



## BI'AH LUGHAWIYYAH IN ARABIC LANGUAGE LEARNING: A CASE STUDY OF A MULTICULTURAL SCHOOL IN JAKARTA

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### Abstract

This study aims to describe the implementation of bi'ah lughawiyyah in Arabic language learning at the Sudan Asia Afrika School in Jakarta and to examine the influence of the language environment on students' Arabic language skills. The research addresses the following question: how does the implementation of bi'ah lughawiyyah contribute to students' Arabic language acquisition in a multicultural school environment? This study was motivated by the importance of the language environment in supporting the success of Arabic language learning, especially in schools with diverse cultural backgrounds. The study employed a qualitative method with a case study approach. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation involving madrasah leaders, teachers, and students as research informants (n=1 school leaders, 4 teachers, and 10 students). The results showed that the school actively implements the use of Arabic in both learning activities and daily communication. Fusha Arabic is used in classroom instruction according to the Sudanese curriculum, while amiyah is used in informal interactions between students and teachers. The presence of native-speaker teachers from various Arab countries further supports the creation of a natural and communicative language environment. In addition, the school culture that habituates students to continuous Arabic use helps students understand and apply Arabic in daily life. This study concludes that bi'ah lughawiyyah significantly influences the success of students' Arabic language acquisition and offers a unique contribution by highlighting the integration of fusha and amiyah within a multicultural Arabic learning environment in Indonesia.

**Keywords:** Bi'ah Lughawiyyah, Arabic Language Learning, Language Environment, Sudanese Curriculum

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## INTRODUCTION

## مقدمة

Arabic is one of the international languages that has an important role in the fields of education, religion, culture, and global communication. In the context of education in Indonesia, learning Arabic is still often considered difficult learning by some students. These difficulties are not only due to differences in language structure, but also due to the lack of an environment that supports the active use of Arabic in daily life.

Arabic is the language spoken by about 150 million people in the West Asian and North African region, especially in the twenty-two member countries of the Arab League (Sauri 2020). The development of Islam also has a great influence on the spread and position of the Arabic language in various regions of the world. This influence can be seen in a number of other languages such as Persian, Turkish, Urdu, Malay, Hausa, and Swahili which absorb a lot of Arabic vocabulary. In fact, the contribution of Arabic to these languages reaches around 40-60 percent, including in the aspects of grammar, nahwu science, and literature. In addition to serving as a

language of communication, Arabic also has an important position as a religious language for more than one billion Muslims in the world and is used in various forms of daily worship.

However, the application of these speaking skills teaching materials cannot be separated from practice in a linguistic environment, from native speakers and original sources (Kasmantoni 2022). Arabic language learning in many educational institutions still tends to focus on theoretical and grammatical aspects so that students' communication skills are not developed optimally. In teaching foreign languages, there will be two things, namely *iktisaabul lughah* and *bi'ah lughawiyah* (Taubah 2017).

One of the important factors in the success of language learning is the existence of *bi'ah lughawiyah* or the language environment (Rizqi 2016). The language environment is a condition that allows students to get used to using the target language in daily activities, both in formal learning and social communication. Through this habituation, students can acquire language more naturally and communicatively. Therefore, the existence of a language environment is one of the elements that greatly influences the success of foreign language acquisition, including Arabic.

Some previous studies have shown that the application of *bi'ah lughawiyah* is able to improve students' speaking, hearing, and Arabic comprehension skills. Previous research has generally discussed the application of the language environment in Islamic boarding schools, madrasas, or dormitory-based educational institutions that require the use of Arabic in certain activities. The results of the study show that the habit of using Arabic can help students be more active and confident in communicating. However, most previous research has still focused on a homogeneous educational environment and has not addressed much about the application of Arabic language environments in multicultural schools inhabited by students from different countries with different dialect backgrounds.

Many studies report that the *Lughawiyah Bi'ah* often fails to maintain consistency in language use due to the lack of linguistic competence of the supervisors or "*muharrrik*" (language movers), as well as the limited availability of authentic support facilities (Isma Aulia, Vidya, Anggraeni 2023). One of the efforts to obtain *maharah kalam* is to create an environment that supports Arabic language learning through habituation in listening, understanding and speaking in Arabic, which is called the language environment or *bi'ah lughawiyah* (Ridho 2024).

