

Exploring Local Wisdom-Based Arabic Language Environment Practices and Their Contribution to Students' Speaking Proficiency

Hamdy M. Zen ¹ , Nila Sari Taha ² 

¹ Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Ternate, Indonesia

² Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 1 Ternate, Indonesia

 <https://doi.org/10.70872/12waiheru.v12i1.8>

Article Info

Article history:

Received April 5, 2026

Revised June 6, 2026

Accepted June 7, 2026

Keywords:

Arabic language

Local wisdom

Speaking proficiency

ABSTRACT

This study examines innovative strategies for creating an Arabic language environment based on local wisdom at State Islamic Senior High School (MAN) 1 North Halmahera. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, this research investigates the implementation of local cultural integration in Arabic language learning and its impact on students' speaking skills. The research findings demonstrate significant improvement in students' speaking abilities through a contextual approach that connects Arabic language with local cultural contexts. The methods used in this study include in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. The findings indicate that the integration of local wisdom through folklore, regional songs, and cultural activities can enhance students' motivation and speaking competence, with speaking skills percentages increasing from an average of 35-45% to 70-80%. This research provides theoretical contributions to the development of foreign language learning models based on local culture.

Corresponding Author:

Hamdy M. Zen

Institu Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Ternate

Lumba-Lumba Street, Number 8, Dufa Dufa 97727, Ternate, North Maluku, Indonesia

✉: hmznst@iain-ternate.ac.id



This is an open access article under [CC-BY-NC-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/)

INTRODUCTION

In the context of globalization and the intensification of cross-cultural interactions, proficiency in foreign languages has become an essential competency for students, including in faith-based educational settings (Hadiyanto et al., 2020; Santoso, 2014). Arabic, as the language of the Qur'an and an international language of communication in the Islamic world, occupies a strategic position within the Indonesian madrasah education system. Nevertheless, challenges in Arabic language instruction, particularly in speaking skills (maharah al-kalam), remain complex. Numerous studies have indicated that Arabic language instruction at the madrasah level continues to emphasize grammatical instruction and memorization, thereby providing limited opportunities for developing students' communicative competence. Consequently, students often demonstrate low proficiency in actively using Arabic in authentic communicative situations.

In the national context, the urgency of improving Arabic-speaking proficiency has intensified amid curriculum demands that emphasize communicative and competency-based approaches. As Islamic educational institutions, madrasahs are expected not only to transmit linguistic knowledge but also to establish a conducive language environment that supports daily communicative practice (Astuti et al., 2020). An effective language environment is believed to increase the frequency of target-language use, reinforce language habits, and facilitate the internalization of the cultural values embedded in the language. However, empirical realities indicate that creating an authentic Arabic-

language environment continues to face various challenges, including limited resources, insufficient pedagogical innovation, and inadequate integration with students' local socio-cultural contexts.

Several previous studies have examined various Arabic language learning strategies, including communicative approaches (Zaid et al., 2024), the use of digital media (Saputra & Nuha, 2025; Hasanuddin, 2024), and the development of bi'ah lughawiyah (language environment) programs (Nurlaila, 2021; Sugirma et al., 2023). These studies generally indicate that an intensive and well-structured language environment can significantly enhance students' speaking proficiency. In addition, several studies have highlighted the importance of contextual approaches to language learning, in which instructional materials are linked to students' experiences and real-life contexts. Meanwhile, research on integrating local wisdom into language learning has begun to attract increasing attention, particularly as an effort to enhance the relevance and meaningfulness of the learning process.

Nevertheless, studies that specifically integrate the concept of the Arabic language environment with local wisdom remain relatively limited. Most existing research treats the development of the language environment and the utilization of local culture as a learning resource as separate domains. In fact, local wisdom possesses substantial potential as a contextual learning medium that can enhance students' motivation and engagement. The integration of local wisdom into Arabic language learning serves not only as a pedagogical strategy but also as an effort to preserve cultural heritage and strengthen local identity amid the forces of globalization. Therefore, this approach has the potential to foster a more holistic, adaptive, and socially grounded learning experience that is closely aligned with students' lived realities.

