *contemporary ijtihad, da'wah communication, discourse analysis, nusantara islam rhetorical transformation*



Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji transformasi retorika dakwah Abu Bakar Ba'asyir dari narasi qoul qodim yang menolak Pancasila menuju qoul jadid yang menerima dan meresapi nilai dasar negara. Topik ini dipilih karena perubahan paradigma dakwah tokoh yang selama ini terstigma radikal bahkan oleh dunia internasional tersebut mencerminkan dinamika komunikasi keagamaan dalam konteks Islam Nusantara dan tantangan integrasi nilai agama dengan identitas kebangsaan. Penelitian dilaksanakan dengan metode kualitatif deskriptif-analitis, menggunakan korpus ceramah, rekaman video, dan wawancara mendalam dengan Ba'asyir serta keluarga sebagai data primer, didukung observasi simbolik di Pesantren Al-Mukmin Ngruki. Analisis wacana kritis dan tematik diterapkan untuk mengidentifikasi pergeseran strategi ethos, pathos, dan logos, serta proses ijtihad kontemporer yang merekontekstualisasi argumentasi keagamaan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa legitimasi dakwah mengalami reposisi dari otoritas teologis eksklusif ke otoritas historis-kultural, bahasa emosional berpindah dari ancaman moral ke narasi empati kolektif, dan argumen rasional direkontekstualisasi melalui referensi sejarah ulama pendiri bangsa. Kombinasi ketiga aspek ini memperkuat efektivitas komunikasi dakwah dalam masyarakat plural. Kesimpulannya, transformasi retorika Ba'asyir membuktikan pentingnya kontekstualisasi dan inkulturasi pesan keagamaan untuk menjembatani tauhid dan nilai Pancasila tanpa kehilangan substansi teologis. Rekomendasi penelitian mencakup pengembangan pelatihan komunikasi dakwah adaptif bagi pengkaji dan dai, integrasi kajian sejarah ulama ke dalam kurikulum dakwah, serta pemanfaatan simbol lokal dan media digital untuk memperkuat legitimasi dan daya tarik pesan dakwah dalam konteks budaya lokal.

Kata Kunci: analisis wacana, ijtihad kontemporer, Islam Nusantara, komunikasi dakwah, transformasi retorika

Introduction

The transformation of da'wah rhetoric in the context of contemporary Indonesian Islam is a fascinating phenomenon to study, especially when linked to the dynamic shift in narrative from a more conservative perspective toward a more contextual and adaptive approach to local wisdom values and national identity.¹ This phenomenon is reflected in the evolution of religious figures' thinking, which has undergone changes in their perspectives and da'wah communication strategies, as documented in various studies on the transformation of Islamic da'wah thot in Indonesia.² Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, as one of the central figures in Indonesian Islamic discourse, has undergone a significant transformation in his da'wah rhetoric from the rigid and extreme narrative of qoul qodim (old opinion) toward qoul jadid (new

¹Tata Sukayat, "Implementing Da'wah Ethics on Social Media: Communication Strategies in the Digital Era," *Jurnal Dakwah* 24, no. 1 (2023).

² Marwa Ulfa, "Transformasi Komunikasi Dakwah dan Pengaruhnya terhadap Praktik Keagamaan Masyarakat Muslim di Indonesia," *Nahnu Journal* 2, no. 2 (2024)



opinion), which is more moderate and adaptable to the socio-political context of Indonesia. The concepts of *qoul qodim* and *qoul jadid*, originating from Imam Syafi'i's scholarly tradition, serve as a relevant conceptual framework for understanding the dynamics of religious that change, where sociological and contextual factors play an important role in the development of Islamic law and that.

Indonesia's diverse socio-political context, with Pancasila as the national foundation, Islam Nusantara as a model of contextual religious understanding, and local wisdom as the nation's cultural heritage, creates a unique space for the transformation of da'wah rhetoric.³ Islam Nusantara, as a paradigm for understanding Islam that integrates universal Islamic teachings with local Indonesian values, offers a moderate, inclusive, and tolerant model of da'wah.⁴ In the view of Islam Nusantara, Pancasila is seen as a manifestation of the values of Islam *ahlussunnah wal jamaah*, so defending the Unitary Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) and practicing Pancasila is a manifestation of implementing Islamic law. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's rhetorical transformation is important to study because it shows how da'wah communication strategies can adapt to contemporary socio-political dynamics without losing the essence of religious teachings, in line with the principles of Islamic communication that emphasize the *bi al-hikmah* approach, considering the context and characteristics of the audience.⁵

Local wisdom in the Indonesian context plays a strategic role as a bridge between universal Islamic teachings and the socio-cultural realities of society.⁶ Integrating local wisdom into da'wah not only serves as an effective communication strategy but also as an effort to contextualize Islamic teachings while respecting the cultural and traditional diversity of Indonesian society. This phenomenon of

³ Ellyatus Sholihah, "Islam Nusantara sebagai Model Pemikiran dan Pengamalan Islam Kontekstual," *Moral Journal* 2, no. 1 (2025)

⁴ A. Sarbini, "Paradigma Baru Pemikiran Dakwah Islam," *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 41, no. 5 (2010).

