



International Conference on Islam, Law, and Society (INCOILS)  
Conference Proceedings 2025

**Contextualizing Semantic Change in the Arabic Language: A Semantic Analysis of Contemporary Social Vocabulary**

Mirza Aly Husaini, S.Pd.,<sup>1</sup> Anis Rohmawati, S.Pd.<sup>2</sup> Siti Roziana Putri Ali, S.Pd.<sup>3</sup> Dr. Luk-luk Nur Mufidah, M.Pd.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1234</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung

<sup>1</sup>[mirza.husaini14@gmail.com](mailto:mirza.husaini14@gmail.com), <sup>2</sup>[rahmaan076@gmail.com](mailto:rahmaan076@gmail.com), <sup>3</sup>[rozianaputri07@gmail.com](mailto:rozianaputri07@gmail.com),  
<sup>4</sup>[nurmufidah@uinsatu.ac.id](mailto:nurmufidah@uinsatu.ac.id)

**ABSTRACT :**

This research seeks to explore how contemporary social vocabulary in Arabic undergoes shifts in meaning over time, as well as the social and cultural elements that contribute to these changes. Drawing on a qualitative method supported by an extensive review of academic studies, the research examines word meanings both at particular points in time and across historical periods to understand how certain terms develop within broader contexts. The findings suggest that semantic change in Arabic generally occurs through three main processes: the expansion, reduction, and alteration of meaning. These shifts arise not only from internal linguistic developments but also from external forces such as globalization, technological advancement, and changing ideological perspectives. The study also shows that semantic change is closely tied to social, ethical, and ideological dimensions. Transformations observed in key terms like *jihād*, *hurriyyah*, and *ḥubb* reflect the evolving societal interpretations of spiritual, political, and cultural concepts. In this way, the Arabic language functions as a dynamic medium that captures the complex interplay between linguistic expression, social conditions, and religious discourse.

**Key words:** *Arabic semantics, semantic change, social vocabulary, contextualization, meaning implication*

**ABSTRAK :**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bagaimana perubahan makna terjadi pada kosakata sosial kontemporer dalam bahasa Arab serta faktor-faktor sosial dan budaya yang memengaruhi transformasi tersebut. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif melalui metode studi pustaka, penelitian ini menelaah pergeseran leksikal secara sinkronik dan diakronik untuk menelusuri evolusi makna secara historis dan kontekstual. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa transformasi semantik dalam bahasa Arab terjadi melalui tiga mekanisme utama, yaitu perluasan makna, penyempitan makna, dan pergeseran makna. Perubahan tersebut dipengaruhi oleh faktor internal bahasa maupun faktor eksternal seperti globalisasi, kemajuan teknologi, dan perkembangan ideologi. Kemudian Implikasi makna dari perubahan tersebut bahwa dinamika semantik dalam bahasa Arab tidak hanya bersifat linguistik, tetapi juga mengandung dimensi sosial, ideologis, dan etis. Pergeseran makna pada istilah tertentu, seperti *jihād*, *hurriyyah*, dan *ḥubb*, mencerminkan perubahan cara pandang masyarakat terhadap nilai-nilai spiritual, politik, dan budaya bahwa bahasa Arab menjadi cerminan dari interaksi kompleks antara bahasa, konteks sosial, serta wacana keagamaan.

**Kata kunci:** *semantik Arab, perubahan makna, kosakata sosial, kontekstualisasi, implikasi makna*

## INTRODUCTION

Arabic is a language with high vitality that plays a significant role in various dimensions of human life. It functions not only as a medium for religious expression and classical literature but has also evolved into a tool for modern communication, continually adapting to social, political, and cultural dynamics. With a long historical trajectory and a rich linguistic heritage, Arabic

demonstrates a strong capacity to accommodate the developments of civilization.<sup>1</sup> Shifts in meaning within the language reflect a natural response to the communicative needs of contemporary Arab society, which is constantly evolving. From a linguistic perspective, the phenomenon of meaning change, or semantic change, is a universal characteristic observed in all languages, including Arabic.<sup>2</sup>

