

Semantic Elements Analysis in Arabic Language Textbooks Used in Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awwaliyah in Tegal Regency

Aziz Muzayin¹ , Ibni Trisal Adam^{2*} Mustofa Kamal³

¹Arabic Language Education, Islamic Institute of Pemalang, Indonesia

²Arabic Language Education, Islamic Institute of Pemalang, Indonesia

²Arabic Language Education, Islamic Institute of Pemalang, Indonesia

¹azizmuzayin@insipemalang.ac.id[□], ²ibnitrisaladam@gmail.com^{□2}
mustofakamal@stipemalang.ac.id[□]

ABSTRACT

This research examines the semantic elements embedded in the Arabic language textbook *Lughah 'Arabiyah Juz' 1* authored and published by the Forum Komunikasi Diniyah Takmiliyah (FKDT), which is widely implemented across Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awwaliyah (MDTA) institutions in Tegal Regency. Semantic structure plays a critical role in facilitating learners' comprehension and supporting the development of interpretive and communicative competence in Arabic language education. However, many instructional materials still emphasize mechanical memorization, grammatical forms, and structural accuracy, rather than meaning construction and semantic depth. The present study employs qualitative content analysis to investigate the representation of semantic components, including lexical meaning, semantic field organization, relational meaning (synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, and polysemy), contextual meaning, and ambiguity potential. Findings indicate that semantic elements are insufficiently represented, with vocabulary items predominantly presented in isolated lists without contextual reinforcement or semantic clustering. Semantic relations appear minimally, and ambiguous glosses are present in several lexical entries. Consequently, learners are at risk of developing fragmented lexical knowledge. The study argues for meaning-oriented reform in Arabic textbook design and recommends the integration of semantic field theory and contextual examples to support comprehension development, improve retention, and strengthen communicative outcomes.

Keywords: Semantics; Arabic textbook; lexical meaning; semantic field; MDTA.

A. INTRODUCTION

The study of semantics, which concerns the systematic investigation of meaning within linguistic structures, is a fundamental domain in modern language education. In the context of Arabic language instruction, semantic competence constitutes the foundation for comprehension and communication, enabling learners not only to identify linguistic forms but also to interpret the intended meanings underlying lexical items, grammatical structures, and discourse sequences. Within basic Islamic education settings such as Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awwaliyah (MDTA), textbooks serve as the primary instructional materials shaping learners' linguistic understanding. Therefore, the semantic quality present in textbooks becomes a decisive factor influencing the development of interpretive

and communicative capabilities.

Despite its importance, semantic analysis in Arabic textbooks has received relatively limited research attention, particularly in Indonesia. Many instructional resources used in Islamic elementary education environments remain form-oriented, emphasizing morphological and syntactic memorization rather than conceptual or contextual meaning construction. This concern aligns with recent research findings indicating that the lack of semantic clarity in Arabic textbooks has contributed to difficulties in comprehension, limited vocabulary acquisition, and inadequate proficiency in interpreting texts (Nurhidayati, 2024; Jamil et al., 2025). In other words, without explicit semantic structuring, textual meaning remains superficial and disconnected from communicative practice.

The theoretical and practical importance of semantics for language learning has been widely established. Fauziyah (2025) demonstrated that vocabulary organized through semantic field theory significantly enhances retention and accelerates comprehension. Muslimah and Muhlisin (2025) further found that combining semantic instruction with translation-based tasks substantially improves learners' ability to interpret lexical variations and contextual meanings. Likewise, Firjatullah (2025) affirmed the critical role of semantic analysis in understanding morphological patterns and relational meaning in Arabic verbs. Nevertheless, such findings have not been fully reflected in textbook content at the MDTA level, where semantic relations and contextual examples are limited or absent.

This issue is particularly relevant in Tegal Regency, where MDTA institutions play a central role in supporting foundational Islamic education for young learners. The textbook *Lughah 'Arabiyah Juz' 1* published by the Forum Komunikasi Diniyah Takmiliyah (FKDT) has been widely implemented as a standard instructional resource. However, to date, no systematic analysis has examined semantic elements within this textbook, nor evaluated its adequacy for developing meaning-based learning. Previous studies have primarily addressed textbook suitability from structural perspectives, overlooking semantic and interpretive dimensions (Amalia, 2024; Allail et al., 2025; Rosi, 2023).

