



A MULTIFACTORIAL ANALYSIS OF COMMUNICATIVE PERFORMANCE AMONG ARABIC LANGUAGE EDUCATION STUDENTS

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Abstract

Communicative performance is a central goal of Arabic language education; yet, it is often unevenly achieved, despite students' positive attitudes toward the language. This study aims to reveal the relationship between language attitudes and Arabic communication performance; analyze the factors influencing the relationship between language attitudes and communication performance; and examine the implications for Arabic language learning. The qualitative research presented in this article is a continuation of the sequential explanatory Mixed-Methods design. Quantitative data were collected through a survey administered to 166 undergraduate students from Arabic Language Education programs at Universitas Negeri Jakarta and UIN Alauddin Makassar. The quantitative findings reveal a strong positive correlation between language attitudes and communicative performance ($r = 0.650$, $p < 0.01$). However, only 17.5% of students with high positive attitudes demonstrated high communicative performance. Qualitative analysis identified three factors related to the relationship between language attitudes and communication performance. 1) Individual factors, such as differences in educational background and gender. 2) pedagogical factors, such as learning methods, teaching materials, and learning evaluation techniques. 3) environmental factors, such as an Arabic-speaking environment and limited access to native speakers. The findings suggest that positive language attitudes alone are insufficient to produce effective communicative performance without the implementation of appropriate teaching strategies and adequate environmental support. The study recommends applying Communicative Language Teaching, restructuring the curriculum, fostering Arabic language communities, providing need-based learning materials, and adopting gender-responsive instructional approaches.

Keywords: *Language Attitude, Communicative Performance, Arabic Language Learning.*

Abstrak

Performansi komunikasi merupakan tujuan utama dalam pendidikan bahasa Arab, namun pencapaiannya sering kali tidak sejalan dengan sikap positif mahasiswa terhadap bahasa tersebut. Penelitian ini bertujuan Mengungkap hubungan antara sikap bahasa dan performansi komunikasi bahasa Arab; Menganalisis Faktor-faktor hubungan antara sikap bahasa dengan performansi komunikasi; dan implikasinya dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab. Penelitian kualitatif dalam artikel ini merupakan tahap lanjutan dari desain *Mixed Method* eksplanatori sekuensial. Data kuantitatif diperoleh melalui survei terhadap 166 mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab di Universitas Negeri Jakarta dan UIN Alauddin Makassar. Hasil kuantitatif menunjukkan adanya korelasi positif yang kuat antara sikap bahasa dan performansi komunikasi ($r = 0,650$; $p < 0,01$). Namun, hanya 17,5% mahasiswa dengan sikap sangat positif yang mencapai performansi komunikasi tinggi. Analisis kualitatif mengidentifikasi tiga faktor yang berkaitan dengan hubungan antara sikap bahasa dan performansi komunikasi, yaitu: (1) faktor individu seperti perbedaan latar pendidikan dan gender; (2) faktor pedagogis seperti metode pembelajaran, bahan ajar, dan teknik evaluasi; serta (3) faktor lingkungan seperti keberadaan lingkungan berbahasa Arab dan akses yang terbatas kepada penutur asli. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sikap bahasa positif saja tidak memadai untuk menghasilkan performansi komunikatif yang efektif tanpa penerapan strategi pembelajaran yang tepat dan dukungan lingkungan yang memadai. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan penerapan *Communicative Language Teaching*, penataan ulang kurikulum, pengembangan komunitas bahasa Arab, penyediaan materi pembelajaran berbasis kebutuhan, serta pendekatan pengajaran yang responsif terhadap isu *gender*.

Kata Kunci: *Sikap Bahasa, Performansi Komunikasi, Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab.*

INTRODUCTION

Communicative performance is considered the primary goal of foreign language education.¹ However, achieving communicative performance in learning Arabic remains a complex challenge. Although decades of research have demonstrated that language attitudes play a crucial role in learning success², the relationship between positive attitudes towards Arabic and communicative

¹ Sabri Thabit and Saleh Ahmed, "From Communicative Competence to Communication Proficiency: A Theoretical Study," *Acuity: Journal of English Language Pedagogy, Literature, and Culture* 8, no. 2 (2023): 13-22, <https://doi.org/10.35974/acuity.v8i1.2739>; Emilee Moore, "Competence, Communicative and Linguistic," *The International Encyclopedia of Linguistic Anthropology* (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118786093.iela0070>; Svetlana Kodrle and Anna Savchenko, "Digital Educational Media in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning," *E3S Web of Conferences* 273 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/202127312018>.

² Anne-Marie Masgoret and R C Gardner, "Attitudes, Motivation, and Second Language Learning: A Meta-Analysis of Studies Conducted by Gardner and Associates," *Language Learning* 53, no. 1 (2003): 123-163, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9922.00212>.

performance has not always been consistent. In the Indonesian Context, Arabic has acquired a special position as the language of the Qur'an and Islamic science. The results of the research of Fatwa Arifah, et al. on 2025 regarding the relationship between language attitude and communication performance in students of the Arabic language education study program at the State University of Jakarta and UIN Alauddin Makassar show that language attitude has a strong correlation with communicative performance ($r = 0.650$, $p < 0.001$), this finding indicates that students' attitude towards Arabic has a significant influence on their communication skills. Although 57.8% of respondents had a high positive attitude, only 17.5% achieved high communication performance, while 59.0% fell into the medium communication performance category, and 23.5% were in the low communication performance category.

Based on the study's results, it can be observed that students in Arabic language education programs at the State University of Jakarta and UIN Alauddin Makassar generally exhibit a positive attitude towards the language, viewing it as essential due to its significant religious, academic, and cultural value. However, the results showed that most students with a very positive attitude still showed reluctance to speak Arabic, were less spontaneous, and tended to avoid communication situations. The mismatch between language attitudes and communicative performance highlights the need for a more systematic examination of other factors that influence student communication performance. This study is theoretically grounded in Chomsky's concept of linguistic competence as a foundational perspective³, while integrating Gardner's motivational model⁴ and the ecological approach⁵ to explain communicative performance as the outcome of interacting individual, pedagogical, and environmental factors. Noam Chomsky made a significant contribution to linguistics through the distinction between competence and performance, which forms the basis of the modern understanding of language and the cognitive processes underlying it. Linguistic competence is defined as the intuitive knowledge that the ideal speaker has regarding the syntactic, semantic, and phonological rules in their language. With this competence, the speaker can generate an unlimited number of grammatical sentences from a limited set of rules⁶.

³ Noam Chomsky, *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (Cambridge: The M.I.T Press, 1965), 43.

⁴ R C Gardner, "Integrative Motivation and Global Language (English) Acquisition in Poland," *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching* (2012): 215-226, <https://doi.org/10.14746/ssl.2012.2.2.5>.

⁵ Joanna Rokita-Jaskow, "An Ecological Perspective on the Challenges in Language Education: Focus on Agency and Affordances," *Anglica Wratislaviensia* 62, no. 1 (November 2024): 13-26, <https://doi.org/10.19195/0301-7966.62.1.2>.

⁶ Abdul-Hussein Kadhim Reishaan and Wia'am Taha, "The Relationship Between Competence and Performance: Towards a Comprehensive TG Grammar," *Kufa Journal of Arts* 1, no. 2 (2008): 35-59, <https://doi.org/10.36317/kaj/2009/v1.i2.6255>; Taofeek Dalamu, "Decoding Encoded Yorùbá Nomenclature: An Exercise of Linguistic Competence and Performance," *Journal of Language and Education* (2019): 16-28, <https://doi.org/10.17323/2411-7390-2019-5-1-16-28>.

On the other hand, linguistic performance is the actual use of language in concrete situations. External factors, including memory limitations, situational stress, psychological conditions, and social context, influence performance. Therefore, performance can appear inconsistent even though the speaker's competence remains stable⁷. Chomsky emphasized that the primary focus of linguistics should be on competence, as performance tends to be distorted by non-linguistic factors⁸.