In terms of the lexicon, it is fundamentally dynamic rather than static, being greatly influenced by the social context and the culture of its speakers. In contemporary Arab society, shifts in value systems, norms, and social conditions have led to a process of recontextualization of various social terminologies. Vocabulary that once held a specific meaning within a classical framework is now undergoing expansion or narrowing of meaning based on the demands of modern communication.<sup>3</sup> This phenomenon highlights that language serves not only as a means of communication but also reflects the ongoing and evolving social dynamics among its users. Semantic studies hold a vital role in revealing these shifts in meaning. By conducting semantic analysis, researchers are able to systematically track changes in meaning, considering both historical aspects and the surrounding social context. This approach offers a more thorough understanding of how language meanings are created, change over time, and adapt within contemporary social discourse.<sup>4</sup>

Technological advancements, the development of mass media, and socio-political dynamics in the Arab region have given rise to a variety of new social lexicons that reflect transformations in lifestyle and thought patterns of modern society. Examining contemporary social vocabulary in Arabic is important for revealing how language functions as a reflection of ongoing social change.<sup>5</sup> Through a semantic study of these lexicons, it becomes possible to understand how Arab society reinterprets various social concepts in accordance with the contemporary context. Academically, research on the contextualization of meaning shifts in Arabic makes a significant contribution to the enrichment of modern Arabic semantic studies. This study deepens the understanding of the interconnection between meaning, context, and the social dynamics developing within present-day Arab society.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Siti Rohmah Soekarba, *Bahasa Arab Menatap Masa Depan: Peluang Dan Tantangan Era Globalisasi, Dalam Al-Sijl Al-Ilmi Al-Mu'tamar Ad-Duwali: Al-Lughah Al-'Arabiyah Wa Al-'Aqlam Wa'ajban Li Wajbin* (Malang: Universitas Negeri Malang, 2008).

<sup>2</sup> Neldi Harianto, Rengki Afria, and Julisah Izar, "Polisemi Dan Homonim Dalam Kajian Semantik Bahasa Arab," *Seminar Nasional Humaniora 2* (2022): 48–53.h 50

<sup>3</sup> Wandira Wandira and S A., Giani, M. P., Madani, D. S., dan Salsabila, "Sejarah Bahasa Arab Dalam Penyebaran Agama Islam Di Indonesia Abad 20," *Jurnal Penelitian Nusantara* 1, no. 4 (2025).h 1-5

<sup>4</sup> Anwar Rudi, "Semantik Dalam Bahasa (Studi Kajian Makna Antara Bahasa Arab Dan Bahasa Indonesia)," *Kariman: Jurnal Pendidikan Keislaman* 5, no. 1 (2017): 119–38.h 120

<sup>5</sup> Mansoer Pateda, *Semantik Leksikal* (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2001).h 163-168

<sup>6</sup> Mamat Zaenuddin and Yayan Nurbayan, *Pengantar Ilmu Balaghah* (Bandung: Refika Aditama, 2007).h 110

Research on changes in meaning in the Arabic language has been extensively conducted by various scholars, including studies by Ghina Hadija and Nur Hasan, “*Semantic Shift in Arabic Vocabulary from Classical to Contemporary Usage : An Analytical Study of Modern Terms*”<sup>7</sup> Anwar Rudi, “*Semantik Dalam Bahasa (Studi Kajian Makna Antara Bahasa Arab Dan Bahasa Indonesia )*,”<sup>8</sup> Abdul Mu’iz and Nu’man, “*Perubahan Makna Pada Kata Serapan Bahasa Arab Dalam Bahasa Indonesia*,”<sup>9</sup> Fitrianto and Hamid, “*Morphosemantic Changes in the Arabic Language in the Social Media Era: A Study of Neologisms and Their Impact on Youth Communication*,”<sup>10</sup> Layla al-Mansuri, “*Semantic Shifts in Classical and Modern Arabic: A Diachronic Study of Key Lexical Terms*”<sup>11</sup> and Alhamdi, et al. “*Menelaah Problematika Kajian Semantik Historis Bahasa Arab di Era Modern*”<sup>12</sup>

This study aims to explore how the meanings of contemporary social vocabulary in Arabic evolve, identifying the social, cultural, and contextual factors that influence these changes, as well as the semantic mechanisms used to comprehend and interpret the shifts in meaning of this contemporary social vocabulary. Additionally, from a practical standpoint, the findings of this research can serve as a resource for learning modern Arabic, translation practices, and cross-cultural communication studies. Therefore, this research not only contributes theoretically to the advancement of Arabic linguistic studies but also illustrates its practical relevance in social and educational fields.

## Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with a literature review as the main method for collecting and analyzing data. This method allows for a thorough exploration of the phenomenon of word meaning change in Arabic from historical, social, and cultural perspectives. Data is gathered through a review of various sources, including books, academic articles, classical documents, and relevant digital sources related to historical semantics. The data analysis is descriptive and interpretive, aiming to identify patterns and factors that influence the transformation of meaning in the context of modern Arabic language. In addition, this research combines synchronic and diachronic approaches in historical semantics, allowing for the analysis

---

<sup>7</sup> Ghina Hajidah Manaf and Nur Hasan, “Semantic Shift in Arabic Vocabulary from Classical to Contemporary Usage : An Analytical Study of Modern Terms,” *Lughawiyat: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab* 8, no. 2 (2025): 336–48, <https://doi.org/10.3758/BRM.42.2.481.5>.

<sup>8</sup> Rudi, “Semantik Dalam Bahasa (Studi Kajian Makna Antara Bahasa Arab Dan Bahasa Indonesia ).”

<sup>9</sup> M. Abdul Muiz and Mohammad Nu’man, “Perubahan Makna Pada Kata Serapan Bahasa Arab Dalam Bahasa Indonesia,” *Armala: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Sastra Bahasa Arab* 5, no. 2 (2014): 100–114.

<sup>10</sup> Ibnu Fitrianto and Riza Hamid, “Morphosemantic Changes in the Arabic Language in the Social Media Era: A Study of Neologisms and Their Impact on Youth Communication,” *IJAS* 1, no. 1 (2024): 25–39.

<sup>11</sup> Layla Al-mansouri, “Semantic Shifts in Classical and Modern Arabic: A Diachronic Study of Key Lexical Terms,” *IJAS: Indonesian Journal of Arabic Studies* 2, no. 1 (2025): 55–66.

<sup>12</sup> Fikri Alhamdi, Syofyan Hadi, and Salsabila Firdaus, “Menelaah Problematika Kajian Semantik Historis Bahasa Arab Di Era Modern,” *BAHTERA: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra* 24 (2025): 161–69.

of word meaning at a specific time as well as tracing its development over time. This approach also considers epistemological and ideological aspects, especially in the context of Arabic language and religious texts, while taking into account criticisms of Western methods in the study of Islam.

## Result

### The concept of meaning change in vocabulary

Historical semantics is a branch of linguistics that looks at how the meaning of a word changes over time. This study doesn't just describe changes in meaning; it also explores the social, cultural, political, and religious factors that cause these changes.<sup>13</sup> Historical semantics examines how meanings evolve in language, including processes like broadening, narrowing, worsening, or improving. These changes are influenced by cultural and historical contexts such as conflicts, industrialization, globalization, and the use of metaphors, which gradually shape how words gain new meanings over time.<sup>14</sup>

Meaning changes in the Arabic language can be influenced by several factors, such as social and cultural development, contact with other languages, and advancements in science and technology.<sup>15</sup> Meanwhile, research conducted by Mustamin and others concluded that Arabic has a semantic system that is flexible along with the dynamics of the times. This flexibility allows Arabic vocabulary to shift in meaning without losing its fundamental essence or core content.<sup>16</sup>

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the Arabic language has a meaning system (semantics) that is dynamic and capable of development over time. According to Ukhrawiyah, the flexibility of meaning in Arabic vocabulary allows for changes in meaning, such as expansion, narrowing, or shifting of meaning, without affecting the core structure and fundamental essence of the language.<sup>17</sup> In other words, even though the language undergoes meaning transformations, Arabic still maintains its identity and basic rules. Basically, the vocabulary in Arabic experiences three dynamics, which are as follows:

*First*, Meaning Expansion (*tamsi' al-ma'na*). Meaning expansion is one form of meaning transformation that occurs when a word moves from a specific original meaning to a broader or more general one. This phenomenon reflects the dynamics of language influenced by social and

---

<sup>13</sup> W. K. Asri and dan Alamsyah W. A. U. Rhamadanty, M. Burhamzah, "Analyzing Semantic Shifts in English and German by Exploring Historical Influences and Societal Dynamics," *Studies in English Language and Education* 11, no. 2 (2024), h 1085

<sup>14</sup> M. Mufid and D. E. Diantika, *Pengantar Semantik Bahasa Arab: Teori Dan Praktik* (Madza Media, 2024).

