Language and Typology of Dakwahist Islamic Fundamentalism: The Study of Arabic Loanwords in The Religious Book of Jamaah Tablig

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Abstract

The study on the extrinsic language and its relation with religious system is important to undertake as it has strong intrinsic language paradigm. This paper found that there is a gap in the language research in response to a socio-cultural challenge. This paper studies the use of language and Islamic fundamentalism system in the religious book of Jamaah Tablig. The result shows that there is a correlation between them. The Arabic loanwords used by Jamaah Tablig in their preaching activities indicate that their religious system is fundamentalist. This paper uses the hermeneutical approach to study this topic. Next, this paper suggests that this group use the contextual and socio-cultural elements of the Quran, and do not use solely literal approach to the study of Islam (the Quran and the Muhammad tradition/Sunnah).

Keywords: dakwahist fundamentalism, Arabic loanwords, khurūj, and ittibâ’

A. Introduction

The fundamentalist is a person or group of people who adhere to their religious basic ideas or principles. In Arabic terminology, it is called as ushuli (principled) which is in line with salafi (Islamic orthodoxy) though they have different viewpoints regarding their ideas or tendency. Either ushuli or salafi engages positive things and has a positive meaning as they are consistent in performing their religious basic tenets. However, the fundamentalist (ushuli or salafi) itself is now having a negative meaning as it has negative connotation. Moreover, it is important to figure out fundamentalism as the movement of the fundamentalist. In KBBI (Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia), fundamentalism defines as a conservative and reactionary religious concept or movement leading to an emphasis on purity and the desire to return to a previous religious teaching as written in the scriptures, eventhough, some members of this group have a tendency to fight for their belief radically. According to Webster dictionary, fundamentalism is defined into two meanings; first, Protestantism movement in 20th century emphasizing the literal interpretation of the Bible as the basic principles for Christian life and teaching. Second, a movement or attitude stressing on the literal precision and adherence to any set of basic principles (Karyono, 2003).

The subsequent development particularly in the context of contemporary
Islamic political history, it is found three mainstreams Islamic fundamentalism; they are dakwahist (preaching), politics, and jihadist (the report of the International Crisis Group, 2005). Those categories are important in response to the perspective of Western and Eastern view in which most of them equate the Islamic fundamentalism monolithically as solely Islamic movement that fights against the pressures of modernity, such as in cases of nationalism and democracy, politics, and economics. Therefore, culturally, fundamentalism is even considered as the religious group who pleased to use violence in fighting for their beliefs including with the acts of terrorism.

As one of the Islamic groups in Indonesia, Jamaah Tablig is categorized as dakwahist fundamentalism; an Islamic preaching organization which is known with the doctrine of *khuruj* (preaching tour). Their preaching activities are focused on matters related to the behavior or traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (Sunnah). Sunnah itself has increasingly become a subject of debate; some claims that Sunnah is purely Arabic culture concerning socio-cultural context. For instance, wearing *imamah* (covering the head with turban winding), wearing *gamis*, eating with three fingers, standing while urinating, drinking with the right hand, and others. For some people, those are merely about Arabic culture regarding the way of dressing, eating, and acting.

Jamaah Tablig was established in 1927 by Muhammad Ilyah Al-kandahlawy in India. Their biggest adherents were India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. As an international movement, Jamaah Tablig expansion has been reached all over the world since 1980 and has spread over 250 countries. In this decade, Jamaah Tablig expanded the preaching activities in the Middle East (Mecca and Medina), ASEAN, Europe, Australia, even Latin America (Nasution et al, 2003). Subsequently, this Islamic movement was brought to Indonesia by a group of people from India under the leader of Miaji Isa and has been developed since 1952. In 1990, this Islamic preaching movement spread in 27 of Indonesian provinces. Regarding this, there are a lot of Indonesian intellectuals joined with this movement (Nasution et al, 2003). Recently, Jamaah Tablig is developing in the Eastern Indonesia.

Therefore, Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) and Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI) are classified as political Islamic fundamentalism. Both of them have the same doctrine to establish Islamic State (*Daulah Islamiyah*). In addition, they have a position as intermediary (*wasā’il*) and have the obligation to do things as mandated and fixed by Allah such as implemented the law of *qishas* (retributed justice) and *rajam* (stoning). Indeed, Indonesia is not Islamic state in which Islamic law is implemented. Either HTI or MMI thinks that Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia (NKRI) is unbeliever state; nonetheless, they realize that fight against this state is inappropriate. For them, preaching is the most appropriate way to conduct the instructions of Allah. For this reason, both of them agree to follow the existing political system and do not use violence in their religious movement (Ba’asyir, 2000).

Moreover, those who categorize as jihadist fundamentalism are Negara Islam Indonesai (NII). It has three ideologies; first, declaring *iman* (faith), bearing witness that Allah is God and Muhammad is Rasul followed by the oath (*baiat*) in front of the leader of the organization. Second, upholding the ideology of Islam. Third, implementing three principles; equality, brotherhood, and preaching. Negara Islam Indonesia (NII) has claimed themselves as successor of the prophethood refer to the Quran Surah Al-Qashash’ 28:75. Those Muslims whose abandon this oath (*baiat*) mean out of NII and are considered *kafir* (unbeliever). Kamil
(2013) said that Negara Islam Indonesia (NII) is a secret organization (Tanzhim Sirri) in which terrorism doers involved inside. In this case, as the fraction of NII, Jamaah Islamiyah (JI) is involved within terrorism actions. According to Media Indonesia (2014), 94 terrorists from this organization were arrested in 2013.

The three categories of Islamic fundamentalism mentioned above are dynamic from one to another. The dakwahist fundamentalist group for instance, at once could be a jihadist fundamentalism as it was showed by Laskar Jihad when the communal conflict hit in Ambon (Report of Crisis Group Middle East and Africa, 2005). For this reason, dakwahist fundamentalism organization is the right place to develop the preaching movement of the political fundamentalism group.