This distinction is often juxtaposed with Saussure's concepts of *langue* and *parole*; however, Chomsky emphasizes the importance of competency analysis in understanding the ideal language system. His ideas led to the birth of research in generative grammar, an effort to map the mental structures that allow humans to acquire and produce language⁹. While Chomsky focuses on internal competence, other perspectives emphasize the affective and social factors that influence the language learning process, one of which is the Gardner Socio-Educational Model. Gardner's Socio-Educational Model is a crucial theoretical framework for understanding second language acquisition, which involves the interaction between psychological and social factors. The core of this model lies in the concept of motivation, which is divided into two main orientations: integrative and instrumental. Integrative orientation refers to an individual's desire to interact and be part of a target language-speaking community. In contrast, instrumental motivation is based on practical benefits, such as career advancement or academic achievement¹⁰. Research shows that integrative motivation tends to correlate with positive attitudes and better language achievement¹¹.

In addition to motivation, this model emphasizes attitudes towards language and learning. Gardner identifies three domains of influential attitudes: attitudes toward the target language-speaking community, attitudes toward language learning in general, and attitudes toward classroom

⁷ Reishaan and Taha, "The Relationship Between Competence and Performance: Towards a Comprehensive TG Grammar," 40; Csaba Veres, "Large Language Models Are Not Models of Natural Language: They Are Corpus Models," *IEEE Access* 10, no. 2 (2021): 61970-61976, <https://doi.org/10.48550/arxiv.2112.07055>; Sonia Touqir, Touqir Nasir, and Sajid Pervez, "Chomsky's Contribution to Linguistics a Review," *International Journal of Linguistics and Culture* 3, no. 1 (2022): 205-225, <https://doi.org/10.52700/ijlc.v3i1.29>.

⁸ Danny D Steinberg, "Competence, Performance and the Psychological Invalidity of Chomsky's Grammar," *Springer Nature* 32, no. 3 (1976): 373-386, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20115111>; Noam Chomsky, *Aspects of The Theory of Syntax* (Cambridge: The M.I.T Press, 1965), 56.

⁹ Touqir, Nasir, and Pervez, "Chomsky's Contribution to Linguistics a Review," 213.

¹⁰ Masgoret and Gardner, "Attitudes, Motivation, and Second Language Learning: A Meta-Analysis of Studies Conducted by Gardner and Associates," 150; Peter D Macintyre and Lanxi Wang, "Willingness to Communicate in the L2 About Meaningful Photos: Application of the Pyramid Model of WTC," *Language Teaching Research* 25, no. 6 (2021): 878-898, <https://doi.org/10.1177/13621688211004645>; Peter D MacIntyre et al., "Willingness to Communicate, Social Support, And Language-Learning Orientations of Immersion Students," *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 23, no. 3 (2001): 369-388, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0272263101003035>.

¹¹ Hendra Husnussalam, Sudiyo Sudiyo, and Silpia Rahayu, "Students' Motivations in English Language Learning of Efl Classroom: A Case Study of English Department Students of Academic Year 2018/2019," *Project Professional Journal of English Education* 3, no. 2 (2020): 271-275, <https://doi.org/10.22460/project.v3i2>; Rahil Mahyuddin et al., "The Relationship Between Integrative Motivation and Malay Language Achievement Among Chinese Private School Students," *The International Journal of the Humanities* 6, no. 2 (2008): 131-135, <https://doi.org/10.18848/1447-9508/cgp/v06i02/42375>.

learning situations. A positive attitude in these three aspects strengthens motivation and increases learning engagement. The model also highlights the importance of the socio-educational environment, encompassing teacher support, classroom atmosphere, and peer interactions. A supportive learning environment has been shown to increase motivation and intention to communicate in the target language¹². Positive perceptions of teachers, for example, are closely related to increased effort and persistence in language learning¹³.

The relevance of the Gardner model extends beyond the context of second language acquisition. It has been applied to bilingual education, as well as motivational studies in other fields, such as music¹⁴. Recent research confirms that this model remains robust in explaining the motivational dynamics of language, considering cognitive, affective, and contextual dimensions. In addition, the Ecological Systems Theory, developed by Bronfenbrenner¹⁵, explains that human development is influenced by the interaction between individuals and various layers of their environment. This theory includes five systems: 1) microsystems, i.e., the immediate environment such as family, school, and peers; 2) mesosystem, i.e. inter-microsystem relationships; 3) ecosystems, which are environments that affect individuals indirectly; 4) macrosystems, namely cultural values, economic conditions, and policies; and 5) chronosystems, namely the influence of time and situational life changes¹⁶.

Research indicates that Ecological Systems Theory applies to understanding a diverse range of developmental contexts, including the educational experiences of at-risk adolescents. This learning model helps identify how environmental factors, such as socioeconomic status, community resources, and family dynamics, interact to affect development, which is often not captured in linear

¹² Masgoret and Gardner, "Attitudes, Motivation, and Second Language Learning: A Meta-Analysis of Studies Conducted by Gardner and Associates," 155; Qi Wang and Fengning Du, "Anxiety in Chinese Language Learning: Relationship to Motivation, Attitude, and Achievement," *Electronic Journal of Research in Educational Psychology* 18, no. 3 (2020): 447-472, <https://doi.org/10.25115/ejrep.v18i52.3180>; Alfiatus Syarofah et al., "A Systemic Literature Review on Ecological Approach in Language Teaching; State of the Art and Future Direction," *Izdihar: Journal of Arabic Language Teaching, Linguistics, and Literature* 7, no. 2 (September 2024): 197-208, <https://doi.org/10.22219/jiz.v7i2.34554>.

¹³ Zoltán Dörnyei, "Motivation and Motivating in the Foreign Language Classroom," *Modern Language Journal* 78, no. 3 (1994): 273-284, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1994.tb02042.x>.

¹⁴ Peter D MacIntyre, Gillian Potter, and Jillian N Burns, "The Socio-Educational Model of Music Motivation," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 60, no. 2 (2012): 129-144, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022429412444609>.

¹⁵ Marcus Crawford, "Ecological Systems Theory: Exploring the Development of the Theoretical Framework as Conceived by Bronfenbrenner," *Journal of Public Health Issues and Practices* 4, no. 2 (2020): 170, <https://doi.org/10.33790/jphip1100170>.

¹⁶ Jonathan Tudge et al., "Uses and Misuses of Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Theory of Human Development," *Journal of Family Theory & Review* 1, no. 4 (2009): 198-210, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1756-2589.2009.00026.x>; Marcus Crawford, "Ecological Systems Theory: Exploring the Development of the Theoretical Framework as Conceived by Bronfenbrenner," 173; Tim Lomas, "Positive Social Psychology: A Multilevel Inquiry Into Sociocultural Well-Being Initiatives," *Psychology Public Policy and Law* 23, no. 3 (2015): 338-347, <https://doi.org/10.1037/law0000051>; Athiyah Laila Hijriyah, Muhajir Muhajir, and Aleeya Humaira Badrisya, "Implementation Of Bi'ah Lugawiyah In Enhancing Student's Arabic Skills At Universitas Islam Sultan Sharif Ali (Unissa) Brunei Darussalam," *Alsinatuna* 10, no. 2 (December 2024): 1-19.

models. Ecological Systems Theory is also widely applied in the study of mental health, socioeconomic conditions, and family relationships¹⁷. Additionally, some factors that can affect communication performance in Arabic learning include gender differences. Social interaction also plays a vital role in the co-construction of knowledge and the negotiation of meaning in a supportive learning environment. Collaboration-based learning activities and peer mediation have been shown to enhance language proficiency and cognitive abilities.

Although various theories and factors have been identified, the study of Arabic language learning still faces some fundamental weaknesses and lacks a unique context. In Arabic language learning, the focus of research continues to revolve around attitudes and motivation, specific teaching methods, and the instruction of grammar. However, studies that systematically investigate the contributions of various factors at the individual, pedagogical, and environmental levels are still limited, particularly in understanding the interaction between variables and their implications for targeted learning interventions.