Sekolah Sudan Asia Afrika Jakarta is one of the international schools based on the Sudanese curriculum that has unique characteristics in the application of the Arabic language. This school was established to facilitate the educational needs of Arab immigrant children, diplomats, and Arab communities living in Indonesia so that they can maintain their Arabic language and culture. In daily activities, schools actively implement the use of Arabic both in the learning process and social communication between students and teachers. In addition, this school is inhabited by students from various Arab countries such as Sudan, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and Syria, as well as Indonesian students who are also adapting to the language environment. This condition creates interesting multicultural interactions, especially in the use of *fusha* and *amiyah* Arabic in the school environment.

"General Arabic" or "*Al-'Arabiyyah Al-'Ammiyah*" is the Arabic language used in everyday conversation in the Arab world, and is very different from written Arabic. The most important dialect difference is between North Africa (*Maghrib* Arabic) and the Middle East (*Hijaz*). The factor that causes the difference in Arabic dialects is the influence of the substrate (the language

used before Arabic came). For example, in the word yakūn (meaning "it"), in Iraq it is called aku, in Palestine fih, and in the Magribi it is called kayen (Akhiril Pane 2018).

Based on information obtained directly from the madrasah mudir, the Sudan Africa Jakarta School has an advantage in terms of legality and educational recognition. Students who were declared to have graduated from this school previously obtained two diplomas (*double diplomas*), namely a diploma recognized by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia and a diploma from the Sudanese Ministry of Education. The possession of the two diplomas is an added value for students because it shows the integration between the Indonesian education system and the Sudanese education curriculum.

However, based on information from the school, this condition has changed since the conflict and war in Sudan. The ongoing war situation caused educational and administrative activities in Sudan to experience obstacles, so that the process of issuing diplomas from the Sudanese Ministry of Education could not be carried out temporarily. Therefore, in recent times schools have only been able to issue diplomas from the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia.

These findings show that the political and security conditions of a country can have an impact on the sustainability of the education system, including international educational institutions that implement foreign curricula. Nevertheless, the Sudan Afrika Jakarta School continues to carry out normal learning activities and maintains the quality of the existing education in accordance with the curriculum implemented in the school

This research has a novelty in the focus of the study on the application of bi'ah lughawiyyah in the environment of multicultural schools based on the Sudanese curriculum in Indonesia. This study not only discusses the use of Arabic in learning, but also looks at how school culture, social interaction, and the diversity of Arabic dialects affect students' language acquisition. Thus, this research is expected to make a scientific contribution to the development of Arabic language learning based on natural language environments.

Based on this description, this study aims to describe the application of bi'ah lughawiyyah in the Sudan School of Asia Africa Jakarta, analyze the use of Arabic in daily learning and communication activities, and find out the factors that support the success of students' Arabic acquisition in the school environment.

## METHOD

## منهج

### Research Site

The research was conducted at the Sudan School of Asia Africa Jakarta because the school actively implements Arabic in learning and daily communication activities within a multicultural environment.

### Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research method with a case study approach. The study aimed to describe deeply the implementation of bi'ah lughawiyyah and the factors influencing students' Arabic language skills at the Sudan School of Asia Africa Jakarta. The research was conducted naturally through observation, interviews, and documentation without manipulating the research setting. Data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

## Participant (Subject) Characteristics

The participants in this study consisted of the madrasah mudir, teachers, and students at the Sudan School of Asia Africa Jakarta. They were selected using purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in the implementation of bi'ah lughawiyah in the school environment. The participants came from multicultural backgrounds, including Sudan, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Indonesia. Most students used Arabic as their daily communication language, both fuṣḥā and 'āmiyah.

The inclusion criteria included participants who were actively involved in Arabic learning activities and daily communication practices at school for at least one academic semester. Meanwhile, individuals who had limited interaction with the school language environment or were not directly involved in Arabic communication activities were excluded from the study. The sample size was determined based on data saturation, where no new significant information emerged from additional participants.

## Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected through non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation related to school activities and the use of Arabic in the school environment. The researcher conducted five non-participant observations over a period of three weeks during classroom learning activities and daily student interactions. In addition, twelve semi-structured interviews were conducted with the madrasah mudir, teachers, and students to obtain in-depth information regarding the implementation of bi'ah lughawiyah. Documentation data included school regulations, learning schedules, activity records, and photographs related to Arabic language activities.

## Research Instruments

The researcher acted as the main instrument in the study, supported by observation guidelines, interview guidelines, and documentation tools.