This study of the fundamentalist poses at the primary question; what is the correlation between the use of language and the Islamic fundamentalism system? It is important to elaborate the contextual and socio-cultural context concerning the study of language. In Indonesia for instance, most researchers in language and literary research employ monodisciplinary study. It is based on the observation of some research found in Syarif Hidatullah State Islamic University Jakarta (student’s thesis and lecturer’s research submitted to UIN Jakarta Research Center). Either students or lecturer’s research used purely language or literary study without any context regarding cultural, social, political, economics, and religious problem. Language and literary study are not only taken from its main science (cultural science), but also the others like social science. Language and literary study however have abandoned the socio-cultural context. It might be influenced by pragmatism and ideology in which the framework of thought and a certain paradigm are justified, and it might also be influenced by their focus on their main field study; regarding the division of work.

The origin of the study on language could be traced back to the structuralism theory of the French linguist, Ferdinand De Saussure (1857-1913). He focused on the intralinguistic language study in accordance with the visible language phenomenon, phonologically, morphologically, syntactically, and semantically. De Saussure theory couldn’t be judged from the study of the other sciences such as psychology, history, philosophy, and the other cultural sciences. He said that the theory emphasized on the extrinsic language were unconvincing and unscientific. For him, the study on historical language assumed hard to be measured and tend to be unempirical. He denied diachronyc approach (phonology, morphology, syntax, and its syntactic system) that study language changing over time (Sulaiman, 2002). However, his theory was refused by experts of extralinguistic study.

Based on the explanation above, the study on language and its relation with dakwahist Islamic fundamentalism system is important to do. This paper focuses on the use of Arabic loanwords in the religious book of Jamaah Tablig. Then, this paper uses the hermeneutical approach to study this topic. Additionally, this paper is a research report; the research itself was conducted in PSIA (Pusat Studi Indonesia dan Arab) in 2013 titled “Religious System and Language: The Study of Contextual Arabic Loanwords in Contemporary Islamic Texts” and has been adapted and revised considering the contextual and socio-cultural contexts.

B. The Theory of Language

The language as it is stated in the title of this paper refers to Arabic loanwords (kata serapan) and borrowing word (kata ambilan). The loanword is a foreign word adopted into Indonesian language in which pronunciation, spelling, and writing are adapted to the utterance of Indonesian society. Every language society has a certain way to
reveal ideas and senses, or to mention the objects around them. The words are gained through convention or commonly called as arbitrary language system (Chaer, 2002), although some of them are created due to causal relation between the meaning and the language. The language is created when there is a relation with the other language society which represents the ideas or concept and referring to a new certain object. By taking the other languages from the other language societies could be indicated as the origin of the creation of a new word.

The borrowing word (kata ambilan) is a word borrowed from the other language, either native or foreign. They are still original (no modification) as it is used in the source language and revealed with transliteration to the target language. It also has not been incorporated into the official Indonesian language.

The differentiation between the loanword and the borrowing word could be found in KBBI (Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia). The loanword is word adopted into Indonesian language and proven by its availability in the dictionary. Meanwhile, borrowing word is foreign word usually use in literature/book, but those words couldn’t be found in Indonesian dictionary. It is written in italic and should be transliterated to show it is foreign.

The Arabic loanword in Indonesia is divided into four parts; first, the meaning and the pronunciation are as original as Arabic even it changes in writing such as 
abicad, adil, bakhil, batil, barakah, musyawarah, and mungkar. Second, the pronunciation is changed but same in the meaning for example, berkah or berkat from word barakah; zalim from word dzalim; makalah from maqolah; and resmi from rasmiy. Third, the pronunciation and the meaning are changed such as, keparat (in Indonesia literally means cursing) taken from kafarat which means kafir. Logat in Indonesia means dialect or accent, taken from (from Arabic ‘lugoh’ which literally means language). Fourth, the pronunciation is same as Arabic but altered in the meaning like kalimat. In Indonesian language, kalimat means a group of words, originated from Arabic which means kata (http://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daftar_kata_serapan_dari_bahasa_Arab, accessed on October 14, 2013).

According to Nikolaos Van Dam, pesantren (Islamic Boarding School) must have played an important role especially in giving effect on a numerous Arabic loanwords in Indonesia. These schools in particular have trained Indonesian society who wish to learn Arabic. Furthermore, the Arabian traders who come to Indonesia do not generally use classical Arabic when communicating with others in their mother tongue (Van Dam, 2013, http://bahasakita.com/kata-serapan-arab-dalam-bahasa-indonesia, accessed on November 10, 2013). Based on Van Dam statement above, the Arabian traders couldn’t be indicated as the main reasons regarding the Arabic loanword used in Indonesia as they even didn’t master that classical Arabic.

The use of Arabic loanwords in Indonesia are mainly concerned with religion. Those who have strong religiosity tend to use the Arabic loanwords. For example, those who call their parents with abi and ummi (both words has been incorporated into Indonesian language) are indicated as religious persons (http://bahasakita.com/kata-serapan-arab-dalam-bahasa-indonesia, accessed on Oktober 14, 2013). In semantic study, as stated by Chaer (2002), the purpose or the information of abi and ummi is similar with father and mother; babeh-nya, papah, mamah, ayah-ibu, papih mamih (in Indonesia), but it is different in meaning as it has different connotation.

The use of Arabic borrowing words which have not yet been so much adapted to Indonesian language show stronger religious system. In the circle of PKS (Prosperous Justice Party) in which the member are generally comes from tarbiyah group/salafi/
Islamic orthodoxy, using Arabic loanwords is a common thing and they use them frequently, such as *akhi* (brother), *thâghut* (satan), *daulah* (nation), *shibghah* (form/tenet), *giyâdah* (leadership), and *jaulah* (journey- for preaching).

