



# Sustaining Islamic Educational Traditions: A Structural-Functional Analysis of Arab Pegon Translation in Pesantren Fathul Ulum

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## Abstract :

The *kitab kuning* (classical Islamic texts) has long been regarded as an authoritative reference in the pesantren (Islamic boarding school) tradition. These books, written by classical Islamic scholars, have been studied across generations and are viewed as time-tested sources of Islamic knowledge grounded in the Qur'an and Hadith. One distinctive method used in pesantren to comprehend the *kitab kuning* is the *maknani* method—a translation approach utilizing Arab Pegon, a modified Arabic script adapted to the Javanese language. The use of Arab Pegon serves not only as a learning aid but also holds historical significance in the spread of Islam in the Indonesian archipelago. Pesantren Fathul Ulum in Kwagean, Kediri, is one of the Islamic boarding schools that continues to preserve this Pegon translation tradition in the study of *kitab kuning*. This qualitative research aims to examine the tradition of translating *kitab kuning* into Arab Pegon at Pesantren Fathul Ulum through the lens of Talcott Parsons' structural-functional theory, particularly the AGIL framework (Adaptation, Goal Attainment, Integration, and Latency). The findings reveal that Pegon translation functions both as a pedagogical tool and a socio-cultural mechanism that sustains the pesantren system. The pesantren's ability to adapt its teaching methods to the diverse backgrounds of its students reflects the function of adaptation. The design of a learning system that preserves classical Islamic knowledge demonstrates the function of goal attainment. The function of integration is evident in the social structure and collective use of linguistic codes, thereby strengthening community cohesion within the pesantren. Meanwhile, the function of pattern maintenance is realized through the preservation of values, norms, and educational traditions across generations. Thus, the practice of Arab Pegon translation plays a vital role in maintaining the existence of pesantren as a traditional Islamic educational institution amid the dynamics of social change.

**Keywords :** *Kitab Kuning, Arabic, Translated, Talcott Parson*

## Abstrak :

*Kitab kuning* telah lama dianggap sebagai rujukan otoritatif dalam tradisi pesantren. Kitab-kitab ini ditulis oleh para ulama klasik dan terus dikaji lintas generasi, sehingga dipandang sebagai sumber keilmuan Islam yang telah teruji oleh waktu dan berlandaskan pada Al-Qur'an serta Hadis. Salah satu metode khas yang digunakan di pesantren untuk memahami kitab kuning adalah metode *maknani*, yaitu metode penerjemahan yang menggunakan huruf Arab Pegon—modifikasi huruf Arab yang disesuaikan dengan bahasa Jawa. Penggunaan Arab Pegon ini tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai alat bantu pembelajaran, tetapi juga memiliki peran historis dalam penyebaran Islam di Nusantara. Pesantren Fathul Ulum Kwagean Kediri merupakan salah satu pesantren yang masih mempertahankan tradisi penerjemahan Pegon ini dalam kajian kitab kuning. Penelitian kualitatif ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji tradisi penerjemahan kitab kuning dengan Arab Pegon di Pesantren Fathul Ulum melalui perspektif teori struktural-

fungsional Talcott Parsons, khususnya kerangka AGIL (*Adaptation, Goal Attainment, Integration, dan Latency*). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerjemahan Pegon berfungsi sebagai alat pedagogis sekaligus mekanisme sosial-budaya yang menopang sistem pesantren. Kemampuan pesantren dalam menyesuaikan metode pengajaran dengan latar belakang santri yang beragam mencerminkan fungsi adaptasi. Perancangan sistem pembelajaran untuk melestarikan keilmuan Islam salaf menunjukkan fungsi pencapaian tujuan. Fungsi integrasi tampak dalam struktur sosial dan kode linguistik yang digunakan secara kolektif sehingga memperkuat kohesi komunitas pesantren. Adapun fungsi pemeliharaan pola terwujud melalui pelestarian nilai, norma, dan tradisi pendidikan dari generasi ke generasi. Dengan demikian, praktik penerjemahan Arab Pegon memiliki peran penting dalam mempertahankan eksistensi pesantren sebagai institusi pendidikan Islam tradisional di tengah dinamika perubahan sosial.

