





## Bridging family language policy and Arabic language acquisition by Indonesian Muslim community: A conceptual approach

### Penghubung antara kebijakan bahasa keluarga dengan penguasaan bahasa Arab oleh komunitas Muslim Indonesia: Sebuah pendekatan konseptual

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#### ABSTRACT

Family language policy encompasses various aspects, such as identity, cultural heritage, communication, education, and social integration within a family or community. Previous research has primarily focused on the use and preservation of native languages within multilingual societies, leaving a gap in understanding the relationship between family language policies and the acquisition of foreign languages in a familial setting. Consequently, this study presents a conceptual approach that explores key concepts and variables relevant to the family language policy approach, specifically regarding the acquisition of Arabic by the Indonesian Muslim community. By analyzing the connection between the family language policy approach and variables related to foreign language acquisition, we hypothesized that the learning or acquisition of Arabic among Indonesian Muslims can be influenced by the language policy implemented within their families. Muslim parents play a crucial role in this process, both ideologically and practically, by providing an optimal learning environment and motivation for their children. As the family language policy involves decisions and practices governing language use and learning within the family context, it encompasses Muslim parents' choices regarding the Arabic language used at home, its application in specific activities, and their support for their children's learning.

#### KATA KUNCI

kebijakan bahasa keluarga, akuisisi bahasa Arab, ideologi bahasa, masyarakat Muslim Indonesia

#### ABSTRAK

Kebijakan bahasa keluarga mencakup berbagai aspek, seperti: identitas, warisan budaya, komunikasi, pendidikan, dan integrasi sosial dalam sebuah keluarga atau komunitas. Penelitian sebelumnya lebih banyak berfokus pada penggunaan dan pelestarian bahasa asli dalam masyarakat multibahasa, sehingga kesenjangan dalam memahami hubungan antara kebijakan bahasa keluarga dan penguasaan bahasa asing dalam lingkungan keluarga belum dieksplorasi lebih detail. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini menyajikan pendekatan konseptual dengan menggali konsep-konsep kunci dan variabel-variabel yang relevan dengan pendekatan kebijakan bahasa keluarga, khususnya terkait penguasaan bahasa Arab oleh keluarga atau komunitas Muslim Indonesia. Dengan menganalisis hubungan antara pendekatan kebijakan bahasa keluarga dan variabel yang terkait dengan pemerolehan bahasa asing, kami berasumsi bahwa pembelajaran atau pemerolehan bahasa Arab di kalangan umat Islam Indonesia dapat dipengaruhi oleh kebijakan bahasa yang diterapkan di dalam keluarga mereka. Orang tua Muslim memainkan peran penting dalam proses ini, baik secara ideologis maupun praktis, dengan menyediakan lingkungan belajar dan motivasi yang optimal bagi anak-anak mereka. Karena kebijakan bahasa keluarga melibatkan keputusan dan praktik yang mengatur penggunaan dan pembelajaran bahasa dalam konteks keluarga, kebijakan tersebut mencakup pilihan orang tua Muslim mengenai bahasa Arab yang digunakan di rumah, penerapannya dalam kegiatan tertentu, dan dukungan mereka untuk pembelajaran anak-anak mereka.

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## Introduction

Arabic has a very strategic position for Indonesian Muslim communities (Wekke, 2015; Yahya et al., 2021). As the majority religion in this country, Islam has teachings that use the Arabic language, as in the Holy Qur'an and Hadith. Therefore, understanding and use of Arabic become very important for Indonesian Muslims (Isbah, 2020; Umam, 2021; Wekke, 2015; Wekke & Hamid, 2013). In addition, this language is the main language in their various worship, thus teaching it is considered as an eminence for Muslims. In the context of Indonesian society, Arabic is used in a variety of specific situations, including worship, prayers, religious lectures, and Friday sermons, as well as in teaching Arabic or Islam in various institutions. This language is even used in mass media (see [indonesiaalyoum.com](http://indonesiaalyoum.com)). In addition, many Indonesian vocabulary and terms are absorbed from Arabic, especially those related to Islamic religious teachings such as prayer, zakat, and pilgrimage (Mahfud et al., 2021; Yahya et al., 2021). This certainly influences the Arabic vocabulary used by Indonesians.