Furthermore, studies examining the implementation of Arabic-language environment development strategies grounded in local wisdom within the context of madrasahs in remote or archipelagic regions, such as North Halmahera, remain scarce. The distinctive geographical and socio-cultural conditions of these areas require contextualized and innovative instructional approaches. As the research site, Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 Halmahera Utara possesses unique characteristics that reflect the diversity of local cultures, making it a relevant context for investigating the integration of Arabic language learning and local wisdom. However, limited research has comprehensively explored how such strategies are implemented and how they affect students' speaking skills.

Based on the foregoing discussion, a significant research gap can be identified: the lack of empirical studies that integrate Arabic-language environment development strategies with a local wisdom-based approach, particularly to enhance students' speaking skills in madrasahs. In addition, there remains a limited body of research employing a qualitative case study approach to explore in depth the experiences, practices, and implementation dynamics of such strategies in real-world educational settings. This gap highlights the need for research that not only describes the strategies employed but also critically examines how integrating local culture can enrich the Arabic language-learning process.

In line with these considerations, this study aims to: (1) investigate the implementation of local cultural integration in Arabic language learning and its impact on students' speaking skills, and (2) examine innovative strategies for creating a local wisdom-based Arabic language environment at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1, North Halmahera. Using a qualitative approach with a case study design and in-depth interviews as the data collection technique, this study is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of actual practices in the field and the factors influencing the successful implementation of these strategies.

Theoretically, this study is expected to enrich the body of knowledge in Arabic language education, particularly regarding the development of language-environment concepts integrated with local wisdom. It also contributes to broadening perspectives on the importance of contextual and culture-based approaches in foreign language learning. In practice, the findings are expected to serve as a reference for educators, madrasah administrators, and policymakers in designing more innovative, context-specific, and effective Arabic language learning strategies to enhance students' speaking skills. Thus, this study has both academic relevance and practical implications for improving the quality of Arabic language education in Indonesia, particularly in madrasah settings.

METHOD

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, enabling the researcher to obtain quantitative data in the form of speaking skill performance percentages and qualitative data reflecting participants' experiences through direct involvement in integrating local wisdom into Arabic language instruction. The study was conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 1, North Halmahera, Indonesia. The research site was selected purposively based on contextual relevance, particularly regarding the implementation of local wisdom values in the Arabic language learning process.

The research participants consisted of the school principal, Arabic language teachers, and students. Participants were selected based on their direct involvement and experience in integrating local wisdom into Arabic language instruction. This sampling technique ensured that the data obtained were rich, relevant, and aligned with the study's objectives.

Data were collected using three primary techniques as follows:

- Semi-Structured Interviews were conducted with the school principal, Arabic language teachers, and purposively selected students. This technique aimed to obtain in-depth insights into participants' perspectives, experiences, and interpretations of integrating local wisdom into Arabic language learning, while maintaining flexibility in developing interview questions.
- Participant Observation was conducted during classroom learning activities. The researcher directly observed the implementation of the local wisdom-based approach in instructional practice and students' interactions with learning materials, incorporating elements of local culture.
- Document Analysis involved the examination of the syllabus, Lesson Plans (RPP), and students' assessment results. This analysis aimed to identify the extent to which local wisdom had been systematically incorporated into the planning and implementation of the learning process.

Data analysis in this study employed the interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman, which consists of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

- Data Reduction was carried out by selecting, focusing, and simplifying raw data obtained from various sources.
- Data Display was conducted through narrative descriptions and thematic categorization to facilitate the interpretation process.
- Conclusion: Drawing and Verification were performed continuously to identify patterns, relationships, and meanings emerging from the analyzed data.

To ensure data credibility, this study employed source triangulation. Triangulation was conducted by comparing and confirming data obtained from multiple sources, namely interviews, observations, and document analysis. This process aimed to enhance the validity of the findings and minimize bias in data interpretation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Integration of Local Wisdom into Arabic Language Learning

Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 1 North Halmahera has developed an innovative strategy to create an Arabic-language environment grounded in local wisdom, fostering a closer connection between Arabic and local culture among students. This integration is implemented through two main approaches that have proven effective in improving learning quality. The first approach involves adapting North Halmahera folktales into contextualized, effective Arabic-language learning texts. This transformation provides students with opportunities to deepen their understanding of the Halmahera community's local cultural values, including its moral principles, customs, and traditions, while learning Arabic. The adapted materials help students improve their reading and speaking skills by using familiar, accessible texts that are already embedded in their cultural experiences. A significant advantage of this approach is that students demonstrate greater interest and engagement because the folktales form part of their cultural identity. The use of Arabic texts linked to local culture also enables students to develop a deeper understanding of language use within its context. It enhances their speaking proficiency, as they not only read the stories but also discuss and retell them enthusiastically in Arabic.