**Kata Kunci:** *Kitab Kuning, Arab Pegon, Penerjemahan, Talcott Parson*

## INTRODUCTION

The term *kitab* specifically refers to written works in the field of religious sciences that are composed using Arabic script. This distinguishes them from other types of writing that use scripts other than Arabic. The *kitab* used as a learning source in Islamic boarding schools, or *pesantren*, is known as the *kitab kuning* (Wijaya, 2023). In the *pesantren* tradition, the *kitab kuning* is a hallmark and identity that cannot be separated from the institution. As a center for the study and development of Islamic sciences, the *pesantren* regards the *kitab kuning* as an inherent part of its identity (Diana Handayani, 2022).

Martin van Bruinessen even stated that the existence of *pesantren* must serve to transmit traditional Islam as found in the *kitab kuning*. Other scholars define the *kitab kuning* as Islamic books, particularly in the field of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), written or printed in Arabic script in languages such as Arabic, Malay, and Javanese, without diacritical marks (*harakat*), thus earning the name “*gundul*” books. According to Abudin Nata, as cited in Elisa, the *kitab kuning* refers to Arabic literary works composed by Muslim scholars of the medieval period, particularly from the 16th to 18th centuries. They are called *kitab kuning* (classical Islamic texts) because they were typically printed on yellow-colored paper. Often unbound, the pages were easily detachable, allowing students to study selected portions without carrying the entire volume. Due to the lack of vowel markings, these books are difficult to read – especially for those not well-versed in Arabic grammar (Irukawa Elisa, 2021).

In *pesantren*, the classical Islamic texts, more commonly referred to as *kitab kuning*, play a crucial role in the dissemination of Islamic teachings. Azra, as cited by Mustofa, noted that the *kitab kuning* has a distinct format and is printed on yellowish paper, which contributes to its name (M Sazili Mustofa, 2021). The *kitab kuning* is also a defining feature of the *pesantren*. It is regarded as an authoritative reference whose contents are beyond question. Having been written long ago and studied over generations, the *kitab kuning* has stood the test of time. These texts are carefully formulated by scholars based on the Qur’an and the Hadith of the Prophet. As such, the teaching of the *kitab kuning* and other religious sciences is inseparable from the *pesantren* environment – making the two fundamentally intertwined (Rohman, Muasomah, & Rifa, 2021).

Because of its vital role in the *pesantren*, the *kitab kuning* can also be viewed as a defining characteristic of the institution. It is not only a repository of Islamic knowledge but also represents a value system that influences every

aspect of life. The *kitab kuning* conveys religious understanding, ritual practice, social interaction, ethics, and the worldview of the pesantren. It lives on as a cultural tradition among *santri* (students), deeply rooted in Indonesian society. As a tradition, it persists in its timeless historical significance, transcending its role as a mere scholarly reference. It functions as the pesantren curriculum, seen as an accurate method for studying Islam. The *kitab kuning* is a core component of the pesantren, serving as the primary reference for the study of religious sciences. To comprehend it, students must first learn tools such as *nahwu* (syntax) and *sharaf* (morphology), which are essential for reading these texts (Izmi et al., n.d.). Due to its importance, the study of the *kitab kuning* is a central activity in pesantren, especially in *salaf* (traditional) pesantren (DM, 2013).

Within the pesantren tradition, one method for understanding the *kitab kuning* is through translation, known as *maknani*, which involves the use of *Arab Pegon*. Historically, Arab Pegon is closely linked to the spread of Islam in the archipelago and was one method used by scholars to propagate Islam in the region. Arab Pegon is the Javanese language written in Arabic letters or hijaiyah, without diacritical marks or vowel indicators. According to Amirudin, traditional translation using Arab Pegon involves rendering messages from Arabic into Javanese. In such translations, both the original text and its meaning are translated in a balanced manner. Since most materials taught in pesantren are Arabic-language *kitab kuning*, Pegon script is commonly used. Students translate these texts word-for-word using Pegon while the *kyai* or *ustadz* reads and explains them (Tasliyah & Anwar, 2022).

This definition aligns with the explanation that Arab Pegon—also known as *Arab pego* or *Arab jawi*—uses Arabic script but employs local languages such as Javanese or other regional tongues depending on the speaker's preference. In other regions, Arab Pegon is also called *Arab Melayu* because it uses Malay or local languages written in Arabic script. Arab Pegon has a unique character: from a distance, it resembles typical Arabic writing, but upon closer inspection, its arrangement does not follow standard Arabic structure. In the pesantren world, Pegon translation plays a key role in the comprehension of the *kitab kuning* (Huda & Musyarrof, 2023).