The limitations and gaps of previous research include: First, most studies highlight one factor separately, thereby ignoring the interaction between variables, whereas language learning is an ecological process influenced by many factors simultaneously. Second, many studies have not identified the relative contribution of each factor. Third, multifactorial studies are more commonly found in European languages in Western contexts; the Context of Arabic learning in Muslim-majority countries, such as Indonesia, remains underrepresented. Fourth, quantitative and qualitative approaches are rarely combined, so explanations of the mechanisms and magnitude of influence often stand alone. Fifth, the performance measure used is usually a written test, rather than assessing the ability to communicate spontaneously and interactively. This gap becomes even more critical when considering the unique characteristics of Arabic language learning in Indonesia, such as the simultaneous existence of religious and professional motivations, the diversity of educational backgrounds, the variation in institutional environments, the impact of online learning during the pandemic, and gender issues in the Indonesian context.

The central problem addressed in this study is the persistent gap between positive language attitudes and actual communicative performance among Arabic Language Education students, which remains insufficiently explained by existing single-variable approaches. Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the multifactorial determinants of communicative performance among Arabic Language Education students at the State University of Jakarta and UIN Alauddin Makassar by examining how individual, pedagogical, and environmental factors interact with language attitudes

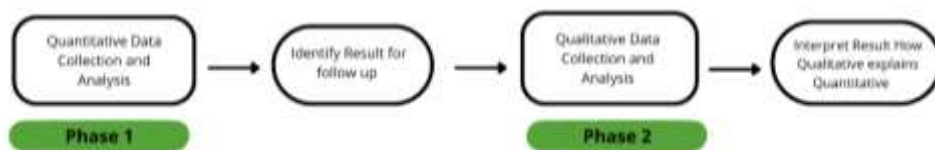
¹⁷ Alfiatus Syarofah et al., "A Systemic Literature Review on Ecological Approach in Language Teaching; State of the Art and Future Direction," 200.

to shape actual communicative outcomes. This study contributes to the field of Arabic language learning by offering an integrated theoretical and empirical account of communicative performance, providing evidence-based insights for communicatively oriented Arabic language learning.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employs a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design¹⁸. This design is carried out in two successive phases: the quantitative phase followed by the qualitative phase. The primary objective of this design is to utilize qualitative data to enhance, clarify, and interpret the initial quantitative findings. The integration process between the two phases is a hallmark of this design, where the results of the first phase inform the implementation of the second phase.



Picture 1. Sequential Explanatory Mixed Methods Design

Quantitative Instrument

The research instruments were developed based on Gardner's Attitude Motivation Test Battery (AMTB)¹⁹ and theories of communicative performance by Noam Chomsky²⁰, adapted to the context of Arabic language learning in higher education. The quantitative instrument took the form of a questionnaire consisting of 30 items, measured using a five-point Likert scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree.

The questionnaire measured two main variables. Variable X (Language Attitudes toward Arabic) consisted of 18 items representing cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of attitude, including beliefs about the importance and usefulness of Arabic, emotional engagement in learning, cultural interest, and willingness to use Arabic in various contexts. Variable Y (Arabic Communicative Performance) consisted of 12 items that measured students' self-reported ability and frequency of using Arabic in communicative situations, such as participation in classroom

¹⁸ John W Creswell and Cheryl N Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design* (SAGE, 2018), 75; Hisako Kakai, "The Mixed Methods Treasure Hunt: Reflecting on the Legacy of Dr. Michael D. Fetters in Teaching Mixed Methods Research," *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 18, no. 3 (2024): 404-414, <https://doi.org/10.1177/15586898241252203>.

¹⁹ Masgoret and Gardner, "Attitudes, Motivation, and Second Language Learning: A Meta-Analysis of Studies Conducted by Gardner and Associates," 130.

²⁰ Chomsky, *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*, 53.

interactions, use of Arabic outside the classroom, interactional confidence, spontaneous expression of ideas, and responsiveness in communication.

The validity of the questionnaire was established through content validity and construct validity. Content validity was assessed through expert judgment involving four specialists in Arabic language education and applied linguistics, who evaluated the relevance, clarity, and appropriateness of each item. The experts concluded that the instrument was feasible for use, with minor revisions that were subsequently implemented. Construct validity was examined using the Pearson Product–Moment correlation, which correlated each item score with the total score based on a pilot test involving 30 respondents. The results showed that all items exceeded the critical r -value of 0.361 at the 5% significance level, indicating that all questionnaire items were valid and suitable for measuring students' language attitudes and communicative performance in Arabic.

Qualitative Instrument

Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews, designed to confirm and contextualize questionnaire findings by exploring students' experiences, perceived facilitating and inhibiting factors, classroom practices, and learning environments. This approach ensured coherence between the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study. This study received ethical approval from the institutional ethics committee of the researchers' affiliated universities. All participants who completed the questionnaire for both quantitative and qualitative data, provided informed consent, participated voluntarily, and were assured of confidentiality and anonymity, with data securely stored and used solely for research purposes.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Quantitative Findings

A quantitative analysis of 166 UNJ and UIN Alauddin Makassar students revealed three key findings:

First, a strong and significant positive relationship was found between language attitudes and communicative performance ($r = 0.650$; $p < 0.01$), confirming that positive language attitudes significantly contribute to Arabic communication performance. *Second*, although 57.8% of respondents had a high positive language attitude, only 17.5% achieved a high level of communicative performance. The majority fall into the medium category. It indicates that positive language attitudes are not automatically directly proportional to communication performance. *Third*, the results of ANOVA show significant differences based on gender, institution, and educational background. Male students have higher performance ($M = 40.43$) than female students

(M = 33.96). From an institutional perspective, UIN Alauddin Makassar students (M = 37.88) demonstrated better performance than those from UNJ (M = 33.86). Regarding educational background, students with a pesantren background (M = 38.13) consistently demonstrate higher performance than those without a pesantren background (M = 32.18).

These findings served as the basis for the second phase of this study, which aimed to explore further the factors affecting the relationship between language attitudes and performance through qualitative analysis.

Qualitative Findings

Participants consisted of 9 informants who had been selected purposively based on survey response patterns that represented variations in the relationship between language attitudes and communicative performance. An in-depth semi-structured interview was conducted. The interview guidelines are specifically designed to explore and dig into explanations from quantitative findings. Data Analysis: Interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. This process involves transcription, encoding, and identifying themes that explain the mechanisms, methods, and dynamics underlying the relationships between quantitatively identified variables.

Table 1. Interview Participant Profile

Code	Institution	Language Attitude Patterns	Performance Level	Background
P1-P3	UNJ	Positive	High	Pesantren and non-Pesantren
P4-P6	UIN Alauddin	Neutral	Medium	Boarding
P7	UNJ	Extreme Negative	Low	Boarding
P8	UNJ	Positive	Medium	Non-Islamic Boarding School
P9	UIN Alauddin	Positive	Medium	Boarding

The final stage of this method involves integrating the findings from both phases as follows. Integration was conducted through a sequential explanatory mixed-methods approach, connecting the quantitative and qualitative phases via the purposive selection of interview participants based on their questionnaire profiles, and by developing the qualitative interview protocol directly from the quantitative results. The results of the regression analysis in the quantitative phase were then combined with the explanatory themes generated during the qualitative phase to form a comprehensive and holistic understanding.

Determinants of the Inconsistencies Between Language Attitudes and Communicative Performance

Students who have a positive language attitude and a High Communication Performance

Students with a positive attitude towards Arabic tend to show strong interest, love, and emotional involvement in the language they are learning. They view Arabic as the language of the Qur'an, a symbol of Islamic knowledge, and as a means of international communication. This positive affective attitude reinforces the cognitive dimension of the belief that Arabic is necessary and beneficial, which in turn gives birth to active behaviors in using Arabic, both in the classroom and off campus.

