

# Morphological Aspects of Social Media in the Omani Security Media and its Role in Instilling Moral Values

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## **Abstract**

This study addresses the morphological aspects of social media and their role in instilling moral values. Apart from other electronic applications and audio-visual media such as radio and television channels, Twitter was chosen to find a solution to the problem of the study which lies in the fact that the language of the Omani security media used in social media is insufficient to persuade the recipients and is not in line with the development taking place in contemporary crimes and issues. This study aims to clarify the morphological aspects and reveal the features of vocabulary (nouns, plurals, derivatives, verbs, and infinitives) used in the Omani security media discourse and their role in promoting moral values. It relies on the descriptive approach in treating and analyzing the issue at hand beside the content analysis mechanism. It concludes that most of the vocabulary used in most tweets doesn't carry moral connotations and does not promote Islamic behavior and values among the public. This study contributes to drawing the attention of those in charge of the security media in highlighting the moral aspect and some Islamic values in the language of the security media, to directly influence the psychology aspect of the recipients.

**Keywords:** Media Language, Media Values, Security Media, Social Media, Twitter.

## **Introduction**

There is no doubt that the media in our contemporary world has the power and control over shaping societal trends and building the thought and personality of individuals, instilling values and behavior in them and teaching children and youth how to integrate with social life in all its forms, which makes it affect the upbringing of the family and society, either positively or negatively. This process occurs through the use of language, which is considered the engine of media material and has a prominent impact on mass communication in our present time.

Therefore, there comes the need for a media language with connected - yet separate - dimensions that make the recipient interact and comprehend the events surrounding him and their repercussions (Al-Shawabkeh, 2021). On the other hand, media provides a rapid exchange of knowledge and information in all areas of human activity and contributes to presenting social problems so that the recipients participate in understanding and discussing these problems and helping find a solution to them (Aroor, 2018). Additionally, media plays a vital role in the field of guidance based on facts and evidence in a simple and easy language, which contributes to consolidating values and principles, establishing and preserving trends, helping to descend cultural heritage through generations, and creating a common base of values and experiences among members of society (Gallab, 2019).

With the technological development in our time, and apart from the traditional media outlets, there emerged new social means, such as social media applications which have followers from different age groups. The linguistic discourse of such new means has different features and characteristics than the written discourse in other traditional means. Recently, most official institutions have paid attention to such an idea. This interest was not limited to individuals only, as some electronic accounts in the Twitter application have millions of followers, and the term “virtual community” has become a general and widespread concept. Also, the electronic networking system has allowed its subscribers to create private sites and link them to the system electronically with other members with the same interests and hobbies, or in the form of groups of friends and followers (Khasawneh, 2015).

This has been the case until the emergence of a group of electronic applications that the global community has accepted in all segments and categories (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Skype, and Instagram, etc.) and other well-known social networking sites (Al-Rasheed, 2015). Therefore, the language used in it plays an effective role in conveying the required message, as well as the type of speech directed through it. The words and phrases chosen by the message's sender (tweets) must be carefully formulated so that the recipients understand and interpret them clearly to achieve their goals. For this reason, if the meaning of a discourse is put under scrutiny from a linguistic perspective, sociolinguist - for example - will focus on the extent of the social interaction that it has caused, while the psycholinguist will look at the nature of the linguistic dialogue so that short written texts are understood (Al-Rawi, 2012).

From this standpoint, this study is made in the field of the language of security media in the Sultanate of Oman and is limited to the morphological aspects of the awareness message on social media. This is based on the fact that this type of means has great importance and plays a pivotal role in changing some social and behavioral trends related to security, criminal, and preventive aspects, and instilling some religious values and principles in the souls of members of Omani society. The term “morphological” is linguistically stated in *Lisan al-Arab* (turning and changing, the declension of winds, i.e., morphing them) (Ibn Manzur, Ref.). The dictionary says that “to morph” means “to turn away from something”, “to return something”, “to spend money”, “to turn away the winds” and “to transform or change something”. Allah the Almighty says: “And to turn the winds and the clouds that are subjected between the heavens and the earth” (Al-Baqarah, 164), and “And indeed We have presented for mankind in this Qur’an every example” (Al-Isra, 89). The conjugation of the verses is to clarify them, and so-and-so’s disposition of the matter means to morph and turn it. Morphology and conjugation mean change (Al-Mu’ajam Al-Waseet). As for morphology, terminologically: it is a science by which the structures of speech and their derivation are known (Al-Tarifi, 2010), which is the change that deals with the form and structure of the word to show the originality and affixation in its letters, or correctness and reasoning, or something else. It is concerned with