The second approach involves transforming traditional North Halmahera songs, which have been modified to become among the most effective instruments for Arabic language learning. Through musical drama performances and singing activities, students can retain Arabic vocabulary

and sentence structures more effectively while maintaining a connection to their local cultural identity. The benefits of this approach include improved phonological skills, such as more accurate pronunciation and intonation, the use of musical drama to facilitate vocabulary memorization enjoyably, and the creation of a more dynamic and interactive classroom environment that motivates students to participate more actively in speaking activities and the learning process.

The Impact of Learning Strategies on Speaking Skills

The findings indicate a highly significant improvement in students' speaking skills following the implementation of a local wisdom-based instructional strategy. Based on systematic observation data and speaking assessments conducted before and after the strategy's implementation, encouraging conclusions can be drawn about the effectiveness of this approach.

Table 1. Comparison of Speaking Skills Before and After the Intervention

Number	Assessment Aspect	Before Intervention	After Intervention	Improvement
1	Fluency	35-40%	70-75%	35%
2	Accuracy	30-35%	65-70%	35%
3	Self-Confidence	40-50%	75-85%	35%

This measurable improvement indicates that students became more confident and actively engaged in Arabic, particularly in speaking, as they felt more emotionally and culturally connected to the instructional materials. Improvements in speaking proficiency are often influenced by several key factors, including appropriate and contextually relevant teaching strategies (Meiarni, 2025; Miolo, 2025), enhanced students' intrinsic motivation (Arifin et al., 2020), and cultural contexts that align with their lived experiences (Husna & Khaerunnisa, 2022).

Research has demonstrated that strategies supporting the development of communicative competence involve active student interaction and the use of meaningful contexts, including local cultural contexts, which significantly strengthen students' confidence in speaking. Kusyairi et al. (2024) stated that speaking skills can develop optimally through increased opportunities for communication in authentic and contextualized situations. Such opportunities enable students to become more personally engaged and confident, thereby significantly enhancing their speaking performance in the target language.

Based on the research findings, the intervention strategy consistently and systematically improved students' speaking skills, yielding highly satisfactory outcomes. This finding is consistent with results from various international studies indicating that contextualized learning approaches with a stronger emphasis on cultural experiences can substantially enhance speaking competence (Dalle et al., 2025). Furthermore, Hikmat et al. (2025) demonstrated that speaking-focused instruction should prioritize direct practice and meaningful interaction within relevant cultural contexts. Techniques such as local culture-based group discussions, role-playing activities centered on indigenous wisdom, and tasks grounded in real-life situations are highly effective in developing students' speaking competence, enabling them to communicate with greater confidence and authenticity.

Analysis of the Importance of Local Wisdom in Language Learning

One fundamental reason students became more engaged with the learning materials and demonstrated significant improvements in speaking skills is the systematic, structured integration of local wisdom into the Arabic language learning process. Local wisdom provides a context that is closer to and more familiar with students' lived experiences, helping them feel more comfortable and confident in using the target language across diverse communicative situations (Hatima et al., 2025).

Recent studies in Arabic language education have consistently emphasized the importance of connecting language learning with local environmental contexts to create meaningful and transformative learning experiences (Rosadi et al., 2025). In this context, integrating local culture not only enhances students' technical language skills but also enables them to perceive Arabic as more than a foreign language detached from their daily lives. Rather, it becomes a language that can be understood and used meaningfully as an integral part of their broader cultural context.

The significant improvement in speaking skills can also be attributed to the comprehensive and authentic evaluation methods employed in this study, particularly through holistic speaking assessments. Performance-based assessment, which combines direct observation with speaking tests, provides a more realistic and accurate representation of students' speaking abilities in authentic contexts.