One pesantren that continues to preserve the tradition of Pegon translation in studying the *kitab kuning* is Pesantren Fathul 'Ulum Kwagean, Kediri. This pesantren not only upholds the tradition but is also active in publishing various *kitab kuning* with Arab Pegon translations, which are sold in the pesantren cooperative and to the public. Pesantren Fathul 'Ulum Kwagean Kediri, located in Krenceng village, Pare, East Java, is founded on the principles of Pancasila and follows the *aqidah* of Ahlusunnah wal Jama'ah. One of its key activities is *sorogan*, an extracurricular program of the *madrasah diniyah Futuhiyyah* aimed at enhancing students' skills in reading *kitab kuning*. This activity bridges the gap between theory and practice in reading classical Islamic texts. Another main activity is the *pengajian kitab kuning*, where the students read *sharh* (commentary) texts in a *bandongan* system, conducted after *musyawarah* (discussion) and *sorogan*. The texts are selected based on the students' educational levels (kwagean.net).

Therefore, this research seeks to analyze the strategies and stages involved in preserving the *kitab kuning* through Arab Pegon translation, as well as the process behind the emergence of these uniquely pesantren-based translated texts at Fathul 'Ulum. To explore this subject, the researcher applies Talcott Parsons' structural-functional theory as an analytical framework. Through this lens, it becomes possible to understand the efforts undertaken by the pesantren in safeguarding and sustaining the tradition of *kitab kuning* translation.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach. According to Creswell, in qualitative research, the researcher explains and explores the research problem and investigates the concept or phenomenon being studied. Therefore, qualitative research can be considered exploratory in nature (Creswell, 2015). The data collection techniques in this study involve three steps: *First*, observation, in which the researcher observes and records the situations and activities related to the recitation of *kitab kuning* and the *bandongan* learning process among the students (*santri*) at Fathul 'Ulum Kwagean. *Second*, interviews, which involve a question-and-answer process between the researcher and respondents aimed at constructing the events or activities surrounding the translation process of *kitab kuning* into Arabic Pegon that is intended for publication. *Third*, documentation, which refers to records of past events. Documentation may include written texts, images, or other forms of work. In this study, documentation consists of images of Arabic Pegon translations found in *kitab kuning* that have been published by the Fathul 'Ulum pesantren.

Data analysis in this study follows the concept proposed by Miles and Huberman, which involves three steps: 1) Data reduction, which entails selecting and focusing the discussion in accordance with the research questions. 2) Data display, which involves describing the results of interviews and observations conducted at Fathul 'Ulum Kwagean pesantren. 3) Conclusion drawing, which consists of synthesizing the various types of data obtained from the pesantren concerning the translation process of *kitab kuning* (Huberman & Miles, 1992).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Profile of Pesantren Fathul 'Ulum

Pesantren Fathul 'Ulum Kwagean is an Islamic boarding school founded by KH. Abdul Hannan Ma'shum in 1981. It is located in Krenceng Village, Pare District, Kediri Regency. This pesantren is an educational institution rooted in Islamic teachings and follows the Ahlusunnah wal Jama'ah doctrine. It organizes both formal and non-formal educational programs, courses, trainings, and various religious and social community activities.

The non-formal educational institution under this pesantren is called Madrasah Diniyah Futuhiyyah. It operates under the auspices of Pesantren Fathul 'Ulum and provides religious education using a classical system based on a traditional (*salaf*) curriculum. This curriculum includes a wide range of

disciplines such as the Qur'an, Hadith, Qur'anic Sciences (*Ulumul Qur'an*), Hadith Sciences (*Ulumul Hadith*), Theology (*Tauhid*), Tajwid, Arabic Language (*Lughat Arab*), Grammar (*Nahwu*), Morphology (*Shorof*), Jurisprudence (*Fiqih*), Inheritance Law (*Faroid*), Arabic Poetic Metre (*'Arudh*), Rhetoric (*Balaghah*), Logic (*Mantiq*), Islamic Astronomy (*Falak*), Principles of Jurisprudence (*Ushul Fiqih*), Islamic Ethics (*Akhlaq*), Islamic History (*Tarikh Islam*), and others.

One of the key activities is Sorogan Kitab, which is a learning method aimed at improving the students' ability to read and understand *kitab kuning* (classical Islamic texts). From another perspective, this activity serves as a breakthrough in combining theoretical and practical approaches to reading *kitab kuning*. This activity usually takes place after the *shubuh* (dawn) prayer.

