Journal of English Language and Education
ISSN 2597- 6850 (Online), 2502-4132 (Print)
Journal Homepage: https://jele.or.id/index.php/jele/index

OPEN ACCESS Article

Expressive Speech Acts in Dr. Haifaa Younis's Preaching: A Pragmatic Study in Islamic Communication Ethics

https://doi.org/10.31004/jele.v11i3.2636

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A B S T R A C T

This study investigates expressive speech acts in Dr. Haifaa Younis's digital preaching and analyzes how this speech acts reflect Islamic communication ethics. Dr. Haifaa Younis was selected as the research subject because her dual professional and religious background as an Iraqi-American physician specializing in obstetrics and gynecology, and as a woman preacher and founder of The Jannah Institute positions her sermons at a distinctive intersection of medical familiarity with women lived experience and Islamic theological authority, producing preaching that is simultaneously persuasive, doctrinally grounded, and emotionally compassionate. Drawing on Searle's (1979) speech act theory and Mawlana's (2007) ethical communication framework, the study examines the linguistic strategies used to convey moral values and ethical messages in contemporary digital Islamic discourse. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed to analyze 36 expressive utterances collected from two YouTube lectures published by the Jannah Institute. The data were identified, classified, and interpreted based on the categories of expressive speech acts and the principles of Islamic communication ethics. The findings reveal six types of expressive speech acts: praising (9 occurrences), expressing hope (8), encouraging (7), thanking (6), empathy (5), and blaming (1). Among these categories, praising emerged as the most dominant form, indicating that moral guidance is frequently conveyed through appreciation and admiration rather than direct obligation or criticism. Furthermore, each expressive speech act reflects key ethical principles proposed by Mawlana, including the unity of God (*tawhid*), enjoining good and forbidding evil, global community, piety, and trustworthiness. The study concludes that expressive speech acts play a significant role in constructing compassionate, ethically grounded, and emotionally engaging digital Islamic preaching discourse.

Keywords: *Expressive Speech Acts, Islamic Preaching, Mawlana's Ethical Communication, Searle's Speech Act Theory, Digital Religious Discourse*

Article History:
Received 24th May 2026
Accepted 19th June 2026
Published 20th June 2026

INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of digital technology has fundamentally reshaped Islamic preaching, requiring preachers to adapt to new communication patterns (Hasibuan et al., 2025). Digital platforms, particularly YouTube, have transformed preaching through the use of online learning systems, accompanied by inclusive and participatory approaches (Agung et al., 2025). This transformation not only broadens the accessibility of religious messages but also introduces new challenges: preachers must deliver Islamic messages that remain impactful, ethically grounded, and responsive to the needs of diverse audiences, harmonizing enduring wisdom with dynamic technological opportunities (Bakhrudin, 2025). The digital literacy gap and the shift of preaching value orientation by capitalistic logic present significant concerns that potentially hinder authentic religious communication (Fadilla, 2025).

Among contemporary Muslim scholars who exemplify this approach is Dr. Haifaa Younis, a prominent Islamic lecturer whose sermons demonstrate articulate, persuasive, and compassionate communication (Nur Iylia, 2024). Dr. Haifaa Younis was selected as the subject of this study because her professional and religious background create a distinctive rhetorical position rarely found among digital preachers: she is an Iraqi-American physician specializing

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in obstetrics and gynecology, and simultaneously a woman preacher at the Islamic Center of Irvine (ICOI) and the founder of The Jannah Institute, and Islamic educational organization devoted to women's spiritual and intellectual development. This dual identity allows her preaching to combine clinical familiarity with women lived experiences and Islamic theological authority, resulting in sermons that are emotionally resonant as well as doctrinally grounded, and particularly rich in the kind of expressive utterances praise, hope, empathy, that this study investigates.

The researcher intentionally selected lectures discussing women because the topic strongly reflects Dr. Haifaa Younis's professional and religious background. Through this background, her preaching frequently addresses women's emotional, spiritual, and social experiences using compassionate and ethically grounded communication. Therefore, lectures concerning women were intentionally selected because they provide rich examples of expressive speech acts used to construct empathic and positive preaching discourse in digital Islamic communication.