## Data Analysis Techniques

The data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

## Trustworthiness / Validity of Data

The validity of the data was maintained through source triangulation and technique triangulation by comparing information from observations, interviews, and documentation.

## RESULT | نتائج

Based on the results of interviews with the mudir of the Sudan Africa School in Jakarta, the students who are accepted, especially students who transfer from other schools, are expected to have basic Arabic language skills. This is because Arabic is the main language in the learning process at the school. Basic Arabic language skills are considered important so that students do not have difficulties in understanding the subject matter being taught. In addition to being used in formal learning activities, Arabic has also been habituated since the Riyāḍ al-Atfāl (kindergarten) level. At this stage, students begin to be introduced to the use of Arabic in daily communication in the school environment. The habituation is carried out through interaction between teachers and students, the use of simple vocabulary, and learning instructions delivered in Arabic.

The results of the study show that the Sudan Asia Afrika Jakarta School actively and comprehensively implements bi'ah lughawiyah in school life. Arabic is used as the main language in the learning process, communication between students, teacher-student communication, and in various daily school activities. The use of Arabic is not only limited to academic activities, but also becomes a culture of communication that lives in the school environment. In the learning process, fusha Arabic is used according to the Sudanese curriculum, while in informal communication, students and teachers often use amiyah Arabic according to the background of their respective countries.

The multicultural school environment is not an obstacle to communication between students and teachers. Despite the differences in dialect between students and teachers from Sudan, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and other Arab countries, they are still able to interact well through daily communication habits.

The language environment (bi'ah lughawiyah) at the Sudan Asia Afrika Jakarta School not only affects students and teachers, but also the workers and staff in the school environment. The use of Arabic in daily communication takes place naturally and intensively, especially since most students use 'āmiyah Arabic in their daily interactions. This condition indirectly requires all elements of the school, including administrative staff, service officers, and other workers, to have basic communication skills using Arabic in order to establish effective interactions with students (Bawazir 2026).

However, the demand for the use of Arabic is not seen as a serious obstacle by school workers. On the contrary, this condition is considered an added value and a positive opportunity for outside communities working within the Sudan Asia Afrika Jakarta School. Workers can learn vocabulary, daily communication expressions, and understand variations of 'āmiyah dialects through direct practice in their work activities.

In addition, based on the results of an interview with one of the students named Shaida, a Yemeni student who has a native Yemeni father and an Indonesian mother, information was obtained that the use of Arabic is not only habitual in the school environment, but also applied in the family environment. Shaida revealed that her parents used to daily communication at home using Arabic as an effort to maintain their children's language skills and linguistic identity (Kindi 2026).

In addition to the school factor, the results of the study also show that there is strong support from families for students' Arabic language acquisition. Some parents choose the school because they want their children to be able to speak Arabic actively. One of the parents of the students interviewed stated that he chose the school because of the quality of the language environment, good school programs, and the use of the Sudanese curriculum which is considered to be able to strengthen children's Arabic language skills.

Other findings showed that some parents provided additional learning in the form of private tutoring after school hours were over. Teachers in schools are asked to provide additional learning assistance to strengthen students' Arabic language skills (Anin 2026).

Based on the results of observations at the Sudan Asia Afrika Jakarta School, the use of Arabic is consistently applied in daily learning and communication activities in the school environment. Teachers accustom students to always use Arabic when interacting, both in the classroom and outside the classroom. In practice, teachers do not allow students to use languages other than Arabic as long as communication can still be done using that language.

The use of languages other than Arabic is only allowed under certain limited conditions. For example, the use of English is allowed when students are interacting with English subject teachers or in a learning context that requires the use of the language. In addition, for native Indonesian students who do not understand the meaning of certain vocabulary or expressions in Arabic, teachers sometimes give brief explanations using Indonesian as a form of comprehension assistance (Rizqi and Arab 2004).

The study also found that some parents are very committed to their children's Arabic language education. One of the students is known to be from Surabaya and his family is willing to move to Jakarta so that his children can attend the Sudan Asia Afrika School in Jakarta. Even in the distribution of report cards, the school explained the contents of the report card in Arabic to the student's parents, which shows that Arabic is really the main language in the school's education system (Bawazir 2026).