There are indeed some specific cases where Arabic is used practically in everyday communication, such as in modern Islamic boarding schools, where Arabic is a mandatory language of communication in the boarding school environment (Al-Saraj, 2014; Kholisin et al., 2022; Siregar, 2022). In addition, educational institutions that teach Arabic at certain times also use Arabic actively, both as an instrument of learning and communication between students and instructors. However, the communication that occurs is usually only a form of habituation or the creation of a linguistic environment, so the participants do not have full awareness of its ubiquitous use.

Even though Arabic has a strategic position for the Indonesian Muslim community, most of them are unable to actively use it in daily communication. From an educational perspective, Arabic in Indonesia is generally taught as a foreign language or as a supplementary form of Islamic religious learning (Sanusi & Albantani, 2020; Verawati & Hasanah, 2021). Even though it can also be used in communication, the paradigm of Indonesian society, in general, still places this language as the language of religion (Islam), not as a medium of communication (Al Shlowiy, 2022; Kurniawan et al., 2021). Nonetheless, Arabic still holds an important position in the context of the Indonesian Muslim community. The use of Arabic is not only necessary to understand religious teachings but is also important in strengthening identity and pride as a Muslim.

There is no obligation for Muslims to teach Arabic to their children. However, as a Muslim, having the knowledge and ability to speak Arabic is very helpful in understanding Islamic teachings (Abdussalam et al., 2021; Kurniawan et al., 2021). Consequently, teaching this language to Muslim children has become an important educational investment for their future. This is because Arabic is a very important language in Islam; therefore, the ability to read and understand the Al-Quran and hadith will be more easily obtained by mastering Arabic. The essence of teaching Arabic to children is to enrich their knowledge of Islamic religion and Arabic culture as well as their communication skills and future career development.

Despite the teaching Arabic, ideologically, is important for the Indonesian Muslim community, in practice and maintenance, not all of them are actively involved in the process of acquiring or learning Arabic for their children due for several reasons (Abduh

et al., 2018). The main reason for this is their inability to teach Arabic personally due to their lack of knowledge and proficiency in the language. This is understandable because, in practice, Arabic is not the main language in their daily communication, but it is still considered only an instrument of worship and an instrument to study the teachings of Islam.

Therefore, this paper attempts to conceptualize the role of Indonesian Muslim families in teaching and learning Arabic to their children through a series of research findings on teaching Arabic to young children in Indonesia. It is assumed that the correct approach to answering this question is the theory of the family language policy. The most recent research on family language policy has been applied to data regarding language use within the family in the context of a multilingual society as well as the maintenance of the original or heritage language within the family.

Family language policy is mainly based on the theory of linguistic politics and linguistic socialization within the field of sociolinguistics (Curdt-Christiansen, 2018). Much of FLP's work uses Spolsky's theoretical model (2005, 2012) which consists of three interrelated elements, they are language ideology (beliefs), language practice, and language management. Language ideology is related to how a family recognizes a particular language, language practices are related to what people do with language, and language management is related to what are they trying to maintain the language. Meanwhile, linguistic socialization theory is a way for children and other beginners to acquire sociocultural knowledge through the use of language and to use it by participating in social interactions (King et al., 2008; King & Fogle, 2013; Ochs, 1988; Ochs & Schieffelin, 2017). The study of family language policy seeks to bridge (understand) the gap between the study of language acquisition in children and the scope of research around language policy, which includes the following: (1) why (and how) some transnational family members maintain their language while some other families lost theirs; (2) in what ways do some children, growing up in a predominantly monolingual society, become bilingual, while other children, growing up in a bilingual environment, become monolingual; (3) language planning and decisions made by caregivers (parents - policymakers) to support or discourage the use and practice of certain languages; and (4) how these decisions and practices interact with broader language ideologies and educational policies (Curdt-Christiansen, 2013, 2018; Spolsky, 2012). The emphasis of FLP is on the balance between and use of languages within the family unit. Therefore, FLP examines how parental ideologies, choices, and approaches regarding languages and literacy, as well as the larger social and cultural framework of family life, affect how children learn and use language.