Language serves as a medium through which preaching manifests moral values and emotional sincerity. In communication, speakers do not merely convey information but also perform actions through their utterances. In pragmatics, this phenomenon is known as speech acts, where language functions as a form of action within a specific communicative context (Ruminda, 2018). In religious discourse such as khutbah or sermons, speech acts rely an essential role in guiding audiences toward moral reflection and action. Research on Friday sermons shows that preachers frequently employ speech acts to encourage obedience to religious teachings and promote ethical behaviour among listeners (Wardoyo, 2017). According to Searle, (1979), expressive speech acts are used to convey the speaker's psychological state or sincerity toward a particular situation, such as expressing gratitude, admiration, or regret. In the context of religious preaching, expressive speech acts are often used to convey sincerity, empathy, and moral concern toward the audience, which helps strengthen the persuasive and spiritual dimension of the sermon (Wardoyo, 2017).

In preaching, these acts are crucial for demonstrating sincerity, compassion, and moral responsibility, which form the ethical foundation of communication in Islam. Complementing this linguistic perspective, Hamid Mawlana's Islamic communication theory (2007) posits that the communication in Islam is fundamentally rooted in the concept of propagation, which functions not merely as message transmission but as an ethical and transformative act. These principles include the unity of God, enjoining good and forbidding evil, global community, piety, and trustworthiness. These principles direct believers to communicate with sincerity, compassion, and moral responsibility, making preaching both a linguistic and spiritual act.

Several previous studies have discussed related themes from both linguistic and ethical perspectives. Nur Iylia, (2024) analyzed directive speech acts in Dr. Haifaa's sermons using a qualitative descriptive-interpretative method. Her study identified how Dr. Haifaa Younis employed indirect and polite directive utterances to encourage positive actions and reinforce contemporary Islamic values, but it did not extend to expressive speech acts, leaving the emotional and affective dimension of her preaching largely unexplored.

From an ethical communication standpoint, Mokodenseho & Yarbo, (2024) conducted a literature-based study on communication-based preaching ethics inspired by the Prophet's Sunnah in the Qur'an. Their research emphasized that preaching must be grounded in moral integrity, humility, and sincerity, aligning verbal communication with the Prophet's example. However, their study did not examine linguistic mechanisms, leaving room for further exploration of how ethical principles manifest through language use in preaching.

A related work by Osman et al., (2023) *Preaching bi al-Lisan by Using Politeness Language,* examined politeness in preaching using Leech's Politeness Theory combined with Islamic teachings, finding that polite language functions as a moral act keeps preaching persuasive without being confrontational: the study, however, remained conceptual and focused on politeness rather than the emotional or expressive dimension of speech. In a more recent contribution, Palangyos & Ulla (2025) examined how pastors across several denominations use language and rhetoric to sustain congregational engagement, showing that vivid,

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symbolic, and content-specific language, together with non-verbal cues, strengthens the persuasive force of sermon delivery; while their study addresses Christian rather than Islamic preaching, it underscores that the expressive and rhetorical dimension of religious discourse remains an active area of inquiry in digital-era homiletics.

Helga et al., (2023) analysed the principles of preaching communication in Ustadzah Halimah Alaydrus's YouTube sermons through qualitative descriptive methods. Their findings emphasized how Islamic preaching on digital platforms can be effectively conveyed through gentle speech, empathy, and respect toward the audience. The study provided important insights into female preaching communication but did not analyse the specific types of speech acts that contribute to ethical interaction. From a linguistic perspective, Hidayati, (2024) examined expressive and directive speech acts in high school textbook materials, finding 33 speech acts (17 directive, 16 expressive) that served an educational function in promoting moral and emotional awareness; the context, however, was limited to classroom learning rather than religious discourse. Meanwhile, Mutoharoh, (2022) investigated expressive speech acts in Deddy Corbuzier's *Close the Door* podcast, identifying utterances such as apologies, praise, and gratitude that reflect the speaker's emotional stance, but without exploring moral or ethical frameworks. Most recently, Meha & Heryono (2025) classified expressive speech acts in a film narrative, confirming that categories such as praising, thanking, and apologizing remain productive analytic units in 2025-era pragmatic research; their study, like Mutoharoh's, was conducted on secular entertainment media rather than religious discourse.