inflected nouns (i.e., Arabized) and inflected verbs, while letters and similar nouns, intransitive nouns, inanimate verbs, and foreign nouns, have no relation to the science of morphology (Al-Samarrai, 2013). In addition, technological tools such as eye-tracking can be used to study the individual responses toward external stimuli (social media) (Ahmed et al., 2022b; Hassan-Alsharif et al., 2020; Hassan-Alsharif et al., 2021a; 2021b). Furthermore, neuromarketing can be used to enhance the body of the knowledge to enhance the understanding individual behavior toward advertising, products or services (Ahmed et al., 2023; Ahmed et al., 2022a; Alsharif et al., 2021a; 2021b; Alsharif et al., 2021c), which can be appeared in social media.

In this context, the research points out that there is a problem that is evident in the words used in social media related to moral values, as they need to be developed and updated. It seems that the vocabulary does not achieve the process of persuasion for the recipients, and does not meet the desired purpose, as its linguistic methods are not compatible with the media development and the new media outlets. The methods used in them are not commensurate with the reality of contemporary crimes and issues, the number of which has become continuously increasing, despite the Omani security media continuing to broadcast awareness materials and messages to warn against them. Accordingly, this study seeks to reveal the morphological characteristics of electronic applications which are used to convey the security media message, especially with regard to instilling and strengthening moral values. Twitter is chosen as an example of these applications due to its large number of followers by individuals within the Sultanate of Oman.

### **Research Rationale**

It should be noted that the account or so-called (identifier) of the Royal Oman Police on Twitter began in October 2014, and is used to transmit police news and security alerts, as well as awareness and security education messages. The account's use in the media aspect has developed and grown gradually since its inception, until it gained many followers. The number of followers as of May 29, 2023, reached 787,782 followers (@Royalomanpolice). The official account of the General Traffic Department began in March 2012, and specializes in publishing news of the administration and the events it holds, in addition to cultural and awareness-raising aspects related to traffic aspects. The number of followers as of May 29, 2023, reached 647,042 followers (@RopTraffic).

Furthermore, the total number of tweets included in the two accounts (Royal Oman Police and General Traffic Department) on Twitter during the period examined by the study (October 1, 2022 - October 31, 2022) amounted to 144 tweets, of which 86 tweets on the account of the Royal Oman Police, and 58 tweets on the account of the General Traffic Department.

### **Research Problem**

The problem of the study is that the language of the security media used in social media does not achieve the process of persuasion for the recipients and is not in line with the development taking place in contemporary crimes and issues, which may be one of the factors in the rise in some crimes. To address this problem, it is necessary to research the language of the Omani security media. used and their methods. This study sheds light on the words used and word structures without paying attention to structures, sentences and other linguistic aspects, since the word is the first building block and the basis on which the linguistic structure is based. In this regard, social media is chosen as the most followed means in this time.

There are some previous studies that dealt with the values of Islamic morality in the media, including the study of Ali (2021), which demonstrated the methods of the media in influencing public opinion in Islam and the privacy of the modern era. The study highlighted the role of the media in achieving Sharia objectives and guarding Islamic principles and values. It also aimed to reveal the street's intent regarding the media message, and to demonstrate the specificity of Islamic media and its legitimate scope for shaping public opinion. It came out with several results, the most important of which is the existence of an interconnected relationship between the media and shaping public opinion and influencing judgments, moral principles and deep Islamic values.

The study of Al-Dubaisi (2020) also sought to know the role of electronic journalism in promoting positive values in society, and aimed to highlight the national, religious, and moral values that electronic journalism embraces. Jordanian newspapers strengthened it in society, and its contribution to diagnosing this role played by electronic journalism and knowing the extent of its effectiveness in promoting positive social values and modifying negative social values. The results of the study concluded that the role of electronic journalism in promoting national values in society was positive, and it occupied the value of love. Patriotism ranked first in the ranking of national values.

As for Suleiman's study (2017), it demonstrated the role of security media through its various means in spreading culture and security awareness among all members of society. It also focused on deepening the relationship of public participation with the security institution. The study concluded that the security institution should adopt a strategic media policy whose philosophy is based on the role of the security media in spreading the security culture regarding various events in society, and a deep understanding of the media influence.

### **Research Objectives**

The general objective of the study is to explain the morphological aspects of social media in the Omani security media and its role in instilling moral values. From this general objective fall special goals that the study seeks to achieve, which is to reveal the features of vocabulary (nouns, plurals, derivatives, verbs, and infinitives) which are used in the Omani security media discourse and its role in promoting moral values.