Given this gap, the present research aims to analyze semantic elements in *Lughah 'Arabiyah Juz' 1* using a qualitative content analysis methodology. The objective is to evaluate how semantic aspects are represented in terms of (1) lexical meaning, (2) semantic field organization, (3) semantic relations, (4) contextualization, and (5) ambiguity potential. The results of the analysis are expected to contribute scientifically to the evaluation and development of Arabic teaching materials, enhance theoretical discussions on semantic pedagogy, and propose strategies for improving textbook design in early Islamic education.

The urgency of this study is reinforced by the practical challenges observed in Arabic language classrooms, where students frequently demonstrate the ability to decode orthographic forms but experience difficulty interpreting text meaning or applying vocabulary appropriately in communicative situations. Hadi (2025) emphasizes that learners' struggles are largely attributed to insufficient exposure to semantic reasoning and contextual meaning. Similarly, semantic shifts, relational meaning, and cultural nuances remain inaccessible to novice learners without adequate semantic support in instructional materials (Langkawi Journal, 2025; Lughawiyat Journal, 2025). Therefore, evaluating the semantic dimension of textbooks is essential for bridging theoretical

principles with pedagogical needs.

The novelty of this research lies in its specific focus on semantic elements within a widely used MDTA textbook in Tegal—an area that remains under-examined. Studies addressing Arabic textbook evaluation often approach the issue from grammatical or pragmatic perspectives, not semantic structures. Additionally, unlike previous research conducted in formal Arabic education contexts (e.g., Islamic senior high schools or universities), this study targets foundational Islamic informal education, where semantic support is arguably more necessary because learners at the elementary level require explicit meaning scaffolding to develop comprehension skills.

The research aims to answer the following questions:

1. How are semantic elements represented in *Lughah ‘Arabiyah Juz’ 1*?
2. To what extent do semantic structures support meaning-based learning at the MDTA level?
3. What improvements are necessary to strengthen semantic orientation in Arabic textbook design?

Addressing these questions is important not only for immediate educational improvement but also for supporting broader curriculum transformation, particularly as Arabic learning objectives in Indonesian Islamic schools increasingly shift from rote memorization to communicative competence and interpretive literacy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Semantics in Arabic Language Studies

Semantics is a fundamental component of linguistic science, responsible for explaining meaning relationships among linguistic elements and the mechanisms through which meaning is interpreted and constructed. In Arabic linguistic tradition, semantic study is embedded within the disciplines of *‘ilm al-ma‘ānī*, *‘ilm al-bayān*, and *‘ilm al-badī‘*, which collectively examine meaning interpretation, rhetorical value, and stylistic variation. The importance of meaning as the core dimension of language has been extensively emphasized in contemporary semantics, which argues that mastery of linguistic forms must be followed by understanding of conceptual content and contextual function (Hariyadi, 2025). In modern linguistic theory, semantics includes lexical meaning, structural meaning, pragmatic meaning, and relational meaning, all of which interact to form communicative interpretation.

The study of meaning is particularly essential in Arabic due to its rich morphological system, semantic derivation through root patterns, and high levels of lexical polysemy and contextual meaning variation. Firjatullah (2025), in a morpho-semantic analysis of *awzān al-fi‘l*, demonstrated

that Arabic morphological patterns are directly associated with semantic expansion, allowing a single lexical root to generate diverse meaning networks. Therefore, semantic analysis is not optional but integral to understanding Arabic linguistic content.

2. Semantic Field Theory and Vocabulary Instruction

Semantic field theory is one of the most influential approaches in vocabulary development. It posits that lexical items should be introduced not as isolated units but as components of structured semantic networks, enabling learners to conceptualize meaning through relationships rather than memorization. Fauziyah (2025) demonstrated that the implementation of semantic field-based vocabulary teaching significantly improves lexical retention, comprehension, and semantic reasoning among Arabic learners. Learning through semantic fields supports deeper cognitive processing by organizing mental lexicons into conceptual clusters (e.g., family, school, worship, food, nature, emotion, hobbies).

The theory further argues that the acquisition of vocabulary is more effective when semantic relations such as synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, and polysemy are made explicit. Muslimah and Muhlisin (2025) similarly reported that translation activities become more meaningful when learners are introduced to semantic variation and relational meaning rather than direct dictionary equivalence. However, many Arabic textbooks in Indonesian contexts remain structurally oriented and present vocabulary in linear listings rather than conceptual clusters.

