



LANGUAGE VARIATION IN ARABIC AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: SOCIOLINGUISTIC CHALLENGES AND PEDAGOGICAL OPPORTUNITIES IN A MULTICULTURAL CLASSROOM

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the linguistic variations in Arabic usage among students of the Arabic Language Education Program, Class E, 2024 cohort, consisting of 15 students, and to identify the contributing factors and challenges in Arabic language learning. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The findings reveal that students' use of Arabic is highly diverse, encompassing variations in dialect, function, formality, and communication medium. These variations are influenced by students' educational backgrounds (e.g., salafi and modern Islamic boarding schools, state Islamic high schools), regional origins, as well as technological and cultural developments. In practice, students frequently combine fusha, 'amiyah, and elements of Indonesian or regional languages in daily interactions. The study also highlights the challenges of curriculum harmonization, the shortage of qualified Arabic teachers, and the necessity for inclusive and intercultural teaching approaches. These findings underscore the sociolinguistic reality that language variation reflects students' social identities and interactional dynamics. Therefore, adaptive and context-sensitive strategies are required to develop Arabic language instruction that is both linguistically effective and culturally relevant in a multicultural academic environment.

Keywords: Language Variation, Arabic Language Education, Sociolinguistics, Code-Switching, Fusha And 'Amiyah, Multicultural Classroom

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INTRODUCTION | مقدمة

Variations in Arabic are forms of Arabic that arise from differences in the way Arab communities speak, based on their different places of residence and socio-cultural needs. (Shazana, 2023). This means that each member of the language community usually consists of various different cultural backgrounds. (Gurnig et al., 2024). These differences have an impact on the variation in the use of Arabic-by-Arabic language education students, especially in class E, when communicating. Because their backgrounds and environments are not the same, the language used varies or is diverse, so that the variations between one another often have significant differences.

The variation in Arabic is not only caused by diverse speakers, but also by the wide variety of social interactions that take place. As stated by Rike Monika (2025) In the sociolinguistic theory of Abdul Chaer and Leonie Agustina, dialectal variation occurs due to differences in language exhibited by groups of speakers who come from specific geographical areas and or have different

social backgrounds, such as status, occupation, or age group. (Monika, 2025). Similarly, in Arab societies that use Arabic as their everyday language, as stated by Jepri Nugrawiyati (2017), Arabic in Arab societies is divided into two types: Standard Arabic, which is the language of the Quraish used in the Qur'an and by the Prophet Muhammad SAW. This language is also known as Fusha Arabic. Fusha Arabic is used today in formal settings and for the codification of poetic works, prose, and intellectual writings in general. Then there is colloquial Arabic, which is the variety of Arabic used for everyday matters. (Nugrawiyati, 2017).

In this case, it is related to the emergence of various Arabic languages used among Arabic Language Education students. There are speakers from among students who come from Salafi boarding schools, modern boarding schools, and also from state madrasahs. In addition, Arabic Language Education students also come from various ethnic groups and regions. (Hanifah et al., 2023). This diversity in language and dialects results in varying levels of Arabic proficiency among students. (Naning et al., 2021). However, differing backgrounds are not the sole reason for the linguistic variations observed among Arabic Language Education students. Instead, several language variations have emerged. Slang is used by students studying Arabic. Many factors cause language variations to occur, such as the development of science and environmental factors. Environmental factors can cause dialects to differ from region to region, even though the language used is Arabic. As found by Mukhamad Miftakhudin Wildani and his colleagues. (2025), who stated that linguistic factors greatly influence dialect changes from one place to another. (Wildani et al., 2025). The same results were found in research conducted by Natasya Febby Nafilda and Preambayun Miji Lestari (2025), namely language variation based on time and sociolect (variation based on social groups). (Nafilda & Lestari, 2025) From these findings, it is not surprising that there are several variations, varieties, or dialects among Arabic language education students.

Through this discussion, we can distinguish the patterns in its use, and this poses a challenge for researchers. Based on the above background, the problem to be studied is how Arabic language variations are encountered by Arabic Language Education students of the 2024 cohort in class E. The objectives of this study are to describe the language variations of Arabic Language Education students of the 2024 cohort in Class E, and to describe the factors causing language variations among Arabic Language Education students of the 2024 cohort in Class E, as well as the challenges associated with them. The results of this study are expected to contribute materially to the body of research in the field of sociolinguistics. It is also hoped that this research will provide benefits as information and enhance knowledge about the application of sociolinguistic science in language variation and the factors influencing it, as well as the challenges involved.

