

## Multicultural Approach to Arabic Language Learning in the Special Program for Arabic Language Development

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### Abstract:

In implementing a multicultural approach to Arabic language learning in an intensive program of Arabic language development, several challenges may arise. One of them is the difficulty in measuring the effectiveness of inclusive learning against diverse student backgrounds. Learning that does not take diversity into account can cause inequities in the assessment of Arabic language competence, especially in speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. Multiculturalism is not only about understanding different cultures, but also about applying them in the context of learning and their application in Arabic language learning.

**Keywords:** Multicultural Approach, Arabic Language Learning

### Introduction

Arabic language education is one of the fields that plays an important role in enriching cultural diversity and multicultural values in society. In the current context of globalization, it is important for educational institutions to adopt a multicultural approach in the Arabic language learning process.<sup>1</sup> Multicultural-based Arabic learning is crucial in ensuring the effectiveness and relevance of the learning.

The background of learning Arabic with a multicultural approach covers several important aspects. First, cultural diversity and student backgrounds are the main factors that need to be considered in the learning process.<sup>2</sup> By understanding cultural differences and student experiences, learning approaches can be tailored to ensure inclusivity and equity in education. Second, multicultural-based learning allows recognition of diverse cultural values and practices.<sup>3</sup> This provides a space for students to develop a deep understanding of the diversity of global society and promotes tolerance and respect for differences.

In addition, Arabic learning that integrates multicultural aspects can also increase student motivation and involvement in the learning process.<sup>4</sup> By presenting learning materials that are relevant to multicultural realities, students tend to be more motivated to learn and develop their Arabic language skills.<sup>5</sup> However, in implementing multicultural-based learning, several challenges may arise. One of them is the difficulty in measuring the effectiveness of inclusive learning against diverse student backgrounds. Learning that does not take diversity into account can lead to inequities in curriculum assessment and

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<sup>1</sup> Mohamad Solihin and Muhammad Hendra Firmansyah, "Implementation of Multicultural Education Development in Schools," *SIRAJUDDIN: Journal of Islamic Education Research and Studies* 3, no. 1 (2023): 17–27.

<sup>2</sup> Kuswaya Wihardit, "Multicultural education: a concept, approach and solution," *Journal of Education* 11, no. 2 (2010): 96–105.

<sup>3</sup> Endang Retnoningsih, "Multicultural-Based Learning in School Institutions," 2019, <https://osf.io/83zmt/download>.

<sup>4</sup> Arifin Maksum et al., "TRAINING FOR TEACHERS FOR MULTICULTURAL ASSESSMENT IN LEARNING," *J-ABDI: Journal of Community Service* 3, no. 4 (2023): 701–6.

<sup>5</sup> Fadillah Ramadhani, Hasan Argadinata, and Firda Dianti, "Implementation of Multicultural Leadership in Improving Quality in Education Units," *Proceedings Series of Educational Studies*, 2023, <http://conference.um.ac.id/index.php/pses/article/view/8169/0>.

development. Multiculturalism is not only about understanding different cultures, but also about applying them in the context of learning Arabic. In this study, researchers want to examine the extent to which multicultural approaches are integrated in the Arabic learning curriculum and the obstacles and challenges faced in implementing multicultural learning in the context of Arabic.

Multicultural approaches emerged in response to the increasingly complex and diverse social realities of contemporary society. This concept highlights the importance of acknowledging, appreciating, and celebrating the diversity of cultures, values, and identities that exist within society.<sup>6</sup> One of the main reasons why a multicultural approach is important is because today's society is increasingly becoming a place for individuals from diverse cultural, religious, ethnic, and other identity backgrounds.<sup>7</sup> In an increasingly global and widely connected society like today, it is important that we can coexist harmoniously despite our differences. A multicultural approach helps build a deeper understanding of the similarities and differences between us, thus fostering the creation of an inclusive and equitable society.

The multicultural approach also plays a role in building awareness of social and political issues relevant to the diversity of society. By paying attention to different perspectives, we can be more sensitive to inequalities, discrimination, and inequalities that may occur in society. Through open intercultural dialogue and interaction, a multicultural approach can help resolve conflict and strengthen solidarity among different communities.<sup>8</sup>

In addition, the multicultural approach also has a positive impact in the context of education. In an educational setting, this concept promotes appreciation of the diverse knowledge, experiences, and perspectives possessed by students. By incorporating multicultural elements in curriculum and learning, schools can create an inclusive environment and encourage holistic intellectual and emotional growth for students.<sup>9</sup> However, although the multicultural approach has many benefits, it cannot be ignored that there are still challenges and obstacles in its implementation. Some critics argue that a multicultural approach can blur power differences and maintain existing social hierarchies.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, it is important that we continue to review and refine this approach in order to be more effective in achieving the goals of inclusion and social justice.

