



INDONESIAN MUSLIMS AND ARABIC LANGUAGE: LEAVES AND LIGHT IN THE REALM OF RELIGI-LINGUISTICS

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Abstract

Low achievement in Arabic language learning among students remains a critical issue in Indonesia. This study seeks to refine the paradigm of Arabic language education by aligning it with the learning objectives and socio-cultural tendencies of society and students. Despite various innovations in curriculum and pedagogy, outcomes remain suboptimal. This research proposes a new paradigm that integrates Arabic language education with the cultivation of Islamic religious character (religi-linguistic), positioning Islamic values as central while using Arabic as a strategic tool to achieve these objectives. Employing a qualitative approach grounded in grounded theory, the study develops this paradigm within Ma'had Al-Jāmi'ah (Islamic boarding schools) at State Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKIN) in Indonesia. The findings highlight the interdisciplinary framework of religi-linguistics, which includes: (1) Islam as the foundational discipline and goal; (2) religious character as the primary indicator; (3) Arabic as the medium; (4) structured interdisciplinary steps in Arabic language learning; and (5) modeling and environmental design as essential strategies. This study urges scholars and policymakers to reevaluate traditional paradigms and adopt this integrated approach, offering a more cohesive and purpose-driven model for Arabic education that addresses both linguistic proficiency and religious character development.

Keywords: *Arabic Language Learning, Islamic Religious Character, Religi-Linguistic Integration, Interdisciplinary Education*

Abstrak

Prestasi yang rendah dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab di kalangan siswa tetap menjadi isu krusial di Indonesia. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyempurnakan paradigma pendidikan bahasa Arab dengan menyelaraskannya dengan tujuan pembelajaran serta kecenderungan sosial dan budaya masyarakat maupun siswa. Meskipun berbagai inovasi dalam kurikulum dan pedagogi telah dilakukan, hasil pembelajaran tetap belum optimal. Penelitian ini mengusulkan paradigma baru yang mengintegrasikan pendidikan bahasa Arab dengan pembentukan karakter keagamaan Islam (*religi-linguistic*), yaitu dengan menjadikan nilai-nilai Islam sebagai pusat utama, sementara bahasa Arab digunakan sebagai alat strategis untuk mencapai tujuan tersebut. Dengan pendekatan kualitatif berbasis *grounded theory*, penelitian ini mengembangkan paradigma tersebut di *Ma'had Al-Jāmi'ah* (*pesantren*) pada Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri (PTKIN) di

Indonesia. Temuan penelitian ini menyoroiti kerangka kerja interdisipliner *religi-linguistic*, yang meliputi: (1) Islam sebagai disiplin dan tujuan utama; (2) karakter religius sebagai indikator utama; (3) bahasa Arab sebagai media; (4) langkah-langkah interdisipliner terstruktur dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab; dan (5) permodelan serta desain lingkungan sebagai strategi penting. Penelitian ini mendorong para akademisi dan pembuat kebijakan untuk mengevaluasi kembali paradigma tradisional dan mengadopsi pendekatan terpadu ini, yang menawarkan model pendidikan bahasa Arab yang lebih kohesif dan berorientasi tujuan, mencakup penguasaan bahasa sekaligus pengembangan karakter religius.

Kata Kunci: *Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab, Karakter Keagamaan Islam, Integrasi Religi-Linguistik, Pendidikan Interdisipliner*

INTRODUCTION

The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre (RISSC), in its report titled *The Muslim 500: The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims 2024*, highlights that Indonesia's Muslim population reached 240.62 million in 2023, comprising 86.7% of the country's total population of 277.53 million. This positions Indonesia as the leading nation among the 11 Southeast Asian countries with the largest Muslim populations.¹ Furthermore, Indonesia holds the distinction of having the largest Muslim population globally, accounting for approximately 13% of the total Muslim population worldwide.²

Since the initial arrival of Islam in Indonesia through to the modern era, the relationship between Islam as a representative faith and the Arabic language has undergone significant and multifaceted dynamics. This interplay has been consistent and enduring, beginning with the adoption of Arabic terms and evolving into a profound influence on Islamic lifestyles. The Arabic language plays a pivotal role in various aspects of religious life,³ including worship practices, the recitation and comprehension of the Qur'an as the holy scripture,⁴ and the understanding of Islamic jurisprudence, which provides binding guidance for adherents.⁵

¹ Cindy Mutia Annur, "Populasi Muslim Indonesia Terbanyak Di Asia Tenggara, Berapa Jumlahnya?," *Katadata.Co.Id*, last modified October 19, 2023, accessed March 6, 2024, <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/datapublish/2023/10/19/populasi-muslim-indonesia-terbanyak-di-asia-tenggara-berapa-jumlahnya>.