Following this is the Pengajian Kitab, or *kitab kuning* study session, which involves reading and explaining commentary texts (*syarah*) using the *bandongan* method. This activity is conducted after musyawarah (discussion) and sorogan sessions. The texts studied are commentary books suited to the students' respective levels.

### **The Tradition of Arabic Pegon Translation in the *Kitab Kuning* of Pesantren Fathul 'Ulum Kwagean**

Based on the results of interviews conducted, several key points can be explained. First, at Pesantren Fathul 'Ulum, the *sorogan* and *bandongan* methods are used in studying the *kitab kuning* (classical Islamic texts). In this method, the *kyai* or *ustadz* reads the text being studied, translates it into Javanese using the Pegon script (Arabic letters adapted to write the Javanese language), and explains its meaning. The students (*santri*) listen attentively, then rewrite the translation in their own books according to what was delivered by the teacher. As explained in an interview with one of the caretakers: "The method uses direct translation, known as *sorogan* and *bandongan*. The *kyai* reads the text, the *santri* listens and writes it down. At the end, a review board (*dewan mushohih*) validates whether it is appropriate for reprinting."

The interview findings show that the process of translating *kitab kuning* using Arabic Pegon follows the *sorogan* and *bandongan* methods, adapted to each student's level. This method is widely used in many pesantren. The findings are consistent with the view that *bandongan* is a one-way (monologue) method where the *kyai* reads, translates, and sometimes comments, while the *santri* listens attentively, annotates the literal meaning, and marks syntactic symbols (*i'rab*). Armai, in his book, explains that in the *bandongan* method, the *kyai* uses the local language and explains the text sentence by sentence, while the *santri* follows carefully by adding notes or codes in their own books. This results in what is often called the "bearded book" (*kitab jenggot*) due to the dense notations resembling a beard (Adib, 2021).

The *sorogan* method, on the other hand, involves a student approaching a teacher, who then reads a few lines from the Qur'an or Arabic texts and translates them word-by-word into a specific language. The student then repeats and translates each word accordingly, as modeled by the teacher (Hanani, 2017).

Second, in the translation process of the *kitab kuning*, students use Arabic

Pegon along with specific symbols and rules consistent with Pegon writing conventions. This was affirmed in another interview with a caretaker: “The translation uses Arabic Pegon, sometimes referred to as *makna gandum* (hanging meaning). It also involves codes that represent Arabic grammar rules. Not all Javanese words are suitable for use in *maknani* (giving meaning to Arabic words).”

From the above findings, it can be concluded that in the translation process, all students must be knowledgeable and skilled in writing Arabic Pegon and understand its grammatical rules. This serves as a foundational competence for students of Pesantren Fathul ‘Ulum to progress through the levels of *kitab kuning* study.

Regarding Pegon writing conventions, certain rules apply: vowel diacritics (*harakat*) are often omitted and replaced with vowel letters. Not all Arabic hijaiyah letters are used identically in Pegon. Letters such as c, g, p, ny, and ng do not exist in the Arabic alphabet. Therefore, adjustments or additional symbols are introduced in Pegon to represent consonants that are absent in Arabic. This is illustrated in the following table:

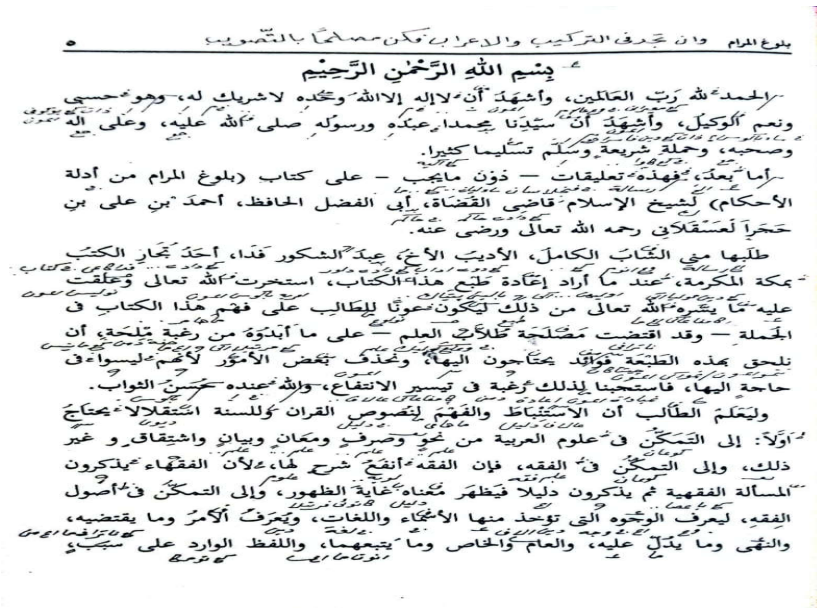
**Tabel 1.** Modified Arabic Pegon Characters for Non-Arabic Latin Consonants

| Latin    | Arabic Pegon |
|----------|--------------|
| Ca / C   | چا           |
| Pa / P   | پا           |
| Dha      | دھا          |
| Nya      | نھا          |
| Ga / G   | گا           |
| Nga / Ng | نگا          |