⁵ Deddy Mulyana, *Ilmu Komunikasi: Suatu Pengantar* (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2011)

⁶ Silvia Riskha Fabriar, "Managing Cultural Diversity through Communication," *Islamic Communication Journal* 8, no. 1 (2025)



transforming the rhetoric of da'wah from the old saying (qoul qadim) to the new saying (qoul jadid) reflects the adaptability of Islamic thought to changing times and socio-political contexts, demonstrating that Islam, as a dynamic religion, is capable of responding to contemporary challenges while maintaining its fundamental values.⁷ The study of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's rhetorical transformation is relevant in the context of da'wah communication strategies based on Islamic religious traditions and local wisdom, considering the ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity that requires an inclusive and tolerant da'wah approach⁸

This research identifies a significant research gap in the study of the transformation of da'wah rhetorical studies in Indonesia. Although various studies have examined separate aspects of this phenomenon, there is still a lack of research that comprehensively analyzes the changes in Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's da'wah rhetoric as a communication strategy based on local wisdom and Indonesian national identity. The lack of specific research examining the transformation of da'wah rhetoric from the perspective of qoul qadim to qoul jadid as a communication strategy based on local wisdom and national identity is a major issue that needs to be addressed. The majority of existing studies tend to focus on the theological or political aspects of religious figures' shifts in thinking, but have not sufficiently explored the communicative and rhetorical dimensions of these transformations.⁹ Furthermore, the absence of a comprehensive analytical framework for understanding how local wisdom and national identity can be integrated into da'wah communication strategies presents a unique challenge, as previous studies have primarily addressed Islam Nusantara and local wisdom separately from communication rhetoric analysis, thus failing to provide a holistic understanding of how these elements can be synergized in contemporary da'wah practice.

This research aims to describe and analyze how the transformation of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's da'wah rhetoric is identified in his corpus of sermons and

⁷Arief Rachman, "Transformation of Religious Authority in the Digital Era," *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 45, no. 1 (2025)

⁸Sa'ad Sadullah, "The Role of Nusantara Ulama Dawah in Islamic Moderation: A Critique of Blackwater and Peripheral in Islamic Studies," *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 45, no. 1 (2025)

⁹Jihan Afri Batubara, "Peran Strategis Retorika Dakwah dalam Membangun Komunikasi Politik yang Efektif di Masyarakat Muslim Indonesia," *Al-Sulthaniyah Journal* 7, no. 3 (2025)



statements, with a focus on the shift from the qoul qodim narrative to the qoul jadid as a significant religious communication phenomenon in the contemporary Indonesian context. The first objective is to identify rhetorical elements based on Aristotle's classical theory (ethos, pathos, logos) that have undergone changes in the transformation and how these changes are manifested linguistically and practically in his da'wah discourse.¹⁰ This research also aims to understand how Abu Bakar Ba'asyir explains the process of transforming his narrative based on in-depth interviews, including the factors influencing his change in thinking and the hermeneutic methodology used in re-reading texts and contexts. This analysis will contribute theoretically and practically to understanding how da'wah can be more effective in diverse societies like Indonesia, considering complex cultural, social, and political dimensions, and integrating communication strategies based on Islamic religious traditions and local wisdom.

Method

This research employs a qualitative design with a descriptive-analytical approach to deeply and contextually explore the transformation of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's da'wah rhetoric. The qualitative approach was chosen because it aligns with the research objectives, which aim to understand the complex and dynamic phenomenon of the transformation of da'wah narratives, and to interpret the meaning contained in lecture discourse and the statements of research subjects.¹¹ Qualitative design allows researchers to delve into a deep understanding of the process of rhetorical change from qoul qodim to qoul jadid without being limited to statistical measurements, but rather focusing on interpreting the meaning and socio-cultural context underlying the transformation. The descriptive-analytical method is used to systematically describe the characteristics of rhetorical transformation and analyze its implications for contemporary da'wah communication strategies.¹² This approach allows researchers to identify patterns

¹⁰U. Hasanah, "Rhetoric in Islamic Tradition Paradigm and Its Development," *Komunika: Jurnal Dakwah dan Komunikasi* 15, no. 2 (2021)

¹¹John Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2014)

¹²Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R&D* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2013)



of narrative change, factors influencing transformation, and the communication dynamics occurring within the Indonesian socio-political context. Qualitative research with this design also provides flexibility to explore phenomena that have not been widely studied, particularly in the context of the transformation of controversial religious figures' thinking in Indonesia.¹³

Setting and Participants

This study focuses on Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's discourse corpus, including sermon texts, preaching recordings, and in-depth interviews with research subjects. The data source for the lectures was collected from social media and online media, which documented the narratives of qoul qodim and qoul jadid between the years 2000 and 2025. The selection of this setting was based on the fact that Ngruki is the main base of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's da'wah activities, so the recordings and transcripts stored there authentically reflect the continuity and changes in da'wah rhetoric.¹⁴ Additionally, the interview with Abu Bakar Ba'asyir was conducted at his home within the pesantren complex, ensuring a conducive and respectful dialog atmosphere while adhering to security protocols. This setting allows researchers to directly access the context of discourse production, from text preparation to rhetorical delivery, thus supporting in-depth critical discourse analysis.

The sole participant in this study is Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, serving as the main narrator of the transformation in his da'wah rhetoric. Semi-structured interviews with him were designed to explore the theological justifications, cognitive processes, and strategic considerations behind the shift from qoul qodim to qoul jadid.¹⁵ Because the research focus is the discourse analysis of da'wah narratives, the involvement of other participants, such as congregants or the community, is not necessary; in fact, one-way interviews with these authoritative subjects provide essential first-hand information for understanding the holistic evolution of da'wah

¹³ Matthew Miles, Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldaña, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2019).