Learning Arabic with a multicultural approach is one of the important aspects in understanding the culture and history of the Islamic world. Arabic language learning is a crucial process in assessing student progress, the effectiveness of teaching methods, and the quality of Arabic language education programs. Arabic language learning plays an important role in ensuring that students achieve their desired learning goals. With proper learning, teachers can find out the extent of students' understanding of the subject matter, the ability to communicate in Arabic, and their level of ability to read and write in the language. Learning also helps teachers to adjust teaching methods to be more effective according to student needs.

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<sup>6</sup> Eri Purwanti, Muhtarom Muhtarom, and Muhammad Idris, "TOLERANCE EDUCATION IN A MULTICULTURALISM SOCIETY (Study of Multicultural Society in Fajar Esuk Village, Pringsewu Regency):(Study of Multicultural Society in Fajar Esuk Village)," *Al-Idarab Islamic Education Management Journal* 8, no. 02 (2023): 1–10.

<sup>7</sup> Rahmad Mulyadi, Diah Sartika, and Hasrian Rudi Setiawan, "Islamic Religious Education as a Means of Shaping Religious Identity in a Multicultural Society," *Khazanah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, 2023, 90–99.

<sup>8</sup> Zakiyuddin Baidhawiy, *Multicultural religious education* (Erlangga, 2005), p. 73

<sup>9</sup> Gusnia Fatimah Azzahra, Masduki Asbari, and Annisa Shintya Ariani, "Multicultural Education: Towards Unity Through Diversity," *Journal of Information Systems and Management (JISMA)* 2, no. 6 (2023): 1–7.

<sup>10</sup> M. Pd Wasitohadi and Theresia Sri Rahayu, *MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION MODEL IN INDONESIA* (Uwais Inspirasi Indonesia, 2023), p.50

In an era of increasingly connected globalization, it is important for individuals to expand their language skills to be able to communicate effectively in an increasingly integrated world. One language that has high strategic value in a global context is Arabic.<sup>11</sup> Learning Arabic also has significant social benefits. Language is a window into one's culture, and by understanding Arabic, one can also understand more deeply the values, traditions, and history that developed in Arab society.<sup>12</sup> It can strengthen tolerance, mutual understanding, and intercultural cooperation in an increasingly multicultural society.

To improve Arabic language skills, there are several strategies that can be implemented. One of them is by attending Arabic courses organized by reputable educational institutions. In addition, utilizing online resources such as language learning applications and digital platforms can also help in enriching vocabulary, grammar, and speaking skills.

Studies have shown that learning foreign languages, including Arabic, can improve a person's cognitive abilities.<sup>13</sup> Acquiring new abilities in language can stimulate the brain and help in improving critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. In the face of an increasingly globally connected world, learning Arabic can provide a significant competitive advantage. By understanding and<sup>14</sup> mastering this language, one can broaden one's horizons, open up career opportunities, and deepen one's understanding of its rich culture and history.

Although learning Arabic has many benefits, there are some challenges that need to be overcome. One of them is the lack of resources to conduct comprehensive learning, especially in limited educational environments. In addition, assessing Arabic language skills which include aspects of speaking, listening, reading, and writing equally can also be a challenge.

## Research Method

The research approach used in the research is a qualitative approach that is relevant and effective in knowing the application of Arabic language learning with a multicultural approach. With a focus on an in-depth understanding of individual contexts, experiences, and perceptions, this method allows researchers to delve into various aspects related to Arabic language learning in a multicultural environment. The locus that is the focus of this research is the application of a multicultural approach implemented in the intensive Arabic language learning program at UIN Maliki Malang.

In the context of Arabic language learning, a qualitative approach is able to provide comprehensive insight into how students, teachers, and other stakeholders interact in a multicultural environment. Through observation, interview, and documentation techniques, researchers can identify the application of multicultural approaches as well as challenges and solutions in Arabic language learning.

Qualitative data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation are analyzed in depth to identify application steps as well as solutions and challenges that arise in the context of Arabic language learning using a multicultural approach. With an inductive approach, researchers can compile emerging findings into informative and in-depth conclusions. The inductive analysis performed allows researchers to approach data with an open mind, exploring the complexity of qualitative findings without forcing prior conceptual

<sup>11</sup> Mohammad Makinuddin, "Arabic as a Peculiarity of pesantren and its challenges in the Global situation," *JALIE: Journal of Applied Linguistics and Islamic Education* 1, no. 2 (2017): 288–308.

<sup>12</sup> Jurna Petri Roszi and Mutia Mutia, "Acculturation of Local Cultural and Religious Values and Their Effects on Social Behaviors," *FOKUS, Journal of Islamic and Social Studies* 3, No. 2 (2018): 172.