In the table above, it can be explained that in the writing of Arabic Pegon, there are several rules, including: to write the vowel (A), it is sufficient to add an alif; to write the vowel (I), it is sufficient to add the letter ya’; to write the vowel (U), it is sufficient to add the letter wawu; to write the vowels (E and É), it is sufficient to add ya’ along with placing a fathah on the preceding letter. To write the vowel É, a pepet (~) is added to the preceding letter; and to write the vowel (O), it is sufficient to add wawu.

In Arabic Pegon, there are also symbols used to indicate the grammatical position of words or phrases. These include: the subject (*mubtada’*) is marked with a small mim, the predicate (*khobar*) uses the symbol kho’, the subject of the verb (*fa’il*) uses the symbol fa’, and the object (*maf’ul bih*) is marked with mim-fa’.

Below is an example of an Arabic Pegon translation found in the book *Bulughul Maram* at the Fathul Ulum Islamic Boarding School in Kwagean, published by the boarding school’s cooperative.



**Figure 1.** Arabic Pegon in the Book *Bulughul Maram*

From the example of the Arabic Pegon translation above, it can be said that the translation generally adheres to the writing conventions of Pegon that are commonly used in other Islamic boarding schools. It also uses Pegon Arabic symbols, such as the mim letter to represent *mubtada'* (subject), which means *utawi* (as for); the mim-fa' as the symbol for *maf'ul bih* (object), meaning *ing* (to); the kha' letter as the symbol for *khabar* (predicate), meaning *iku* (is); and the mim-tha' symbol for *maf'ul muthlaq*, meaning *kelawan* (with).

The third point concerns the process of producing *kitab kuning* (classical Islamic texts) translated into Arabic Pegon, published by the Fathul 'Ulum Islamic boarding school. The process involves, for example, interviews conducted by researchers with the school administrators.

The translation process usually begins with students (*santri*) attending lessons (*ngaji*) with the teacher (*mustahiq*). The version with complete translation and neat handwriting is then written down. The work is validated, and if it meets the criteria, it will be published. The requirements include understanding the rules of Arabic Pegon, consistently attending *ngaji* until completion, and producing clear and readable handwriting. These are the essential conditions for becoming a translator. The most important point is the student's consistency (*istiqomah*) in attending the lessons. To maintain authenticity, the student must participate in *talaqqi* (direct transmission of knowledge) with the *kyai* (Islamic scholar). Through this method, authenticity is preserved. Once the translation is complete, it is reprinted. This ensures the preservation of its authenticity.

A distinctive feature of the *kitab kuning* at this boarding school is that students are allowed to study using Pegon Arabic translations, specifically intended for the accelerated learning classes (*kelas kilatan*). Based on the interview results above, it can be concluded that before a Pegon Arabic translation of a classical text can be published, several stages and requirements

must be fulfilled by the students or translators. These include: 1) The student must have a solid understanding of Arabic Pegon writing rules. 2) The student must be consistent and earnest in attending the Islamic lessons provided by the boarding school. 3) The student must produce neat and legible handwriting. 4) There must be a *mustahiq* or validator who has the full authority to validate the student's translation work.

If all these conditions and processes are properly followed, the translated *kitab kuning* can be approved for publication by the pesantren. The lengthy process followed by the student translators is a reflection of the commitment to preserving the authenticity of the core ideas, the writing, and the meaning. On the cover of the book, there is a note stating the publisher as: "*bima'na ala pesantren Fathul 'Ulum Kwagean Pare Kediri*", which serves as an identity marker indicating that the Pegon translation was published by the Fathul 'Ulum Islamic Boarding School in Kwagean, Kediri.