While language variation in Arabic has been studied globally, little attention has been paid to how it manifests among Indonesian university students with diverse Islamic educational backgrounds. This study fills that gap by documenting the sociolinguistic practices of Arabic Language Education students in a multicultural academic setting.

METHOD | منهج

Research Design

This study uses a descriptive qualitative design that aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the variations in Arabic language use among students in the Arabic Language Education Study Program, class E, class of 2024. This study is observational in nature and does

not involve any intervention with the subjects, so that the students' linguistic behavior is observed in a natural context without any specific treatment. This design is considered appropriate because it is able to capture complex sociolinguistic phenomena in a comprehensive and contextual manner.

Participants

The subjects in this study consisted of 15 students in class E of the 2024 cohort enrolled in the Arabic Language Education Study Program at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Participants were selected purposively, taking into account the diversity of their educational backgrounds, such as their origins from Salafi Islamic boarding schools, modern Islamic boarding schools, and state Islamic high schools, as well as their diverse regional backgrounds. The participants are active users of Arabic in both academic and social contexts, and there are no exclusion criteria other than membership in the class being studied.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was conducted using three main techniques, namely participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Observations were made by participating in teaching and learning activities, group discussions, and informal interactions between students inside and outside the classroom. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with several strategically selected students, each lasting 30 to 45 minutes and recorded with the informants' consent. Additionally, document analysis was used to examine conversation transcripts, learning notes, and student writings that reflect the practice of Arabic language use.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques with reference to Abdul Chaer and Leonie Agustina's (2010) theory of language variation, which covers aspects of dialect, sociolect, chronolect, register, and code-switching. The analysis process was carried out manually through the stages of data coding, grouping based on themes, and validation through discussions with the research team to ensure the validity of the findings and consistent interpretation of the data.

Trustworthiness

To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, this study employed triangulation, member checking, and an audit trail. Triangulation was done by comparing data from observations, interviews, and document analyses. Member checking involved confirming the accuracy of interview interpretations with participants, while the audit trail ensured transparency through systematic documentation of each research step. Interviews were conducted twice for each participant, with each session lasting around three minutes. Ethical considerations were maintained through informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation.

RESULT | نتائج

The results of the discussion on the dynamics of language variation among Arabic Language Education students of the 2024 cohort indicate that diverse social and cultural interactions significantly contribute to the complexity of Arabic language use in educational settings. The language variations that emerge are not only influenced by educational background but also by environmental factors and advancements in knowledge, creating a richness of dialects

and language varieties, including slang. As noted by Tiwaldi and Wahab 2017, as long as there is social movement, language will always undergo change. (Tiawaldi & Wahab, 2017)

Based on the results of participatory observation, it was found that the daily interactions of Arabic Language Education students in class E of the 2024 cohort showed a striking pattern of language variation. In academic contexts such as class discussions and presentations, students tend to use more formal and structured Arabic (fusha). However, in informal settings such as the cafeteria or through social media, there is a shift toward a more flexible language form, which is a mix of colloquial Arabic ('amiyah), Indonesian, and regional languages. This is outlined in the table below:

Tabel 1. Comparison of Fusha, 'Amiyah, and Mixed Arabic Indonesian

No	Sentence	Fusha Arabic	A'miyah Arabic	Arab-Indonesian Mix
1.	Siapa dosen selanjutnya	من الأستاذ التالي؟	مِنْ الأَسْتَاذِ الْجَاهِي؟	Dosen ba'da hadza siapa?
2.	Ustadznya belum datang	الْأَسْتَاذُ لَمْ يَأْتِ بَعْدُ		Ustadz belom yakti
3.	Apakah kamu puasa?	هَلْ أَنْتَ صَاهِيْمَ؟	إِنْتَ صَاهِيْمَ؟	Anta sha'im hari ini?
4.	Makalah dikumpulkan ke siapa?	إِلَى مَنْ تُعْدَمُ الْوَرَقَةُ؟		Makalahnya sa tazma' ila siapa?
5.	Libur nanti ke mana?	إِلَى أَنَّ تَدْهُبُ فِي الْإِجَازَةِ؟ أَوْ فِي الْعُطَلَ؟	رَاجِعٌ فِي الْإِجَازَةِ؟	Utlah nanti kemana guys?