In the last decade, the family language policy approach has received attention from academics and coalesced as a field in sociolinguistics or anthropolinguistics. Several experts have formulated the basic concepts surrounding this approach, including King et al., (2008), King & Fogle (2013), Lanza & Lomeu Gomes (2020), Schwartz & Moin (2012), and many more. These experts tried to formulate their ideas theoretically from the results of an analysis of the empirical data found regarding language maintenance and language use within the family scope in the context of a multilingual society.

King & Fogle (2013) attempted to link the concepts of family language policy and foreign language acquisition. They explored the perspectives of bilingual families

regarding family language policies. The results showed that parents primarily relied on their personal experiences with language learning in making decisions for their children. This indicates that parents play an important role in their children's success in learning a foreign language. Schwartz & Moin (2012) also examined parents' assessments of their young children's bilingual development. This study highlights parents' insensitivity to the length of their children's utterances, as well as their tendency to rationalize FLP by overestimating their children's overall language competence. Furthermore, as part of their family language ideology, parents' expectations of different educational settings (monolingual versus bilingual kindergarten) and their presentation of children's bilingual development may influence their appraisals of children's language competence.

Although some experts have connected family language policy with bilingual or multilingual parenting, however, the results have discussed more debates about the maintenance of the original language and the management of more than one language in the family context, rather than the role of parents in foreign language learning or acquisition by their children. Parents play a vital role in determining and directing foreign language learning for their children for various reasons. Thus far, the family language policy approach has not appeared to have touched on aspects of foreign language learning for children. Therefore, this study aims to bridge the gap between these two variables.

While most FLP research has tended to two-parent documents in which children are acquiring more than one language, the current work explores how these processes play out specifically discussing the bridge between family language policies and foreign language acquisition (learning), especially Arabic for non-Arabs. For the Indonesian Muslim community, Arabic is not their native (mother) language, but, this language, ideologically, gets attention and a very respectable place because of several factors which are elaborated on in the discussion.

## **Method**

The main concepts and variables investigated in this study are defined and conceptualized using a conceptual approach. By employing this approach, the aim is to elucidate the connections between these concepts and variables. Building upon previous research findings, this study seeks to investigate and delve into the relationship between foreign language acquisition and family language policies. Specifically, within the context of the Indonesian Muslim community, the Arabic language holds significant importance, particularly for religious worship and fostering a deeper understanding of faith. Consequently, it is hypothesized that parents within the family unit possess both religious and cultural motivations to teach, facilitate comprehension, or simply guide their children in mastering this language.

This conceptual research was conducted in three steps including data collection, analysis, and presentation of the analysis results. These research steps are illustrated in Figure 1 as follows:

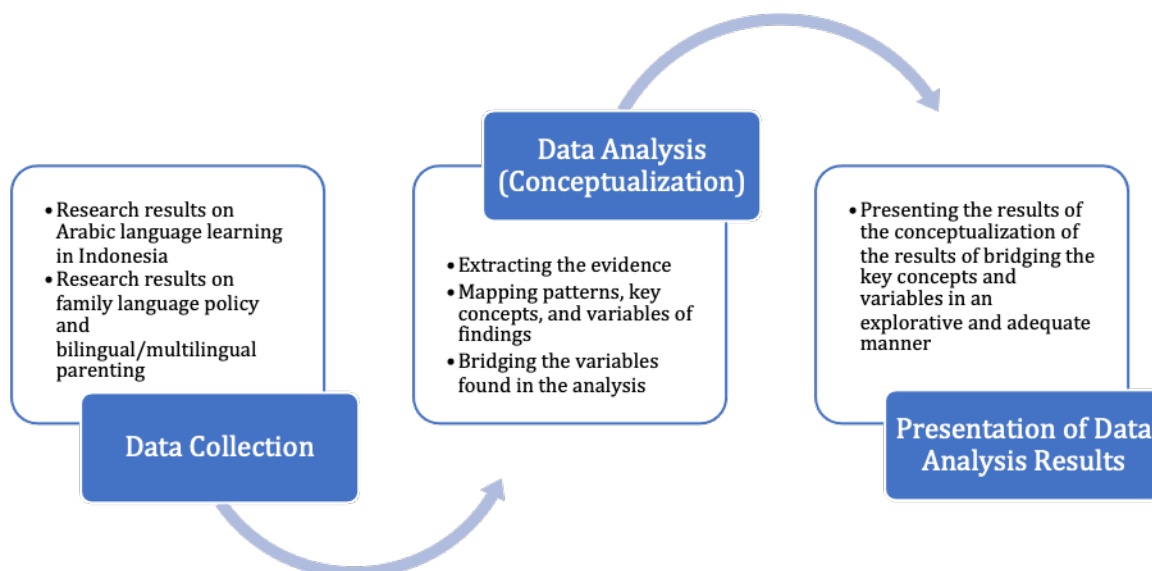


Figure 1. Conceptualization approach steps

Based on Figure 1, it can be noted that this research process begins with collecting evidence from research results showing the importance (position) of Arabic for the Indonesian Muslim community. Next, we identify the results of the study to look for evidence and map the analysis variables. On the other hand, the results of research on family language policies are also examined to explore the role of the family (parents) in the success of their children's bilingualism or multilingualism. The variables that play an important role in their children's success in acquiring a foreign language are also mapped. Once those patterns or variables are identified, then a bridge the gap between the acquisition of a foreign language, especially Arabic, and the language policy of Indonesian Muslim families will be established.

## Results and Discussion

As much of FLP's work uses Spolsky's theoretical model (2004, 2009) which consists of three interrelated elements, the discussion in this paper also makes use of it. The three elements are language ideology (beliefs), language practice, and language management. Consequently, the language ideology is concerned with how Indonesian Muslim communities recognize the Arabic language, language practices are related to what they do with the Arabic language, and language management is related to what they are trying to maintain the Arabic language learning or acquisition. Therefore, this conceptual article tries to bridge these elements and Arabic language learning or acquisition, specifically by the Indonesian Muslim community.

### *Language ideology and Arabic language acquisition*

Language ideology refers to the set of beliefs, attitudes, and values people have toward language and its use (Curdt-Christiansen, 2018; King et al., 2008). These beliefs can influence language learning and use, including how people perceive and value different languages, the social and cultural factors that affect language learning and use, as well as people's attitudes toward language learners.

In the context of Arabic language learning or acquisition, language ideology can play a significant role in how learners approach and experience the learning process. For example, learners may hold certain beliefs about the status of Arabic as a language or they may have preconceptions about the cultural or religious associations that come with the language. In this case, the status of Arabic as a language of worship in Islam contributes to the perspective of belief for Muslims to glorify and learn this language as well as possible (Jaspal & Coyle, 2010). These beliefs can significantly influence how motivated learners learn Arabic and how they perceive their progress in the language.

Language ideology is deeply intertwined with broader sociopolitical and historical factors, shaping how learners perceive and engage with a language (Curdt-Christiansen & Huang, 2020). For example, the historical context of the spread of Islamic teachings brought by Arabs to Indonesia has had a lasting impact on how Arabic is viewed within society. The perception of Arabic as a language of religion and tradition can significantly influence learners' views on its relevance and importance in their own lives. As (Forsberg Lundell et al., 2022) suggest, language ideology can affect foreign language acquisition in several crucial ways, including motivation, user perceptions and attitudes, and language socialization.

One of the primary ways language ideology impacts language learning is through its influence on motivation. When a language is perceived as prestigious or significant, learners are generally more motivated to acquire it. Conversely, if a language is regarded as low-status or unimportant, motivation to learn it may diminish. This dynamic is evident in research findings that explore the motives behind learning Arabic. For instance, a survey conducted among Arab immigrants in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (Seymour-Jorn, 2004) revealed that 50% of respondents chose to study Arabic to read the Qur'an in its original language and interpret the text for themselves. The remaining 50% were motivated by a desire to improve their reading and writing skills. These findings highlight how religious and practical motivations, shaped by language ideology, play a critical role in the decision to learn Arabic.