Taken together, these studies point to two specific gaps that the present research addresses. First, studies that classify expressive speech acts (Helga et al., 2023; Mutoharoh, 2022; Osman et al., 2023) have examined moral principles without linking them to specific categories of speech acts. What has therefore been overlooked is a systematic mapping between types of expressive speech acts and the specific ethical principles they enact in digital Islamic preaching that is, how a single act of praise, hope, or empathy operationalizes a particular value such as unity of God, piety, or trustworthiness, rather than treating linguistic form and religious ethics as separate objects of analysis. Second, although Nur Iylia, (2024) analyzed directive speech acts in Dr. Haifaa Younis's own sermons, her study did not examine expressive speech acts, leaving unanswered how Dr. Haifaa Younis, whose preaching is widely noted for its emotional depth and compassionate tone, constructs that tone linguistically. Her sermons are therefore a worthwhile and, to date, under-examined subject for investigating how expressive speech acts construct ethically grounded, emotionally engaging digital Islamic discourse.

This research bridges that gap by examining how Dr. Haifaa Younis constructs positive and empathic preaching through expressive speech acts that reflect (H Mawlana, 2007) five fundamental principles: unity of God, enjoining good and forbidding evil, global community, piety, and trustworthiness. These principles guide communicators to embody values such as sincerity, compassion, and moral responsibility. Using Searle's (1979) speech act theory integrated with Mawlana, (2007) Islamic ethical communication framework, this study provides an interdisciplinary approach that links linguistic pragmatics with Islamic moral values a perspective rarely explored in previous works.

Accordingly, this study aims to identify the types of expressive speech acts in Dr. Haifaa Younis's digital preaching and to examine how these acts reflect Islamic communication ethics as outlined by (H Mawlana, 2007). By integrating (J R Searle, 1979) speech act theory with Mawlana's ethical framework, this research offers an interdisciplinary perspective that links linguistic pragmatics with Islamic moral values, a contribution rarely explored in prior studies on religious discourse.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to analyze expressive speech acts in Dr. Hiafaa Younis's digital preaching. The research focuses on identifying, classifying, and

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interpreting expressive speech acts based on (J R Searle, 1979) speech act theory, and examining how these acts reflect Islamic communication ethics as proposed by (H Mawlana, 2007).

Data Source

The data source of this research is two YouTube lectures delivered by Dr. Haifaa Younis on the official Jannah Institute YouTube channel. Detailed of the two lectures are as follows: (1) "The Four Best Women of Paradise in Islam," with a duration of approximately 30 minutes, published on 10 April 2026; and (2) "The Four Best Women of Paradise in Islam (Part 2)," with a duration of approximately 29 minutes and 40 seconds, published on 12 April 2026. These videos were purposively selected based on the following criteria: (1) the lectures discuss women as the central topic, which strongly reflects Dr. Haifaa Younis's professional and religious background as a Muslim preacher and specialist in obstetrics and gynecology; (2) the lectures contain rich expressive utterances related to Islamic ethical communication; and (3) the videos are publicly accessible, ensuring transparency and verifiability of the data. The selected lectures were transcribed into written text to facilitate systematic identification and analysis of expressive speech acts.

Research Subject

The unit of analysis in this research is utterances produced by Dr. Haifaa Younis that function as expressive speech acts based on Searle's (1979) classification. Through systematic transcription and preliminary observation of the selected lectures, the researcher identified 36 utterances categorized as expressive speech acts, consisting of thanking (6), praising (9), expressing hope (8), encouraging (7), empathy (5), and blaming (1). These utterances serve as the primary data for analyzing how expressive speech acts are used and how they reflect Islamic communication ethics.

To ensure a consistent and replicable identification process, and utterance was coded as an expressive speech act only if it satisfied the following criteria, adapted from Searle's (1979) classification: (1) Illocutionary point: the utterance's primary communicative function is to express the speaker's psychological state or attitude toward a state of affairs (e.g., gratitude, admiration, hope, sympathy, disapproval), rather than to assert a fact, request an action, or make a commitment. (2) Propositional content: the utterance presupposes a proposition about the speaker or the hearer to which the psychological state is directed (for example, the proposition "you have been an engaged audience" underlies the thanking act in "Jazakumullah khair for being an amazing audience"). (3) Sincerity condition: the utterance reflects the speaker's genuine attitude, marked linguistically by exclamatory forms, evaluative adjectives and adverbs, religious performative expressions (e.g., "Jazakumullah khair," "SubhanAllah," "Alhamdulillah"), or other affect-laden lexical choices. (4) Contextual function: the interpretation of each utterance was checked against its co-text and delivery context within the video (the surrounding discussion, the audience being addressed, and the sequential position of the utterance in the lecture) to distinguish genuine expressive speech acts from utterances that were only superficially similar in form, such as rhetorical or informational questions.