Based on the comparison table between Fusha Arabic, 'Amiyah Arabic, and Arabic-Indonesian mixed language above, it can be concluded that the variation in Arabic language usage among Arabic Language Education students in class E of the 2024 cohort is greatly influenced by their educational background. Fusha Arabic is more predominantly used by students from Salafi boarding schools and some modern boarding schools, as they are accustomed to reading and memorizing classical texts (kitab kuning) written in Fusha Arabic. Therefore, they tend to maintain the formal structure of Arabic and adhere to its rules, especially in academic or religious contexts.

Student from Salafi boarding schools stated:

"When I'm in class or discussing religious texts, I try to use Fusha, because that's what we're used to in Islamic boarding schools. But when I'm chatting casually, I sometimes mix the two." (Interview, PBA undergraduate student, 2025).

Meanwhile, Arabic 'amiyah is found to be used by students who have a background in modern Islamic boarding schools, although not as intensively as fusha. These students generally gain exposure to Arabic amiyah through daily practice at the boarding school, such as in daily conversation (muḥādatsah) or interaction with Arabic speakers through the media. Although they understand and are able to use fusha, they are also familiar with the distinctive expressions of amiyah that are often used in informal contexts.

Student from boarding modern schools stated:

"Back then, we used to speak 'amiyah in our boarding house for daily conversations. So now, when I talk to my friends, 'amiyah automatically comes out." (Interview, PBA student, 2025).

The Arabic-Indonesian mixture is more commonly used by students who come from public madrasah aliyah, who generally have limited experience in actively practicing Arabic. They tend to mix Arabic vocabulary into Indonesian sentences, both in spoken and digital contexts (e.g., on social media or WhatsApp groups). This mixture is used to demonstrate religious identity, symbolic closeness to the Arabic language, and to facilitate communication among

peers. (Sofa & Febrianti, 2025). This phenomenon is not merely a reflection of linguistic variation but also reveals social dynamics within the academic community, where language serves as a medium to express closeness, group identity, and social status among individuals in a multicultural learning environment. (Gurning et al., 2024)

Through in-depth interviews, students revealed that their educational background greatly influences their language habits. Students from Salafi Islamic boarding schools are more accustomed to classical Arabic language structures and classical texts, while students from senior high schools tend to be more accommodating of popular language and contemporary terms. Some students also acknowledged that digital media, such as Arabic-language YouTube content and social media, also shape their language style. They feel more confident using a mix of languages when speaking with peers, but still strive to maintain politeness and structure in formal settings.

Document analysis was carried out through several interrelated stages. First, the communication context was identified to distinguish between formal documents, such as papers and presentations, and informal ones, such as class WhatsApp conversations. Next, linguistic coding was conducted by marking words, phrases, or sentences that indicated shifts between *fusha*, *'amiyah*, and Arabic-Indonesian mixed language. The coded data were then used for thematic categorization, including themes such as "formal use in academic contexts," "informal adaptation in social media," and "religious identity symbols." The final stage involved data triangulation, which compared document analysis results with interview and observation data to ensure consistency between the language used and the speakers' perceptions.

Meanwhile, document analysis of assignment notes, class WhatsApp group messages, and presentation results shows consistency in the use of language variations according to the context of communication. In formal documents such as papers or class presentations, students use more standard Arabic language structures and academic terminology. However, in informal notes or digital communication, popular terms such as "masyaAllah vibes-nya enak banget," "ikhwan ngopi dulu yuk," or the use of Arabic-Indonesian acronyms like "TQ (tasyakur qoblal imtihan)" appear. This indicates that students actively adapt language forms according to the medium and purpose of communication.

On the other hand, cultural and religious influences, especially in the context of Indonesia as a Muslim-majority country, are a strong motivation for students to learn Arabic, which can be utilized in designing contextual learning programs. (Anjani & Tatang, 2025). These findings are in line with previous research, such as that conducted by Usnia Wati and colleagues in 2020, which examined language variation from the aspects of speakers, usage, formality, and means. (Usnia Wati, Syamsul Rijal, 2020) This study also shows that external factors such as technological developments and social media contribute to shaping the linguistic variation of students.

However, the challenges of harmonizing curricula and recognizing various Arabic dialects remain important issues that need to be addressed through dialogue and cooperation between institutions. Thus, Arabic language education in Indonesia has great potential for growth, provided that all stakeholders work together to improve the quality and relevance of Arabic language teaching at the global level.