### **Research Methodology**

This is a qualitative study which relies on the descriptive approach in dealing with the issue at hand. It also depends on content analysis as a tool for studying the morphological aspects of social media in the Omani security media and its role in instilling moral values.

Police news and awareness messages published on the Twitter accounts of the Royal Oman Police and the General Traffic Department during the period (October 1, 2022 - October 31, 2022) were chosen to be the sample for this study.

The goal of this study, as previously mentioned, is to explain the morphological aspects of social media in the Omani security media and their role in instilling moral values. To achieve this goal, the researcher conducted the following:

*First:* Collecting all the tweets received from the accounts of the Royal Oman Police and the General Traffic Department during the period covered by the study, and then sorting them, followed by selecting the tweets that carry connotations of moral values.

*Second:* Revealing the morphological characteristics contained in social media used by the Omani security media and their role in instilling moral values, the researcher analyzes the

vocabulary by sorting and dividing it into specific fields, and then studies their relationships with each other and their semantic purposes.

As for the data collection method, it consists of extrapolating media texts contained in tweets on social media with a moral value connotation. The research tool also consists of two data collection tools: induction and content analysis, where the researcher, to obtain the information, extrapolated the methods, linguistic formulations, and expressions mentioned in books. This is in addition to linguistic references in the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah, and their parallels with the methods included in the media discourse on the Twitter accounts of the Royal Oman Police and the General Traffic Department.

## Results and Discussion

### 1- Names Used in Media Discourse and Their Connection to Moral Values:

Before initiating the analysis of the vocabulary of nouns, it must be pointed out that the researcher extracted the morphological characteristics from the tweets that carry moral values and left the tweets that do not include any of these values. The researcher also divided the words into (infinitives, plurals, derivatives, nouns, and verbs) and came up with results within following, Table 1:

**Table 1:** Types of vocabulary used in tweets in morphological terms.

Tweet	Nouns	Plurals	Derivatives	Verbs	Infinitives
Traffic	62	48	87	55	38
Police	82	73	32	28	21
Total	144	121	119	83	59

As OF nouns, linguists did not provide so many divisions of them, and since this research deals with the morphological aspect, the focus was on dividing nouns as correct, shortened, incomplete, or extended. Through the researcher's observation of the tweets received in the period that the study treated, it is concluded that all the names mentioned are correct, and no shortened or incomplete nouns were mentioned. As for the extended nouns, two words were mentioned: (blind and errors).

The researcher also divided the nouns based on masculine and feminine considerations and noted that 42 masculine nouns and 40 feminine nouns were included in the tweets included in the Royal Oman Police account. (@Royalomanpolice). In the tweets included in the General Traffic Department's account, 31 feminine nouns and 26 masculine nouns were mentioned (@RopTraffic).

After examining the totality of the different types of names used in all the tweets, it was concluded that most of them are general names that do not have a direct connection to moral values, and do not carry connotations that instill some kind of values in the hearts of the recipients, even though they were formulated in tweets related to awareness or news about arresting people such as (coast guard police seize a boat smuggling infiltrators). The sentence included six nouns, but it lacks a word that has a moral value meaning.

### 2- Singular Nouns Used in Security Media Discourse and their Connection to Moral Values:

Plural in the Arabic language is a noun that indicates more than two (Ismail, 2021), and is divided into (masculine plural, feminine plural, and general plural). Accordingly, the researcher noticed that most of the plurals used in the security media discourse on social networking sites do not promote moral values, and a few of them were mentioned in tweets that include some behaviors that must be followed, even indirectly, and among these groups are (skills, formations, drugs, influences, trucks, networks, drivers, residents, expatriates, foreigners,

mistakes, damages, effects, behaviors) and other words, where 6 words were used in the masculine plural form, including 5 words in the account of the Royal Oman Police and only one word in the account of the General Traffic Department. As well, 57 words were used in the feminine plural form, of which 35 words were used in the account of the Royal Oman Police, and 22 words in the account of the General Traffic Department.