3. Relational Semantics and Meaning Interpretation

Relational semantics examines how meaning is structured through relationships among lexical items. Understanding relational meaning contributes significantly to comprehension, especially in languages like Arabic, where multiple words may share similar roots but differ functionally, pragmatically, and semantically. Studies on relational semantics emphasize the necessity of presenting lexical relations in instructional materials to improve interpretation accuracy and critical reasoning (Langkawi Journal, 2025).

Semantic relations also play a crucial role in avoiding ambiguity and misinterpretation. Jamil et al. (2025), in their evaluation of Arabic textbooks used in Islamic secondary institutions, found that the absence of explicit semantic relational explanations contributes to student confusion and misunderstanding. Ambiguity, particularly in polysemous vocabulary, often results in conceptual errors if contextual examples are not provided. Therefore, textbooks must employ relational meaning structures to ensure semantic clarity and cognitive coherence.

4. Contextual Meaning, Ambiguity, and Text Comprehension

Context plays a central role in determining meaning, especially in Arabic where lexical interpretation frequently depends on sentence structure, discourse intentions, and sociocultural background. Nurhidayati (2024) highlighted that contextual meaning significantly enhances comprehension and supports deeper interpretation, particularly when learners encounter polysemous or idiomatic expressions. Without contextualization, vocabulary acquisition becomes mechanical and shallow,

hindering communicative competence.

Ambiguity arises when a linguistic expression is open to multiple interpretations. Several recent studies have identified semantic ambiguity within textbooks, particularly when translation glosses are inconsistent or imprecise (Anjani, 2024). Ambiguity may also result from omission of relational or contextual cues, causing confusion in learner interpretation. Therefore, instructional texts must provide clear context and avoid misleading or overly literal glosses.

5. Evaluation of Arabic Textbooks

Arabic textbook evaluation research has developed broadly in recent years, emphasizing the importance of assessing instructional materials according to linguistic, pedagogical, and cultural dimensions. Amalia (2024) examined content suitability in Arabic textbooks and concluded that although textbooks are generally adequate in structure, they still lack semantic reinforcement and communicative focus. Similarly, Allail et al. (2025) found that textbooks used in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah required improvement in meaning-based structure and contextual application.

Rosi (2023) and Hadi (2025) suggest that modern Arabic learning materials must integrate semantic depth, cultural relevance, and communicative pedagogy to support evolving language objectives. However, empirical evidence shows that textbooks used in early Islamic education rarely incorporate semantic strategy, and instead rely heavily on memorization-based drills and grammatical rules.

6. Research Gap

Although numerous studies have examined textbook structure, textbook suitability, and learning challenges, few have specifically investigated semantic elements in Arabic textbooks at the MDTA level. Most existing works address higher-level formal education such as madrasah tsanawiyah or universities (e.g., Jamil et al., 2025; Amalia, 2024). Furthermore, research addressing content analysis of semantic elements within localized educational settings remains scarce, especially in Tegal Regency where MDTA institutions serve as foundational language education.

Thus, reviewing semantic structure within *Lughah 'Arabiyah Juz' 1*, a textbook widely used in MDTA Tegal, is academically necessary for filling this research gap. The present study provides substantive contributions by offering empirical evaluation of semantic representation in early-level instructional materials, proposing improvements aligned with semantic theory, and strengthening the theoretical foundation for meaning-oriented Arabic pedagogy.

B. RESEARCH METHODS

This research employs a qualitative content analysis approach to examine the semantic elements contained in the Arabic language textbook *Lughah 'Arabiyah Juz' 1* authored and published by the Forum Komunikasi Diniyah Takmiliyah (FKDT). Content analysis is appropriate for systematically evaluating written materials and identifying patterns contained within texts, including linguistic structure, semantic distribution, and thematic emphasis. The method enables detailed investigation of meaning organization and representation within instructional texts without intervening in classroom learning processes.

Research Design

The research design follows the three stages of qualitative content analysis:

- (1) **Data Reduction**, which involves identifying and categorizing textual units relevant to semantic analysis;
- (2) **Data Display**, presenting findings through descriptive and thematic organization; and
- (3) **Conclusion Drawing and Verification**, synthesizing patterns and interpreting findings in relation to semantic pedagogy and prior research.

Data Source

The primary data source consists of the textbook *Lughah 'Arabiyah Juz' 1*, latest edition used in multiple MDTA institutions across Tegal Regency. The book contains vocabulary lists, exercises, short dialogues, sentences, illustrations, and explanatory notes intended to support Arabic literacy development. The selection of this textbook is based on its extensive adoption and official support from FKDT for Arabic curriculum implementation in Diniyah Takmiliyah classrooms.