Utterances meeting all four criteria were extracted, transcribed verbatim, coded with a data label indicating the video and sequence number (e.g., V1Q1 for Video 1, Quote 1), and grouped into six subtypes, thanking, praising, expressing hope, encouraging, empathy, and blaming, following the sub-classification patterns established in Searle (1979) and applied in subsequent studies such as Mutoharoh (2022) and Meha & Heryono (2025).

Instruments

In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the primary instrument for collecting and interpreting data (Creswell, 2014). In this study, the researcher observes the selected preaching videos, transcribes the utterances, and identifies expressive speech acts based on (J R Searle, 1979) speech act theory. Supporting instrument include transcription notes,

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classification tables for expressive speech acts, and analytical guidelines derived from (H Mawlana, 2007) Islamic communication ethics framework.

Procedures

The data collection procedures in this research follow systematic qualitative research steps. First, the researcher accessed the selected preaching videos from the official Jannah Institute YouTube channel. Second, the researcher carefully observed each video to identify relevant segments containing expressive and ethical communication. Third, the selected lectures were transcribed into written text to preserve linguistic details. Fourth, the researcher highlighted utterances indicating expressive speech acts such as gratitude, praise, encouragement, or sympathy. Finally, the identified utterances were organized into a classification table for further analysis.

Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study applies descriptive qualitative analysis through the following steps. First, the researcher read and rechecked the transcribed data to ensure accuracy. Second, utterances as expressive speech acts were identified according to Searle (1979) classification. Third, each expressive utterance was categorized into specific types of expressive speech acts. After the classification process, the researcher interprets how these expressive speech acts reflect the principles of Islamic communication ethics proposed by (H Mawlana, 2007), namely unity of God, enjoining good and forbidding evil, global community, piety, and trustworthiness, and analyzed the pragmatic mechanism (illocutionary force, sincerity condition, deixis, and perlocutionary effect) thorugh which each utterance constructs that ethical meaning.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This section presents the findings of expressive speech acts identified in Dr. Haifaa Younis's preaching. The analysis reveals six types of expressive speech acts, namely thanking, praising, expressing hope, encouraging, empathy, and blaming. These expressive utterances function not only to express the speaker's psychological state but also to reflect Islamic ethical communication values based on Mawlana, (2007) framework.

Table 1. Types of Expressive Speech Acts in Dr. Haifaa Younis's Preaching

No	Types of Expressive Speech Acts	Frequency
1	Thanking	6
2	Praising	9
3	Expressing Hope	8
4	Encouraging	7
5	Empathy	5
6	Blaming	1
	Total	**36**

Table 1 shows that praising is the most dominant expressive speech act found in the preaching, occurring 9 times out of total 36 utterances. This indicates that Dr. Haifaa Younis frequently employs positive evaluation and admiration to reinforce Islamic values and moral awareness in her audience. Expressing hope (8) and encouraging (7) also appear frequently, showing that emotional support and spiritual motivation are central aspects of her preaching style. Thanking appears 6 times, while empathy is present in 5 utterances. Meanwhile, blaming appears only minimally with 1 occurrence, indicating that moral correction is delivered carefully and sparingly in contrast to her predominantly supportive and compassionate expressions.

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Table 2. Representative Utterances and Islamic Ethical Values

Types	Representative Utterances	Islamic Ethical Values
Thanking	"Jazakumullah khair for being an amazing audience," "Alhamdulillah, Rabbil Alameen"	Unity of God, piety
Praising	"She was the first Muslim, not Muslim woman. She was the first one who believed"; "SubhanaAllah, SubhanAllah"	Piety, enjoining good and forbidding evil
Expressing Hope	"May Allah make it easy for you. Ya Rabbi, ameen"; "May Allah give us all one character of Sayyidina Khadija"	Global community, piety
Encouraging	"Don't let anyone make you look down at yourself"; "Be a person who carries the torch of light"	Piety, trustworthiness
Empathy	"It's very difficult, right? That's not possible for many, many women,""; "She was a single parent, you know how people feel"	Global community, trustworthiness
Blaming	"You want to tell people I know… This is all not for Allah"	Enjoining good and forbidding evil

Table 2 demonstrates that expressive speech acts in Dr. Haifaa Younis's preaching consistently reflect Mawlana, (2007) five fundamental principles of Islamic ethical communication. Gratitude expressions reinforce spiritual awareness and dependence on Allah, praising strengthens appreciation of Islamic teachings and encourages good, expressions of hope and encouraging foster collective solidarity and piety, empathy builds emotional closeness rooted in trustworthiness, and blaming functions as moral correction grounded in the principle of enjoining good and forbidding evil.