¹⁴ John Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2014)

¹⁵ Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2015).



rhetoric.¹⁶ The interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim, then analyzed alongside the corpus of lecture texts using critical discourse analysis, which considers the aspects of ethos, pathos, and logos within the context of Islam Nusantara. The selection of this single participant is methodologically justified because only Abu Bakar Ba'asyir possesses epistemic authority over the changes in the da'wah narrative that are the focus of the study, thus facilitating the researcher's data triangulation between his oral narratives and written texts.

Data Collection Instruments and Techniques

Primary data collection was conducted using two main techniques: in-depth interviews and text document analysis, which were selected based on the characteristics of the phenomenon being studied and the research objectives to be achieved. In-depth interviews were conducted with Abu Bakar Ba'asyir as the main research subject, aiming to explore his understanding, experiences, and reflections regarding the transformation process of his da'wah rhetoric from qoul qodim to qoul jadid. Semi-structured interview techniques were chosen to allow the subject to freely and deeply express his views, with guiding questions covering key themes such as factors driving changes in thinking, the hermeneutic process in understanding the history of the independence struggle, and the ijtihad methodology used in reconstructing the da'wah narrative.¹⁷ The interviews were digitally audio-recorded after obtaining informed consent from the subjects, and then transcribed verbatim to ensure data accuracy and facilitate in-depth thematic analysis. In addition to interviews, this research utilizes text document analysis, consisting of a corpus of lectures, recorded statements, and written documents by Abu Bakar Ba'asyir from the qoul qodim and qoul jadid periods. These serve as secondary data sources, providing historical and narrative context for the changes in da'wah.¹⁸

¹⁶Matthew Miles, Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldaña, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2019).

¹⁷Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2015).

¹⁸Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology," *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (2006)



The justification for using a combination of interviews and text document analysis is based on the need to obtain comprehensive and in-depth data about the complex phenomenon of rhetorical transformation. Interviews provide direct access to the subject's thoughts and reflections on the transformation process, while document analysis offers empirical evidence of concrete changes in the da'wah narrative that can be verified and analyzed objectively. Triangulation between interview data and text documents strengthens the validity and reliability of the research findings, while also providing a holistic perspective on the transformation of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's da'wah rhetoric.¹⁹ The data collection instruments were designed with consideration for the sensitivity of the research topic and the characteristics of the subjects, so that they can facilitate in-depth information disclosure while maintaining research ethics and respecting the subjects' privacy. This approach allows researchers to explore not only the textual aspects of rhetorical transformation but also the cognitive and emotional dimensions underlying these changes, leading to a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

Data analysis

Data analysis in this study uses a critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach combined with thematic analysis to identify patterns of rhetorical transformation in the collected data corpus. Critical discourse analysis was chosen for its ability to uncover the hidden meaning structures within texts and discourses, as well as to understand the relationship between language, power, and the socio-political context underlying the transformation of da'wah rhetoric.²⁰ The analysis process begins with the data reduction stage, which is the process of selecting and categorizing data from interview transcripts and text documents based on their relevance to the research objectives. The reduced data was then organized using an analytical framework that integrated Aristotle's rhetorical theory (ethos, pathos,

¹⁹Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 5th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2017)

²⁰Teun A. van Dijk, *Discourse and Knowledge: A Sociocognitive Approach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).



logos) with the concepts of qoul qodim and qoul jadid from the Islamic jurisprudence tradition. The next step is data presentation thru the development of themes and narrative patterns emerging from the data, with a focus on identifying changes in rhetorical strategies, factors influencing the transformation, and the communicative implications of these changes.²¹ Thematic analysis was applied to identify the main themes in the rhetorical transformation, including shifts in argumentation, changes in the target audience, and the evolution of persuasive strategies used during the qoul qodim and qoul jadid periods.

The validity and reliability of the analysis were strengthened thru the application of data triangulation, which combined multiple sources of evidence from interviews and text documents to verify the consistency of the research findings. Methodological triangulation was also applied by using different analytical approaches (discourse analysis and thematic analysis) to analyze the same data, thus increasing the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings.²² The verification process was conducted thru member checking with the research subjects to ensure the accuracy of the interview data interpretation, as well as expert validation thru consultation with discourse analysis and da'wah communication experts to validate the research findings. The conclusion-drawing stage is carried out after data saturation is reached, which is when no new themes or patterns emerge from the data, thus ensuring that the analysis has reached adequate depth and breadth.²³ The entire data analysis process was conducted using an iterative approach that allowed the researcher to move back and forth between the data, analysis, and interpretation to produce a deep and comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's da'wah rhetorical transformation.

²¹Rustandi, "Analisis Wacana Pesan Komunikasi Dakwah Ali Syari'ati," *Anida (Aktualisasi Nuansa Ilmu Dakwah)* 17, no. 2 (2017)

²²Imam Gunawan, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif: Teori dan Praktik* (Jakarta: PT Bumi Aksara, 2016)

²³Matthew Miles, Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldaña, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2019).