Moreover, language ideologies significantly shape learners' attitudes and perceptions of a language. These ideologies, influenced by sociocultural, historical, and political contexts, profoundly impact language learning motivation, language choices, and the development of language skills (Szwed & González-Carriedo, 2019). For example, learners might view a language as difficult, complex, or even irrelevant, based on their preconceived beliefs or the societal status of the language. Such perceptions can either hinder or enhance their willingness to engage with the language, thereby affecting the overall language acquisition process.

Language ideology also plays a crucial role in language socialization, the process through which individuals learn a language within its social and cultural context. Language socialization involves not only acquiring linguistic forms and structures but also internalizing the social norms, cultural values, and communicative practices associated with the language. Consequently, language ideology can influence how learners are socialized into using a language. This includes determining the contexts in which the language is used, the methods by which it is taught, and the norms and values that are emphasized during the learning process. The interplay between language ideology and

socialization underscores the importance of understanding the broader cultural and social factors that shape language learning experiences.

In the case of Arabic language acquisition, language ideology can play a particularly significant role. Arabic is a language with deep historical, cultural, and religious roots, and it is often associated with a particular identity and worldview. This can impact how learners approach the language and their perceptions of its relevance and importance. For example, learners who come from cultures that do not share the same religious or cultural background as Arabic may find it challenging to connect with the language and its associated values. Additionally, perceptions of Arabic as a difficult or complex language may further hinder their motivation and engagement in the learning process.

On the other hand, learners who come from cultures that share some of the cultural or religious values associated with Arabic may find it easier to connect with the language and its associated worldview (Gogonas, 2012; Spolsky, 2003). They may also be more motivated to learn the language as a means of connecting with their cultural heritage or as a way to engage with Arabic-speaking communities. Overall, understanding how language ideology can impact language acquisition is important for learners and educators alike. By recognizing and addressing these factors, learners can develop a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the language they are learning, which can lead to more successful language acquisition outcomes.

#### *Arabic language practice by Indonesian Muslim communities*

Language practices encompass the actual usage and application of languages by individuals (Curdt-Christiansen & Huang, 2020). Within the Indonesian Muslim community, the practice of Arabic holds significant significance for multiple reasons (Akmaliyah et al., 2021; Wekke, 2015). Firstly, Arabic serves as the language of the Quran, the holy book of Islam, and is regarded by Muslims as the most exquisite language globally. Secondly, Arabic serves as the language of Islamic law, and Muslims require the ability to read and comprehend Islamic texts to observe their faith dutifully. Lastly, Arabic represents the language of Islamic culture, enabling Muslims proficient in Arabic to connect with fellow Muslims across the globe, fostering a sense of unity and shared understanding.

The practice of the Arabic language within the Indonesian Muslim community is multifaceted, encompassing a range of activities that reflect both religious devotion and cultural engagement (Muradi et al., 2021; Yahya et al., 2021). One of the most significant areas where Arabic is utilized is in worship practices. For instance, during the five daily prayers (Sholat), Indonesian Muslims recite verses from the Quran in Arabic. This practice is not just a matter of routine; it serves as a powerful method for developing a deeper connection with the language and, consequently, a more profound engagement with the words of Allah. Additionally, the recitation of the Quran, particularly during special religious occasions such as Taraweeh prayers in Ramadan and communal recitation circles, further enhances Arabic language skills. Through these practices, worshippers continually improve their pronunciation, memorization, and understanding of Arabic, ensuring that the language remains an integral part of their spiritual lives.

In addition to worship, education plays a crucial role in Arabic language acquisition within the community. Many Indonesian Muslims seek to deepen their understanding

of Arabic through enrollment in Arabic language-based and Islamic institutes, particularly pesantren and madrasah (Sangidu, 2021; Syuhadak et al., 2021). These institutions offer structured programs that cover various aspects of the language, including vocabulary, grammar, conversation, and comprehension, alongside Islamic teachings. Pesantren, in particular, are recognized for their comprehensive Islamic education, where Arabic is a core subject. Students in these settings study Arabic grammar, syntax, morphology, and rhetoric, which are essential for interpreting Islamic texts in their original form (Himmah & Amrulloh, 2018; Putra, 2022). This rigorous academic training not only equips students with the necessary language skills but also instills a deep appreciation for the linguistic precision of Arabic, preparing them for both scholarly pursuits and religious leadership.