<sup>15</sup> Saida Gami and Berti Arsyad, "Fenomena Al-Isytirak Al-Lafdzi Dalam Al-Qur'an," *A Jamiy: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab* 6, no. 1 (2017): 9–11.

<sup>16</sup> M. Mustamin, H. Sa'adah, and M. Yamin, "Perkembangan Ilmu Semantik Dalam Konteks Kosakata Bahasa Arab," *Jurnal Tarbiyah Dan Ilmu Keguruan Borneo* 2, no. 2 (2021): 81–98.

<sup>17</sup> F. Ukhrawiyah, "Perubahan Makna Kosakata Bahasa Arab Yang Diserap Ke Dalam Bahasa Indonesia," *Al-Ma'Rijah* 16, no. 2 (2019), <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/290086405.pdf>.

cultural changes in society. Words that previously had a limited meaning range can expand because they are used in more varied or broader contexts than before.<sup>18</sup>

*Second*, narrowing of meaning, or *tadyiq al-ma'nā*, happens when a word that originally had a broad meaning becomes more specific.<sup>19</sup> This process shows how society's understanding of a word changes over time. Narrowing of meaning is often caused by cultural changes, technological advances, or the need to clearly separate ideas that were not previously distinguished in language.

*Third*, Semantic Shift (*tatammur al-ma'nā*). Semantic shift happens when a word changes meaning over time, so its new meaning is different from its original or basic meaning. In this process, the old meaning doesn't always disappear completely, but often moves or changes, being replaced by a new meaning that comes from different ways the word is used in context.<sup>20</sup> Semantic shift shows how people's understanding, cultural values, and social dynamics change in a language community.

### Factors That Influence the Change of Word Meaning

Semantic shift (*tatammur al-ma'nā*) in the Arabic language is an unavoidable linguistic phenomenon and a part of the continuous development of language dynamics. This shift occurs due to various factors, both originating from internal sources within the language and influenced by external factors. The main factors that contribute to the change in meaning within the Arabic language.<sup>21</sup>

Arabic has been developing dynamically in line with the social and cultural changes happening in Arab society. As the social structures, value systems, and traditions of the community change, the meanings within the language also adapt to remain aligned with the context of the times.<sup>22</sup> Following the views of linguistic experts, language is a living system that continuously adapts to the social environment of its users. In the context of the Arabic language, the social and cultural changes occurring in Arab communities have a significant impact on both lexicological and semantic meanings. This shows that the dynamics of language are not only the result of internal linguistic processes, but also a reflection of the development of civilization and the mindset of the society.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> Mustamin, Sa'adah, and Yamin, "Perkembangan Ilmu Semantik Dalam Konteks Kosakata Bahasa Arab."

<sup>19</sup> U. Ridlo, "Bahasa Arab Dalam Pusaran Arus Globalisasi: Antara Pesimisme Dan Optimisme," *Ihya Al-Arabiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab* 1, no. 2 (2019).

<sup>20</sup> A. P. R. Cahyani, "Linguistik Transformasi Generatif dalam Bahasa Arab pada Era Modern," *An Nazhair: Journal of Arabic Education* 1, no. 2 (2024): 103–115.

<sup>21</sup> A. P. R. Cahyani, "Linguistik Transformasi Generatif Dalam Bahasa Arab Pada Era Modern," *An Nazhair: Journal of Arabic Education* 1, no. 2 (2024): 103–15.

<sup>22</sup> Febry Ramadani S, "Hakikat Makna Dan Hubungan Antar Makna Dalam Kajian Semantik Bahasa Arab," *Taqdir: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab Dan Kebahasaan* 6, no. 1 (2020): 87–102.h 89

<sup>23</sup> Cahyani, "Linguistik Transformasi Generatif Dalam Bahasa Arab Pada Era Modern."

Arab language, which has a long history and played a central role in Islamic civilization, cannot be separated from its interactions with various non-Arab languages, including Indonesian. It is stated that the Arabic language has undergone different forms of contact with other languages through international trade routes, colonialism, the spread of Islam, and educational activities.<sup>24</sup> This cross-language interaction naturally leads to word borrowing (*dakbil*) and meaning adjustments, both from and into Arabic. This borrowing process affects not only the vocabulary but also involves changes in meaning that adapt to the needs and semantic system of the receiving language. One example of this is the word "logat" in the Indonesian language.