Results & Discussion

Data analysis reveals four main themes that address the research objective of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's rhetorical transformation from qoul qodim to qoul jadid. First, in the realm of ethos, a significant shift was found in the narrator's legitimacy: the qoul qodim narrative affirmed religious authority that rejected Pancasila as idolatry, while in the qoul jadid phase, there was an attempt to reconstruct the image of national hero scholars by emphasizing the alignment of the value of monotheism and the state's foundation.²⁴ The codes "historical legitimacy" and "national legitimacy" appear repeatedly in the post-2010 lecture corpus, marking a rhetorical strategy that more closely aligns religious and state authority. Second, in terms of pathos, the qoul qodim narrative uses harsh emotional language and emphasizes moral threats, while the qoul jadid adopts empathetic language, highlighting a narrative of compassion toward the nation and the ummah. The codes "collective empathy" and "brotherhood narrative" were identified in the interview transcripts, where Abu Bakar Ba'asyir emphasized the importance of educating the heart before criticizing the political system.²⁵

Third, in terms of logos, the initial argument of the qoul qadim was based on evidence rejecting Pancasila as a product of "thogut," while in the qoul jadid phase, there was a recontextualization of verses of monotheism to support national unity. The terms "reinterpretation of verses" and "contextual ijtihad" frequently appear in recent da'wah recordings, indicating a systematic effort to restructure religious arguments to be relevant to Indonesia's socio-political dynamics.²⁶ Fourth, the interview with Abu Bakar Ba'asyir revealed the theme of the cognitive transformation process: the subject mentioned historical reflection on the contributions of the nation's founding scholars and internal dialog with his students as driving factors for narrative change. The codes "historical reflection" and

²⁴Yulia Rahmi, "Qaul Qadim and Qaul Jadid: Understanding Social Factors Influence in Islamic Law Development," *Al Hurriyah: Jurnal Hukum Islam* 9, no. 2 (2024)

²⁵Marwa Ulfa, "Transformasi Komunikasi Dakwah dan Pengaruhnya terhadap Praktik Keagamaan Masyarakat Muslim di Indonesia," *Nahnu Journal* 2, no. 2 (2024)

²⁶Yulia Rahmi, "Qaul Qadim and Qaul Jadid: Understanding Social Factors Influence in Islamic Law Development," *Al Hurriyah: Jurnal Hukum Islam* 9, no. 2 (2024)



"hermeneutic dialog" appear in the interview narratives, confirming that the transformation is not merely rhetorical but also epistemological.²⁷

Overall, these findings illustrate the dynamics of the transformation of da'wah rhetoric as a structured process involving changes in legitimation strategies (ethos), emotional language (pathos), rational arguments (logos), and the cognitive internalization process of the subject, thus providing new insights into the adaptation of da'wah communication strategies in the context of Islam Nusantara.

Interpretation of Ethos Transformation

The transformation of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's ethos moved from exclusive theological authority in the *qoul qodim* phase, which affirmed the purity of monotheism thru opposition to Pancasila, toward historical-cultural authority in the *qoul jadid* phase, which linked the credibility of scholars with the nation's struggle heritage and the *ijtihad* of the nation's founders. This shift marks a relocation of the source of legitimacy from normative-doctrinal claims of truth to claims of validity rooted in the historical context of Indonesian Islam and its convergence with the principle of the Oneness of God, thus building an ethos thru the continuity between monotheism and religious nationalism.²⁸ Within the framework of classical rhetoric, ethos is not merely the moral character of the speaker but rather the performativity of credibility recognized by the community, and in the context of Islamic Nusantara, this ethos implies the integration of local values with religious authority as the basis of public trust.²⁹ The data corpus shows that Ba'asyir repositioned himself from a "guardian of sharia purity" to an "interpreter of clerical heritage" who combined scholarly authority with historical authority, thus his credibility no longer rested on opposition, but on the reconciliation of values.³⁰ This articulation seems consistent in his statement: "Indonesia based on Pancasila is why

²⁷Matthew Miles, Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldaña, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2019).

²⁸ Umdatul Hasanah, "Rhetoric in Islamic Tradition Paradigm and Its Development," *Komunika: Jurnal Dakwah dan Komunikasi* 15, no. 2 (2021)

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰Yulia Rahmi, "Qaul Qadim and Qaul Jadid: Understanding Social Factors Influence in Islamic Law Development," *Al Hurriyah: Jurnal Hukum Islam* 9, no. 2 (2024)



it was approved by religious scholars, because its foundation is monotheism... I used to consider Pancasila to be polytheistic, but after I studied it... it's impossible for religious scholars to approve a polytheistic national foundation".³¹ Thus, the ethos of qoul jadid is not a denial of the commitment to monotheism, but rather a repositioning of the source of legitimacy by making the ijtiḥad of scholars and the history of independence the anchor of the credibility of contextual da'wah.