Discussions

Thanking as Spiritual Gratitude and Positive Discourse

Expressions of gratitude frequently appear in Dr. Haifaa Younis's preaching as a form of emotional and spiritual affirmation. In the opening of the first video, she directly addresses her audience: *Data V1Q1 (00:00:04)*

"Jazakumullah khair for being an amazing audience actually. It's one of the best audiences I've been talking to."

Pragmatically, this utterance carries a dual illocutionary force. On the surface, it performs a conventional act of thanking with the audience's attentiveness as its propositional content; beneath that, the choice of the religious formula "Jazakumullah khair" ("may Allah reward you with goodness") rather than a secular "thank you" redirects the locus of reward from the speaker to Allah, satisfying the sincerity condition of a thanking act while simultaneously performing an act of praise-through-invocation. This double function is the linguistic mechanism by which Dr. Haifaa Younis reframes an ordinary social courtesy as an act of worship, illustrating that the illocutionary force of an expressive act in religious discourse is rarely singular. The perlocutionary effect intended is to make the audience feel that their attentiveness itself has spiritual value, which increases their motivation to remain engaged for the rest of the lecture.

Data V1Q2 (00:06:30)

"Alhamdulillah Rabbil Alameen."

Unlike V1Q1, this utterance has no addressee-directed propositional content; it is a self-directed expressive act whose sincerity condition is satisfied purely by its formulaic, ritual character rather than by a specific triggering event. Its function is therefore less interpersonal than indexical: it signals, at a transitional moment in the lecture, that the speaker's stance toward all circumstances favorable or otherwise is one of thankfulness. According to Mawlana (2007) principle of unity of God, all gratitude is directed toward Allah rather than human achievement alone, and the principle of piety is reinforced as the remembrance of Allah remains central even at structurally minor junctures of the lecture. Based on these results, thanking in Dr. Haifaa Younis's preaching functions as more than social courtesy: it is a

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linguistic representation of sincerity, patience, and dependence on Allah, essential qualities of Islamic ethical communication.

Praising as Moral Appreciation and Spiritual Admiration

Praising emerges as the most dominant expressive speech act in the preaching. When Sayyida Khadijah, she states:

Data V1Q3 (00:18:45)

"She was the first Muslim, not Muslim woman. She was the first one who believed in Rasulullah alayhi salatu wassalam."

The negation-then-correction structure ("not Muslim woman," "the first one who believed") is a rhetorical device that pragmatically upgrades the propositional content of the praise: it explicitly excludes gender as the relevant category of comparison, redirecting the object of admiration from social identity to spiritual conduct. This satisfies (Searle, (1979) sincerity condition for praise genuine positive evaluation of conduct while its perlocutionary effect is to model, for the audience, a hierarchy of value in which faith outranks status. Another example is directed at the audience itself:

Data V1Q4 (00:00:17)

"You're very tentative, you're engaging your questions."

Here the second-person deixis ("you're") makes the audience simultaneously the addressee and the propositional object of the praise, collapsing the distance between speaker and hearer that is more typical of top-down homiletic address. This immediacy reflects Mawlana (2007) principle of enjoining good and forbidding evil through positive reinforcement rather than confrontation: rather than instructing the audience to engage, the speaker performs an evaluative act that retroactively rewards engagement, making future engagement more likely through positive reinforcement rather than obligation. Based on these findings, the dominance of praising in Dr. Haifaa Younis's preaching reflects a communication strategy that consistently elevates moral and spiritual qualities over worldly ones, building ethical awareness through admiration rather than fear.