<sup>13</sup> Moh Ainin and Faculty of Letters FS UM, "The phenomenon of demotivation in Arabic language learning in madrasas: Causes and alternative solutions," *Their Innovative Learning*, 2011, 59.

<sup>14</sup> Maryam Nur Annisa and Randi Safii, "Analysis of Learning Needs of Arabic as a Foreign Language in the Context of Higher Education," *ELOQUENCE: Journal of Foreign Language* 2, no. 2 (2023): 313–28.

structures. It can provide deep and contextual insights into multicultural approaches to Arabic language learning.

### Results and Discussion

Arabic language learning is an important part of measuring students' ability to Arabic language competence which includes speaking proficiency, listening proficiency, reading proficiency, and writing proficiency. In this era of globalization, Arabic language learning at State Islamic University of Malang in an intensive Arabic learning program has unconsciously carried out its learning with a multicultural approach. Multicultural-based learning plays a key role in ensuring that students not only understand the language, but also the culture attached to it. This can be seen from the use of books, application media, and learning systems that pay attention to the multicultural factors of Arabic language learners.

Arabic language learning is important to do to gain a deeper understanding of students' abilities in mastering competence in Arabic. By learning using a multicultural approach, students can understand the cultural context behind Arabic, enriching their understanding of the language. In addition, respect for diversity is an important aspect of multicultural-based Arabic language learning. Through multicultural learning, students will learn to appreciate cultural differences and understand that diversity is a richness, not an obstacle.

Arabic language learning at UIN Maliki Malang is one of the fields that is very enriching when applied multicultural approach. This approach allows students to learn a language while also understanding and appreciating the cultural diversity that surrounds them. The steps for implementing multicultural learning include. First, Arabic language learning that is responsive to culture. One important step in implementing multicultural learning in language learning is to create a curriculum that is responsive to diverse cultures. Teachers need to pay attention to students' backgrounds in designing learning materials so that students can feel represented and motivated to learn. According to Gorski and Swalwell (2015), a culturally responsive curriculum can help students from diverse backgrounds to feel valued and motivated in the learning process.

Second, use material that depicts diverse cultures. The next step is to use learning materials that illustrate diverse cultures. Teachers can choose reading materials, songs, films, or artworks from different cultures to enrich students' learning experience. According to Banks (2015), the use of materials that reflect cultural diversity can help students to develop a deeper understanding of the world and increase tolerance for differences.<sup>15</sup>

Third, encourage collaboration among students from diverse cultures. Another important step in the application of multicultural learning in language learning is to encourage collaboration among students from diverse cultures. Through group discussions or collaborative projects, students can learn from each other and understand each other. According to Sleeter and Grant (2017), collaboration between students from different cultural backgrounds can help reduce prejudices and stereotypes that exist between them.<sup>16</sup> The application of multicultural learning in Arabic language learning at UIN Maliki Malang has significant benefits. In addition to increasing students' understanding of diverse cultures, this approach can also help improve students' learning motivation, self-confidence, and communication skills.

<sup>15</sup> Isep Sunandi et al., "The Role of Education in Understanding and Respecting Multiculturalism in Schools," *Tambusai Education Journal* 4, No. 1 (2020): 899–907.

<sup>16</sup> Carl A. Grant and Christine E. Sleeter, *Doing Multicultural Education for Achievement and Equity*, 0 ed. (Routledge, 2012), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203831397>.

In today's global era, the ability to communicate across cultures is essential. Multicultural learning prepares students for success in an increasingly connected world. With the Performance-Based Assessment Method, Arabic language learning can include projects or presentations that incorporate cultural aspects in the language being studied. Reflection and discussion can be done by giving students the opportunity to reflect on how culture affects their language and communication. Structured assignments are also an important aspect of assignments by asking students to apply their multicultural understanding in real situations.

In the application of Arabic language learning with a multicultural approach at UIN Maliki Malang, there are several challenges and solutions that are carried out including: (1) The challenge of limited learning resources, in this case lecturers and teaching teams ensure the availability of materials and resources that reflect various aspects of Arabic culture and aspects of Indonesian culture that are in accordance with the daily use of Arabic in the campus environment and the country of Indonesia. (2) Resistance to Change, teachers and students may not be familiar with multicultural approaches, which require training and awareness. (3) Fair Assessment, it is important to ensure that assessment focuses not only on linguistic aspects, but also on understanding and appreciating the value of cultural diversity in language.

### Conclusion

From the results of qualitative data analysis, researchers can extract relevant implications for further development in the context of multicultural Arabic language learning. This research is expected to provide in-depth insights into the effectiveness and challenges in implementing multicultural-based Arabic learning evaluation. The results of this study can provide a foundation for the development of better evaluation strategies and more inclusive curriculum updates. Recommendations based on research findings can lay the foundation for more inclusive and quality teaching to have a positive impact on Arabic language teaching and learning in the multicultural era.

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