This repositioning of the ethos was reinforced by Ba'asyir's normative declaration, which linked theological evaluation with the intentions and authority of the founding scholars of the nation thru the scheme of "ijtiḥad of scholars, legitimacy of Pancasila, tawḥid," which implied the normalization of Pancasila as a national moral basis with tawḥidic values.³² His key statement emphasized: "It is impossible for scholars to accept something false... so I agree that Pancasila is essentially based on monotheism... [however] its implementation refers to the first principle, Belief in the One and Only God".³³ Theoretically, this aligns with reading ethos as credibility supported by the alignment between words, public reason, and symbolic practices, thus rhetorical authority is cultivated thru the congruence of values, history, and the goals of the da'wah. The historical-cultural dimension of the qoul jadid ethos is also reinforced by the testimony of Ba'asyir's son, Abdurrahim Ba'asyir, regarding the opening of access to knowledge and verificative dialog: "There were many developments in information... and then that could change the ijtiḥad that already existed"³⁴, which marks the ethos as the result of a hermeneutic process on the collective memory of Indonesian Islam. In other words, Ba'asyir's legitimacy in the qoul jadid phase transformed from an ethos based on doctrinal exclusivity to an ethos based on historical coherence and public

³¹CNN Indonesia, "Abu Bakar Baasyir Akui Pancasila, Dasarnya Tauhid," August 3, 2022, <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20220803061930-12-829512>

³²Umdatul Hasanah, "Rhetoric in Islamic Tradition Paradigm and Its Development," *Komunika: Jurnal Dakwah dan Komunikasi* 15, no. 2 (2021)

³³Wawancara pribadi dengan Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. (2023, June 16). Ruang studi, Kompleks Pesantren Al-Mukmin Ngruki, Sukoharjo

³⁴Wawancara pribadi dengan Abdurrahim Ba'asyir. (2023, June 16). Rumah area Kompleks Pesantren Al-Mukmin Ngruki, Sukoharjo



acceptability within the horizon of Islam Nusantara, without relinquishing his claim to the truth of monotheism.³⁵

This shift in ethos was also manifested thru symbolic actions that affirmed the narrative of reconciliation, such as participating in the August 17th ceremony at the Al-Mukmin Ngruki Islamic boarding school. This was a public performance of national ethos aligned with monotheism, thus presenting the credibility of da'wah as an ethical practice of community rather than just a verbal claim.³⁶ From the perspective of local wisdom-based da'wah strategy, this symbolic action broadens the "bridge of trust" between religious authorities and the national community, thus ethos serves as social capital to affirm that monotheism can be articulated within the political-ethical space of Pancasila. Such a construction of ethos is highly relevant to the model of Islam Nusantara as an ethical community, meaning a moral community that interprets the universal values of Islam thru the lens of local culture and national history, making the source of da'wah legitimacy intersubjective and contextual. With this configuration, the ethos of qoul jadid presents a credible communicator profile because it is theologically coherent, historically reasonable, and culturally acceptable, while also maintaining the da'wah horizon on the principle of "bi al-hikmah" in a pluralistic society. Ultimately, it was this repositioning of ethos that allowed Ba'asyir's conciliatory message to cross from the apologetic arena to the pedagogical arena, that is, from merely defending monotheism to teaching the public about the harmony of values, history, and nationality within the framework of contextual da'wah.

The Meaning of Pathos Change in Da'wah

The shift in pathos in Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's rhetoric appears to be a transition from the language of moral threats and the dichotomy between monotheism and

³⁵Yulia Rahmi, "Qaul Qadim and Qaul Jadid: Understanding Social Factors Influence in Islamic Law Development," *Al Hurriyah: Jurnal Hukum Islam* 9, no. 2 (2024)

³⁶*Ibid.*



false deities toward an empathetic narrative that links monotheism with national consciousness, making the emotional atmosphere of the da'wah more "inclusive" than "confrontational." In the qoul qodim phase, the exploited emotions are predominantly fear, anger, and the assertion of identity boundaries, while in the qoul jadid, the projected emotions are serenity, collective pride, and religious gratitude that connects the community with the history of scholars and the nation.³⁷ Ba'asyir's key statement marks this shift: "Indonesia based on Pancasila is why it was approved by the ulama, because its foundation is monotheism... I used to consider Pancasila to be polytheistic, but after I studied it... it's impossible for the ulama to approve a polytheistic national foundation".³⁸ Its emotional traces are also evident in symbolic practices, such as the August 17th ceremony in Ngruki and the call for a gesture of gratitude that produces a collective sense of "calm" thru shared celebration rather than confrontational rhetoric.³⁹ Thus, the pathos of the new saying serves as an affective framework that normalizes the acceptance of Pancasila within the horizon of monotheism, while simultaneously shifting the emotional relationship between preachers and their congregations from fear to closeness and trust.⁴⁰

Theoretically, this shift is consistent with Aristotle's framework of pathos, which states that emotions influence audience decisions, and a speaker who can put the audience in the right frame of mind will increase the receptivity of the message. Research on emotional persuasion shows that negative emotions like fear can be effective when accompanied by efficacy information, but positive/affiliative emotions, empathy, hope, and collective pride tend to foster more sustainable engagement and commitment, especially when the message goals are integrative.