The advancement of knowledge and technology has a considerable impact on the changing meanings within language, including linguistics. Various innovations in human life, such as education, communication, mass media, information technology, and the publishing industry, drive the expansion of lexical meanings and the creation of new terms that were previously unfamiliar.<sup>25</sup> In the field of education and literacy, for instance, the emergence of various objects, concepts, and processes in modern learning systems requires language to evolve through semantic changes. As a result, many old vocabulary terms, which initially had limited meanings, have broadened to remain relevant with contemporary developments.

The statement illustrates the close relationship between the advancement of science and technology and the development of language, including Arabic. Language serves not only as a means of communication but also as an adaptable system responding to the social and intellectual shifts in society. The expansion of meanings and the emergence of new terms reflect a linguistic response to the progress of the times. This phenomenon demonstrates that language is dynamic and continually adapts to incorporate new concepts arising from human innovation.<sup>26</sup> A natural tendency in language use is the effort to simplify both forms and meanings of words to facilitate communication. This simplification process often leads to changes in lexical meaning, either by narrowing or broadening the meanings. In this context, language adjusts to be more efficient and aligned with the mental frameworks and practical needs of its speakers. The changes in meaning that occur are not just structural but also semantic, as speakers collectively generate new interpretations for words that are used frequently.<sup>27</sup>

The meaning of a word can change because of emotional connections or social values that a community attaches to it. In semantic study, this process is called amelioration, which is when a

---

<sup>24</sup> Ahmad Mukhtār 'Umar, *Ilm Al-Dalalah* (Kairo: 'Ālam al-Kutub, 1998).h 231

<sup>25</sup> Muhammad Fahmi Hijazi, *Al-Bahits Al-Lughawi* (Kairo: Maktabah Gharib, 1993).

<sup>26</sup> A. F. Hudzaifah and A. Fauzi, "Toshihiko Izutsu Dan Makna Semantik Atas Dīn Dalam Al-Qur'an: Studi Buku Relasi Tuhan Dan Manusia," *At-Tabfīdż: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 4, no. 2 (2023).

<sup>27</sup> Ibnu Qayyim al-Jauziyyah, *Ibnu Qayyim Al-Jauziyyah: At-Taubah Wa Al-Inābah*, *Penerjemah Ahmad Dzulfikar, Tobat Dan Inabah* (Jakarta: Qisthi Press, 2021).h 345

word's meaning becomes more positive, and peyoration, which is when a word's meaning becomes more negative. A word that was once neutral can turn into something with a positive or negative tone, depending on how people as a group see it, their historical background, and the changing cultural norms.<sup>28</sup> This shows that the meaning of a word isn't only based on its structure or origin, but also on ideas, feelings, and culture that change over time.<sup>29</sup> For example, a word that was once used in a formal or neutral way might become negative if it's linked to behavior that society sees as wrong. On the other hand, a word that was just ordinary can gain a positive meaning if it's connected to good things like virtue, honor, and success.<sup>30</sup>

### Semantic Mechanisms in Contemporary Social Vocabulary in Arabic

Semantic Mechanisms Social, political, economic, and technological changes in the Arab world have given rise to new terms, while shifting or expanding the meanings of existing words.<sup>31</sup> In this context, semantic studies play an important role in understanding how meaning in the Arabic language changes over time. Semantics, as a branch of linguistics that studies meaning, explores the relationship between form (word) and meaning (sense) and how both change as time passes. Through semantic studies, we can understand the mechanisms that cause shifts in the meaning of a word, whether due to internal influences within the language or external factors such as cultural changes, social interactions, and globalization.<sup>32</sup>

One significant example of a change in meaning in Arabic language relevant to this study is the word "*ijāzah*" (إجازة). In classical Islamic tradition, *ijāzah* refers to an academic authorization given by a teacher to a student, granting permission to transmit or teach a particular discipline. However, in modern educational contexts, the meaning has shifted to simply being a certificate or an administrative proof of graduation, lacking the spiritual and scholarly authority that the original meaning conveyed.<sup>33</sup> Another example is as follows:

Table 1. Examples of Semantic Words

Word	Diachronic meaning	Synchronic meaning	Explanation
حب ( <i>hubb</i> )	Contains the meaning of love that	Meaning love in a social, emotional,	There has been a shift in meaning

<sup>28</sup> Wandira and A., Giani, M. P., Madani, D. S., dan Salsabila, "Sejarah Bahasa Arab Dalam Penyebaran Agama Islam Di Indonesia Abad 20."h 54

<sup>29</sup> A. Al-Mansouri, "Evolusi Semantik Bahasa Arab Klasik Dan Modern: Sebuah Studi Leksikal," *Jurnal Internasional Studi Bahasa Arab* 9, no. 1 (2025): 14–29.