The findings suggest that high-performing students display a strong emotional attachment to Arabic, as evidenced by feelings of love, pride, and a personal sense of connection to the language. One participant stated, "*Ada rasa cinta, bangga, dan terpanggil setiap mendengar bahasa Arab*" (There is a sense of love, pride, and calling every time I hear Arabic). At the same time, another described feeling "*sangat senang, merasa cinta dan bersemangat saat belajar*" (very happy, feeling love and enthusiasm when studying). This affective engagement fosters communicative confidence, including the willingness to speak despite grammatical imperfections, as students emphasized that "*keberanian berbicara dipandang lebih penting dibanding menunggu kalimat sempurna secara gramatikal*" (the courage to speak is more important than waiting for a grammatically perfect sentence). They also consider that grammatical errors are not the main obstacle to communication, because what is more important is the ability to convey meaning clearly.²¹ Such confidence is further strengthened by external validation, particularly appreciation from native speakers and the belief that Arabic is a meaningful and valuable language.²²

The data indicate a coherent pathway linking positive attitudes to high communicative performance through integrative motivation and willingness to communicate²³. Affective attachment enhances cognitive beliefs that position Arabic not merely as an academic subject but as "*bahasa Al-Qur'an, kunci ilmu agama, dan setara dengan bahasa internasional*" (the language of the Qur'an, the key to religious knowledge²⁴, and an international language). This affective

²¹ Sabri Thabit and Saleh Ahmed, "From Communicative Competence to Communication Proficiency: A Theoretical Study," *Acuity: Journal of English Language Pedagogy, Literature, and Culture* 8, no. 2 (2023): 13-22, <https://doi.org/10.35974/acuity.v8i1.2739>.

²² Engelina Salainti, "Positive Language Attitudes and Motivation Affect Students' Proficiency and Performance in Learning English as a Second Language," *Klasikal: Journal of Education, Language Teaching and Science* 5, no. 3 (2023): 526-535.

²³ Muhammad Nur Kholis et al., "Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in Arabic for Students of State Islamic University," *Alsinatuna* 9, no. 1 (December 2023): 51-64, <https://doi.org/10.28918/alsinatuna.v9i1.2206>.

²⁴ Fatwa Arifah et al., "Is Arabic a Sacred Language or a Foreign Language?," *Proceedings of the 7th International Conference on Language, Literature, Culture, and Education (ICOLLITE 2023)*, Atlantis Press, 2024,

cognitive orientation generates integrative motivation, expressed in students' desire to engage with the Arabic-speaking community, as one informant noted: "*Saya ingin menguasai bahasa Arab agar dapat berinteraksi dengan penutur asli*" (I want to master Arabic to interact with native speakers). Motivation then translates into behavioral engagement, with students actively seeking opportunities to use Arabic in supportive environments, which increases their willingness to communicate and sustains frequent practice. This practice confidence cycle ultimately results in high communicative performance characterized by fluency, spontaneity, and effective meaning-making, even when grammatical accuracy is not fully achieved.

Overall, the pathway can be summarized as follows: positive attitudes (both affective and cognitive) foster integrative motivation, which encourages behavioral engagement and increased willingness to communicate, leading to frequent practice, growing confidence, and ultimately, high communicative performance. This pathway highlights the role of language attitude factors as an essential factor in the development of Arabic communicative competence among high-performing students.

Students Who Have a Neutral Language Attitude and a Medium Communication Performance

Students with a neutral attitude towards Arabic tend to appreciate the scientific and religious values of the language, although their emotional involvement is relatively limited. They enjoy learning when the material is relevant to everyday life or presented interactively, but tend to be passive when faced with complex or overly technical topics. Students with a neutral attitude toward Arabic exhibit ambivalent responses across learning contexts, reflecting a realistic and balanced cognitive appraisal of the language. When discussing grammatical complexity, one informant noted that "*Bahasa Arab memiliki struktur tata bahasa yang jelas dan teratur... namun tidak selalu mudah dipahami, terutama bagi yang belum terbiasa atau belum memiliki kosakata cukup*" (Arabic has a clear and structured grammar system, yet it is not always easy to understand, particularly for learners with limited exposure or vocabulary). This dual perception suggests an awareness of both the systematic grammatical system of Arabic and the practical challenges associated with its use.²⁵

Students in this group display a conditional rather than intense attachment to Arabic. As one participant explained, "*Hubungan emosional bersifat netral positif... disertai kesadaran bahwa penguasaan bahasa memerlukan usaha dan waktu yang panjang*" (the emotional relationship is

153–61, https://doi.org/10.2991/978-94-6463-376-4_21; Kamarudin Salleh, "Arabic as a Language between Qur'anic (Sacred) and Historical Designations," *Millah* 7, no. 1 (2007): 109–23, <https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.vol7.iss1.eng.art5>.

²⁵ Fatima A Alkohlani, "The Problematic Issue of Grammatical Gender in Arabic as a Foreign Language," *Journal of Language and Cultural Education* 4, no. 1 (2016): 17–28, <https://doi.org/10.1515/jolace-2016-0002>.

neutral positif, accompanied by awareness that mastery requires sustained effort). Such moderated affect contrasts with the substantial emotional investment typically observed among high-performing students and suggests a more cautious motivational orientation.

Their engagement fluctuates depending on instructional and interactional conditions. Students reported enjoyment when learning materials were accessible but expressed boredom when content became overly complex or technical, as reflected in the statement that learning is "*cenderung senang dan tertarik, meskipun terkadang muncul rasa jenuh ketika materi sulit atau terlalu teknis*" (generally enjoyable, though occasionally tedious when the material is too complex). Similarly, willingness to interact in Arabic increased in informal, familiar contexts but declined when topics required formal vocabulary or extended cognitive processing, making interaction less spontaneous and less enjoyable.

Students with neutral attitudes toward Arabic demonstrate a realistic cognitive orientation that recognizes the language as essential yet challenging to master without intensive practice, which directly affects their communicative development. As one student noted, "*sikap netral berpengaruh pada perkembangan kemampuan berbicara yang cenderung lambat karena latihan tidak dilakukan secara intensif.*" Their communicative performance is generally functional but lacks spontaneity, with fluency and confidence emerging only under specific conditions, such as topic familiarity, prior preparation, and supportive interlocutors, as reflected in the statement that "kelancaran berbicara bergantung pada penguasaan kosakata dan familiaritas topik."

Environmental factors play a decisive role, particularly the presence of interactive lecturers and peers who actively use Arabic. In contrast, limited exposure reduces engagement, indicating a reliance on external stimulation rather than intrinsic motivation. Although a pesantren background provides foundational linguistic skills, it does not ensure sustained enthusiasm and instead reinforces a cautious attitude toward the challenges of Arabic.²⁶ These patterns reflect predominantly instrumental motivation, which supports academic needs but constrains natural communicative performance, suggesting that targeted pedagogical interventions, such as increasing contextual relevance and opportunities for speaking practice, are necessary to foster more active engagement and improved communicative outcomes.²⁷

²⁶ Muhamad Ali Abdul Basit and Rahma Putri Kholifatul Ummah, "Aplikasi Teori Generatif-Transformasi Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Di Pondok Pesantren Nurussalam Krapyak Yogyakarta," *Lisanan Arabiya Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 2, no. 2 (2019): 155-171, <https://doi.org/10.32699/liar.v2i02.648>.

²⁷ Oksana Chaika, "Role of Reflective Practice in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning via Multicultural Education," *International Journal of Social Science and Human Research* 6, no. 2 (2023): 1343-1350, <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijsshr/v6-i2-74>; Grit Liebscher and Jennifer Dailey-O'Cain, "Contextualizing Language Attitudes: An Interactional Perspective," *Language and Linguistics Compass* 11, no. 9 (2017): 12250, <https://doi.org/10.1111/lnc3.12250>; Kazeem Oluwatoyin Ajape, Morufudeen Adeniyi Shittu, and Taofik Olalekan Yusuf, "Communicative Language Approach (CLT) to the Teaching and Learning of Arabic Language in Nigerian

Overall, these findings suggest that situational factors, such as topic familiarity, lexical demands, and instructional design, play a significant role in shaping communicative performance among students with neutral attitudes.

Students who have negative language attitudes and low communication performance

Students with negative attitudes often report unpleasant learning experiences, particularly during online learning periods. They assessed that virtual interactions inhibit natural communication processes and reduce the opportunity to practice spontaneous speaking. However, some still show motivation to dare to speak because of the encouragement to become prospective Arabic language educators.