### **Application of Parsons' Theory in Pesantren Fathul 'Ulum Kwagean**

Talcott Parsons, a prominent sociologist in the 20th century, developed a theoretical framework known as Structural Functionalism. This theory views society as a complex, interdependent system where each component serves a specific function that contributes to the overall stability and equilibrium of the system. Drawing from earlier thinkers like Auguste Comte and Herbert Spencer, Parsons likened society to a biological organism in which different parts (or institutions) perform necessary roles to ensure the survival and continuity of the whole.

In this model, social change is not viewed as abrupt or revolutionary. Instead, Parsons believed that change occurs gradually and is always aimed at restoring or maintaining balance within the social system. When an element within the system changes—due to either internal dynamics or external pressures—other elements will adapt to accommodate the shift, thereby restoring a state of equilibrium. In this context, change is considered functional if it contributes positively to the social system and maintains its stability.

One important distinction in Parsons' approach is between planned and unplanned change. Planned change is initiated by change agents, individuals or groups who intentionally seek to reform certain aspects of society for the betterment of its members. These agents are often policymakers, educators, religious leaders, or social activists who influence transformation by introducing new values, technologies, or norms into the system (Prasetya, Nurdin, & Gunawan, 2021).

To maintain systemic stability and continuity, Parsons introduced a foundational concept known as the AGIL paradigm, which outlines four functional imperatives that every social system must fulfill: 1) Adaptation (A) This refers to the system's ability to adapt to its external environment. It involves the ways a society gathers and allocates resources to respond to physical and social challenges. Economic systems and technological advancements often fall under this imperative, as they provide societies with tools to survive and thrive within their environment. 2) Goal Attainment (G)



Every social system must define and pursue collective goals. This imperative relates to the political system and decision-making processes that enable societies to set priorities, establish policies, and allocate authority. In Parsons' view, effective leadership and governance are crucial for achieving societal goals and addressing complex political and social issues. 3) Integration (I) This function ensures social cohesion and solidarity by maintaining harmony among different parts of the system. It involves establishing and enforcing norms and values that guide behavior and resolve conflict. Legal systems, educational institutions, and religious frameworks play key roles in achieving integration by fostering a shared identity and moral code among members of society. 4) Latency or Pattern Maintenance (L), Latency refers to the preservation and transmission of cultural patterns—such as language, values, beliefs, and customs—that sustain the identity and continuity of a society. Institutions like family, religion, and schools are instrumental in maintaining these patterns across generations. This imperative is crucial for socialization and for nurturing the internal motivation of individuals to conform to societal norms (Sulistiawati & Nasution, 2022).

Parsons emphasized that perfect integration or balance is rarely achieved in real societies. Instead, social systems are in a state of dynamic equilibrium, constantly adjusting and readjusting in response to internal and external factors. When one part of the system changes—for instance, a shift in cultural values due to globalization or technological innovation—other parts (such as education, politics, or economy) must adapt to maintain overall harmony. A critical insight of Parsons' theory is the idea of reciprocal interdependence: changes in one institution (e.g., religion, education, or family) inevitably affect others. This notion supports holistic approaches to social analysis, where each institutional change is analyzed in terms of its systemic consequences.

In the context of Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), especially those like Pesantren Fathul 'Ulum Kwagean, Parsons' structural functionalism offers a useful analytical lens. Application of Parsons' Theory in Pesantren Fathul Ulum Kwagean.

**Table 2.** Application of Parsons' Theory in Pesantren Fathul Ulum Kwagean

| AGIL Component             | Definition (Functional Imperative)  | Application In Pesantren Fathul 'Ulum Kwagean   |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| <b>A - Adaptation</b>      | The ability of the system to adapt to the environment and allocate resources effectively. | Pesantren adapts the <i>kitab kuning</i> (classical Islamic texts) using Arabic Pegon, integrating religious teachings with local language and culture. |
| <b>G - Goal Attainment</b> | The ability to set and achieve collective objectives.                                     | Pesantren aims to produce religious scholars (ulama) and preserve Islamic knowledge through structured diniyah education.                               |
| <b>I - Integration</b>     | The harmonization of  | The pesantren fosters unity and   |

|                    |  |  |
|--------------------|--|--|
|                    | social relationships through shared norms and values.                        | discipline among santri through shared Islamic values and a communal learning environment.   |
| <b>L - Latency</b> | The maintenance and transmission of cultural patterns and social motivation. | Pesantren sustains traditions such as sorogan and bandongan learning methods and preserves Arabic Pegon and local Islamic culture. |