### 3- Derivatives Used in Security Media Discourse and their Connection to Moral Values:

Derivation in language means taking a part of something or separating it from the original. Technically, it means taking one or more words from another one with proportionality in meaning between what the derivative was taken from with the difference in pronunciation (Zayed & Rumman, 2015). One of the linguistic traits in the morphological aspect of the language of the Omani security media on social media is that it includes a large number of derived vocabularies of all kinds, but it was found that most of them do not carry direct moral connotations and values. The researcher found out that 119 difficult words were used, of which 87 words were derived in the tweets included in the General Traffic Department account, and 32 words in the Royal Oman Police account, which were divided into (active participle, derived adjective, passive participle, time noun, place noun, instrument noun, and preference noun). Table 2 shows their details:

**Table 2:** Types of derivatives used in tweets.

	Active Participle	Derived Adjective	Passive Participle	Time Noun	Place Noun	Inst. Noun	Pref. Noun	Total
Traffic	29	28	14	1	10	3	2	87
Police	12	10	9	0	1	0	0	32
Total	41	38	23	1	11	3	2	119

### 4- Single Verbs used in Security Media Discourse and their Connection to Moral Values:

Arabic verbs are divided into augmented and un-augmented verbs. Considering the analysis and sorting carried out by the researcher, it was noticed that two types of verbs were used, namely (the triple augmented and the triple un-augmented). The tweets on the Royal Oman Police account and the General Traffic Department account included 83 verbs; considering that this number does not count the single verb twice. These verbs were divided into 32 triple verbs, 21 triple verbs added to a letter, 27 triple verbs added to two letters, and 3 triple verbs added to three letters.

Among the most common forms of the triple augmented verb that were used in all tweets were the form of (fa'ala) such as: (dakhala "entered", kashafa "revealed", and dabata "seized"). The form of (fa'ela) was also used, such as: (laqea "met"), and the form of (fa'ola) was used, such as (kamona "lied" and "sa'uba" "became difficult"). Among the forms of the triple verb added to one letter is the form (fa'ala) (geminated form), such as: (nazzama "organized", naffaza "implemented", sabbaba "caused", and akkada "confirmed"), and the triple verb added to two letters is the form (tafa'ala) (geminated form), such as: (tahakama "controlled", ta'amada "deliberated", and tatalaba "requested"). The form (tafa'ala) is also widely used as (talaha "noted", tatayara "scattered", tataba'a "followed", tawasala "communicated", and tanawala "dealt"). As for the triple un-augmented verb added to three letters, it comes with three forms (yastakhdem "to use", yastatee' "to be able", estakhdama "has used").

The findings of the research concluded that.

- 1) Most of the tweets that were considered to contain a moral value do not, in fact, contain a direct educational message, nor do they include vocabulary that has moral connotations. Rather, they were considered to include a topic related to Islamic behavior and values,

such as the topic of thefts, drugs, etc., so the followers of the tweets did not perceive these tweets as they were intended to deliver an awareness message, but rather as news conveyed to public opinion.

- 2) As of the plurals and their types mentioned in the Omani security media discourse on social media, the researcher noted that the plurals that carry moral connotations and reinforce Islamic values are very few compared to the number of plurals used in the phrases and sentences included in tweets, as if most of these plurals were formulated in news about activities and events that the security practiced. A few of them were in tweets that included some behaviors that must be followed, even indirectly, and among these groups (skills, formations, drugs, influences, trucks, networks, drivers, residents, expatriates, foreigners, mistakes, damages, effects, behaviors) and other terms.
- 3) Through the researcher's observation and analysis of the derived vocabulary, verbs, and nouns mentioned in the media discourse in the language of social communication, it was found out that most of them have general meanings and do not carry moral connotations. In addition, there are foreign vocabulary that are formulated in derivative forms, such as the word "automatic," which was mentioned in one of the tweets of the General Traffic Department when it talked about how to use the transmission on sloped and elevated roads. Likewise, the word "routine" was also mentioned in one of the tweets of the General Traffic Department, which included advice and guidance for performing regular maintenance.

### **Conclusion**

Shedding light on the importance of social media in our present time and its role in influencing the behavior of public opinion and changing attitudes, along with its significant competition to traditional media, it has proven that these means must be exploited in a positive way to contribute to instilling moral values in individuals. In conclusion, this study can open the door for future studies in the security or linguistic field. Accordingly, the research's recommendations are summarized as follows:

1. Conducting a study or more on the role of social media in educating society about the danger of the scourge of drugs and psychotropic substances, due to the importance of this topic in our present era, in addition to the presence of fertile material and many topics raised by the security establishment through social media sites that talked about this aspect.
2. Conducting a future study to investigate security media materials that address children directly and are concerned with instilling moral values in them, whether within the framework of social media or in printed supplements intended for children.
3. Conducting a study on the semantic level and linguistic dimensions of tweets included in the accounts of media outlets and security services, due to the importance of the linguistic dimension in conveying the media message and its contribution to convincing recipients.

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