<sup>30</sup> Rahmatika Halil et al., "Jenis-Jenis Makna Dalam Kajian Semantik Bahasa Arab" 8 (2024): 51435–40. H 51438

<sup>31</sup> Roby Fathan Alifiansyah, Bambang Irawan, and Nur Hasan, "Hubungan Kata Dan Makna Dalam Bahasa Arab," *Alsina : Journal of Arabic Studies* 5, no. 1 (2023): 73–92, <https://doi.org/10.21580/alsina.5.1.16868>.h 80

<sup>32</sup> Alhamdi, Hadi, and Firdaus, "Menelaah Problematika Kajian Semantik Historis Bahasa Arab Di Era Modern."

<sup>33</sup> Alhamdi, Hadi, and Firdaus.h 164

	is spiritual and moral in nature	and even erotic context in modern media	from spiritual to profane
شع (shar‘)	Means a path or rule that guides life	Known as Islamic religious law that regulates various aspects of life	Narrowing of meaning from a general concept to religious law (syariat).
حرية (hurriyyah)	Freedom from bondage, oppression, or slavery	Refers to individual freedom of expression, religion, and politics	There has been an expansion of meaning that has sparked debate between conservative and progressive views
جهاد (jihād)	A sincere struggle, both spiritual and physical	physical struggle or warfare in a modern ideological context	Its historical meaning is broad, but it is now experiencing political and ideological polarization
قبيلة (qabilah)	a large family group or tribe in traditional social structures	a social entity based on kinship and solidarity	a social and historical meaning that still persists in Arab culture
حديث (hadīth)	General conversation	Texts of the Prophet Muhammad's sayings in Islam	Narrowing of meaning to the realm of religion and sacred texts
هاتف (hātif)	a voice without form; a mysterious voice	telephone/cell phone	There has been a shift in meaning from an abstract

	that is heard without its source being seen		concept to a concrete object of communication
سيارة ( <i>sayyārah</i> )	a group of travelers or caravans on a journey	car (motor vehicle)	A narrowing and shift of meaning from “a moving group” to a specific means of transportation

### Semantic Implications in Contemporary Social Vocabulary

Changes in the meaning of several social vocabulary words in Arabic demonstrate how language evolves in tandem with the development of the society that uses it. Several terms that used to have spiritual or moral nuances have now developed into terms that are closer to the social experiences of modern society.<sup>34</sup> Love, for example, which was once often associated with purity of soul or moral bonds, now appears in more romantic and emotional expressions.<sup>35</sup> The same thing happened with the term **هاتف** (*hātif*), which originally described a mysterious, formless voice, but has now changed to mean a telephone or modern communication device. This kind of shift shows that the relationship between language and social life is never static; language changes along with the way humans interpret the world.<sup>36</sup>

Changes in meaning can help understand social dynamics, but the historical semantic approach used to explore them often leads to debates. Some people believe that reopening the old meaning of certain terms, especially those related to religion, might shift established understandings. The term **جهاد** (*jihād*) is one of the most common sources of tension. When its historical meaning is brought back, some groups feel it may reduce the sacredness of teachings that have long been seen as part of divine text. Similar doubts arise when semantic analysis is applied to terms like **شرع** (*shar‘*) or **حديث** (*hadīth*), as both hold important positions in religious discourse. Instead of being understood in their broad original sense, they tend to be narrowed

<sup>34</sup> Geoffrey Leech, *Semantics: The Study of Meaning*, 2nd Ed (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1981).h 25-32

<sup>35</sup> Emil Badi Ya‘qub, *Fiqh Al-Lughah Al-‘Arabīyah Wa Khaṣā’iṣhā* (Beirut: Dār al-Thaqāfah al-Islāmiyyah, 1982).h 173

<sup>36</sup> Sugito Sugito and Ami Suparmi, “Kajian Makna Dan Perubahan Makna Bahasa Arab Dalam Penguatan Kompetensi Linguistik Bahasa Arab,” *Sīyaqiy: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Bahasa Arab* 2, no. 1 (2025): 32–41, <https://journals.iaialzaytun.ac.id/index.php/siyaqiy>.

down, and the expansion of their meanings in modern contexts is often seen as an attempt to introduce external influences into Islamic thought.