Furthermore, Indonesian Muslims with a deep interest in Arabic often immerse themselves in the study of Arabic-Islamic literature and texts. This engagement involves delving into classical works such as the Quran, Hadith (the recorded sayings and actions of Prophet Muhammad), Tafsir (Quranic exegesis), and Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence). By studying these texts in their original Arabic form, individuals gain a more nuanced and accurate understanding of Islamic teachings. This scholarly pursuit not only enhances their linguistic abilities but also strengthens their spiritual connection to the core tenets of Islam. Through this dedicated study, they contribute to the preservation and transmission of Islamic knowledge, ensuring that the rich heritage of Arabic linguistic and cultural traditions continues to thrive within the community.

Another significant aspect of Arabic language practice in Indonesia is its use within Islamic organizations. These organizations often adopt Arabic as the primary language for their religious activities, congregations, and conferences (Federspiel, 1984; Hasan, 2009). The use of Arabic in these contexts serves to convey Islamic teachings with the original linguistic precision and fosters a sense of unity and shared identity among Indonesian Muslims. By participating in Arabic-speaking environments within these organizations, community members deepen their engagement with the language, which in turn reinforces their religious commitment and cultural identity. This widespread use of Arabic underscores its importance as both a spiritual and cultural vehicle, central to the life of Indonesian Muslims.

We assume that activities related to Arabic, especially in Indonesian Muslim community settings can only be carried out successfully with the role and support of the family or community. Consequently, the family and community play a pivotal role in shaping the practice of Arabic speaking among individuals. This role encompasses various significant aspects, such as language transmission, Islamic-religious education, language code-switching, Islamic-religious rituals, and practices, as well as community support.

One of the most crucial aspects of this influence is language transmission. When Muslim families prioritize the transmission of Arabic as both a religious and cultural language, they significantly enhance the likelihood of fostering Arabic-speaking practices within the household (Said, 2021; Yousef, 2022). In homes where parents consistently use Arabic in their daily interactions with their children, the language naturally becomes an integral part of communication. This immersive environment encourages

children to adopt Arabic as a primary mode of expression, thus reinforcing their language skills in a familial context.

In addition to direct language transmission, Islamic-religious education plays a vital role in promoting Arabic-speaking practices. Families that recognize the importance of Arabic for understanding Islamic teachings often take active steps to encourage their children to learn and speak the language. This encouragement may involve enrolling children in Arabic language courses, providing educational resources, or integrating Arabic into the family's religious education practices (García-Sánchez, 2010; Gogonas, 2012). Through embedding Arabic into the religious learning process, families not only highlight the language's significance but also create opportunities for regular speaking practice, thereby reinforcing its use in daily life.

Another important factor is language code-switching, a common practice among Muslim families where two or more languages are alternated within a conversation. In this context, Arabic often serves as one of the languages alongside the local language or Bahasa Indonesia. When families engage in code-switching, they create natural opportunities for Arabic-speaking practice in everyday conversations. This practice allows family members to become comfortable using Arabic in various contexts, further enhancing their proficiency and confidence in the language.

Islamic-religious rituals and practices also contribute significantly to Arabic-speaking practice within families. Many of these rituals, such as reciting the Quran, performing supplications (prayers), or conducting religious ceremonies, require the use of Arabic. By actively participating in these religious activities, family members are not only fulfilling their spiritual duties but also engaging in regular Arabic-speaking practice. These rituals provide a meaningful context for language use, ensuring that Arabic remains a living, spoken language within the household.