By fulfilling these imperatives, pesantren maintain their relevance and resilience as traditional yet dynamic religious institutions within Indonesian society. Talcott Parsons' Structural-Functional Theory views society as a system composed of interconnected parts that function together to maintain social equilibrium, including the preservation of traditions. Parsons introduced four functional imperatives (AGIL) that must be fulfilled for a social system to survive:

### 1. Adaptation

In Talcott Parsons' structural-functional theory, *adaptation* refers to the system's ability to manage internal resources effectively while adjusting to external environmental demands. To keep the Fathul Ulum Islamic boarding school (pesantren) relevant to the social, cultural, and intellectual dynamics of society, changes are necessary. The translation of classical Islamic texts (*kitab kuning*) into Arabic Pegon at Fathul Ulum Kwagean is a concrete example of an adaptive mechanism carried out both culturally and pedagogically.

As primary sources of classical Islamic scholarship, kitab kuning are written in classical Arabic with complex and sophisticated structures. Teachers with diverse educational and linguistic backgrounds often face difficulties in understanding these texts. Translating them into Javanese using Arabic script—known as Arabic Pegon—has become the primary method in this context. This allows students (santri) to access Islamic knowledge without first mastering Arabic grammar, serving as a medium that bridges students with Islamic sciences.

This method also reflects how the pesantren responds to the practical needs of its students, such as overcoming language barriers and accelerating the internalization of religious knowledge. In other words, the pesantren maintains the core values of Islamic knowledge while adjusting to internal conditions like student capability and socio-cultural background. Moreover, teaching methods such as sorogan and bandongan, which incorporate Arabic Pegon translation, are part of its adaptive strategy. Bandongan provides students the opportunity to listen to direct explanations from teachers or kyai, while sorogan enables individualized learning based on each student's ability. Both methods create a flexible and contextual learning environment, reinforcing the pesantren's function to adapt to student diversity.

Thus, the tradition of Arabic translation—such as the independent printing of Pegon-translated texts by the pesantren—shows that this adaptation is not

merely reactive but has become embedded in the cultural structure of the pesantren. It demonstrates that adaptation is not only a short-term functional response, but also supports the long-term sustainability of the Fathul Ulum pesantren's social system.

## **2. Goal Attainment**

Goal attainment refers to a social system's ability to formulate goals, allocate resources, and organize collective actions effectively and purposefully to achieve those goals. Without clear goal attainment, a social system may lose direction and ultimately become unstable.

The main goal of the Fathul Ulum Kwagean pesantren is to preserve and deepen classical Islamic knowledge (khazanah salaf) through the study of kitab kuning, and to produce students who understand and can apply this knowledge in social and religious life. The pesantren develops various methods and tools to achieve this goal, one of which is the tradition of Arabic Pegon translation.

This translation practice plays a strategic role in achieving the pesantren's goals by bridging the gap between the source texts (in classical Arabic) and the students' understanding—most of whom come from non-Arabic backgrounds. Arabic Pegon has developed into a helpful tool for understanding Islamic sciences taught at Fathul Ulum. In addition, the translation validation system carried out by the mushohih council (expert teachers) demonstrates a mechanism to oversee quality during the goal-attainment process. This ensures that students understand the content of the texts accurately.

The pesantren's organizational structure—such as the division of roles between the kyai, ustadz, senior students, and junior students—also contributes to goal achievement. This indicates that goals are pursued under a unified leadership structure within Fathul Ulum. It shows that the pesantren's social structure has a strong goal orientation, with each structural component designed to support this process.

## **3. Integration**

Integration is a function of the social system that works to unify elements within society to maintain harmony, coordination, and stability. It allows a social system to perform its roles and functions consistently, reduces the likelihood of conflict, and fosters solidarity among its members. Without integration, the system may fracture due to uncoordinated differences in roles, values, or objectives.

At Pesantren Fathul Ulum Kwagean, a traditional Islamic educational institution, there exists a complex social structure composed of various components, including the kyai (religious leaders), ustadz (teachers), senior students, junior students, as well as specific learning practices and methods. In this context, the tradition of translating kitab kuning into Arabic Pegon plays a crucial role as an integrative tool that unites these components within a cohesive educational system.

Arabic Pegon translation enables students from diverse backgrounds to understand one another. Pegon provides a standardized local linguistic framework for comprehending classical Arabic texts and has become a hallmark translation method in pesantren. Through the use of grammatical symbols—such as for *mubtada'*, *khobar*, and other syntactic indicators—the pesantren creates a shared code that can be understood and utilized by all students. This enhances intellectual and cultural cohesion among pesantren members by aligning interpretations of texts and reducing ambiguities in comprehension.