² World Population Review, "Muslim Population by Country 2024," last modified 2024, accessed March 6, 2024, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/muslim-population-by-country>.

³ Choirul Mahfud et al., "Islamic Cultural and Arabic Linguistic Influence on the Languages of Nusantara: From Lexical Borrowing to Localized Islamic Lifestyles," *Wacana Journal of the Humanities of Indonesia* 22 (May 10, 2021): 224–248.

⁴ Anwar G Chejne, "Arabic: Its Significance and Place in Arab-Muslim Society," *Middle East Journal* 19, no. 4 (1965): 447–470, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4323917>.

⁵ Nahla A. K. Alhirtani, "The Influence of Arabic Language Learning on Understanding of Islamic Legal Sciences—A Study in the Sultan Idris Education University," *International Education Studies* 11, no. 2 (January 26, 2018): 55.

An especially compelling intersection lies in the two disciplines that continually contribute to the development of societal civilization:⁶ the cultivation of Islamic religious character and the learning of the Arabic language within the Indonesian context. Yahya et al aptly describe this phenomenon as the "Arabic Language as Representation of Muslim Identity in Indonesia."⁷ This perspective is further supported by Hamid et al⁸, whose research highlights that the primary motivation for Arabic language learning among Indonesians is to deepen their understanding of Islam, particularly through engaging with the Qur'an and Sunnah, both of which are conveyed in Arabic.

Although explicit directives for the interdisciplinary integration of religious and linguistic studies are absent, scholars such as Rahimi and Hematiyan have underscored its necessity.⁹ Harisca et al further advocate for revising the Arabic language curriculum as a second language in Indonesia to align with the advancements of the 5.0 era. However, before such curricular changes are implemented, it is imperative to establish an interdisciplinary framework that integrates religious and linguistic studies. This integration is crucial to determine whether the primary purpose of Arabic language learning is to function as a tool for communication or to facilitate a deeper understanding of Islam.¹⁰

If the paradigm of Arabic language learning prioritizes its use as a communication tool, numerous evaluation studies have consistently highlighted significant shortcomings in achieving this objective.¹¹ Even innovative approaches have proven insufficient in addressing these challenges, as evidenced by the findings of Andrian and Yul and Bahruddin et al.^{12;13} Consequently, there is an urgent need to reframe Arabic language learning as a means to deepen Islamic understanding. This approach aligns with the concept of "religi-linguistic," which underscores the intrinsic connection

⁶ Jay Newman, "Education as Civilization," *The Journal of Educational Thought (JET) / Revue de la Pensée Éducative* 11, no. 3 (1977): 203–212, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23768660>.

⁷ Yuangga Kurnia Yahya, Umi Mahmudah, and Siti Rochma, "Arabic Language as Representation of Muslim Identity in Indonesia," *Lakhomi Journal Scientific Journal of Culture 2* (June 28, 2021): 82–88.

⁸ M. Abdul Hamid, Rizka Widayanti, Suci Ramadhanti Febriani, Ayu Desrani, and Yasmadi, "Investigating Arabic Foreign Learning in Indonesian Context: It's Necessity or It's The Demand?," *IJAZ ARABI: Journal of Arabic Learning 5*, no. 2 (June 2022): 549–562.

⁹ Ali Rahimi and Navvab Hematiyan, "Language and Religion; Linguistic Religion or Religious Language," (June 15, 2011). Accessed March 17, 2024, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283723882_Language_and_Religion_Linguistic_Religion_or_Religious_Language.

¹⁰ Rodhy Harisca, Ahmad Bukhari Muslim, and Abdulahi Hussein Moalim Shariif, "Arabic Teaching Curriculum for Indonesian General Educational Stages in the Society Era 5.0," *Jurnal Al Bayan: Jurnal Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab 15*, no. 1 (June 11, 2023): 100–117.

¹¹ Widiya Yul et al., "Assessing Arabic Speaking Skills: A Critical Study for Implementation of Final Examination in Indonesia," *Izdihar: Journal of Arabic Language Teaching, Linguistics, and Literature 5*, no. 2 (August 31, 2022): 151–166.