Expressing Hope as Spiritual Support and Collective Compassion

A particularly rich example occurs when Dr. Haifaa Younis personally acknowledges single parents in her audience:

Data V1Q5 (00:21:28) "How many of you in this room is single parent? Alhamdulillah. May Allah make it easy for you. Ya Rabbi, ameen."

The sequence here is pragmatically significant: a genuine information-seeking question is immediately reframed, through "Alhamdulillah," as an occasion for gratitude before the hope-expressing formula ("May Allah make it easy for you") is delivered. This ordering means the expressive act of hope is not offered in the abstract but is anchored to an identified sub-group within the audience, which increases its sincerity condition and its perlocutionary force: those who identify as single parents are directly interpellated as ratified addressees rather than incidental listeners. This reflects Mawlana (2007) principle of global community, where communication functions to embrace diverse experiences and strengthen collective solidarity. A further example appears at the close of her discussion of Sayyida Khadijah:

Data V2Q6 (00:10:35)

"May Allah, subhanahu wata'ala, give us all one character of Sayyida Khadija. One. If everything is good, but let's be realistic, inshaallah"

The first-person plural deixis ("give us all") constructs a shared spiritual aspiration that includes the speaker herself, while the qualifying clause "let's be realistic" performs a face-saving hedge that tempers the idealism of the hope with an acknowledgment of human limitation, a dual quality, both spiritually ambitious and humanly realistic, that reflects Mawlana (2007) principle of piety through sincerity of desire directed toward Allah. The use of collective pronouns and direct prayerful expressions reduces distance between the preacher and the audience, making digital preaching feel personally meaningful rather than institutionally distant.

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Encouraging as Motivation and Spiritual Resilience

One notable example directly challenges the audience's socially conditioned self-deprecation:

Data V1Q7 (00:23:01)

"Don't let anyone make you look down at yourself. I see this in my office, where the woman, 'oh I'm stay-home mom.' Now she's feeling pity for herself. Why? You're a mother. You know what mother is? You know what Islam, how Islam looks at mothers?"

Pragmatically, this utterance layers a directive form ("don't let") inside an expressive act: its illocutionary point is not primarily to command a behavior but to express the speaker's disapproval of an internalized belief and her emotional investment in the hearer's wellbeing, which is what marks it as expressive rather than purely directive under Searle (1979) taxonomy. The embedded anecdote from her medical practice functions as evidential support that raises the sincerity condition of the utterance, this is not a generic platitude but a claim grounded in professional experience. Another example appears when she motivates women toward Islamic knowledge:

Data V1Q8 (00:12:47)

"Be a person who carries the torch of light."

This metaphorical encouragement frames religious knowledge as both individual responsibility and collective service; its indirectness (an imperative built on a metaphor rather than a literal instruction) softens the directive force while amplifying the emotional and aspirational charge of the expressive act. Mawlana (2007) principle of trustworthiness is reflected through the consistent alignment between her words and her own identity as a Muslim educator, lending moral credibility to the encouragement she delivers.

Empathy as Emotional Understanding and Human Connection

Dr. Haifaa Younis demonstrates this most vividly when she addresses the difficulties faced by Muslim women in accessing Islamic education:

Data V1Q9 (00:03:00)

"How many women live in the West, can do what I am doing right now? It's very difficult, right? You leave everything, and then just pack, and then go. That's not possible for many, many women, for many reasons."

The rhetorical question that opens this utterance does not seek information; its illocutionary force is to invite the audience to co-construct the answer, which pragmatically distributes the evaluative stance between speaker and hearer rather than imposing it. Rather than presenting herself as an exceptional figure, Dr. Haifaa Younis acknowledges the structural barriers faced by her audience, reducing the hierarchical distance between preacher and listener. Empathy is also expressed through recognition of shared experience beyond gender:

Data V1Q10 (00:08:23)

"There are lot of obstacles, meaning, and I always say, married woman, five children, and she works. And she's a wife, and she's a daughter. Where the time is gonna come form, right?"

The enumerated list of roles (wife, mother, worker, daughter) functions as a pragmatic strategy of specificity: naming exact conditions rather than offering generalized sympathy raises the sincerity condition of the empathic act, since generic expressions of concern could be produced without genuine knowledge of the hearer's circumstances, whereas specific enumeration signals attentiveness. This reflects Mawlana (2007) principle of trustworthiness, as sincerity and attentiveness to the hearer's real conditions form the ethical basis of authentic communication.