The hierarchical social structure of the pesantren, involving *kyai*, *ustadz*, senior, and junior students, also supports the orderly and stable learning process. During translation activities, senior students or *ustadz* often act as intermediaries to help younger students understand the translations and sentence structures. This fosters a sense of solidarity and shared responsibility. Beyond aiding learning, these interactions strengthen social bonds among students within a layered solidarity network.

Additional integrative practices include *mushohih* forums, student deliberations (*musyawarah*), and regular study sessions (*pengajian*), all of which help unify knowledge and social dynamics. However, participants are expected to remain within the ethical boundaries of *salaf* values and pesantren decorum (*adab*). This tradition promotes mutual respect for differing opinions within a collective, rather than individualistic, learning environment. In the pesantren community, such values are vital for creating unity.

More importantly, the Arabic Pegon tradition serves as both a cultural identity and technical tool of the pesantren. This system has been passed down across generations, forming a symbolic link between generations of students. The Pegon-translated texts handed down from one generation to the next serve as tangible evidence of consistency and shared commitment to pesantren values. This results in both normative and functional integration—attachment to the values, traditions, and scholarly authority of the pesantren.

#### **4. Latency**

Latency, or pattern maintenance, refers to the function of a social system that involves preserving the values, norms, and cultural patterns that sustain the continuity of the system. This includes how a society transmits cultural values to the next generation and educates individuals to internalize those values, ensuring the system remains stable and functional.

The tradition of translating *kitab kuning* into Arabic Pegon reflects the latency function at Pesantren Fathul Ulum Kwagean. This tradition has been passed down as part of the value and scholarly culture inheritance system in the pesantren. More than just a tool to understand texts, the translation of Arabic Pegon serves as a central means of transmitting classical Islamic knowledge from the *kyai* to the students.

This tradition ensures the continuity of *salaf* Islamic teachings by preserving

their authenticity in the Arabic texts while helping students comprehend them in their local language. The translated books are read, handed down, and taught to subsequent generations. Thus, Arabic Pegon functions as a lasting documentation of the intellectual culture of the pesantren.

Additionally, Pesantren Fathul Ulum has printed and translated a significant number of kitab kuning into Arabic Pegon. These books have evolved into a type of “cultural document” containing not only knowledge but also the interpretative legacy of earlier scholars. Through the printing and dissemination of these books to its students, the pesantren reaffirms its commitment to preserving traditional Islamic learning methods, ways of thinking, and value systems that are hallmarks of classical Islamic education.

## CONCLUSION

This study employed Talcott Parsons' structural-functional theory to comprehensively analyze the tradition of Arabic Pegon translation in *kitab kuning* (classical Islamic texts) at Pesantren Fathul Ulum Kwagean. Using the AGIL framework – Adaptation, Goal Attainment, Integration, and Latency – the study revealed that the translation practice serves as more than a linguistic technique; it functions as a crucial socio-cultural mechanism within the pesantren system.

Adaptation is reflected in the pesantren's ability to respond to students' diverse linguistic and educational backgrounds by adopting Arabic Pegon as a pedagogical tool, thereby making complex Arabic texts accessible without requiring mastery of Arabic grammar. This demonstrates the institution's capacity to reshape its learning environment in line with internal and external demands. Goal Attainment is evident in the pesantren's clearly defined objective: to preserve classical Islamic scholarship and produce students who are literate in *kitab kuning*. This goal is systematically pursued through translation practices, structured learning hierarchies, and rigorous validation processes by qualified *mushohih*. Integration occurs through the use of Arabic Pegon as a shared linguistic code that facilitates mutual understanding and cultural cohesion among students and teachers. The pesantren's hierarchical yet collaborative structure fosters social solidarity and stabilizes the learning process. Latency is manifested in the maintenance of institutional norms, traditions, and educational values across generations. This is achieved through the preservation of Arabic Pegon translation practices, regular *muhafadhah* (memorization and review activities), and the printing and dissemination of translated texts. These practices reinforce the pesantren's cultural identity and ensure continuity over time.

In line with Parsons' theory, the Arabic Pegon translation tradition embodies all four functional imperatives of a social system, positioning it as a foundational element of institutional resilience. It enables Pesantren Fathul Ulum Kwagean to remain relevant, stable, and sustainable as a traditional Islamic educational institution amidst the challenges of modernity.

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