¹² Riko Andrian and Widiya Yul, "Arabic Teaching Efficacy Model (ATEM): A Language Teaching Model Design," *International Journal of Arabic-English Studies 23*, no. 2 (2023): 369–384.

¹³ Uril Bahruddin, Riko Andrian, and Zulfi Mubaraq, "The Teaching of Maharah Qira'ah in Arabic for Economic Management Department," *Psychology and Education 58*, no. 2 (2021): 9377-9383.

between cultivating Islamic character and Arabic language learning within Islamic higher education institutions (PTKIN) in Indonesia.¹⁴

Islamic Boarding Schools serve as a prime example of interdisciplinary integration, combining Islamic character education with Arabic language learning. These institutions, which operate on a boarding school concept, are present across all PTKIN in Indonesia. The concept was first introduced by UIN Maliki Malang in 2000 and represents a synthesis of Islamic character development and structured Arabic language education.¹⁵ By fostering an Islamic environment and cultivating noble character (*akhlaq al-karīmah*), Islamic Boarding Schools effectively integrate religious values with Arabic language instruction, as demonstrated by their well-structured programs and teaching materials.¹⁶

Building on this foundation, this research seeks to contribute to the development of paradigms and curricula for Arabic language learning that are tailored to the needs of Indonesian society and students. Clarifying the direction of Arabic language learning paradigms is essential, as it significantly impacts the mapping of objectives and the design of effective learning strategies. Mishra (2020) underscores the urgency of ensuring that students acquire relevant, integrated, and beneficial learning experiences.¹⁷ While it could be argued that Islamic character can be cultivated without proficiency in Arabic, authentic Islamic understanding is deeply rooted in the Qur'an, Sunnah, and classical scholarly works, all of which are inherently tied to the Arabic language.

Moreover, an interdisciplinary approach in the social sciences provides a valuable framework for this endeavor. It integrates perspectives from multiple disciplines to explore social phenomena, including the influence of methods, theories, and organizational structures on teaching and research. Researchers adopting this approach prioritize holistic understanding by drawing on diverse worldviews rather than limiting their focus to a single field.¹⁸ This perspective enriches the discourse on Arabic language learning and its alignment with Islamic character education.

The contemporary interdisciplinary discourse extends beyond the mere integration of two disciplines within academic and research domains. It has started to permeate broader and more

¹⁴ Mahyudin Ritonga, Henrdro Widodo, Munirah, Talqis Nurdianto, "Arabic Language Learning Reconstruction as a Response to Strengthen Al-Islam Studies at Higher Education," *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education (IJERE)* 10, no. 1 (2021): 355–363.

¹⁵ Magister Studi Agama-Agama (MSAA) UIN MALIKI Malang, "Profil MSAA UIN MALIKI Malang," Accessed March 13, 2024, <https://msaa.uin-malang.ac.id/sample-page/>.

¹⁶ World Schools Redacture, "Benefits of Boarding Schools: What Experts Say," World Schools. Last modified 2024. Accessed March 25, 2024, <https://world-schools.com/boarding-school-benefits/>.

¹⁷ Pramod Mishra, "Interdisciplinary Approach In Education." IPPEM, Group of Institutions. Last modified March 18, 2020. Accessed March 16, 2024, <https://www.blog.ipemgzb.ac.in/Interdisciplinary-Approach-In-Education>.

¹⁸ Raymond C. Miller, "Interdisciplinarity: Its Meaning and Consequences," *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies* (March 1, 2010).

complex contexts, including academic communities and the wider society,¹⁹ within which religion plays a central role in shaping societal practices and values. More specifically, interdisciplinary integration across various fields today aims to achieve multiple objectives: enhancing research outcomes, increasing the efficiency of student learning, reducing departmental subjectivity and bias, fostering and expanding opportunities for further research, promoting critical thinking, and bridging diverse ideas.²⁰

The multifaceted dimensions of interdisciplinary integration, as explored by scholars, are exemplified in the following illustration:

Figure 1. Interdisciplinary Approach by Mishra, 2020.