DISCUSSION | مناقشة

In this study, the dynamics of language variation among students in the Arabic Language Education class E of the 2024 cohort were analyzed using the language variation theory of Abdul

Chaer and Leonie Agustina. It was found that the use of Arabic among students reflects their complex social, cultural, and educational diversity. This variation can be classified into the following categories:

Language variation based on speakers (social and regional dialects) is very evident among students in the Arabic Language Education class E of the 2024 cohort. The students come from diverse backgrounds, such as Salafi boarding schools, modern boarding schools, and state senior high schools, as well as from various regions such as Java, Sumatra, Sulawesi, Kalimantan, West Nusa Tenggara, and Madura. This diversity results in differences in pronunciation (phonological) and vocabulary selection (lexical). Students from Salafi boarding schools generally maintain consistent use of Classical Arabic (fusha) due to their familiarity with classical texts. Meanwhile, students from state-run high schools and some modern boarding schools demonstrate flexibility in language use; they are more comfortable using colloquial Arabic (amiyah) in daily conversations and often mix Arabic vocabulary with Indonesian in informal interactions.

Variations Based on Usage (Fungsiolek) Arabic is used in academic contexts, worship, and everyday social interactions. In academic activities, the Arabic used is more formal and follows the rules of fusha. However, in everyday conversations or social media, students often use code-mixing with Indonesian, regional languages, and even slang, such as “ana lapar parah” or “syukron bro!”.

Variations Based on the Level of Formality the Arabic used by students shows varying degrees of formality. In formal settings such as presentations and book discussions, they use standard Arabic. However, in casual conversations, the language used is freer and more mixed, and it is not uncommon for humorous words and contemporary terms to be inserted.

Variations Based on Medium In spoken communication, the use of Arabic is more flexible and greatly influenced by local dialects. Meanwhile, in written communication, such as college assignments or messages in groups, students tend to maintain the grammatical structure of Arabic, although interference from their native language still occurs.

Variations in Code-Mixing and Arabic Language Interference in the Environment of Arabic Language Education Students

The phenomenon of code-mixing and language interference is one of the most prominent forms of language variation in the communication practices of Arabic Language Education students in class E of the 2024 cohort. Code-mixing occurs when students mix Arabic language elements into Indonesian sentences or vice versa, both in spoken and written form. This is generally used in informal and expressive situations, such as communication via social media, casual conversations in the cafeteria, or peer-to-peer discussions. (Habibah et al., 2023). A concrete example of code-mixing can be seen in expressions like: “Ana lapar parah”, “pengen makan hubja.” and “Syukron ya bro, udah bantu presentasi.”

In these examples, it is clear that Arabic words (“ana” and “syukron”) have been incorporated into Indonesian sentence structures. The use of these words is not due to a limited vocabulary, but rather as a form of Islamic identity, a custom of the Islamic boarding school community, and an effort to show group solidarity.

Meanwhile, language interference appears in the form of the influence of Arabic grammatical structures on the way Indonesian students speak. For example, in the sentences: “I wrote this paper because there was a syafahi exam” and “My friend had a musyahadah last night.” The terms “syafahi” (oral exam) and “musyahadah” (memorization exam) are Arabic

words that have been incorporated without adaptation to Indonesian sentence structure, thereby creating interference both lexically and syntactically. This indicates that students not only borrow Arabic vocabulary but also bring Arabic linguistic patterns into their Indonesian speech.

This phenomenon of code-mixing and interference, although often considered a form of “linguistic inaccuracy,” actually reflects the unique linguistic world of Arabic language students who are in a transitional position between two language systems. This condition also shows that students use language not only as a means of communication, but also as a symbol of social, religious, and academic identity. The findings of (Nabilah et al., 2025) support this study by revealing that semantic shifts and new term formations in Arabic social media communication reflect the same linguistic flexibility observed in students’ code-mixing practices. Both studies highlight Arabic language variation as a natural outcome of adaptation to social and digital contexts. Thus, this reinforces the idea that Arabic evolves dynamically across academic and everyday settings.

Thus, based on the language variation theory of Abdul Chaer and Leonie Agustina, it can be concluded that the language variation that occurs reflects the social identity of students and demonstrates the importance of a sociolinguistic approach in designing more contextual and relevant Arabic language learning.