Besides religious issues, changes in meaning also affect the political and social areas. Some words that have changed in meaning are often used for certain purposes, either to strengthen a story or to show a particular ideology. The shift in the meaning of **جهاد** (*jihād*) from moral struggle to military action is one example of how the meaning of a word can be exploited to construct political discourse. Another challenge arises from limited access to classical literature, which means that semantic research often relies on secondary interpretations, making it difficult to ascertain the original meaning of a word with certainty. Amidst the development of digital technology, the process of meaning change is happening much faster. Expressions that once had traditional meanings, such as **قبيلة** (*qabīlah*) or **قبيلة** (*qabīlah*), are now confronted with new perspectives shaped by social media, globalization, and changes in the lifestyles of modern Arab societies. These changes show that the dynamics of language not only reflect the development of thought, but also help determine the direction of social and ideological change in society.<sup>37</sup>

## Conclusion

The Arabic language has become a semantic dynamic that is highly adaptive to the social, cultural, and technological changes of modern Arab society. Through historical semantic studies, this research reveals that semantic change in contemporary social vocabulary occurs through three main mechanisms: expansion of meaning (*tamsi' al-ma'nā*), narrowing of meaning (*tadyiq al-ma'nā*), and shift in meaning (*tatawwur al-ma'nā*). These changes are influenced by internal language factors and external factors such as social development, cross-cultural interactions, advancements in science and technology, and ideological value transformations in society. Semantic studies of the Arabic language do not eliminate its essence or basic structure, but rather enrich its meaning to remain relevant to the current context. Additionally, this research shows that semantic change in Arabic is not just a linguistic phenomenon, but also reflects social, ideological, and cultural dynamics. Understanding the mechanisms and factors behind semantic change is important for the development of modern Arabic linguistics, contemporary Arabic language learning, and intercultural communication studies.

## Bibliography

Al-Jauziyyah, Ibnu Qayyim. *Ibnu Qayyim Al-Jauziyyah: At-Taubah Wa Al-Inābah*, Penerjemah Ahmad Dzulfikar, Tobat Dan Inabah. Jakarta: Qisthi Press, 2021.

---

<sup>37</sup> Sugito and Suparmi.

- Al-Mansouri, A. "Evolusi Semantik Bahasa Arab Klasik Dan Modern: Sebuah Studi Leksikal." *Jurnal Internasional Studi Bahasa Arab* 9, no. 1 (2025): 14–29.
- Al-mansouri, Layla. "Semantic Shifts in Classical and Modern Arabic: A Diachronic Study of Key Lexical Terms." *IJAS: Indonesian Journal of Arabic Studies* 2, no. 1 (2025): 55–66.
- Alhamdi, Fikri, Syofyan Hadi, and Salsabila Firdaus. "Menelaah Problematika Kajian Semantik Historis Bahasa Arab Di Era Modern." *BAHTERA: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra* 24 (2025): 161–69.
- Alifiansyah, Roby Fathan, Bambang Irawan, and Nur Hasan. "Hubungan Kata Dan Makna Dalam Bahasa Arab." *Aksina : Journal of Arabic Studies* 5, no. 1 (2023): 73–92.
- Asri, W. K., and dan Alamsyah W. A. U. Rhamadanty, M. Burhamzah. "Analyzing Semantic Shifts in English and German by Exploring Historical Influences and Societal Dynamics." *Studies in English Language and Education* 11, no. 2 (2024).
- Cahyani, A. P. R. "Linguistik Transformasi Generatif Dalam Bahasa Arab Pada Era Modern." *An Nazhair: Journal of Arabic Education* 1, no. 2 (2024): 103–15.
- Fitrianto, Ibnu, and Riza Hamid. "Morphosemantic Changes in the Arabic Language in the Social Media Era: A Study of Neologisms and Their Impact on Youth Communication." *IJAS* 1, no. 1 (2024): 25–39.
- Gami, Saida, and Berti Arsyad. "Fenomena Al-Isytirak Al-Lafdzi Dalam Al-Qur'an." *A Jamiy; Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab* 6, no. 1 (2017): 9–11.
- Halil, Rahmatika, Hana Putri Amalia, Siti Aisiyah Siregar, Willi Hidayati, and Agustiar Agustiar. "Jenis-Jenis Makna Dalam Kajian Semantik Bahasa Arab" 8 (2024): 51435–40.
- Hariato, Neldi, Rengki Afria, and Julisah Izar. "Polisemi Dan Homonim Dalam Kajian Semantik Bahasa Arab." *Seminar Nasional Humaniora* 2 (2022): 48–53.
- Hijazi, Muhammad Fahmi. *Al-Bah̄ts Al-Lughawi*. Kairo: Maktabah Gharib, 1993.
- Hudzaifah, A. F., and A. Fauzi. "Toshihiko Izutsu Dan Makna Semantik Atas Dīn Dalam Al-Qur'an: Studi Buku Relasi Tuhan Dan Manusia." *At-Tahfidz: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir* 4, no. 2 (2023).
- Leech, Geoffrey. *Semantics: The Study of Meaning, 2nd Ed.* Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1981.
- Manaf, Ghina Hajidah, and Nur Hasan. "Semantic Shift in Arabic Vocabulary from Classical to Contemporary Usage : An Analytical Study of Modern Terms." *Lughawiyat: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab* 8, no. 2 (2025): 336–48.
- Mufid, M., and D. E. Diantika. *Pengantar Semantik Bahasa Arab: Teori Dan Praktik*. Madza Media, 2024.
- Muiz, M. Abdul, and Mohammad Nu'man. "Perubahan Makna Pada Kata Serapan Bahasa Arab