Although the Sudan Asia Afrika Jakarta School actively implements the use of Arabic in the school environment, this institution does not override the Indonesian curriculum and national identity. This can be seen in various school activities, especially at the *ḥaflah* or *tasyakuran* event. One of the performances that is routinely performed is singing the national anthem of Indonesia Raya (Rizka 2026).



Figure 1. Photo session for final-year MA students after the final school examination.

## DISCUSSION

## مناقشة

However, several previous studies have reported that the implementation of *bi'ah lughawiyyah* does not always achieve optimal results. In some educational institutions, the language environment fails because Arabic is only used formally during classroom activities and is not consistently practiced in daily communication outside the classroom (Ulya, Astina, and Qorny 2022). In addition, limited teacher competence, lack of supervision, low student motivation, and the absence of family support often become obstacles to the sustainability of the language environment. In some *pesantren* and Islamic schools in Indonesia, students tend to return to their mother tongue when there is no strict language policy or communicative learning atmosphere. These conditions indicate that the success of *bi'ah lughawiyyah* is not merely determined by the existence of language rules, but by the consistency of implementation and the active involvement of all educational elements.

The findings of this study show that several institutional prerequisites are necessary for the successful implementation of *bi'ah lughawiyyah*. First, schools need consistent language policies that encourage the continuous use of Arabic in both academic and non-academic activities. Second, the presence of competent teachers, especially native speakers, contributes significantly

to the creation of authentic communication patterns (Sholehah 2025). Third, schools need to establish a supportive social culture in which students feel encouraged rather than pressured to use Arabic. Fourth, collaboration between schools and families is essential to maintain continuity between the school language environment and the home environment. Without these institutional supports, the implementation of bi'ah lughawiyyah may become symbolic rather than functional.

Compared to previous studies conducted in Indonesian Islamic boarding schools, this study demonstrates a different pattern because the Sudan Asia Afrika Jakarta School applies Arabic within a multicultural and international environment. Previous studies in Indonesia generally focused on homogeneous student communities where students shared similar linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Abdi Sampurna Nasution, Isna Bulqis Saragi 2025). In contrast, this study found that the diversity of dialects and nationalities did not hinder communication; instead, it strengthened students' adaptability and communicative competence. Similar findings were also reported in studies of Arabic language institutions in Middle Eastern countries, where continuous exposure to authentic communication was found to accelerate second-language acquisition. However, unlike some Arabic immersion programs in other countries that rely heavily on formal instruction, the Sudan Asia Afrika Jakarta School combines formal learning with natural social interaction, making Arabic function as a living language rather than merely an academic subject.

The feasibility of replicating this model in other schools depends greatly on socio-cultural and institutional conditions. Schools with strong boarding systems or religious-based educational cultures may adopt this model more easily because students interact intensively in a controlled environment. However, in public schools or institutions where students have limited exposure to Arabic outside the classroom, the implementation may face challenges related to limited practice time, inconsistent language policies, and lack of community support. Therefore, adaptation is necessary according to the characteristics of each institution. Schools that wish to replicate this model should gradually build a communicative culture, strengthen teacher competence, provide continuous language exposure, and involve parents in supporting language habituation at home. Thus, the success of bi'ah lughawiyyah cannot be separated from the readiness of educational institutions to create a sustainable and supportive language ecosystem.

## CONCLUSSION | خاتمة

This study concludes that the implementation of bi'ah lughawiyyah at the Sudan Asia Afrika Jakarta School significantly supports students' Arabic language acquisition through the consistent use of Arabic in learning activities and daily communication. The findings answer the research problem by showing that students' Arabic skills are influenced by several interconnected factors, including the presence of native-speaker teachers, institutional language policies, communicative school culture, and family support. The continuous interaction in both fuṣṣhā and 'āmiyah enables students to acquire Arabic naturally and communicatively in multicultural educational settings.

This study provides the first empirical account of bi'ah lughawiyyah implementation in a Sudanese-curriculum multicultural school in Indonesia, highlighting the synergy between institutional policy and family support in strengthening students' Arabic language development. The findings also reinforce theories of language acquisition emphasizing the importance of authentic and sustainable language exposure in second-language learning.

However, this study is limited to a single research site and focuses primarily on descriptive qualitative findings. Therefore, future research should employ mixed-methods designs to measure the impact of bi'ah lughawiyyah on specific Arabic language skills, such as mahārah al-kalām or mahārah al-istimā', through pre-test and post-test assessments across broader educational contexts.

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