Negative attitudes toward Arabic among this group are not rooted in a rejection of the language itself, but rather arise from specific learning conditions, particularly the dominance of online instruction. Students reported that enjoyment and engagement were higher in face-to-face classes, where interaction felt more natural and speaking opportunities were more frequent. One participant explained that “*rasa senang mengikuti perkuliahan bahasa Arab ada ketika pelaksanaannya dilakukan secara tatap muka,*” whereas online learning created affective discomfort due to “*keterbatasan komunikasi, kendala teknis, dan kurangnya interaksi langsung,*” making learning feel less enjoyable and less effective. These conditions generated anxiety and reduced emotional involvement, which weakened students' engagement with spoken Arabic.

Affective barriers were further intensified by interactional constraints in online classrooms, where communication felt rigid and lacked spontaneity. As one student noted, “*percakapan terasa kaku, sulit berkembang secara spontan, dan kurang memberikan kesempatan bagi mahasiswa untuk berlatih secara natural.*” Although students expressed a desire to apply new vocabulary in daily life, this intention was often frustrated by limited opportunities and weak linguistic environments.

²⁸One respondent acknowledged that “*keinginan untuk membiasakan diri memang ada, tetapi keterbatasan forum atau komunitas yang aktif membuat penerapan kosakata baru menjadi jarang terjadi.*” This gap between intention and practice highlights how environmental limitations suppress communicative development.

These negative learning experiences had a direct impact on communicative performance, characterized by low fluency, limited vocabulary use, and reduced confidence. Students themselves recognized that their speaking ability developed slowly due to “*minimnya latihan percakapan*

Universities,” *IJUS | International Journal of Umranic Studies* 6, no. 2 (November 2023): 59–73, <https://doi.org/10.59202/ijus.v6i2.738>.

²⁸ Faizal Pikri, “The Role of the Language Environment in Improving Arabic Learning Abilities,” *International Journal of Science and Society* 4, no. 2 (2022): 346–354, <https://doi.org/10.54783/ijsoc.v4i2.478>.

langsung" and the lack of an immersive atmosphere. Nevertheless, some learners maintained motivation driven by instrumental goals, particularly professional aspirations. One student stated that "*tujuan untuk menjadi seorang guru menjadi motivasi utama dalam membangun rasa percaya diri*," indicating that career-oriented motivation partially counterbalanced affective barriers, even though it did not fully compensate for limited communicative practice.

Educational background played a significant role in shaping attitudes, particularly for students from pesantren environments.²⁹ These students reported that pesantren experience provided strong foundational habits, as "*pengalaman belajar di pesantren memberikan kebiasaan dan dasar yang kuat*" enabling them to sustain motivation despite less supportive current environments. Family support further reinforced this positive orientation, with one student recalling encouragement from parents who believed that mastering Arabic would make one "*terlihat keren dan fasih berbicara*." The use of Arabic in family interactions, even if limited, created authentic communicative spaces that supported affective resilience.

Conversely, students from non-pesantren backgrounds often transformed initial disadvantage into achievement motivation. Feeling challenged by peers, one student explained that starting from zero "*memotivasi untuk mengejar ketertinggalan dan membuktikan bahwa latar belakang non-pesantren bukanlah hambatan*". Supportive pedagogy proved crucial in this process, as patient lecturers and peer assistance helped overcome early difficulties with nahwu and sharaf. Confidence developed through preparation, familiar topics, and non-judgmental interaction, as students noted that "*rasa percaya diri muncul dari persiapan sebelumnya dan lingkungan yang mendukung*." Overall, these findings confirm that negative attitudes stem largely from contextual and pedagogical factors rather than inherent learner dispositions, suggesting that targeted instructional and environmental interventions can effectively mitigate affective barriers and improve communicative performance.³⁰

Gender and Communicative Performance

At the quantitative stage of this study, results based on analysis of variance (ANOVA) were obtained, which showed significant differences based on sex ($F = 18.725$; $p < 0.001$). Male students have a higher average performance (Mean = 40.43) than female students (Mean = 33.96).

²⁹ Muhammad Yusuf, "The Language Environment in Supporting Arabic Language Learning in Pesantren South Sulawesi," *Bulletin of Science Education* 3, no. 2 (2023): 84-102, <https://doi.org/10.51278/bse.v3i2.561>.

³⁰ Eko Prayetno and Munirul Abidin, "The Relationship Between Fluency in Speaking Arabic and Self-Confidence to Presentation Skills," *Studi Multidisipliner: Jurnal Kajian Keislaman* 11, no. 2 (December 2024): 439-52, <https://doi.org/10.24952/multidisipliner.v11i2.13661>; Burhanuddin Burhanuddin, "Pengembangan Materi Ajar Berbasis Komunikasi Dalam Pendidikan Bahasa Arab," *Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia* 4, no. 12 (2024): 1318-1328, <https://doi.org/10.59141/japendi.v4i12.2583>.

Table 2. Analysis of Variance and Descriptive Statistics of Communicative Performance Based on Gender

ANOVA

TotalY

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1481,220	1	1481,220	18,725	,000
Within Groups	12973,292	164	79,105		
Total	14454,512	165			

Report

TotalY

Gender	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Female	33,96	115	8,714
Male	40,43	51	9,291
Total	35,95	166	9,360

Based on interview data, male students are more willing to take risks when speaking and are less concerned about making grammatical mistakes. This risk-taking behavior aligns with the sociocultural expectation that males should demonstrate assertiveness and confidence in public discourse, as one high-performing male student expressed regarding spontaneous expression: "*Keberanian berbicara dipandang lebih penting dibanding menunggu kalimat sempurna secara gramatikal, karena inti komunikasi adalah pesan dapat tersampaikan dengan baik*" (The courage to speak is considered more important than waiting for grammatically perfect sentences, because the essence of communication is that the message can be conveyed well). This prioritization of communicative courage over grammatical precision reflects gendered socialization that rewards male assertiveness.³¹

In contrast, female students tend to be more perfectionistic and cautious in their speaking, a pattern shaped by sociocultural norms that emphasize female propriety, accuracy, and avoidance of public error. Female students in the neutral-attitude group articulated this concern: "*Rasa percaya diri muncul ketika topik sudah dikuasai, kosakata dipersiapkan terlebih dahulu, serta lawan bicara*

³¹ Nur Afifi and Martina Martina, "Gender Differences and Language Learning Strategies of Indonesian Students: A Critical Research Review," *Klasikal: Journal of Education, Language Teaching and Science* 6, no. 3 (2024): 786-793.

bersikap suportif dan tidak mengoreksi dengan cara yang membuat minder" (Confidence arises when the topic has been mastered, vocabulary is prepared beforehand, and the interlocutor is supportive and does not correct in ways that make one feel inferior). This conditional confidence, dependent on thorough preparation and supportive environments, suggests that female students have been socialized to fear judgment and prioritize error avoidance over communicative fluency.

The intersection of gender with educational background further complicates these patterns. Non-pesantren female students face compounded challenges: both the gender-based expectation of caution and the initial disadvantage of lacking knowledge in Arabic. One non-pesantren student described: "*Rasa percaya diri muncul dari persiapan sebelumnya (menghafal kosakata dan kalimat kunci), topik yang familiar, dan lingkungan yang mendukung*" (Confidence arises from prior preparation (memorizing vocabulary and key sentences), familiar topics, and a supportive environment). The extensive preparation described here, as memorizing vocabulary, represents compensatory strategies that require additional time and effort, potentially limiting spontaneous speaking opportunities.

Conversely, male students from pesantren backgrounds benefit from the dual advantage of foundational Arabic training and cultural permission to speak boldly. This intersectional advantage manifests in performance differences that cannot be attributed solely to gender, but must be understood as the product of overlapping sociocultural privileges and disadvantages.³² Sociolinguistically, this shows that social norms and gender roles influence communication styles and language performance. Male students are more likely to take advantage of opportunities to speak in public forums, whereas female students tend to focus more on accuracy and prudence. Therefore, a gender-inclusive learning strategy is needed, for example, by providing a safe learning space and strengthening the confidence of female students to speak without fear of making mistakes³³.

Environment and Communicative Performance

In addition, at the quantitative stage of this study, significant differences were also found based on campus origin ($F = 7.974$; $p = 0.005$), where UIN Alauddin Makassar students demonstrated higher performance (Mean = 37.88) compared to UNJ students (Mean = 33.86).