- Dalam Bahasa Indonesia.” *Armala: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Sastra Bahasa Arab* 5, no. 2 (2014): 100–114.
- Mustamin, M., H. Sa’adah, and M. Yamin. “Perkembangan Ilmu Semantik Dalam Konteks Kosakata Bahasa Arab.” *Jurnal Tarbiyah Dan Ilmu Keguruan Borneo* 2, no. 2 (2021): 81–98.
- Pateda, Mansoer. *Semantik Leksikal*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2001.
- Ridlo, U. “Bahasa Arab Dalam Pusaran Arus Globalisasi: Antara Pesimisme Dan Optimisme.” *Ihya Al-Arabiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab* 1, no. 2 (2019).
- Rudi, Anwar. “Semantik Dalam Bahasa (Studi Kajian Makna Antara Bahasa Arab Dan Bahasa Indonesia).” *Kariman: Jurnal Pendidikan Keislaman* 5, no. 1 (2017): 119–38.
- S, Febry Ramadani. “Hakikat Makna Dan Hubungan Antar Makna Dalam Kajian Semantik Bahasa Arab.” *Taqdir: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab Dan Kebahasaan* 6, no. 1 (2020): 87–102.
- Soekarba, Siti Rohmah. *Bahasa Arab Menatap Masa Depan: Peluang Dan Tantangan Era Globalisasi, Dalam Al-Sijl Al-‘Ilmi Al-Mu’tamar Ad-Duwal: Al-Lughah Al-‘Arabiyyah Wa Al-‘Awwalimah Wajhan Li Wajhin*. Malang: Universitas Negeri Malang, 2008.
- Sugito, Sugito, and Ami Suparmi. “Kajian Makna Dan Perubahan Makna Bahasa Arab Dalam Penguatan Kompetensi Linguistik Bahasa Arab.” *Siyaqiy: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Bahasa Arab* 2, no. 1 (2025): 32–41.
- Ukhrawiyah, F. “Perubahan Makna Kosakata Bahasa Arab Yang Diserap Ke Dalam Bahasa Indonesia.” *Al-Ma’rifah* 16, no. 2 (2019).
- ‘Umar, Ahmad Mukhtār. *Ilm Al-Dalālah*. Kairo: ‘Ālam al-Kutub, 1998.
- Wandira, Wandira, and S A., Giani, M. P., Madani, D. S., dan Salsabila. “Sejarah Bahasa Arab Dalam Penyebaran Agama Islam Di Indonesia Abad 20.” *Jurnal Penelitian Nusantara* 1, no. 4 (2025).
- Ya’qub, Emil Badi. *Fiqh Al-Lughah Al-‘Arabiyyah Wa Khaṣā’iṣubā*. Beirut: Dār al-Thaqāfah al-Islāmiyyah, 1982.
- Zaenuddin, Mamat, and Yayan Nurbayan. *Pengantar Ilmu Balaghah*. Bandung: Refika Aditama, 2007.