In the study on language, emphasizing Arabic loanwords on its context and its relation with religious system like preaching activities could be analyzed by lots of theories particularly by extralinguistic study like hermeneutics. It is an interpretation (retroactive) of text considering heuristic (structural reading). Hermeneutics means explaining process from the content and the meaning side appears in the text to hidden texts. In hermeneutics, those who study the text strive to understand creatively toward the text meaning lying behind the visible structure. In this case, hermeneutics refers to text meaning (message) characterized inner, transcendental, and latent (hidden). It is aimed at getting desirable firmament on text, symbol or sign. There are meanings within text; denotative that can be caught by deep understanding, and connotative that lays behind the deeper and higher first meaning which is not only obtained by using inner sight with contemplative mind and creative imagination but also by considering the text and its context (Hadi, 1993).

The theory used in this paper is hermeneutics by Hans-Georg Gadamer (1889-1976). This theory is a critique on hermeneutical theory of Wiliam Dilthey (1833-1911) as a pioneer of hermeneutics usage in social or humanities studies. According to Dilthey, to interprete the text meaning, the interpreter must find the objective meaning in producing or reconstructing the meaning as experienced by the author. The reader of literary text should fully described the author’s intention, as if he was experiencing a historical event as experienced by the author. It has been made possible as what Dilthey called as the historical understanding. This historical understanding is able to make the reader, such the reader of language text in getting the cultural distance over reproduction. In other words, a reader of language text must have *verstehen* (understanding); the ability to enter into the mental life of the author on the basis of the signs provided by the author. The hermeneutical task is to produce the author’s intention with trans-histories presupposition, namely the ability to break away from self-context history into the context of the author’s life. Dilthey claims these presuppositions as the objective study of literature. Dilthey’s hermeneutical theory is called reconstructive or reproductive hermeneutics.

Gadamer asserts that the distance gap between the reader (the interpreter) and the author should not be assumed as negative thing, but should be understood as an encounter of two horizons; the horizons of the interpreter and authors. The interpreter or reader enriches his own horizons by means of bringing his own horizon into author’s horizon. As a result, the interpretation is not only reproductive but also productive or constructive (beyond the author’s intention and also it’s meaningful for the interpreter corresponding to his socio-cultural context). Thus, his hermeneutical theory is called hermeneutics of constructive or productive. According to Gadamer, it is difficult and impossible to understand the writer’s mind and to explore the historical background, culture, the author’s purpose or sender as a whole. Hence, language has autonomous meaning, stand-alone, free of author’s intention, social and its cultural context, and release from the first recipient as the targeted public by the writer.

In the explanation preceded, Gadamer’s statement is almost the same as the concept of semiology/hermeneutical theory of Roland Barthes (1915-1980), although it is likely to be moderate. His theory celebrates the plurality of meaning of a text and proclaims the death of the author. According to Barthes, encountering the meaning of the second level should be
individual and no single method. Single approach to the meaning leads to be repressive unproductively. Barthes theory about semiology shifts from the author as the attention center, the source of meaning, and the most authority reader over the interpretation, to the reader who has been given a major role in producing the meaning. Text no longer belongs to the author, but to the reader. He depicts a linguistic work like onion. Text consists of levels of meaning that if the stripping level continues to do, it will not end at the heart, the center, in a secret, and not in the reduced principle. In this case, Barthes Semiology makes liberation towards meaning, because it has been colonized/controlled by modern systems (thought) that only produce a correct and complete single interpretation. In this case, Barthes attempts to replace a text on its location which contains of quotations, repetitions, and references. In response to the problem of rejection of a single interpretation and the obligation to open chances for new meaning. In this case, Barthes has same thought as Derrida. For its reason, Derrida denied logocentrism and fonosentrism. Logocentrism means the desire of the center. The word Logocentrism is derived from the word logos in the New Testament that concentrated on the word as the origin of the center of God’s presence. Since the word is spoken, it is also called fonosentrism. On the contrary, Derrida suggests the reader of language text to make a deconstruction; it is to hold the relation between elements of the text expression (signifier) and the elements of text content (signified) in gaining another meaning/new meaning. Several studies (Dilthey, 2002; Gadamer, 1995; Barthes, 1988, Atho and Fahruddin, 2003; Par, 2001; Sumaryono, 2001; Kurniawan, 2005; Hoesd, 2011) mention that for Derrida, the process of deconstruction is infinitive, because the correlation between the signifier and signified is not persistent (the meaning of sign is dynamic and complex).

However, to avoid incoherence meaning as explained above, then this paper used Gadamer hermeneutical theory which is developed by Barthes. Although hermeneutical theory/Barthes semiotics primary (first level/denotation) then put it on the second level of semiotic (connotation).

The theory used in this paper is the theory of two aspects of tendencies: Dilthey’s objectivity and Gadamer’s subjectivity. The theory itself refers closely to the theory of hermeneutic Paul Ricoeur (the expert of hermeneutics who was born in 1913) that bridged both of the two tendencies. According to Ricoeur, a reader of the text does not have to project himself into work or language text, but he should beself-opened over it. A reader of the text should posit himself in medias res, always in the middle, not at the back and not also on the front. It means to ease and simplify the content of text is in a way of understanding. In the interpretation of text, a reader of the text should not necessarily deals with a text that seemed to be normative, but he should read fully into the text. He must have concepts (social, economic, and ideological systems) drawn from his own experience that cannot be avoided from his involvement, because the concepts are changeable or adjustable depending on the needs of the text. According to Ricoeur, a text (any discourse fixed by writing) is independence; it is aparted not only from writer/author, but also the process of the disclosure, the original context, and the prior audience. For the reason that the author’s intention is almost unknown, indeed it’s unused. However, the reader should focus
only on the text, even the interpretations lead the specification of space and time. Based on Recoeur’s argument, the meaning of a text does not lie behind the text, but in front of the author. It’s not a hidden thing; it is open, even it leads to a world that may be encountered to. The principle way to deal with its interpretation is to stand on an inconspicuous reference text (the symphonic structure of segmental acts). Therefore, Ricoeur suggests that the assessment of the text is started from the analysis of explanation as a preliminary stage to assess the static dimensions of a text (language as meaning). Furthermore, to interpret is to uncover the dynamic and the contextual meaning of the text (language as an event/discourse.