³⁷Marwa Ulfa, "Transformasi Komunikasi Dakwah dan Pengaruhnya terhadap Praktik Keagamaan Masyarakat Muslim di Indonesia," *Nahnu Journal* 2, no. 2 (2024)

³⁸*CNN Indonesia*, "Abu Bakar Baasyir Akui Pancasila, Dasarnya Tauhid," August 3, 2022, <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20220803061930-12-829512>

³⁹*Tempo*, "Abu Bakar Baasyir Ikut Upacara HUT RI di Ponpes Al-Mukmin Ngruki," (17 Agustus 2022), <https://www.tempo.co/politik/abu-bakar-baasyir-ikut-upacara-hut-ri-di-ponpes-al-mukmin-ngruki-306263>

⁴⁰M.M. Nawaffani, *Pandangan Masyarakat terhadap Perubahan Ustadz Abu Bakar Ba'asyir Mengenai Transformasi Penerimaan Pancasila* (Tesis, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, tahun 2023)



Additionally, narratives that shift the focus from threats to shared concern are more effective in "transporting" audiences emotionally, thereby reducing resistance, especially on sensitive issues related to identity and ideology. In the context of da'wah (Islamic preaching), the choice of empathetic pathos aligns with the principle of bi al-hikmah, which guides the adjustment of affect to the audience's culture, thus persuasion occurs thru the reinforcement of shared values rather than polarization.⁴¹ As a result, the rhetoric of qoul jadid absorbed emotions compatible with the horizon of Islam Nusantara, which is warm, cool, and binding, thereby increasing the chances of internalizing the message within a diverse community.

This dimension of pathos is also intertwined with the framework of affective solidarity, which is a shared emotional bond that strengthens loyalty, a sense of belonging, and coordination of actions within a religious-national community.⁴² The family's clarifying phrase, "He rejected it if Pancasila was pitted against Islam," shifted emotions from sectarian anger to cohesive sentiment, fostering solidarity thru recognition of the shared values they both uphold: monotheism and unity.⁴³ Collective practices such as independence ceremonies and thanksgiving serve as "affective rituals" that reinforce a sense of community, convert pathos into an emotional habitus that fosters support, and erode stigma.⁴⁴ Comparative evidence suggests that shared emotions, including guilt cultivated into intergenerational support, can mediate attitudinal distance and enhance solidarity on political-moral issues.⁴⁵ Therefore, the cultivation of pathos that prioritizes empathy and collective pride explains why the rhetoric of qoul jadid is more effective in embracing a diverse audience without abandoning normative commitment to monotheism.

⁴¹Umdatul Hasanah, "Rhetoric in Islamic Tradition Paradigm and Its Development," *Komunika: Jurnal Dakwah dan Komunikasi* 15, no. 2 (2021)

⁴²James M. Jasper, "Emotions and Social Movements: Twenty Years of Theory and Research," *Annual Review of Sociology* 37 (2011)

⁴³ *CNN Indonesia*, "Abu Bakar Baasyir Akui Pancasila, Dasarnya Tauhid," August 3, 2022, <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20220803061930-12-829512>

⁴⁴Hasanddin Aco, "Untuk Pertama Kalinya, Ustaz Abu Bakar Ba'asyir Mengikuti Upacara HUT Kemerdekaan RI," *Tribunnews*, August 17, 2022, <https://www.tribunnews.com/nasional/2022/08/17/untuk-pertama-kalinya-ustaz-abu-bakar-baasyir-mengikuti-upacara-hut-kemerdekaan-ri>

⁴⁵Gary Tang, "Affective Solidarity: How Guilt Enables Cross-Generational Support for Political Radicalization in Hong Kong," *Japanese Journal of Political Science* 22, no. 4 (2021)



Recontextualization of Logos and Contemporary Ijtihad

The transformation of logos in Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's rhetoric demonstrates a fundamental shift from deductive-normative arguments sourced literally from the Quran and Hadith to inductive-contextual arguments that integrate history, the objectives of Islamic law, and the socio-political realities of Indonesia.⁴⁶ In the qoul qodim phase, his argumentative construction relied on textual evidence that affirmed the supremacy of Islamic law and rejected all forms of non-Islamic political systems as thagut, with the argument that "this concept of the religion of Islam can only reach its goal if the way of practicing it follows the system established by Allah". However, in the qoul jadid phase, logos underwent reorientation thru the application of contemporary ijtihad that considered the historical context of the independence struggle and the role of scholars in formulating Pancasila as part of a rational argument. His key statement: "The reason Indonesia is based on Pancasila is why it was approved by religious scholars, because its foundation is monotheism, the Oneness of God... it's impossible for religious scholars to approve a state foundation that is polytheistic, because religious scholars must have sincere intentions".⁴⁷ demonstrates the application of logos, combining theological premises with historical evidence to arrive at a conclusion that legitimizes Pancasila. This transformation aligns with Bitzer's theory of situational rhetoric, which emphasizes that rhetorical arguments must be responsive to exigence or contextual needs to produce effective persuasion.⁴⁸

This recontextualization of logos also reflects the application of contemporary ijtihad methods that combine ijtihad intiqai (selecting the opinions of previous scholars) with ijtihad insha'i (deriving new laws) to produce arguments that are more adaptable to contemporary realities. Abdurrahim Ba'asyir explained this epistemological process, stating, "Many developments in information may have only recently become available... and then this could change the ijtihad that already

⁴⁶Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1, no. 1 (1968)

⁴⁷*Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1, no. 1 (1968)



existed"⁴⁹, indicating that the transformation of arguments is not merely a change of opinion but an evolution of methodology in reading texts and contexts. Within the framework of modern hermeneutics, this approach aligns with the principle of contextualization, which considers historical and social horizons in interpreting meaning. Thus, the logos of qoul jadid does not abandon the authority of the text but expands the space for interpretation thru the integration of historical and sociological data. The ijtiḥad method applied by Ba'asyir also demonstrates the characteristics of contemporary ijtiḥad, which is flexible and adaptable, allowing theological arguments to be aligned with the need for social harmony without losing the essence of tawḥid as the argumentative foundation. Thus, the reconstruction of logos in the qoul jadid phase reflects the ability of da'wah rhetoric to adapt to contextual complexities thru a methodology of ijtiḥad that is responsive to the challenges of the times.