The integration between the disciplines of Islamic character development and Arabic language learning will be thoroughly examined in the following discussion section. It is essential to clearly delineate the distinctions between these two fields; otherwise, proponents of a strictly disciplinary approach may reject their interdisciplinary integration. The interdisciplinary approach in science, in fact, emerged as a response to scholars' dissatisfaction with rigid disciplinary boundaries, which often limited the scope and applicability of academic inquiry.²¹

According to the academic discipline framework established by the Higher Education Environmental Agency of Indonesia,²² Islamic character development is classified under Cluster 10 (X), Religion and Philosophy, specifically within the sub-cluster of Religious Knowledge and the field of Islamic Studies, coded as 641. In contrast, Arabic language learning is categorized under Cluster 12 (XII), Education Sciences, specifically within the sub-cluster of Educational and Literary Sciences, in the field of Arabic Language (and Literature) Education, coded as 746. This disciplinary

¹⁹ Robert Frodeman, *The Oxford Handbook of Interdisciplinarity*, 2nd edn., 2016.

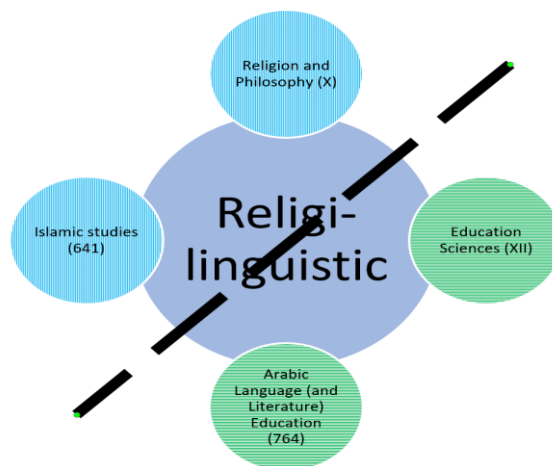
²⁰ Pramod Mishra, "Interdisciplinary Approach In Education." IPED, Group of Institutions. Last modified March 18, 2020. Accessed March 16, 2024, <https://www.blog.ipemgzb.ac.in/Interdisciplinary-Approach-In-Education>.

²¹ Miller, "Interdisciplinarity: Its Meaning and Consequences."

²² Direktorat Pendidikan Tinggi Islam, Modul Penyelenggaraan Ma'had Al Jami'ah Di Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri (PTKIN). Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia. Indonesia: Direktur Jenderal Pendidikan Islam, 2021. Accessed March 21, 2024.

distinction underscores the necessity of interdisciplinary integration to bridge the unique contributions of each field while addressing shared objectives in education and character formation.

Figure 2. Interdisciplinary of Religi-Linguistics along with Discipline Codes based on Directorate of Islamic Higher Education ²³



From the above figure, it is understood that both disciplines exist in different domains and are then integrated into a unified domain. The group of images with vertical blue shading and their codes represents the discipline of Islamic studies. Within this discipline, Islamic character serves as the content for teaching and learning for teachers and students. Furthermore, the group of images with horizontal green shading represents the linguistic discipline. Within this discipline, Arabic language serves as the subject of study.

Islamic Boarding School represents a distinction within State Islamic Higher Education Institutions in Indonesia that seeks to integrate knowledge, science, and the strengthening of religious moderation²⁴ through noble conduct.²⁵ The implementation of noble conduct, in turn, aims to foster religious character.²⁶ Religious character, when viewed from its dimensional aspects, appears extensive, encompassing psychological, social, and communicative aspects within pious students. All three aspects contribute to portraying a positive religious image.²⁷ Religious character has become

²³ Direktorat Pendidikan Tinggi Islam, “Modul Penyelenggaraan Ma’had Al Jami’ah Di Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri (PTKIN).”

²⁴ Redaktur UIN Sunan Gunung Djati, “Dirjen Pendis: Ma’had Akselerator Distingsi PTKIN,” *UIN SGD Bandung*, last modified August 7, 2023, accessed March 21, 2024, <https://uinsgd.ac.id/dirjen-pendis-mahad-akselerator-distingsi-ptkin/>.

²⁵ Direktorat Pendidikan Tinggi Islam, “Modul Penyelenggaraan Ma’had Al Jami’ah Di Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri (PTKIN).”

²⁶ President of the Republic of Indonesia. Presidential Regulation (Perpres) Number 87 of 2017 on Strengthening Character Education. The Central Government of Indonesia. Indonesia: LN.2017/NO.195, LL SETKA : 14 HLM, 2017. Accessed May 8, 2024. <https://peraturan.bpk.go.id/Details/73167/perpres-no-87-tahun-2017>.