C. Religious Social Views of Jamaah Tablig

As an Islamic preaching organization in encouraging people to the truth of Islam and adherence to religion, Jamaah Tablig could have been rated as a commendable Islamic social group. Nevertheless, there is a gap between their religious views and the social traditions considering the contemporary Islamic fundamentalism. They have problems in their literalism tradition. It can clearly be seen in terms of Sunnah which is controverted in Islam. For example: first “necessity”, or more precisely Sunnah for Jamaah Tablig to wear abaya clothes and ‘imamah (covering the head with turban winding) or to eat with three fingers. These are the traditions of Muhammad and subsequently debatable. For some people, the core of using dress is to cover genitals, not its literal form. Then, regarding eating with three fingers, they assumed that Arabian is not eating rice but wheats and dates. So, it makes sense that the Prophet ate them with three fingers. Moreover, the Sunnah of eating with three fingers is associated with eating rice with vegetables. The three refers to the odd number (witr) in which some Hadiths said that Allah like this action. However, eating with five fingers and eating with spoon in the modern culture are not considered makruh (disliked or offensive act).

Second, lengthen the beard; standing while urinating (in fiqh is called makruh), suggestion of tayammum or Islamic ritual ablation using a purified sand or dust (using right hand), and sitting while drinking. These activities are Sunnah, and are not considered as such compulsory (Kamil, 2011). In the modern context, these two things could be a problem. Jamaah Tablig members do not give a good treatment in lengthen the beard (neat). There is a gap regarding this because it seems to be contradicted from Islamic principles as the Prophet’s Hadith: “Allah is the most beautiful, that loving beauty/ neatness”. Then, for Jamaah Tablig, standing while urinating in front of available standing urinate place in toilet is considered makruh. This is actually different from the classical period of Islam in the seventh century where the Arabic society was urinating in standing position on the desert; in Islam, this is something uncivilized. Today, standing while urinating is in toilet and closed. The concept of modern toilet relates to the tendency of modern society to maximize the space and land, as it has high expense. Sitting while urinating at mall for instance somehow gives difficulties for Muslims; it takes time and they must have faced a long entrance.

Those literalism mentioned above is based on the interview with Jamaah Tabligh management. According to Muhammad Adham (personal communication, December 2, 2013), the texts in the Quran and Hadith should be taken literally. The purpose is to avoid any mistake in their interpretation or in understanding of the real meaning. The literalism in understanding these religious texts is refuted by other members. Jamaah Tablig activists are not in the extreme bracket and are not moderate. Neither Quran nor Hadith needs to be taken literally or contextually. Himpunan Fadhilah Amal, a book created by Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya explained that Quran and Hadith do not need to be taken literally, but there is also a way of takwil (esoteric interpretation
of the Quran), although only a few. That’s why in their interpretation, Jamaah Tablig considers munâsabatul âyât (relationship between verses) and ashabun nuzul (historical context in which Quranic verses were revealed). Moreover, according to Jamaludin, there are a lot of mutaradif words (synonym) in Arabic that need to be translated and interpreted (personal communication, December 2, 2013).

In translating the verses and hadith, Jamaah Tablig also tends to use thematic translation method; a translation that is in accordance with certain theme that they chose. This can be seen in the book of Himpunan Fadhilah Amal written by Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya Al-Kandahlawi. This book is one of the books that have been used as reference in Jamaah Tablig’s preaching activities. There are collection of verses, hadith and tales of the prophet Muhammad and his companions within the text that have been compiled thematically (Al-Kandahlawi, 2006). The core of Jamaah tablig’s teaching is inviting humans to remember their God by worshiping him, and then the verses, hadith...

1 The tendency of not using literal translation for instance, can be seen in the translation book of Himpunan Fadhilah Amal by Maulana Muhammad Zakariyyain first chapter, Fourtty Hadith Regarding the virtue of Quran:...
make Jamaah Tablig understands the whole contextual of the Quran and Hadith. Literalism addressed to Jamaah Tablig is a religious dominance tendency, without neglecting some of their understanding which is taken unliterally. However, they are literal toward those things mentioned above that have become their trademarks, if there is someone who dressed like Jamaah Tablig within the society, they will ask, “Are you member of Jamaah Tablig?” That’s why, if this phenomenon is not used as the primary analysis, it becomes irrelevant to the context of Jamaah Tablig.

As a fundamentalist (not politics and jihadist), Jamaah Tablig is not necessarily accuse other streams or groups that have different interpretation with them as misguided people. Jamaludian and Adham stated that for Jamaah Tablig, all problems either social or diversity, need to be placed in forum. In this case, they tend to appreciate the difference and freedom of opinions. Of course in this research, if we said some hard-line groups such as Wahabi that interpret Quran literally, they are more cynical and think others as misguided people (personal communication, December 2, 2013).

It is understandable for those who do not have different perception from Jamaah Tablig. For some people, the doctrine of *khuruj* (preaching tour) assumed as a weird stipulation. The steps that should be taken are; doing *jaulah khusushi* (visit local ulama) who are generally come from different social group from Jamaah Tablig. Then, doing *jaulah umumi* (visit local residents) and persuading them to come to the mosque. Next step is doing *bayan* (explanation); a religious lecture which is delivered by a member of Jamaah Tablig. They study their main religious book.

Other than that, Jamaah Tablig is a preaching organization that focuses on fostering morals (individual moral improvement). They avoid aqidah and fiqh issues which are khilafiah (controversial) for various religious groups. Their da’wa listeners are first invited to follow Jamaah praying in mosque. This is in accordance with the da’wa principle that must always be remembered by Jamaah Tablig members. In doing bayan, they emphasis it in the greatness of Allah, the faith in judgment day, the responsibility of jamaah praying, and the responsibility of da’wa. To give their listeners more motivation, Jamaah Tablig uses the book *Kisah-Kisah Para Sahabat* that was made by Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya. In their preaching activity, Jamaah Tablig is very deliberate and respectful the differences in religious interpretation even though it is not principal; they are relatively used safe materials to avoid different interpretation (Nasution et al, 2016).