The significance of this shift in logos lies in its ability to overcome the dichotomy between textual authority and contextual demands thru the framework of maqashid al-shariah, which prioritizes the welfare of the community and social harmony. Ba'asyir's argument that "the first principle contained in Pancasila refers to 'Laa ilaha illallah', meaning there is no god but Allah"⁵⁰ demonstrates the application of logos, connecting universal theological principles with local national symbols thru analogy and logical inference. This approach aligns with Aristotle's theory of logos, which emphasizes the importance of rational arguments (logos) as a means of persuasion, connecting premises acceptable to the audience with the speaker's desired conclusion.⁵¹ In the context of contemporary da'wah, this kind of recontextualization of the logos allows religious messages to resonate with diverse audiences without compromising theological integrity, while also facilitating constructive dialog between religious values and national identity. Furthermore, the

⁴⁹Wawancara pribadi dengan Abdurrahim Ba'asyir. (2023, June 16). Rumah area Kompleks Pesantren Al-Mukmin Ngruki, Sukoharjo

⁵⁰Wawancara pribadi dengan Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. (2023, June 16). Ruang studi, Kompleks Pesantren Al-Mukmin Ngruki, Sukoharjo

⁵¹C. Rapp, "Aristotle's Rhetoric," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Winter 2002 ed., <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-rhetoric/>



transformation of Ba'asyir's logos shows that contemporary ijtihad not only serves as a tool for adapting Islamic law to social changes, but also as a rhetorical strategy that enhances the effectiveness of da'wah communication in a plural society like Indonesia. This entire process of recontextualization confirms that logos in da'wah rhetoric can function as a bridge between traditional authority and contemporary relevance, enabling the transmission of authentic religious values that are also responsive to the dynamics of the times.

Strategic Implications and Contributions to the Theory and Practice of Da'wah

Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's rhetorical transformation from qoul qodim to qoul jadid has significant strategic implications for the development of contextual da'wah communication in a multicultural society like Indonesia. Based on the research findings, a rhetorical strategy that integrates historical legitimacy (ethos), collective empathy (pathos), and contextual argumentation (logos) is proven to be more effective in achieving resonance with diverse audiences, aligning with the principles of contextualization and inculturation in religious communication.⁵² Ba'asyir's statement, "but unfortunately, this was used as a tool to sow discord and divide the community, leading to many people opposing it. Yes, I said, this can't be arbitrary, this is the ijtihad of the scholars, so I want to accept this ijtihad"⁵³ shows an awareness of the complexity of da'wah communication in a sensitive socio-political context. These strategic implications support the theory of adaptive da'wah communication, which emphasizes the importance of tailoring messages to the local context to improve the effectiveness of religious communication.⁵⁴ This transformation also confirms the theory of inculturation in religious communication, where the universal values of religion can be articulated thru local

⁵²A. A. Okunade, "New Testament Contextualization and Inculturation in Nigeria," *Pharos Journal of Theology* 103, no. 2 (2022).

⁵³Wawancara pribadi dengan Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. (2023, June 16). Ruang studi, Kompleks Pesantren Al-Mukmin Ngruki, Sukoharjo

⁵⁴M. Muklisin, M. S. Ismail, A. Hidayat, and M. Debit, "Adapting Da'wah Communication Strategies for Traditional Society," *ICESH: International Conference on Education, Social and Humanities* 4, no. 1 (2023).



cultural symbols and narratives without losing their theological substance.⁵⁵ Thus, this model of rhetorical transformation provides a strategic framework for preachers to develop da'wah communication that is responsive to contemporary socio-cultural dynamics while maintaining the authority and relevance of religious messages.

The theoretical contribution of this research lies in the development of the Da'wah Rhetorical Transformation Model, which integrates three systematic phases: historical reflection as a basis for legitimacy, value contextualization as an adaptation strategy, and rhetorical reconstruction as a communicative practice. This model expands the literature on da'wah communication by integrating Aristotle's classical rhetorical theory with contemporary *ijtihad* concepts and situational rhetoric theory to explain the mechanisms of adapting da'wah messages to changing socio-political contexts.⁵⁶ Within the theoretical framework of Islamic communication, this model aligns with the principle of *bi al-hikmah*, which emphasizes adapting communication strategies to the characteristics and needs of the audience.⁵⁷ Abdurrahim Ba'asyir explained the epistemological process of transformation: "When we return with correct and broad knowledge, there will be balance in our views, regardless of who we are. That is the effort that will be made"⁵⁸, which emphasizes that rhetorical transformation is the result of a continuous process of learning and reflection. Methodologically, this research contributes thru a triangulation approach that combines discourse analysis, in-depth interviews, and participant observation to holistically understand the phenomenon of rhetorical transformation.⁵⁹ This model also fills a gap in da'wah communication studies by providing a framework that can be used to analyze similar transformations in other religious figures within different national contexts.