²⁷ Neng Rina Rahmawati et al., “Karakter Religius Dalam Berbagai Sudut Pandang Dan Implikasinya Terhadap Model Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam,” *Ta’dibuna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 10, no. 4 (December 27, 2021): 535.

vital to discuss in Indonesia since the president designated it as one of the essential elements to be fulfilled by students.²⁸ For this regulation to be implemented effectively, the roles of schools, parents, and the community must synergize within the education system.²⁹

Strategic steps in fostering religious character among students include family education and environmental influence.³⁰ This means that Islamic character, which manifests as religious discipline in this study, tends to be more easily developed through education patterns within the family and surrounding environment. However, a dilemma arises: do the family and surrounding community possess an Islamic character rooted in an authentic understanding of Islam? Naturally, any factor that enhances Islamic character will always be tied to the mastery of the Arabic language, as it is essential for accessing authentic Islamic knowledge. This aligns with the findings of research conducted by Muhamat, Guleng, & Aini.³¹

Conceptually, Islamic Boarding School at UIN Malang has implemented multilanguage learning³² including Arabic, English, and Indonesian. The multilanguage strategy can be applied in Islamic Boarding School even though the primary learning goal is Arabic, indicating that teaching Arabic using Indonesian and English as instructional languages is acceptable.

Furthermore, looking at the boarding school conditions in Islamic Boarding School in PTKIN that provide dormitories, there is a potential advantage to maximize language immersion in a language environment.³³ Additionally, boarding schools can decrease bilingual users' loyalty to their mother tongue and instead encourage the use of foreign languages.³⁴

Andrian & Yul recommend more effective learning strategies in boarding schools, such as modelling.³⁵ They explain that the environment influences individuals as its basis.³⁶ indirectly support

²⁸ President of the Republic of Indonesia, Presidential Regulation (Perpres) Number 87 of 2017 on Strengthening Character Education.”

²⁹ Irmie Victorynie, M Husnaini, and Noor Amili, “Model of Religious Character Education: A Case Study in Al-Hilal Islamic Primary School Bekasi, Indonesia Foundation from the Family and Strengthened through the Islamic Education System in Schools,” *Journal of Social Studies (JSS)* 16, no. 2 (2020): 103–120.

³⁰ Santy Andriane, Laelatul Arofah, and Restu Dwi Ariyanto, “Strengthening Religious Characters: Efforts to Save Indonesia,” *Proceeding: Kresna Social Science and Humanities Research* 1 (December 8, 2020): 1–10.

³¹ Razaleigh Muhamat, M Kawangit, and Zulkefli Aini, “Impact of the Implementation of Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE) Program in the Philippines,” *Educational Research Journal* (2020): 27-32

³² Nuril Mufidah, Nihayatus Sa’adah, and Nur Kholis, “Strategi Multilanguage untuk Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab: Studi Di Ma’had Mahasiswa UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim, Malang,” *Al-Ma’rifah* 16, no. 01 (April 11, 2019): 1–10.

³³ World Schools Redacture, “Benefits of Boarding Schools: What Experts Say,” World Schools. Last modified 2024. Accessed March 25, 2024, <https://world-schools.com/boarding-school-benefits/>.

³⁴ Ari Kartini and Didin Sahidin, “The Language Loyalty of Bilingual People in Boarding School Environment,” *Seloka: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia* 10, no. 1 (April 2021), <https://journal.unnes.ac.id/sju/index.php/seloka>.

³⁵ Riko Andrian and Widiya Yul, “Arabic Teaching Efficacy Model (ATEM): A Language Teaching Model Design,” *International Journal of Arabic-English Studies* 23, no. 2 (2023): 369–384.

³⁶ Andrew J Martin, Emma C Burns, Roger Kennett, Joel Pearson, and Vera Munro-Smith, “Boarding and Day School Students: A Large-Scale Multilevel Investigation of Academic Outcomes Among Students and Classrooms,” *Frontiers in Psychology* 11 (January 5, 2021).

this recommendation, explaining that boarding schools offer all students an equal opportunity to achieve learning outcomes despite varying individual qualities, due to modelling strategies. This means that students with low motivation immediately receive treatment that does not need to be tested by teachers, namely modelling students with high learning motivation.