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Blaming as Moral Correction in Islamic Communication

Dr. Haifaa Younis demonstrates this most vividly when she addresses the difficulties faced by Muslim women in accessing Islamic education:

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Blaming as Moral Correction in Islamic Communication

Blaming appears only once throughout the preaching, in Dr. Haifaa Younis's opening discussion about the proper intention behind asking questions:

> *Data V1Q11 (00:00:50)*
> *"Don't you ever ask because you want to be heard, you want to show yourself, you want to tell people I know. Or even worse, sometimes I see this, when you ask to basically embarrass the speaker, or to show that you know more than the speaker, or to prove the speaker is wrong. This is all not for Allah."*

Pragmatically, the utterance withholds its evaluative conclusion until the final clause ("This is all not for Allah"), after cataloguing three negative intentions in escalating order of severity. This structure — listing objectionable behaviors before naming them as blameworthy — is a face-mitigating strategy: the audience is invited to recognize the behavior in the abstract before it is condemned, which preserves the dignity of anyone in the audience who might recognize themselves in the description, consistent with Searle (1979) account of blaming as an expression of disapproval toward conduct that violates moral expectations. The generic second-person "you," rather than a marked or individuated address, further ensures that the correction is read as a general ethical reminder rather than a personal accusation. Within Islamic communication ethics, this utterance reflects Mawlana (2007) principle of enjoining good and forbidding evil, delivered through structured ethical reasoning rather than aggressive confrontation. The minimal presence of blaming compared to the dominance of praising, empathy, encouragement, and hope indicates that Dr. Haifaa Younis prioritizes compassionate communication, with moral criticism present only when necessary and always grounded within a broader discourse of sincerity and care.

Taken together, the findings of this study indicate that expressive speech acts play a significant role in constructing ethical and emotionally engaging Islamic preaching in digital contexts. The dominance of praising and expressing hope, together with the frequent use of encouraging and empathy, reflects a preaching style that is constructive, compassionate, and spiritually oriented rather than corrective or confrontational. Beyond classification, the

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pragmatic mechanisms identified above, layered illocutionary force, deictic choices, sincerity-raising devices such as anecdote and specificity, and face-mitigating sequencing, show that Dr. Haifaa Younis's expressive utterances are not incidental features of her speaking style but structured linguistic strategies through which Islamic ethical principles are enacted in real time

CONCLUSIONS

This study identified the expressive speech acts used in Dr. Haifaa Younis's digital preaching and examined how they operationalize Mawlana's (2007) principles of Islamic communication ethics. Analysis of 36 utterances from two lectures revealed that her preaching is dominated by affirming expressive acts, particularly praising, expressing hope, encouraging, and showing empathy, while blaming occurred only once. This pattern indicates a persuasive preaching style that emphasizes appreciation, compassion, and emotional support rather than confrontation. The study contributes theoretically by demonstrating that Searle's (1979) speech act theory and Mawlana's (2007) ethical framework operate as complementary perspectives, with each expressive speech act reflecting a specific ethical principle, including trustworthiness, piety, enjoining good, forbidding evil, and the unity of God. This integrated framework offers a practical model for analyzing religious discourse from both pragmatic and ethical perspectives. Practically, the findings provide guidance for digital preachers, educators, and content creators in developing persuasive yet respectful communication strategies suitable for diverse online audiences. Future studies should compare expressive speech acts across preachers, platforms, or religious traditions and investigate their effects on audience engagement and message reception.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to extend her deepest appreciation to the academic supervisors, Mrs. Tenny Sudjatnika, M.Ag., and Mrs. Dr. Hj. Ruminda, M.Hum., whose expert guidance, insightful feedback, and thoughtful direction have been instrumental throughout the process of completing this research. The acknowledge and mentorship they have generously provided have played a pivotal role in shaping and enhancing the quality of this study. Furthermore, the author is also deeply grateful to her parents, Mr. Muhamad Soleh Almukarom, M.Pd., and Mrs. Roni, S.Pd., whose endless support, prayers, and encouragement have served as the primary source of motivation in completing this research, as a meaningful step toward pursuing the next academic stage and honouring their sacrifices. The author also extends her heartfelt appreciation to her sisters, Vera Maulida Rahmah, S.Sos., and Arifa Dhiyaul Auliya, for their constant support and encouragement throughout this journey.

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