⁵⁵ I. H. Alamyar and U. Halwati, "The Theory of Communicative Action in Da'wah," *ICODEV: Indonesian Community Development Journal* 4, no. 2 (2023)

⁵⁶ Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1, no. 1 (1968)

⁵⁷ F. Faustyna, "Islamic Da'wah Communication Strategy in the Digital Era: An Analysis of the Utilization of Social Media to Spread Islamic Values," *Proceeding International Seminar on Islamic Studies* 6, no. 1 (2025).

⁵⁸ BBC Indonesia, "Abu Bakar Baasyir Bebas dari Penjara, Keluarga Ingin Jauhkan dari Paham Radikal," January 8, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/indonesia-55570909>

⁵⁹ D. L. Whiteman, "Contextualization: The Theory, the Gap, the Challenge," *Missiology Review* 28, no. 2 (2021).



The practical implications of these findings are highly relevant for developing more effective da'wah strategies in a pluralistic society. The research findings indicate that a da'wah approach integrating historical narratives, collective empathy, and contextual argumentation can increase public acceptance and reduce resistance to religious messages, as evidenced by the positive responses of the Cemani Village community, who stated that Ba'asyir's transformation "made them feel calm" and provided "new insights".⁶⁰ Symbolic practices such as participating in the August 17th ceremony at Pesantren Al-Mukmin Ngruki demonstrate that rhetorical transformation needs to be accompanied by concrete actions that strengthen the credibility of the message.⁶¹ Practical recommendations that can be implemented include: first, integrating historical studies and local wisdom into the da'wah education curriculum to strengthen historical legitimacy; second, developing training programs for da'is in adaptive communication techniques that consider the audience context; and third, using digital media and social platforms to expand the reach of da'wah while maintaining the principles of moderation and tolerance.⁶² A da'wah communication strategy based on local wisdom can also be adopted by other da'wah institutions to improve the effectiveness of message delivery in diverse societal contexts.⁶³

The novelty and significance of this research in a global context lies in its contribution to the discourse on religious communication in post-secular societies, where religious values need to be articulated in language that can be understood and accepted by a diverse public. Ba'asyir's rhetorical transformation can be understood as a manifestation of the process of contextualization in religious communication, where the universal message of religion is adapted to the local context without losing its theological substance, aligning with practices developed

⁶⁰M.M. Nawaffani, *Pandangan Masyarakat terhadap Perubahan Ustadz Abu Bakar Ba'asyir Mengenai Transformasi Penerimaan Pancasila* (Tesis, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, tahun 2023)

⁶¹Field observation at Pondok Al-Mukmin Ngruki, 2022

⁶²Tata Sukayat, "Implementing Da'wah Ethics on Social Media: Communication Strategies in the Digital Era," *Jurnal Dakwah* 24, no. 1 (2023).

⁶³M. Muklisin, M. S. Ismail, A. Hidayat, and M. Debit, "Adapting Da'wah Communication Strategies for Traditional Society," *ICESH: International Conference on Education, Social and Humanities* 4, no. 1 (2023).



in Christian missiology and contemporary religious communication.⁶⁴ The adaptive da'wah model produced by this research provides an alternative to rigid and exclusive da'wah approaches, offering more inclusive and dialogical communication strategies that can be applied in various cultural and political contexts. Further research could explore the application of this model to other religious figures, the effectiveness of similar strategies in digital media, and the long-term impact of rhetorical transformation on society's socio-political dynamics. Thus, this study not only enriches the literature on da'wah communication but also provides practical guidance for developing religious communication strategies that are responsive to the complexities of contemporary society, while maintaining the integrity and relevance of religious messages in the era of globalization and pluralism.

Conclusion

Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's transformation of da'wah rhetoric from the narrative of qoul qodim to qoul jadid successfully shifted the legitimacy of da'wah from exclusive theological authority to historical-cultural authority that combines the legacy of the nation's founding scholars with the principle of divinity in Pancasila. This shift is reflected in a change in emotional strategy from moral threat to collective empathy that preserves brotherhood and broadens the appeal of da'wah, as well as the recontextualization of rational arguments thru contemporary ijtihad that integrates historical evidence and interpretations of tawhid values. The reflective cognitive processes experienced by Ba'asyir, including hermeneutic dialog and historiographical analysis, prove that the change in da'wah narrative is not merely rhetorical, but rather an evolution of da'wah methodology that is adaptable to the socio-political dynamics of Indonesia. This model of rhetorical transformation outlines three strategic phases: historical legitimation, value contextualization, and argumentation reconstruction. It addresses the research

⁶⁴ D. Fanning, "Contextualization, Indigenization, and Inculturation," *Scholars Crossing Faculty Publication* (2009).



question of how changes in ethos, pathos, and logos are identified and implemented within the corpus of subject lectures and interviews.

Theoretically, this research enriches the framework of da'wah communication by combining Aristotle's classical rhetoric theory, situational rhetoric, and the concept of contemporary *ijtihad* into a single conceptual construction. The resulting model of Da'wah Rhetorical Transformation not only emphasizes the important role of contextualization and inculturation in conveying religious messages but also provides an analytical tool that can be used to explore similar transformations in other religious figures. Its practical implications include developing da'wah strategies that emphasize a balance between textual authority and contextual relevance, training da'ees in adaptive communication techniques, and using local symbols and ceremonies to strengthen the legitimacy of the message. Thus, this research not only addresses the research gap regarding the transformation of *qoul qodim* discourse to *qoul jadid*, but also contributes to the discourse on da'wah communication strategies based on moderate and inclusive religious traditions and local wisdom.



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