Finally, community support plays a crucial role in reinforcing Arabic-speaking practices. Muslim families often seek out community-based opportunities to enhance their Arabic language skills (Abdelhadi, 2022). This might involve participating in religious gatherings, joining Arabic language circles, or enrolling children in Arabic language-based extracurricular activities. These community interactions offer additional exposure to Arabic and create more opportunities for speaking practice, particularly in environments where there is a significant presence of Arab descent or Arabic-speaking individuals (Nashoih & Ashoumi, 2018). Such community engagement not only bolsters language skills but also fosters a sense of shared cultural and religious identity.

By implementing a language policy that prioritizes Arabic within the family, Muslim families contribute to the development and maintenance of Arabic-speaking practice among their members. The consistent use of Arabic in family interactions, integration of Arabic into religious education, code-switching practices, and participation in Arabic-speaking communities all foster an environment that encourages Arabic-speaking proficiency among Indonesian Muslims (Yusuf & Wekke, 2015).

#### *Arabic language maintenance among Indonesian Muslim community*

Language management refers to the interventional measures used to preserve and develop a specific language (Curdt-Christiansen & Huang, 2020; Spolsky, 2009). Indonesian Muslims have a deep-rooted connection with the Arabic language, recognizing

it as the language of the Islamic faith and crucial in religious practices, scriptures, and scholarly pursuits (Federspiel, 1984; Letmiros, 2019). Consequently, families within this community actively implement language policies, making deliberate choices and taking specific actions to foster and maintain the use of Arabic within their households.

Through a comprehensive examination, this inquiry aims to uncover the diverse strategies employed by Indonesian Muslim households to preserve and uphold the Arabic language across different contextual settings. Several things that can be done to maintain the practice or acquisition of Arabic by Muslim family members include providing Islamic-religious education, Qur'anic studies, Islamic lectures and sermons, Arabic language classes, Arabic language media, religious travel, and pilgrimage, as well as Arabic digital resources.

One of the foundational strategies for Arabic language maintenance is religious education. Indonesian Muslim families recognize that a deep understanding of the Quran and other Islamic texts is paramount, and this understanding is most profound when accessed in the original Arabic (Muradi et al., 2021; Wekke, 2015; Yahya et al., 2021). To ensure their children receive a solid grounding in the language, many parents enroll them in religious schools, such as pesantren and madrasah. These institutions prioritize Arabic as a core subject, providing a structured environment where students not only learn the language but also apply it in their daily religious practices. This approach ensures that Arabic is not just a subject to be studied but a living language used in spiritual contexts, reinforcing its importance and relevance.

Alongside formal education, Quranic studies hold a central place in language maintenance efforts. The recitation and memorization of the Quran are practices deeply embedded in Indonesian Muslim culture. Children are often taught Tajweed, the set of rules governing the pronunciation during Quranic recitation, in Arabic from a young age (Novebri & Dewi, 2020; Orba Manullang et al., 2021). This practice is not merely about language acquisition but also about preserving the sanctity and authenticity of religious expressions. By mastering Quranic Arabic, individuals can engage more meaningfully with the text, fostering a personal and communal connection to their faith that transcends linguistic barriers.

Islamic lectures and sermons also play a significant role in sustaining Arabic language use within the community. These events, often held in mosques or community centers, provide a platform for religious leaders and scholars to discuss Islamic teachings in Arabic (Fakhruroji, 2019). For many, these gatherings are a key opportunity to hear and practice the language outside of a formal educational setting. The use of Arabic in these contexts reinforces its status as the language of Islamic scholarship and religious life, ensuring that even those who may not use Arabic in their daily lives remain connected to it through communal worship and learning.

In addition to religious instruction, formal Arabic language classes are commonly pursued by families seeking to enhance their children's linguistic capabilities. Unlike Quranic studies, which focus primarily on religious texts, these classes offer a broader curriculum that includes grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, and conversational skills (Yusuf & Wekke, 2015). This holistic approach equips learners with the tools necessary to use Arabic in a variety of contexts, extending their proficiency beyond religious knowledge and enabling them to engage with Arabic-speaking communities more

broadly. By diversifying their language skills, students are better prepared to use Arabic in both religious and secular settings.