³² Akmaliah Akmaliah and Teti Ratnasih, "Teaching Arabic by Gender Perspective at Pesantren Darunnajah," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 3, no. 1 (June 2017): 69, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v3i1.1055>; Wan Ab Aziz Bin Wan Daud et al., "Gender Differences in Learning Arabic Language Proficiency via M-Learning among Malaysia University Students," *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies* 17, no. 2 (2021): 1069–82, <https://doi.org/10.17263/jlls.904123>.

³³ Afifi and Martina, "Gender Differences and Language Learning Strategies of Indonesian Students," 790.

Table 3. Analysis of Variance and Descriptive Statistics of Communicative Performance Based on Environment

ANOVA					
TotalY					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	670,187	1	670,187	7,974	,005
Within Groups	13784,325	164	84,051		
Total	14454,512	165			

Report			
TotalY			
Institution	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Universitas Negeri Jakarta	33,86	80	9,003
UIN Alauddin Makassar	37,88	86	9,318
Total	35,95	166	9,360

These differences can be explained in the academic environment context. UIN Alauddin has an Islamic atmosphere that is more supportive of the use of Arabic in daily life, both in lectures and religious activities, thus creating an immersive environment that facilitates language practice. On the other hand, at UNJ, the use of Arabic is more limited to formal academic settings, while students' social interactions are predominantly in Indonesian. These findings reinforce the notion that the campus social and cultural environment plays a significant role in facilitating effective communication performance³⁴. Thus, Arabic language learning in public universities requires institutional support through policies that encourage Arabic language practice outside the classroom, such as extracurricular activities, language communities, and scientific forums.

³⁴ Habibur Rahman and Fida Layly Maisurah, "Pengajaran Bahasa Arab Dan Sosiologi Masyarakat Islam Indonesia: Kajian Fenomenologi-Sosiolinguistik," *Cognitive Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran* 1, no. 2 (2024): 31-46, <https://doi.org/10.61743/cg.v1i2.44>; Munassir Alhamami, "Language Learners' Attitudes Toward Online and Face-to-Face Language Environments," *Frontiers in Psychology* 13 (2022): 1-12, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.926310>; Pikri, "The Role of the Language Environment in Improving Arabic Learning Abilities," 350.

Educational Background and Communicative Performance

Based on quantitative analysis, significant differences were also found based on educational background ($F = 17.135$; $p = 0.000$). Students with Islamic boarding school backgrounds exhibit higher communication performance (Mean = 38.13) compared to those from non-Islamic boarding schools (Mean = 32.18).

Table 4. Analysis of Variance and Descriptive Statistics of Communicative Performance Based on Educational Background

ANOVA					
TotalY					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1367,362	1	1367,362	17,135	.000
Within Groups	13087,150	164	79,800		
Total	14454,512	165			

Report			
TotalY			
Educational Background	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Pesantren	38,13	105	8,785
Non Pesantren	32,18	61	9,184
Total	35,95	166	9,360

It is due to more intense exposure to Arabic in the pesantren environment, both through book learning activities, lectures, and daily communication. These findings support the habit formation theory, which posits that repetitive habituation leads to automation in language skills. In addition, Islamic boarding school students also have a strong affective and spiritual orientation towards Arabic as the language of religion and Islamic science, which builds integrative motivation³⁵. However, the results of the interviews show that non-pesantren students have high motivation to achieve. They strive to develop the abilities of their more proficient peers, driven by academic desire and the support of their inclusive lecturer. Thus, the motivation to learn Arabic, combined with environmental support, can help balance the limitations of such backgrounds.

Exploring the Inconsistencies through Theoretical Perspectives

The most prominent finding in this study is the misalignment between students' positive attitudes towards the Arabic language and their actual communicative performance. Although 57.8% of students exhibited a positive attitude at a high level, only 17.5% were able to achieve a

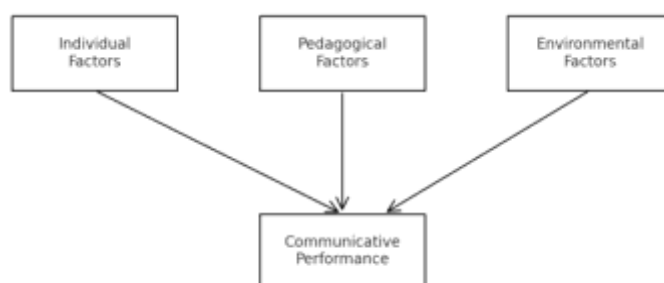
³⁵ Khoirunnisa'il Fitriyah et al., "Enhancing Arabic Speaking Skills Through Habit Formation in Bilingual Education," *Jurnal Al Bayan: Jurnal Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 16, no. 2 (December 2024): 501-526, <https://doi.org/10.24042/albayan.v16i2.24316>.

high communicative performance. The integration of quantitative and qualitative data suggests that the misalignment is primarily due to a lack of environmental support and pedagogical limitations, rather than a lack of motivation or the emergence of negative attitudes towards the Arabic language.

This inconsistency can be explained through an integrated theoretical framework that combines Chomsky's competence performance distinction³⁶, Gardner's socio-educational model³⁷, Krashen's affective filter hypothesis³⁸, and Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory³⁹. While students demonstrate strong linguistic competence, communicative performance remains limited, confirming that grammatical knowledge alone is insufficient for effective communication⁴⁰. Positive attitudes and integrative motivation toward Arabic provide psychological readiness for learning⁴¹; however, communicative output is still mediated by affective factors, such as anxiety and confidence⁴². Crucially, the translation of competence and motivation into performance depends on the alignment of environmental systems, ranging from immediate classroom interactions to institutional and sociocultural contexts⁴³.

The findings suggest that limited communicative opportunities, grammar-focused pedagogy, and inadequate learning environments hinder performance, even among highly motivated students. Thus, communicative performance emerges only when linguistic competence, positive attitudes, manageable affective conditions, and supportive ecological environments converge; the absence of any one of these elements disrupts the pathway from attitude to performance. Based on the analysis of this research, it can be seen that communicative performance in Arabic language learning is influenced by three factors, namely: 1) Individual Factors; 2) Pedagogic Factors; 3) Environmental Factors.

Picture 2. Factors of Communicative Performance



³⁶ Chomsky, *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*, 63.

³⁷ Masgoret and Gardner, "Attitudes, Motivation, and Second Language Learning," 137.

³⁸ Stephen D.. Krashen, *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition* (California:Pergamon, 1985), 89.

³⁹ Crawford, "Ecological Systems Theory: Exploring the Development," 174.

⁴⁰ Chomsky, *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*, 54.

⁴¹ Masgoret and Gardner, "Attitudes, Motivation, and Second Language Learning," 154.

⁴² Krashen, *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*, 70.

⁴³ Crawford, "Ecological Systems Theory: Exploring the Development," 172.

Individual Factors

This inconsistency can be explained through several theoretical perspectives. Within the framework of Chomsky⁴⁴, as clarified by Reishaan and Taha⁴⁵, competence refers to internal linguistic knowledge. In contrast, performance refers to the ability to apply this knowledge in a real-world context, influenced by psychological, situational, and emotional factors. Students in this study generally have strong grammatical competence. However, their communicative performance remains limited. Several conditions contribute to this, including feelings of fear and anxiety about making mistakes when speaking Arabic spontaneously, as well as a lack of knowledge among students on how to use Arabic in authentic communication contexts.

As explained by Permata⁴⁶, Chomsky's generative-transformative theory is highly relevant in the Context of Arabic language learning, because it suggests that linguistic competence can only be realized in real performance through continuous practice and exposure to authentic language use⁴⁷.

According to the Affective Filter Hypothesis introduced by Krashen⁴⁸, emotional variables such as anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence can serve as psychological barriers that inhibit the entry of comprehensible inputs into language acquisition mechanisms. The qualitative findings of this study indicate that students with a positive attitude towards Arabic generally have a lower affective filter, enabling them to be better prepared to receive and process linguistic information. However, this readiness does not always lead to optimal communicative performance, as various environmental barriers still limit their chances of practicing Arabic in real life. These findings are consistent with the results of Salainti's⁴⁹ research, which suggests that positive attitudes and motivation do contribute to language proficiency; however, the impact is significantly influenced by the quality of learning received and the frequency of practice available.