Theoretical Implications

From a sociolinguistic perspective, Theoretically, the findings of this study reinforce sociolinguistic perspectives that view *code-mixing* not as a deviation but as an adaptive linguistic mechanism embedded in multilingual competence. Drawing on the *Markedness Model* and *Matrix Language Frame Model* proposed by Myers-Scotton (1993, 2002), the students’ linguistic choices in alternating between *fusha*, *‘amiyah*, and Arabic Indonesian mixtures demonstrate their ability to navigate multiple linguistic systems consciously and contextually. This supports Abdul Chaer and Leonie Agustina’s (2010) theory of language variation, which posits that linguistic diversity arises systematically from differences in speaker background, purpose, and communicative context. Furthermore, these findings align with Ferguson’s (1959) concept of *diglossia* and modern multilingualism frameworks that emphasize language fluidity.

This study enriches sociolinguistic theory by showing how *code-mixing* operates within Indonesian Islamic academic settings, where Arabic serves not only as a religious and academic language but also as a marker of group identity and solidarity. Additionally, the results confirm (Alsalami, 2025). assertion that *code-switching* in bilingual and multilingual environments serves communicative, cognitive, and social purposes reflecting speakers’ flexibility in meaning-making and identity construction. In addition, the findings of (Zubair, 2024). strengthen the results of this study by showing that code-mixing and code-switching are natural processes in second language acquisition rather than forms of linguistic error. Thus, the phenomenon observed among Arabic Language Education students in Indonesia expands the theoretical understanding of Arabic language variation by highlighting the interplay between linguistic choice, social identity, and pedagogical context within a multicultural academic setting.

Pedagogical Implications

Recognizing *code-mixing* as a natural linguistic strategy carries important implications for Arabic language pedagogy. Rather than being viewed as an error, *code-mixing* should be understood as a legitimate communicative strategy that reflects students’ multilingual

competence and sociocultural awareness. Drawing on Gumperz (1982) and Myers-Scotton's *Markedness Model* (1993), *code-mixing* serves as a resource for identity expression, solidarity building, and pragmatic adjustment to context. When students blend *fusha*, '*amiyah*, and Indonesian, they are actively negotiating meaning, signaling group belonging, and aligning linguistic choice with situational appropriateness. Therefore, instead of being treated as a linguistic "mistake," *code-mixing* should be recognized as evidence of creative and dynamic language behavior within multilingual communities.

Teachers should view students' mixed-language expressions not as deficiencies but as transitional stages and potential learning resources. Integrating examples of '*amiyah* and Arabic–Indonesian blends into classroom discussions can bridge the gap between students' real-life linguistic practices and formal Arabic instruction. This approach aligns with (Syahid et al., 2025) who emphasize that *code-switching* in bilingual classrooms enhances comprehension, reduces learning anxiety, and fosters inclusivity. Hence, Arabic educators are encouraged to employ *code-switching* strategically to clarify complex grammar and vocabulary, support engagement, and maintain a communicative learning environment. In addition, the findings of (Aditya et al., 2025) support this study by demonstrating that *code-mixing* and *code-switching* in Arabic learning function as natural pedagogical and social strategies rather than linguistic errors. This aligns with the present study's results, which highlight code-shifting as a means of adaptation and meaning negotiation within academic contexts. Thus, this phenomenon reflects the multilingual dynamics of Arabic learners in Indonesia.

Pedagogically, this implies that Arabic language teaching in multilingual contexts should adopt a bilingual and context-sensitive approach that values linguistic diversity as a pedagogical asset. Curriculum design and teacher training programs should incorporate bilingual teaching strategies, fostering students' metalinguistic awareness and confidence in using Arabic dynamically. In this way, *code-mixing* functions as a bridge between students' everyday language use and academic Arabic, promoting inclusive, contextualized, and culturally responsive language learning.

Challenges and Opportunities Among Arabic Language Education Students

Arabic language education in Indonesia faces significant challenges, ranging from a shortage of qualified teachers to an irrelevant curriculum. (Manan & Nasri, 2024). However, these challenges can be overcome with commitment from the government, innovation in teaching methods, and the use of modern technology. (Jamil & Agung, 2022). By taking advantage of existing opportunities, Arabic language education in Indonesia can develop further and make a positive contribution to society and the nation. (Sanjaya, 2024) It is essential for all stakeholders to collaborate in improving the quality of Arabic language education to produce a generation that is not only proficient in Arabic but also ready to compete at the global level.