Impact on Student Motivation and Engagement

A local wisdom-based approach also significantly enhanced students' intrinsic motivation and active engagement in the Arabic language learning process. Based on in-depth interviews, students reported more positive attitudes and greater enthusiasm toward learning Arabic because the approach was highly relevant and meaningful to their daily lives. They perceived Arabic not merely as a foreign language learned mechanically, but as a language that could be used to understand, appreciate, and express their own culture more creatively and authentically.

The findings of this study reveal remarkable improvements in students' speaking skills through a contextual approach that strategically connects Arabic language learning to rich, meaningful local cultural contexts. The integration of local wisdom through alternative and innovative media, such as adapted folklore, transformed traditional songs, and integrated cultural activities, effectively enhanced students' intrinsic motivation and speaking competence.

The study's significant theoretical contribution lies in developing a comprehensive, culture-based model of foreign language learning, offering a new paradigm that is more inclusive, contextualized, and meaningful for foreign language education in multicultural Indonesia. This study provides strong empirical evidence that integrating local wisdom is not merely an appealing theoretical strategy but can also practically and measurably improve the quality of foreign language learning, yielding highly satisfactory outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Based on the comprehensive and in-depth findings of this study, several important conclusions can be drawn regarding the implementation of a local wisdom-based Arabic language environment development strategy at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 1, North Halmahera. The integration of local wisdom was found to be significantly and consistently effective in enhancing students' Arabic-speaking skills.

The systematically developed contextual approach successfully increased students' intrinsic motivation by directly and meaningfully connecting Arabic language materials with their local cultural context and everyday life experiences. Through the use of innovative learning media, such as adapted folklore, transformed regional songs, and integrated cultural activities, the learning process was no longer perceived as a monotonous mechanical activity but rather as a meaningful experience that fostered students' personal and emotional engagement.

The dynamic, interactive learning environment established successfully encouraged students' active participation throughout the Arabic language learning process. By systematically integrating elements of local culture, Arabic language learning at MAN 1 North Halmahera evolved into a dialogic space in which students not only received knowledge passively but also explored, interpreted, and constructed linguistic understanding within their own familiar and meaningful cultural context.

This study makes significant theoretical and practical contributions to the development of culturally grounded models of foreign language learning by offering a new paradigm that is more inclusive, contextualized, and meaningful for foreign language education in Indonesia, a country characterized by rich cultural diversity. The integration of local wisdom with twenty-first-century skills in the development of Arabic language learning materials was found to facilitate the achievement of educational objectives aimed at producing high-quality graduates with strong character. For future development, this study recommends strengthening the integration of local wisdom into instructional materials, adopting more diverse and contextualized teaching methods, and enhancing collaboration among educational stakeholders to create a more supportive and sustainable learning environment.

REFERENCES

- Arifin, R. A., Kulsum, E. M., & Mutiarawati, R. (2020). Persepsi Siswa Tentang Lingkungan Belajar Bahasa Dan Motivasi Dalam Meningkatkan Keterampilan Bahasa. *Jurnal Perspektif*, 4(2), 135. <https://doi.org/10.15575/jp.v4i2.92>