Pedagogical Factors

The study's findings show that pedagogical factors play a significant role in influencing positive language attitudes and communication performance. Although most students show interest and good views on learning Arabic, the level of oral Arabic proficiency is still influenced by the way it is taught, the form of learning activities, and the management of the learning process in the

⁴⁴ Chomsky, *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*, 34.

⁴⁵ Abdul-Hussein Kadhim Reishaan and Wia'am Taha, "The Relationship Between Competence," 49.

⁴⁶ Bagus Adrian Permata, "Teori Generatif-Transformatif Noam Chomsky Dan Relevansinya Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab," *Empirisma* 24, no. 2 (2015): 179-187, <https://doi.org/10.30762/empirisma.v24i2.18>.

⁴⁷ Nasser AlMansour, "Effect of Attitude on Foreign Language Acquisition: Arabic Pronunciation as Case Study," *Arab World English Journal* 7, no. 1 (March 2016): 310-25, <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol7no1.18>.

⁴⁸ Krashen, *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*, 68.

⁴⁹ Salainti, "Positive Language Attitudes And Motivation Affect Students' Proficiency," 530.

classroom.

One of the main issues in learning Arabic in Indonesia is that some Arabic language learning still uses traditional approaches that focus on grammatical analysis and translation. This approach facilitates the mastery of Arabic language structure, but does not provide sufficient training space for the spontaneous use of the Arabic language. These findings align with the studies of Albahri et al.⁵⁰ and Ajape et al.⁵¹, which suggest that grammar-oriented teaching models tend to be less effective in developing communicative skills. This condition shows the need for the implementation of communicative approaches such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), as recommended by Qasserras⁵². In line with this, students in the study expressed the need to increase interactive activities, such as group discussions, role-plays, or communicative tasks that are relevant to daily life contexts.

The imbalance between the emphasis on theory in Arabic and the practical opportunity to use Arabic in communication is also a concern. Many students master Arabic grammar, but are not yet able to use it fluently in real situations. It indicates that the learning process stalls at the stage of grammatical comprehension, without being complemented by the practice of using Arabic in direct communication. Skill Acquisition Theory posits that the transition from declarative knowledge to language skills necessitates repeated practice and consistent feedback⁵³. Therefore, the provision of structured Arabic practice spaces needs to be strengthened in Arabic language learning within higher education.

Students' experiences in participating in online learning during the pandemic also affect the development of their communication skills. Learning interactions carried out through online platforms are often perceived as rigid, unnatural, and frequently disrupted by technical issues. This condition hinders the process of practicing speaking Arabic, which requires direct interaction. These findings align with the results of Alhamami's⁵⁴ study, which demonstrate that face-to-face learning facilitates a more natural conversation flow and supports speaking activities. The sociocultural perspective also emphasizes the importance of dialogical interaction and responsive support as

⁵⁰ Marwan Abdulrazzaq Albahri, Ping Yang, and Mohamed Moustakim, "Saudi Arabian Tertiary Teachers' and Learners' Attitude towards the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)," *International Journal of Information and Education Technology* 8, no. 4 (2018): 317–21, <https://doi.org/10.18178/ijiet.2018.8.4.1055>.

⁵¹ Kazeem Oluwatoyin Ajape, Morufudeen Adeniyi Shittu, and Taofik Olalekan Yusuf, "Communicative Language Approach (CLT)," 60.

⁵² Lhoussine Qasserras, "Systematic Review of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in Language Education: A Balanced Perspective," *European Journal of Education and Pedagogy* 4, no. 6 (November 2023): 17–23, <https://doi.org/10.24018/ejedu.2023.4.6.763>.

⁵³ Barry J Zimmerman and Dale H Schunk, *Self-Regulated Learning and Performance* (Routledge, 2011), 196., <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203839010.ch1>; Emilee Moore, *Competence, Communicative and Linguistic*, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118786093.iela0070>.

⁵⁴ Alhamami, "Language Learners' Attitudes Toward Online and Face-to-Face Language Environments," 7.

integral to the language learning process⁵⁵.

In addition to methods and modalities, the relevance of Arabic learning materials also plays a role. Some students consider that some of the material seems far removed from the life situations they are facing. The integration of actual topics, such as social media, popular issues, and contemporary Arabic culture, is seen to increase students' interest and involvement in learning Arabic⁵⁶. For students with an orientation in Islamic studies, theological topics, or contemporary thought from the Arab world, these are actually an additional source of motivation⁵⁷. Therefore, adjusting Arabic teaching materials to accommodate various student profiles is a crucial step in learning Arabic in higher education.

Additionally, assessment patterns that emphasize the analysis of language structure also have the potential to hinder the development of communicative skills. Although the topic of assessment was not frequently mentioned in the interview, the tendency to focus on grammar appeared to have an impact on students' learning strategies. Overall, the research findings suggest that improving communication skills does not sufficiently depend on students' positive attitudes. Strengthening communicative approaches, balancing theory and practice, prioritizing face-to-face learning, selecting relevant materials, and enhancing the assessment system are essential considerations to create a learning environment that better supports the development of communicative competencies in Arabic.

Environmental Factors

Furthermore, the understanding of these limitations becomes clearer when analyzed through the perspective of *Ecological Systems Theory*. In this approach, reinforced by Li, Rokita-Jaśkow and Swanson and Levine, the process of language acquisition is viewed as the result of layered interactions between various systems that influence one another⁵⁸. 1) At the microsystem level, direct interaction with peers, lecturers, and family plays a crucial role in providing exposure and opportunities for language use. 2) At the mesosystem level, the relationship between these environments, such as the relationship between home and campus, can support or hinder the

⁵⁵ Mustafiqul Hilmi and Ayu Miranda, "Vigotsky's Sociocultural: An Analytical Study in Arabic Language Learning," *Kitaba* 3, no. 1 (2025): 10-17, <https://doi.org/10.18860/kitaba.v3i1.29732>.

⁵⁶ Borjan Grozdanoski, "Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language: The Importance of Cultural Awareness," *Publicaciones* 49, no. 5 (2019): 131-148, <https://doi.org/10.30827/publicaciones.v49i5.13874>.

⁵⁷ Ibrahim Al-Huri, "Arabic Language: Historic and Sociolinguistic Characteristics," *English Literature and Language Review* 1, no. 4 (2015): 28-36, <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.16163.66089/1>.

⁵⁸ Xi Li, "The Need for Ecological Nested Models as Emerging Theoretical Frameworks in the Investigation of Affective Variables in L2 Education," *Heliyon* 9, no. 6 (June 2023): 1-8, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e16891>; Rokita-Jaśkow, "An Ecological Perspective on the Challenges in Language Education," 24; Bridget Swanson and Glenn S Levine, *An Ecological Approach to Language Pedagogy, Programs, and Departments* 1, no. 1 (2020): 65-85, <http://hdl.handle.net/10125/69841>.

practice of Arabic in daily life. Meanwhile, exosystems include institutional policies, curriculum, and resource distribution that shape the quality of the learning environment, and 3) **macrosystems** related to the attitude of the wider community towards the Arabic language and the cultural values inherent in its learning. In addition, the chronosystem introduces a time dimension, such as changes in educational patterns resulting from the pandemic or the development of individual abilities over time. From this perspective, it becomes clear that although positive attitudes are effective at the personal level, their transformation into communicative performance can only occur if a harmonious environmental configuration at all levels of the system supports them.