There are eight even more of bayan principals of Jamaah Tablig. The members must respect other Muslims, especially ulama; In doing bayan, members are expected to use the correct words, give reassuring explanation and do not allowed to make gossips; the members must also be patient if they receive bad and hurtful welcome (Nasution et al, 2016). In addition to preaching principal factors, the acceptance of other religious interpretation in Jamaah Tablig presumably influenced by similarities in the mainstream Islam, especially traditional Islam such as NU (Nahdhatul Ulama). Jamaah Tablig sees *taklid* (to follow) in certain mazhab is obligatory and *ijtihad* (effort on Islamic activities). For them, there are no ulama today that can do *ijtihad*. This is something reasonable because the founder, Maulan Ilyas is a Sufi from Tarekat Jisytiyyah using Sunni Maturiduyyah as *aqidah* and Hanafi as mazhab (Nasution et al, 2016).

However, as an organization and independent Islamic group, it doesn’t mean the existence of Jamaah Tablig is without any scrutiny and fully accepted by other mainstream Islamic groups. Even in some cases, Jamaah Tablig is considered to have lack of respect towards other Islamic groups. Their door to door preaching is often regarded as intrusive by others and assumed that the people that they visited are
less Islam. Refusals from communities and religious leaders are often occurred; Jamaah Tablig also has less sympathy towards the preaching activities such as Tabligh Akbar, especially if those activities put together with certain art programs. Jamaah Tablig has beliefs that preach is not only the job for ulama but also all Muslims. Jamaah Tablig even thinks that madrasah (school) is a dangerous preaching system. There are five reasons regarding this: (1) the religious teaching is not gained from home because people learn it in madrasah (school); (2) ulama is bowing down to benefactors; (3) leaning towards material, because presuming religion won’t run without money; (4) rivalry between ustadz; and (5) Madrasah students have worldly ambitions, so that their love for Allah and his Prophet will be faded (Kamil, 2011 & Nasution et al, 2016).

Jamaah Tablig has a religious tolerance. In their view, each individual has the same right as a citizen to pray in peace in accordance with their respective religion and beliefs. Jamaah Tablig said that this is what the Prophet Muhammad had shown in his religious practice. The Prophet can live in harmony side by side with non-Muslims. However, Jamaah Tablig strictly rejects if the head of state is non-Muslim. Jamaludin and M. Adham said unless the head of state is a Muslim, then disaster comes out (personal communication, December 2, 2013).

Therefore, Muslims women have the same rights just like Muslim men; working in the public space in particular. According to Jamaah Tablig, women have the same rights for working as long as they are allowed by their husbands. In this case, Jamaah Tablig observes the moderate feminism positively regarding the equal right in the space determined by culture; not nature. Once again this excessive literalism appears. They see anything that the women (wives) do particularly in domestic affairs must be done with their husbands’ permission (Jamaludin, personal communication, December 2, 2013). Whereas, the religious book such as Fiqh al-Marâh al-Muslimimah said that women do not need to ask permission to her husband for doing Islamic practices (obligations as Muslim) like hajj. The hajj is legal for women even without their husband’s permission. In this case, Ibrahim (1981) stated that hajj is the obligation of women (as Muslims) toward Allah.

Muhammad Adham (personal communication, December 2, 2013) had cynical views regarding this. According to the existing verses or hadith, a woman is not allowed to leave home alone, and without waering hijab. Therefore, woman is not allowed to work. This condition is hard to understand. How could women work if during their work, they must be accompanied by their muhrim (father/ brother/ husband). This is very inconvenience for them, especially in big cities. According to M. Adham, if women are not allowed to work, how could they become leaders, more over to be leaders of people? Jamaah Tablig in this case is different from Muhammadiyah that sees women with their muhrim (people who have family relationship with woman) in security context only. If it is safe, women are allowed not to be accompanied by their muhrim (personal communication, December 2, 2013). For Muhammadiyah, the argument (‘illat) regarding the text of hadith on prohibition of coming out from home without muhrim in Islam should be revealed. Despite that, it seems that the issue regarding women’s fairness in public domain is a controversial issue. Jamaah Tablig encourages women to involve in khuruj. Jamaah Tablig in this case is greatly appreciating women’s rights, especially in her preaching activity (PP Muhammadiyah, 2011).

As an organization based in India where Muslim is minority, Jamaah Tablig is a political organization. In the new order era, they can flourish without being disturbed despite the inclination of the regime towards political Islam. And this is probably that make their organization rapidly growing across the globe. For their activists, politic is vulnerable to conflict and full of intricacies.
Their activists mostly don’t care too much to politic such as democracy because they don’t know much about it. For Jamaah Tablig, there is no need for building Islamic state because the most important thing is embracing Muslims to be more Islamic and adhere to their religious tenets (Kamil, 2010).

Jamaah Tablig is not focus on Islamic state. Its main focus is embracing people to be more Islamic. There are many people who claim themselves as Muslims but they do not undertake Islamic religious basic principles. Jamaah Tablig is created to remind the others to return to the Prophet’s Sunnah (Jamaludin, personal communication, December 2, 2013).

Despite their literally and problematic view, Jamaah Tablig is against the West regarding justice for women and non-Muslims in public space as an idea or politic social power. This fundamentalist group thinks the West as a power in threatening the agidah (creed) and Muslims existence especially on how they are dressing.