- Astuti, R., Akla, A., & Sarbaini, A. (2020). Strategi Pembentukan Lingkungan Berbahasa Arab di Madrasah Aliyah. *An Nabighoh: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab*, 22(1), 17. <https://doi.org/10.32332/an-nabighoh.v22i01.2075>
- Dalle, A., Amir, J., Fatimah Al Ilmullah, S., Mannahali, M., & Angreany, F. (2025). Program Penguatan Pembelajaran Bahasa Asing di SMA Melalui Kolaborasi dengan Masyarakat. *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, 3(2), 242–250. <https://doi.org/10.59562/abdimas.v3i2.10792>
- Hadiyanto, A., Samitri, C., & Maria Ulfah, S. (2020). Model Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Multiliterasi Berbasis Kearifan Lokal Dan Moderasi Islam di Perguruan Tinggi Negeri. *Hayula: Indonesian Journal of Multidisciplinary Islamic Studies*, 4(1), 117–140. <https://doi.org/10.21009/004.01.07>
- Hasanuddin, H. (2024). Efektivitas Penggunaan Media Digital Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Di Pesantren Darul Ikhlas Panyabungan Kab. Mandailing Natal. *Berkala Ilmiah Pendidikan*, 4(3), 500–505. <https://doi.org/10.51214/bip.v4i3.1155>
- Hatima, Y., Ummah, I., & Saputra, E. E. (2025). Integrasi Nilai Kearifan Lokal Budaya Sunda dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia melalui Pendekatan Sastra di Sekolah Dasar. *Sulawesi Tenggara Educational Journal*, 5(1), 484–492. <http://www.jurnal-unsultra.ac.id/index.php/seduj/article/view/1218>
- Hikmat, A., Solihati, N., Khuluqo, I. El, Zulaiha, S., & Fakhira, J. (2025). Pendekatan Berbasis Budaya dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris: Program Pengabdian di Thailand. *Journal of Sustainable Community Development (JSCD)*, 7(1), 69–75. <https://doi.org/10.32924/jscd.v7i1.138>
- Husna, K., & Khaerunnisa, K. (2022). Implementasi Budaya Dalam Pembelajaran Keterampilan Berbicara Bagi Pemelajar BIPA Level 2. *BELAJAR BAHASA: Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia*, 7(1), 39–54. <https://doi.org/10.32528/bb.v7i1.8>
- Kusyairi, Fazaraul Farahiyah Ad, & Habibatul Ummah. (2024). Menumbuhkan Keterampilan Berbicara Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa di Sekolah. *Demagogi: Journal of Social Sciences, Economics and Education*, 2(4), 239–251. <https://doi.org/10.61166/demagogi.v2i4.58>
- Meiarni, I. (2025). Peningkatan Keterampilan Berbicara Siswa Melalui Berbagai Strategi Pembelajaran. *Jurnal Pemikiran Pendidikan Dan Keguruan*, 1(1), 56–63. <https://doi.org/10.59966/kfqq9668>
- Miolo, M. I. (2025). Strategi Inovatif dalam Pengajaran Keterampilan Berbicara dan Menulis Bahasa Arab: Sebuah Tinjauan Pedagogis. *Al-Kalim: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab Dan Kebahasaaraban*, 4(1), 65–87. <https://doi.org/10.60040/jak.v4i1.153>
- Nurlaila, N. (2021). Pembentukan Bi'ah Lughawiyah Dalam Meningkatkan Maharah Kalam Dan Kitabah Pada Mahasiswa Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab Fakultas Tarbiyah Institut Agama Islam Muhammadiyah Bima. *AL-AF'IDAH: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab Dan Pengajarannya*, 5(1), 31–49. <https://doi.org/10.52266/al-afidah.v5i1.658>
- Rosadi, A., Kasman, Adhar, Y. I., & Irham. (2025). Eksplorasi Kebutuhan ECO-ELT Berbasis Kearifan Lokal dan Komunikasi global: Perspektif Pengajar di Pesantren. *Jurnal Komunikasi Dan Kebudayaan*, 12(2), 1–17. <https://jurnal.universitasmbojobima.ac.id/index.php/jkk/article/view/400>
- Santoso, I. (2014). Pembelajaran bahasa asing di indonesia: antara globalisasi dan hegemoni. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 14(1), 1. https://doi.org/10.17509/bs_jbps.v14i1.696
- Saputra, L. M., & Ulin Nuha, M. A. (2025). Penerapan Media Pembelajaran Digital Untuk Meningkatkan Efektivitas Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab. *Jurnal Sathar*, 3(2), 123–130. <https://doi.org/10.59548/js.v3i2.448>
- Sugirma, Huda, M., Amalia, D. R., Sulaikho, S., & K, A. (2023). Analisis Pengembangan Program Studi Melalui Pembentukan Bi'ah Lughawiyah pada Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab di IAIN Ternate. *Shaut al Arabiyah*, 11(2), 301–311. <https://doi.org/10.24252/saa.v11i2.43955>

12 WAIHERU

Volume 12, Issue 1, June 2026

Zaid, A. H. bin, Widyanti, L. N., Ismail, M., & Jannah, D. A. M. (2024). Implementasi Pendekatan Komunikatif (Communication Approach) Dalam Meningkatkan Keterampilan Berbahasa Arab. *Al Mi'yar: Jurnal Ilmiah Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Dan Kebahasaaraban*, 7(2), 682. <https://doi.org/10.35931/am.v7i2.3769>