There are challenges in designing a curriculum that can meet the needs and objectives of Arabic language education universally in various countries. Differences in social and cultural contexts and local needs can complicate efforts to harmonize curricula to fit within a global framework. (Mualif, 2019). An inconsistent curriculum can lead to gaps in Arabic language comprehension and proficiency among students from different backgrounds. Therefore, an in-depth analysis of the most effective teaching concepts and approaches that are in line with global needs is necessary. (Taqiyya, 2024).

Global market potential: With increasing international relations and globalization, proficiency in Arabic provides students with broad career opportunities. (Triandani et al., 2024).

Arabic is one of the official languages of the United Nations (UN) and is used in many Middle Eastern countries that are important trading partners for Indonesia. (Hafiz et al., 2016). Therefore, proficiency in Arabic can open up job opportunities in various sectors such as diplomacy, international trade, and the oil and gas industry. (Thalib & Nur, 2025).

Support from the Government and Educational Institutions: The Indonesian government has demonstrated its commitment to improving Arabic language education through various policies and programs. For example, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Culture have launched training programs for Arabic language teachers and provided scholarships for students who wish to continue their Arabic studies abroad. In addition, many universities offer high-quality Arabic language study programs. (Ritonga et al., 2023).

Modern Technology and Learning Media, Technological advances provide great opportunities for innovation in Arabic language learning. The use of mobile applications, e-learning platforms, and social media can make Arabic language learning more interactive and enjoyable. (Sutinalvi et al., 2024). In addition, technology also allows access to various learning resources from around the world, so that students can learn Arabic in a more flexible and efficient way. (Safitri et al., 2025).

The Influence of Culture and Religion: As a country with a Muslim majority, learning Arabic has strong cultural and religious dimensions. (Lintang, 2023). The motivation to understand the Qur'an and other Islamic texts is a powerful incentive for many students to learn Arabic. Educational institutions can take advantage of this to design learning programs that are more contextual and relevant to students' lives. (Ridwan, 2023).

In addition, the issue of curriculum harmonization is also related to the recognition and integration of various Arabic dialects used in different regions. (Rahma & Aqmal, 2024) The choice of the right dialect in the global curriculum is a critical issue, given that dialect differences can affect understanding and communication among students from different countries. (Suparno, 2018) To overcome these challenges, dialogue and cooperation between institutions and countries is needed to develop a curriculum that meets global needs, while taking into account the cultural diversity and social environment in which Arabic is taught. (Zahra & Astari, 2022). An in-depth analysis of successful curriculum models and the integration of technology in Arabic language teaching may be relevant strategies for overcoming these challenges. (Manan & Nasri, 2024).

This study is limited by its small sample size (15 participants) and focus on a single cohort (Class E, 2024). The short interview duration (approximately three minutes per session) might restrict depth of insight. Future research should involve more participants across institutions and employ longitudinal approaches to examine how *code-mixing* evolves alongside Arabic proficiency.

CONCLUSION | خاتمة

Based on the article "The Dynamics of Language Variation in Arabic: Challenges and Opportunities Among Arabic Language Education Students," this study reveals that Arabic Language Education students in class E of the 2024 cohort demonstrate diversity in language variation in their use of Arabic. These variations include social and regional dialects, usage in various contexts (academic, social, religious), levels of formality, and communication media (spoken and written). This indicates that Arabic language learning does not occur in a vacuum but is significantly influenced by the cultural, social, and educational backgrounds of its speakers.

This diversity serves as both a richness and a challenge in Arabic language learning at the university level.

The main factors causing linguistic variation include educational background (Salafi boarding schools, modern schools, madrasahs), ethnicity and regional origin, as well as the influence of the digital environment and global culture. Additionally, the use of Arabic in a mixed code with Indonesian and slang indicates a shift in the function of Arabic from its original formal use to a more fluid role in the social context of students. This phenomenon aligns with sociolinguistic perspectives that language reflects social identity and power dynamics within society.

Thus, to address the challenges in Arabic language education in Indonesia, it is necessary to apply a contextual, inclusive, and responsive teaching approach that accommodates the linguistic diversity of students. The curriculum must be able to accommodate differences in dialect and culture, while technology and intercultural strategies can be utilized to create a dynamic and relevant learning environment. This approach will support the achievement of Arabic language learning that is not only linguistically effective but also capable of developing students' social and cultural competencies in a global context.

This study calls for a pedagogical shift toward embracing linguistic diversity in Arabic classrooms. Future curricula should integrate contrastive analysis of fusha and 'amiyah, while teacher training programs must prepare educators to navigate code-mixing as a resource not a deficit.

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