Jamaah Tablig members especially those who have joined with this organization in a very long time, must use long sleeves of abaya and lengthen their beards. They are even required to brush their teeth every time they want to pray using siwak (some kind of small piece of rattan), just like in the Rasul’s era. When gathered around with other members, they usually eat from the same tray in a group. Around 5 people per tray. They eat using their hands and wherever possible using three fingers. When they eat, they bend their right leg and their butt is touching their left foot sole. They believe that these kinds of action are the Prophet’s Sunnah (Nasution et al, 2016).

Jamaah Tablig has a strong literalism in Sunnah especially in fighting against the West and modernity; like dressing. They think Islam must be the same like the one in the Prophet’s era even though the social context and size is different and not principal matter. Islam is only conceived as an outer skin. This is why the contextualization of Islam for Jamaah Tablig seems to be a serious problem. They have difficulties in differentiating where Islam’s area is and where culture’s area is. Likewise, Jamaah Tablig doesn’t expect to be a modern Islam.

Just like what they see the West, Jamaah Tabligh also see secularism as forbidden concept. For them, it is impossible to separate religion with how to run the nation. Both of them must coexist. The state ideally has to regulate religious affairs. Meanwhile as Muslims, Jamaah Tablig also sees that in running a nation, Muslims must refer to what the Prophet Muhammad had been practicing before (Jamaludin & M. Adham, personal communication, December 2, 2013). In this case, Jamaah Tablig has a tendency to be the political fundamentalism that is idealized Islamic state, at least for their some members.

Jamaah Tablig is against any secularism, even though it is not contrary to religion. In addition, secularism as living interest based on the mundane rational and empirical perspective. This assumption can be seen from how many moderate Islamic leaders who are against the practice of khuruj. Formally, the rules of khuruj in Jamaah Tablig stated that this activity must guarantee the livehood for the family that left behind, ask permission to leave work, and cook behind mosque or house where there is a member of Jamaah Tablig who lives there. However, what often happens is the reverse of those formal rules. The control and discipline in maintaining the rules is very weak. Frequently they don’t care about their work and littering the mosque. They (moderate figures) honor their afterlife orientation more than their world affairs. Even for students, they are threatened to be drop out (Kamil, 2011).

The cost of khuruj must be borne by their own members because in preaching activity, they cannot receive any material rewards. Whereas, in the Jamaah Tablig’s customs the khuruj activity is taking three days in a week, a week in a month, or a month in a year. At least 40 days in a lifetime (Nasution et al, 2016). And they also often
leave the town and even abroad. It’s hard for them to work, even though the participants are allowed to work before doing jaulah or khuruj. There are two problems regarding this. First, they are too literal in understanding the verses in Quran. Jammah Tablig is too literal in understanding the verse QS. Yunus (10:72), “I’m not asking for any payment from you. My payment is only from Allah.” JT is also too literal in understanding the hadith: “Read the Quran and don’t you eat therefore.” Even though in many Fiqih books, such as Fiqh as-Sunnah, said that the mazhab of Maliki, As-Syafi’I and Ibnu Hazm allow people to receive payment when they are teaching Quran and Islamic knowledge. The reason for this is to refuse the hardships of life and as compensation for their focus in understanding the religion that make them cannot do any other work (Sâbiq, 1365 H).

In this point, Jamaah Tablig is different from other mainstream Islamic groups that recognize the existence of modern specialized communities with their job descriptions. It always emphasizes that preaching is not only the sole responsibility of ulama (Muslim scholars) but also every Muslim. This view is not completely wrong because it is important to see the context of society who’s not really understand Islam. Nevertheless, preaching is done in an amateurish way. Just like what Habib Mundzir Al-Musawa, the head of Majlis Zikr Rasulullah, has complained. The members of Jamaah Tablig do not have enough religious knowledge. Even some of them do not have adequate basic knowledge (Nasution et al, 2006).

As a consequence of cynical view towards the West and rejection on secularism, and even modernism, Jamaah Tablig doesn’t use any modern technology, such as communication and information technology to strengthen their organization. This can be seen from the absence of Jamaah Tablig’s official website that can help people to get information about Jamaah Tablig activities and other information related with. One of the Jamaah Tablig’s activist said that they cannot deny the function and the benefit of the technology as an effective preaching media and as an information tool such as mobile phone, internet, social media and others (M. Adham, personal communication, December 2, 2013).

Even with all of the above matters, Jamaah Tablig refuses to preach using violence. For them, the best jihad is not war: the preaching activity should not be done by force but by wisdom, it should have been done by morals, as conducted by the Prophet Muhammad SAW (Jamaludin & M. Adham, personal communication, December 2, 2013). Even so, in addressing the groups as radical, Jamaah Tablig is open-minded by creating the discussion regarding matters of faith or religious practices (Jamaludin & M. Adham, personal communication, December 2, 2013).

Jamaah Tablig assesses and sees other Islamic groups that have been labeled as Islamic terrorist groups by media as un-Islamic. They even assert that there are no verses in the Quran or hadith legalized the preaching by using violence method. Rasulullah himself never cited it. As a foundation in their preaching activity, they do it with peace, unity (ittihad), and discussion; not instruction.

Jamaah Tablig is using the concept of tolerance when they are preaching. There is no coercion towards certain group. Preaching is not only done by discussion but also in an intimate way. For example, the discussion of religious matters can be done while drinking coffee in a coffee house (M. Adham, personal communication, December 2, 2013).

Based on the explanation above, the problem in Jamaah Tablig’s religious system is their literal interpretation of Sunnah. They have problems in seeing the West or Indonesian modernity especially on dressing and eating. They also has problem in understanding the connection between religion with modern technologies and justice for women (Muslim and non-Muslims) in a public space. In their preaching activity, they generally talk about observance like jammah
praying, culture, and politics (sometimes). They don’t mind with such matters like preaching without violence and NKRI (Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia). Because of those reasons, Jamaah Tablig can be categorized as dakwahist Islamic fundamentalist even though they are easily be influenced by Islamic radicalism. Theoretically, Islamic fundamentalism is dynamic from one to another; it is flexible from dakwahist fundamentalism to politics even to jihadist fundamentalism.