Unit of Analysis

The units of analysis include:

- a. Lexical items and vocabulary lists presented in each lesson
- b. Example sentences and dialogues
- c. Translation notes and gloss explanations
- d. Structural and semantic categories relevant to meaning development
- e. Instructions and exercises involving vocabulary interpretation

Analytical Framework The analysis applies semantic theory categorization consisting of:

- a. Lexical meaning
- b. Semantic field representation
- c. Sense relations (synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, polysemy)
- d. Contextual meaning

- e. Ambiguity and semantic clarity

This structure aligns with Fauziyah (2025), Nurhidayati (2024), Langkawi Journal (2025), and Manan (2024) who identify these elements as essential indicators of meaning-based learning quality.

Data Validation

Triangulation was conducted through:

- a. Comparison with findings from previous research on Arabic textbooks (Amalia, 2024; Jamil et al., 2025)
- b. Cross-check with semantic theory (Hariyadi, 2025; Al-Haiadreh, 2025)
- c. Peer expert consultation (Arabic linguistics and textbook design reviewers)

This approach ensures analytical reliability and strengthens interpretation consistency.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The semantic analysis of *Lughah 'Arabiyah Juz' 1* produced findings across five dimensions.

1. Lexical Meaning Presentation

The textbook primarily presents vocabulary in isolated lists typically located at the beginning or end of lessons. Lexical items appear without semantic grouping or contextual explanation, limiting interpretive meaning construction. Instead of semantic categories, vocabulary is arranged linearly and thematically limited, creating a fragmented approach to meaning acquisition. This aligns with Amalia (2024) who found similar patterns in Indonesian Arabic textbooks lacking structured semantic support.

2. Semantic Field Structure

Semantic fields are not visibly implemented in this textbook. There is no conceptual grouping used to relate vocabulary items by meaning domains such as school, worship, family, food, or daily activities. Absence of semantic clustering contradicts evidence from Fauziyah (2025), who demonstrated that semantic field organization significantly improves conceptual retention and lexical comprehension.

3. Sense Relations and Relational Meaning

Sense relations are rarely presented. Synonymy and antonymy appear minimally and are not explained explicitly. Hyponymy and hypernymy relations are absent, and examples of polysemy are not addressed. The lack of linkages among lexical items restricts learners' development of semantic reasoning skills, confirming findings by Jamil et al. (2025) regarding semantic confusion in textbooks with limited relational structure.

4. Contextual Meaning Application

Contexts supporting vocabulary use appear infrequently. Some lessons contain short example sentences, but their quantity and semantic depth are insufficient for understanding meaning variations. The absence of dialogues and situational examples restricts interpretation support, consistent with Nurhidayati (2024) describing contextual meaning as the core foundation for comprehension-based learning.

5. Ambiguous or Inaccurate Glosses

Ambiguity is found where gloss translations provide incomplete or imprecise meaning. Several lexical entries appear without contextual clarification, generating potential misunderstanding. Anjani (2024) similarly found semantic ambiguity prevalent in Arabic textbook translations caused by surface-level glosses.

DISCUSSION

Meaning-Based Learning Needs Not Yet Fulfilled

Analysis demonstrates that semantic structures within *Lughah 'Arabiyah Juz' 1* do not fundamentally support the needs of early Arabic learners. Without structured meaning reinforcement, learning remains mechanical and memorization-based, preventing interpretive progress. As supported by Hadi (2025), absence of semantic reasoning contributes to learners' difficulty understanding texts beyond literal surface-level representation.

Alignment with Research Findings

These findings align with research showing that semantic strategies improve language learning outcomes. Semantic field theory application increases vocabulary depth (Fauziyah, 2025), relational meaning clarity reduces confusion (Langkawi Journal, 2025), and contextual teaching enhances comprehension (Nurhidayati, 2024). The textbook analyzed has not yet adopted these approaches.

Implications for MDTA Curriculum

Given MDTA's focus on foundational Arabic learning, meaning-based pedagogy is essential. Textbook revision should apply the following principles:

- a. Reorganize vocabulary by semantic fields
- b. Present relational meaning explicitly
- c. Develop contextual examples and dialogues
- d. Expand semantic explanations and clarity
- e. Eliminate ambiguity through structured gloss revision

Integrating semantic pedagogy will align learning objectives with contemporary communicative Arabic education goals as emphasized by Rosi (2023) and Al-Qorin (2025).

D. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that semantic elements within *Lughah ‘Arabiyah Juz’ 1*, the Arabic textbook widely used in Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awwaliyah (MDTA) institutions in Tegal Regency, are presented in a limited and insufficient manner. The analysis revealed that semantic components—lexical meaning, semantic field organization, semantic relations, contextual meaning, and clarity—have not been optimally integrated into the structure of the textbook. Vocabulary items are predominantly organized in isolated lists and lack semantic or contextual scaffolding required for supporting deeper comprehension. The absence of semantic field structuring and explicit relational meaning (e.g., synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, and polysemy) restricts lexical network construction and comprehension development. Furthermore, limited contextualization and the presence of ambiguous gloss translations may hinder learners’ ability to interpret meaning accurately and communicate effectively.

These results support previous research showing that semantic structure and contextual reinforcement improve comprehension outcomes and instructional effectiveness in Arabic language education. The textbook under review, however, reflects a traditional, form-based approach rather than a meaning-oriented model aligned with contemporary pedagogical frameworks. Therefore, the study recommends systematic textbook restructuring based on semantic field theory and the incorporation of contextual learning strategies to foster deeper interpretive skills and communicative competence.

Future studies should expand the scope of analysis by comparing multiple textbooks across regions, conducting experimental validation of prototype semantic-based materials, and integrating classroom observation to measure the impact of semantic pedagogy on learning performance.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to extend their deepest gratitude to the Chairperson of the Forum Komunikasi Diniyah Takmiliyah (FKDT) of Tegal Regency for granting access and academic support throughout the research process. Special acknowledgment is also conveyed to the material development team of Arabic Language textbooks for Madrasah Diniyah Takmiliyah Awwaliyah, whose dedication and contribution enabled the successful completion of this study.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Look this example below:

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.

Author 2: Conceptualization; Data curation; In-vestigation.

LITERATURE

- Amalia, N. N. (2024). *Analysis of the Arabic Language Textbook for Junior High School: Content Suitability Study*. Al-Ibba Journal.
- Allail, C. A., Sopian, A., Saleh, N., & Maulani, H. (2025). *Praxeology Analysis of The Arabic Language Textbook for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*. IJALT.
- Al-Dakhil, A. (2024). *Semantic Expansion in Arabic Language Textbooks for the Preparatory Stage*. Thi Qar Arts Journal.
- Al-Haiadreh, M. T. (2025). *The Theory of Semantic Fields and Its Presence in the Arab Heritage*. Forum for Linguistic Studies, 7(9).
- Al-Qorin, A. S. (2025). *Designing Communicative-Based Arabic Learning Materials*. JALSAT Journal.
- Anjani, L. (2024). *Analisis Kesalahan Semantik dalam Penerjemahan Bahasa Arab ke Bahasa Indonesia*. Repository UIN SAIZU.
- Bahtera Journal. (2025). *Problematika Kajian Semantik Historis Bahasa Arab di Era Modern*.
- Fauziyah, I. (2025). *Implementation of the Semantic Field Theory in Arabic Vocabulary Teaching*. Ihtimam Journal.
- Firjatullah, F. (2025). *Semantic Analysis of the Meaning of Fi'Il-Mazid Patterns*. JIIC, 2(6).
- Hariyadi, S. T. (2025). *Kajian Semantik Bahasa Arab*. Siyaqiy Journal.
- Hadi, S. (2025). *Menelaah Problematika Kajian Semantik Historis Bahasa Arab di Era Modern*. Bahtera Journal.
- Jamil, S., Ruswatie, A., Aqsho, M., & Fiqiyah, M. (2025). *An Analysis of the Arabic Language Textbook for Seventh Grade Students*. Al-Bayan Journal.
- Langkawi Journal. (2025). *Qur'anic Insights on Educational Evaluation: A Semantic Study*.
- Lughawiyyat Journal. (2025). *Semantic Shift in Arabic Vocabulary from Classical to Modern Usage*.
- Manan, W. A. (2024). *Semantic Field of Teacher Terms in Ta'lim al-Muta'allim*. Arabiyati Journal.
- Muslimah, A. S., & Muhlisin, M. (2025). *Integration of Translation and Semantics Studies in Arabic Language Learning*. Aphorisme Journal.
- Nurhidayati, N. (2024). *Lexical Semantic Fields on Textbook for Reading Course in Arabic*. Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra.
- Rosi, K. (2023). *The Development of Modern Arabic in Syntactic and Semantic Analysis*. Al-Ibba Journal.
- Mahira Journal. (2025). *Relasi Makna dalam Bahasa Arab*.