Implications for Theory and Practice in Arabic Language Education

The findings of this study offer several critical theoretical implications. First, the study's results highlight the need to recontextualize the relationship between language attitudes and language performance. These findings indicate that the relationship between language attitudes and communication performance is not always directly proportional, but rather influenced by various factors that can shape the pattern of this relationship. This view aligns with Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain⁵⁹, who emphasize the importance of associating language attitudes with more dynamic interactional perspectives. Second, this study also strengthens the validity of the ecological approach in the study of language education, as emphasized by Alfiatus Syarofah et al. and Rokita-Jaśkow⁶⁰, that language learning outcomes can only be comprehensively understood if they consider the layers of systems that interact with each other. Third, the findings of this study confirm the importance of integrating affective perspectives such as attitude, motivation, and self-confidence, with a sociocultural perspective that emphasizes the role of social interaction, *scaffolding*, and *communities of practice* in the language learning process. It aligns with Hilmi and Miranda⁶¹, who demonstrate that Vygotsky's sociocultural theory provides a robust framework for understanding Arabic learning as a socially mediated process.

In addition to the theoretical implications, this study also produced some practical recommendations for policy and pedagogy, including: the Arabic language learning curriculum needs to be reoriented towards a Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach by increasing the portion of communicative practices through task-based activities, role play, collaborative

⁵⁹ Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain, "Contextualizing Language Attitudes: An Interactional Perspective," 12250.

⁶⁰ Alfiatus Syarofah et al., "A Systemic Literature Review on Ecological Approach in Language Teaching," 205; Rokita-Jaśkow, "An Ecological Perspective on the Challenges in Language Education," 17.

⁶¹ Hilmi and Miranda, "Vygotsky's Sociocultural: An Analytical Study in Arabic Language Learning," 12.

projects, and content-based learning⁶². This effort needs to be supported by the establishment of communities of Arabic practice in the campus environment, such as conversation clubs, language exchanges, cultural activities, Arabic media discussion groups, and academic halaqah, as shown by Dewi and Setiadi⁶³ regarding the influence of community practice on language choice.

Additionally, Arabic learning support should be designed to the student's educational background. Non-pesantren students require intensive support in the early stages through explicit instruction in basic communication functions, the development of high-frequency vocabulary, and the use of structural scaffolding. Instead, pesantren students need to be facilitated in transforming their structural knowledge into communicative skills through advanced assignments and exposure to a variety of contemporary Arabic languages. Universities also need to provide native speaker teaching staff, either through virtual exchange programs, guest lectures, teaching assistants, or foreign programs. It needs to be bolstered to increase confidence and willingness to communicate⁶⁴.

In addition, technology can be strategically utilized as a complement to face-to-face learning through the integration of social media, Arabic language applications, online discussion forums, video recording assignments, and the consumption of Arabic content to expand language practice⁶⁵. The relevance of the teaching material must also be considered; content that suits the interests and needs of students has been proven to increase motivation⁶⁶. Additionally, based on differences in performance by gender, approaches to learning Arabic need to be sensitive to the potential barriers faced by female students, for example, by providing a safe space to practice, overcoming gender stereotypes, and presenting successful female role models in the use of Arabic⁶⁷.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. The findings are based on data from two universities in Indonesia, which may limit their generalizability to other higher education contexts with different institutional and sociocultural characteristics. The sample also showed uneven representation across attitude categories and gender, restricting deeper subgroup comparisons. Communicative performance was assessed primarily in structured academic settings,

⁶² Grozdanoski, "Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language: The Importance of Cultural Awareness" 143; Qasserras, "Systematic Review of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in Language Education," 20; Kazeem Oluwatoyin Ajape, Morufudeen Adeniyi Shittu, and Taofik Olalekan Yusuf, "Communicative Language Approach," 64.

⁶³ Udiana Puspa Dewi and Criscentia Jessica Setiadi, "Language Attitude and Language Choice in Bilingual Academic Learning Environment," *Lingua Cultura* 12, no. 4 (2018): 369-373, <https://doi.org/10.21512/lc.v12i4.4288>.

⁶⁴ Kholis et al., "Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in Arabic for Students of State Islamic University," 57; Novy Maryani, Ade Arip Ardiansyah, and Ahmad Mohammed Hasan, "Arabic Language Learners as an Example of Their Willingness to Communicate in a Second Language (L2-WTC) Accomplishment," *Jurnal Al Bayan: Jurnal Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 16, no. 2 (November 2024): 463, <https://doi.org/10.24042/albayan.v16i2.24312>.

⁶⁵ Babikir Eltigani Siddig, "Social Media in Teaching of Languages," *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (Ijet)* 15, no. 12 (2020): 72-80, <https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v15i12.12645>.

⁶⁶ Burhanuddin, "Pengembangan Materi Ajar Berbasis Komunikasi Dalam Pendidikan Bahasa Arab," 1324.

⁶⁷ Afifi and Martina, "Gender Differences and Language Learning Strategies of Indonesian Students," 788.

which may not fully reflect students' spontaneous or real-world communicative abilities. In addition, pedagogical and environmental factors were mainly inferred from student self-reports rather than systematic classroom observations, and several potentially influential variables such as cognitive aptitude, prior language exposure, and socioeconomic background were not examined, which may have independently affected the observed relationships.

Future research should adopt more in-depth and ecologically grounded approaches to advance understanding of the attitude–performance relationship in Arabic language education. Ethnographic classroom observations combined with interviews and discourse analysis of video-recorded interactions can provide richer insights into how pedagogical practices, feedback, and interactional patterns shape students' attitudes and willingness to communicate. Further studies should also develop authentic assessments that capture communicative performance in spontaneous and real-world contexts beyond structured academic tasks. In addition, gender-focused research with balanced and intersectional samples is needed to examine how gender interacts with educational background, socioeconomic status, and cultural factors, and to identify mechanisms and interventions that promote more equitable and effective Arabic language learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the relationship between language attitudes and communicative performance in Arabic learning is complex rather than linear. Using a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design that combined survey data from 160 students with in-depth interviews of eight participants, the findings revealed a strong statistical correlation ($r = 0.708$, $p < 0.001$). However, the results also showed that only 17.5% of students with positive attitudes achieved high communicative performance. Qualitative evidence indicates that affective factors, pedagogical practices, and environmental conditions jointly mediate this relationship, explaining why positive attitudes alone do not necessarily lead to communicative competence. This study identifies three key determinants of communicative performance: individual factors (confidence, anxiety, and willingness to communicate), pedagogical factors (teaching approaches, opportunities for practice, and instructional modality), and environmental factors (academic culture, institutional support, and exposure). The integration of these dimensions supports the ecological perspective, confirming that learning outcomes emerge from the interaction between systems rather than from isolated variables.

Theoretically, this study suggests the need to reframe the attitude performance relationship by incorporating ecological, affective, and sociocultural dimensions. Practically, the findings underscore the importance of communicative-oriented pedagogy, contextually relevant learning materials, differentiated support for students from diverse educational backgrounds, and the

strengthening of Arabic-speaking environments across institutions. Efforts to enhance communicative competence also require gender-responsive strategies and the integration of technology to extend language exposure beyond the traditional classroom setting. The enhancement of communicative performance in Arabic ultimately depends on the synergy of individual, pedagogical, and environmental factors. Positive attitudes and intrinsic motivation at the personal level create psychological readiness. However, this readiness can only be actualized when pedagogical practices provide structured opportunities for meaningful communication and when environmental systems offer consistent support and authentic contexts for language use. The absence of any single element disrupts the entire developmental pathway, explaining the attitude and communicative performance gap observed in this study. Therefore, the development of Arabic language curricula in higher education should explicitly take into account the multiple factors influencing communicative performance, integrating affective support, communicative-oriented pedagogy, and environmentally embedded learning opportunities.

Nevertheless, several limitations should be acknowledged. The data were drawn from two Indonesian universities, which may constrain the generalizability of the findings to other higher education contexts with different institutional and sociocultural profiles. Uneven representation across attitude categories and gender limited more detailed subgroup analysis. At the same time, communicative performance was primarily measured through structured academic tasks, which may not fully capture spontaneous or real-world language use. Moreover, pedagogical and environmental influences were inferred mainly from student self-reports rather than systematic classroom observations, and several potentially relevant variables, such as cognitive aptitude, prior language exposure, and socioeconomic background, were not examined. Future research should therefore adopt more ecologically grounded approaches, including ethnographic classroom observation, discourse analysis of authentic interactions, and the development of performance assessments that reflect real-world communication. Gender-focused and intersectional studies with more balanced samples are also needed to understand better how social and educational factors interact to shape communicative performance in Arabic language learning.

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