D. The Relations between Arabic Loanwords and Religious System

As an Islamic organization, Jamaah Tablig is relatively engaged Arabic words as their main references are Quran and Hadith. They use many Arabic loanwords to represent their preaching ideas or methods. The Arabic words adapted into Indonesian language are giving senses for Islamic spirit. Psychologically, the original Arabic words in the religious context (preach) give a significant influence to religiosity and has a magical power; particularly when the preaching is talking about the afterlife. The use of Arabic loanword/borrowing word is effective in preaching activity. Jamaah Tablig uses the Arabic loanwords not only in their preaching activity but also in their daily social interactions. It is understandable as the Arabic is not only the language of Islam, in which the main text is Quran and Hadith, but also the language of Muhammad, in which they emphasized on preaching to follow the Prophet’s tradition/ Sunnah.

The use of Arabic loanwords could be found in the book of Himpunan Fadhilah Amal translated by A. Abdurrahman Ahmad and friends, from the original Fadhilah Amal created by Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya Al-Kandahlawi, describe that reality. The uses of Arabic loanwords can also be seen in the Abul Barro Al-Baitawie’s handbook, Ciri dan Cara Dakwah Rasulullah. This book was published in Jakarta by Gaus & Co publisher in 2007. These two books are the handbooks for Jamaah Tablig and their members or activists in their preaching activities. Those books are used as a guide and also as reference.

This part will explain the relation between Arabic loanwords used in those two books with the religious system of Jamaah Tablig as a preaching fundamentalist. In the opening (muqadimah) Himpunan Fadhilah Amal created by Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya, it can be seen that the translator was trying to convey the original ideas that were presented by the author and also to show the religious flavor of meaning. The translator then kept many Arabic loanwords, and it seems hard to be translated into Indonesian language.


“After finished doing miswak and wudhu, we should sit in a quiet place with great respect and humility while facing kiblat. Then by presenting the heart and in khusyu’, we read Quran that came directly from Allah. If we understand its meaning, we better read it with tadabbur and tafakkur. If we find
the merciful verses, we better pray to get His forgiveness and grace. If we find the punishment verses and threat from Allah, we better ask for His protection, because there is no other protector than Allah. If we find the verses about the greatness and glory of Allah, then say Subhanallah. If we are not crying while we read Quran, we have better pretend to cry (Rah. a, 2006).

The total loanwords that had been used by the translator on the text above are about 23 from 99 words. This means around 23% or almost a quarter of the whole words are Arabic loanwords.

The text below is also presented in the second book; the handbook of Abul Barro Al-Baitawie titled Ciri dan Cara Dakwah Rasulullah. In one chapter found the text below

"Mudzakaroh Ulama ulama di Bangladesh menyimpulkan bahwa ciri gerakan dakwah Rasulullah SAW. adalah: (1) dapat dilakukan oleh semua lapisan umat tanpa batas apapun. (2) Adanya satu perintah pimpinan/syuro di seluruh dunia yang ditaati. (3) Adanya mahabbah diantara ahli dakwah.”

"The Mudzakaroh ulamas in Bangladesh concluded that the Rasulullah’s da’wa characteristics are: (1) can be done by all people without any restriction. (2) The existence of one worldwide leader’s command (syuro) that is obeyed by all. (3) The existence of mahabbah between the preaching experts.” (Al-Baitawie, 2007).

There are 13 Arabic loanwords on this text from 37 words used. This is around 35% from the whole words.

Two texts below show the same thing. And even the uses of Arabic loanwords are much more


“The Characteristic of Ambiya’ preaching (based on, pen.) of the ulamas mudzakaroh in the hajj season of 2006-2007: (1) All Prophets are Dai. (2) All Prophets did not ask for any payments in doing their preaching apart from Allah. (3) All Prophets visited people not visited by them.” In other part of the second book, there is also text that has relation with da’wa, “Ambiya for not accepting any Payments from anyone in preaching to remove material’s impression. Allah said: ‘In Ajriya illa ‘alallah. (It is not my reward but to Allah only). ‘La As’aluka Ajran (I did not ask for reward from you) (Al-Baitawie, 2007).

On the first text related to preach, there are 14 Arabic loanwords from 36. Meanwhile on the second text there are 13 words from 36 words. This is comparable to 39 % of Arabic loanwords on the first text and 36 % on the second text. The Arabic loanwords used in the text above are very many. The Arabic loanwords used by Jamaah Tablig are much more compared with the mainstream of Islamic texts like NU and Muhammadiyah.

If the three later texts are analyzed by syntactical and socio-cultural contexts, then we can see the preaching fundamentalist side of Jamaah tablig. On the first text of the second book, the syntactical content of the text is mainly discussed about preaching
that can be done by all people without any restriction. Preaching is not the sole responsibility of ulama. Then, according to the first text, the preaching needs an organized and mutual love between ulama. All refer to the practices and characteristics of Jamaah Tablig as an organization that focused on billisan preaching (orally preaching).

They seem to restrict themselves to the literal understanding of verses like QS. An-Nahl’16:125, “Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction.” And also hadith narrated by Bukhari, “tell from me even one verse.” This verse and hadith is correct. However, we must see where those verses and hadiths are applicable. Generally, preaching is indeed the responsibility of all Muslims. But it depends on the preaching object. For people who don’t know or know a little about Islam, those verse and hadith are applicable. Yet, those verses and hadiths have to be interpreted using QS. Ali Imran’ 3:104, “And be among you a group of people that calls upon the kindness, calls on the goodness and prevent from doing evil.” and also QS. At-Taubah (9), “Why not go from each group among them, some of the people to deepen their knowledge of their religion and to warn their people.”