Engagement with Arabic-language media is another key strategy that Indonesian Muslim families use to maintain language proficiency. The availability of Arabic newspapers, magazines, books, and digital media such as radio stations, podcasts, and television programs offers continuous exposure to the language in everyday contexts. This immersion in media helps individuals develop a more intuitive grasp of Arabic, as they encounter it in various forms of communication (including news, entertainment, and social commentary). An example of such a resource is the Arabic-language website Indonesia Al-Youm (<https://indonesiaalyoum.com/>), which provides content on Indonesian events and issues, allowing users to connect their cultural and linguistic identities. This ongoing exposure ensures that Arabic remains relevant and accessible, even outside of explicitly religious settings.

Religious travel, particularly pilgrimages like Hajj and Umrah, provides a powerful, immersive experience for Arabic language maintenance. During these journeys to Mecca, Indonesian Muslims are surrounded by an Arabic-speaking environment, offering them a rare opportunity to practice and deepen their language skills in real-time (Hajj) contexts. The use of Arabic in rituals, prayers, and everyday interactions during these travels reinforces its significance as the language of Islam and strengthens the individual's connection to the global Muslim community. This direct exposure not only enhances language proficiency but also solidifies the role of Arabic as a vital part of the pilgrim's spiritual journey.

Finally, the rise of digital resources has greatly expanded access to Arabic language learning tools. Mobile applications, online courses, and language learning websites offer interactive lessons, exercises, and audiovisual materials that cater to learners at various levels (Fajriati et al., 2020; Wargadinata et al., 2020). These resources are particularly valuable for individuals who may not have access to formal education or who wish to supplement their learning outside of traditional settings. By providing flexible, on-demand language practice, digital platforms ensure that Arabic language acquisition can continue in a modern, fast-paced world, allowing for a personalized and convenient learning experience.

From this exploration, it can be noted that the language policy of Muslim families plays a crucial role in the maintenance of the Arabic language. It is important to note that the extent of Arabic language maintenance may vary among Indonesian Muslim families based on factors such as their level of religious commitment, educational opportunities, socio-economic background, and personal motivations. Nevertheless, the overarching goal remains the preservation of Arabic as a vital tool for understanding and practicing the Islamic faith.

By implementing a language policy that prioritizes Arabic, Muslim families create an environment conducive to Arabic language maintenance. They recognize the significance of Arabic within their religious and cultural context, actively transmit the language to the next generation, and provide support through education, socialization, and language planning. Through these efforts, Muslim families contribute significantly to the preservation and vitality of the Arabic language within the Indonesian Muslim community.

## Conclusions

This article has presented a conceptual approach to examining the relationship between family language policy and the acquisition of Arabic within the Indonesian Muslim community. Through the exploration of Arabic language ideology, practice, and maintenance, it can be noted that several important insights have emerged. Language ideology has been identified as a significant factor shaping motivations and attitudes toward Arabic language acquisition, highlighting the need to understand the ideological perspectives of Indonesian Muslims towards Arabic for language educators and policy-makers. Additionally, the study revealed that Arabic language practices among Indonesian Muslim communities are influenced by various factors such as religious rituals, scriptures, and educational contexts, emphasizing the importance of exploring specific practices employed by Indonesian Muslim families to enhance Arabic language instruction and learning. Moreover, language maintenance has been recognized as a crucial aspect of the continued use and preservation of Arabic within the Indonesian Muslim community. Future research can build upon this foundation by conducting empirical studies to delve deeper into the specific language ideologies held by Indonesian Muslims towards Arabic language acquisition, providing insights into the motivations, beliefs, and attitudes that shape language-learning practices. Qualitative research can further examine the diverse Arabic language practices within Indonesian Muslim communities, including the roles played by religious institutions, educational settings, and digital resources, to inform effective pedagogical approaches and integrate Arabic language instruction into broader educational contexts. Longitudinal studies focusing on language maintenance among Indonesian Muslim families can shed light on the factors contributing to the successful intergenerational transmission of Arabic proficiency and the challenges faced in maintaining the language within evolving sociocultural contexts. Addressing these research gaps will enhance our understanding of family language policies and Arabic language acquisition, ultimately leading to more informed language education policies and practices.

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