Based on this explanation, Jamaah Tablig is not only trapped in literalism but also in understanding the rationality of the texts (Quran). As they encourage everyone to fulfill the Islamic requirement for preaching, even if the person falls short of strong religious intellect makes the preaching itself is performed in amateurish way. For them, the most important thing is to mobilize their preaching without seeing their religious competence. They seem to be affected by another text from the second book concerning the blessing in motion. If people are moved to preach, then the blessing will come in practice and become the cause of hidayah (guidance). Otherwise, they are not explored the history of the preaching across the world (Al-Baitawie, 2007). The amateurish preaching system of Jamaah Tablig seems unsafe. They may say something considered right even it is wrong in Islamic understanding. In such cases, they are threatened by the hadith of the Prophet, narrated by Bukhari and Muslim, “Those who lie to me (about religion), then be prepared to inhabit the hell.”

On the second texts, besides engaging the necessity of preaching by paying expenses themselves, the main syntactical context is the importance of jaulah and khuruj. For Jamaah Tablig, preaching means picking up the ball; not waiting for someone to come out just like the contemporary ulama. However, they are trapped in the textual literalism and historical practices of the Prophets and his preaching.

They failed in understanding the contextual preaching as mentioned in the Quran. In some verses said that Allah raised the Prophets according to and with the same language as their society. Even more, the Prophet said that, “Speak in accordance with the level of their thinking” (Amin, 2009). The other hadiths also mentioned that it has to be adjusted to the language of the people that become the object of the preaching. Based on the quran and hadith, this means that preaching must be in accordance with the mindset and culture of the people that become the object of the preaching. Culturally, modern society is industrial society organized and appreciated the importance of privacy. For this reason, they cannot be visited unless with the appointment. The modern society tends to love something efficient and effective as a measurement of the modernity in capitalism (modern management). Jamaah Tablig tends to use traditional method of preaching (door to door).

In the third text, it is containing the obligation for preaching with self paying expenses. There is a gap either syntactically or contextually regarding this. It doesn’t match with Emile Durkheim’s division of labor theory for the sociology of modern society. This theory was originated from his idea about traditional and industrial society. In traditional society, division of labor is
very little. Meanwhile in modern society is the reverse, very complex. This reality is influenced by the population growth rate and urban dynamics. The dense population forces the industrial society to make specific division of labor. Each individual will only occupy certain position or role. In industrial society, their type of social solidarity is also different with traditional society. If the type of social solidarity of traditional society is mechanical typology; formed because of the similarity between its members), then the industrial society is organic. It is not only formed by the communal similarity between its members but also the cooperation between their members which is different in their competence (Rusli, 1994).

Based on the description about Jamaah Tablig, it can be said that: first, Jamaah Tablig’s amateurish preaching system is out of date in today social context. Second, the view expressed by moderate Islam that allows taking wages while preaching, the rate is not determined and being commercialized. As it has mentioned above, it is more contextual and meet the demands of ulama’s humanitarian needs and make the preaching be more effective.

This solidarity typology is formed because of the interdependence between each other. A teacher will need a doctor when sick and a farmer will need a trader when harvest time. They are united by their differences. Autonomy and individual specialty, therefore, valued considering that every individual undergo their respective functions. For social order, the applicable law is not repressive and run by people who are given the task of social control (Jones, 2010; Martono, 2011). Then, this is logical that the preachers allow taking wages while they are preaching as expressed by moderate Islam because it meets the demands for human needs. Therefore, it is more contextual and more effective.

Based on a further observation of the religious books and literatures of Jamaah Tablig, the uses of Arabic loanwords are much more than the loanwords used in the other moderate Islamic organizations like Nahdatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, mainly on socio-cultural matters considering the context of preaching and the social interaction between them. Furthermore, the Arabic loanwords used by Jamaah Tablig remain unknown by the other mainstream Islamic organizations such as ikhwan and akhwat. These two words are used to call their activists who are considered as siblings. The word halaqah means the center for preaching or place is also used by them. Mosque, in this case is the ideal place for preaching. Aside from the word khuruj, there is also jaulah (travel from house to house, mosque to mosque, village to village to encourage praying and to prosper the mosque); tarbiyyah Isliamiiyah (Islamic education); and mabit means stay overnight in mosque during khuruj.

In the book of Abul Barro Al-Baitawie (2007), there is also terms such as mudzakarah (discussion), bi’ah da’wah (environment of the Ulama), tahammul masyaqat (impervious to sufferin), tasyaqun (work confidently), tawahhud (one heart, one mind, one preaching sentence), ittiba’ (follow the way of the Prophet and his companions). Those Arabic loanwords remain unknown and are not used by the mainstream Islamic organization. The other popular Arabic loanwords used by Jamaah Tablig are tasykil (to form), markaz (center), masturat (which must be covered, addressed to woman), ijtima’ (annual gathering of the followers), and bayan (religious speech). These words also remain unrecognized by the mainstream Islamic organization.

Muhammad Adham and Jamaludin said that there are Arabic loanwords used by the mainstream Islamic fundamentalism and also used by Jamaah Tablig such as: da’wa, tabligh, nahi munkar, hidayah, tagarrub, kaffah, and daurah (personal communication, Desember 2, 2013). The use of those terminologies are relaying on the needs. Nonetheless, to whom the preaching is performed influence the uses of Arabic
loanwords. If the preaching is addressed to people in the market community with many merchants inside, then the Arabic loanwords are not used that much.

E. Closing

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the use of language and daktwahist Islamic fundamentalism have a positive correlation. The Arabic loanwords used by Jamaah Tablig in their preaching activities indicate that their religious system is fundamentalist. In their religious activities, Jamaah Tablig and the other mainstream Islamic organizations such as Nahdatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah use the same loanwords, eventhough a lot of loanwords are exclusively used by Jamaah Tablig such as *khuruj*, *jaulah*, *mabit* and *ittiha*. These loanwords work for their doctrine and movement within their organization. As a fundamentalist group, they seem to restrict themselves to a literal approach in understanding the basic tenets of Islam, particularly the Quranic verses. They use the literal approach to the study of Islam (Quran and Muhammad traditions/Sunnah), and neglect the contextual and socio-cultural elements of the Quran.

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