Modelling is not just among students; teachers also serve as effective models for students in language learning. Ellman³⁷ explains that this strategy is effective,³⁸ efficient, and principled. There is a teaching model called ATEM (Arabic Teaching Efficacy Model) offered by Andrian & Yul. The model focuses on fostering students' psychological aspects based on Self-efficacy theory.³⁹ One emphasized dimension in this model is student persistence through social recognition.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach using grounded theory to design a new paradigm integrating Arabic language learning and Islamic values within Islamic Boarding School Al Jami'ah in PTKIN Indonesia. The research was conducted in selected Islamic Boarding School across diverse regions, such as Java and Sumatera, to ensure varied and representative data. Participants included Islamic Boarding School administrators, Arabic language instructors, and students, chosen through purposive sampling, with theoretical sampling used to refine the data as the study progressed.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. Interviews explored participants' experiences and perceptions, while observations captured the dynamics of teaching and learning activities. Document analysis provided additional insights into curricula, instructional materials, and institutional guidelines. These methods allowed for a comprehensive understanding of how Arabic language learning intersects with the cultivation of Islamic values.

The analysis followed the grounded theory process, beginning with open coding to identify initial themes, followed by axial coding to establish relationships among categories, and concluding with selective coding to synthesize findings into a cohesive framework. Triangulation of data sources,

³⁷ Matthew Ellman, "Key Concepts in Teacher Training #2: Modelling," World of Better Learning, Cambridge. Last modified February 2, 2021. Accessed March 25, 2024. <https://www.cambridge.org/elt/blog/2021/02/02/key-concepts-teacher-training-modelling/>.

³⁸ Warren Haston, "Teacher Modeling as an Effective Teaching Strategy," *Music Educators Journal* 93 (March 1, 2007): 26–30.

³⁹ Albert Bandura, "Perceived Self-Efficacy in Cognitive Development and Functioning," *Educational Psychologist* 28, no. 2 (1993): 117–148; Albert Bandura, *Social Learning Theory* (New York: General Learning Press, 1971), https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwi8iMHP3Mb5AhXgSmwGHc3iDRkQFnoECAQQAQ&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.asecib.ase.ro%2Fmpps%2FBandura_SocialLearningTheory.pdf&usg=AOvVaw2z_dKxB1vOWU3-66XUXMq0.

affirmed that Islamic Boarding School serves as a distinctive feature of PTKIN at the tertiary level in Indonesia, aiming to integrate knowledge, science, and the strengthening of religious moderation.⁴⁰ This suggests a shift that contrasts sharply with the concept of Islamic Boarding School at UIN Maliki Malang, which places this distinction on the difference in morals and manners of its students compared to non-PTKIN students. However, this conceptual difference may simply be a matter of varying perspectives.

In fact, the concept of Islamic Boarding School at IAIN Kerinci and UIN Maliki Malang aligns more closely with the Module of organization and implementation of Islamic Boarding School at state Islamic higher education institutions Indonesia (PTKIN), (2021)⁴¹. This module explains that one of the core spirits of the curriculum is the practice of noble character (*akhlāq karīmah*). Nonetheless, the researcher tends to view the integration of knowledge, science, strengthening religious moderation, and inculcation of noble manners and morals as a unified whole that should flourish within the Islamic Boarding School community.

Moreover, integrating knowledge, religious moderation, and noble manners as part of the educational process is crucial. This approach encourages a balanced view of Islam that fosters tolerance and inclusivity. The combination of academic learning and character development in Islamic Boarding Schools ensures that students are not only prepared for careers but also equipped with the moral values necessary to contribute positively to society. This model promotes the understanding that knowledge and virtue should go hand in hand, with religious teachings complementing modern scientific knowledge.

In conclusion, Islamic Boarding Schools serve as platforms where students' intellectual and moral capabilities are nurtured together. The integration of *akhlāq karīmah*, knowledge, and religious moderation in these institutions helps shape well-rounded individuals who are not only academically capable but also embody the values of tolerance, peace, and respect.

2. Theoretical and Practical

According to the Module Implementation of Islamic Boarding School in State Islamic Universities/PTKIN, the term "religious" is juxtaposed with two paradigmatic words: 'mindset'

⁴⁰ Redaktur UIN Sunan Gunung Djati, "Dirjen Pendis: Ma'had Akselerator Distingsi PTKIN."

⁴¹ Direktorat Pendidikan Tinggi Islam, *Modul Penyelenggaraan Ma'had Al Jami'ah Di Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Negeri (PTKIN)*, Indonesia: Direktur Jenderal Pendidikan Islam, 2021. Accessed March 21, 2024. <https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&&p=cb79d30470ebb651JmltdHM9MTcxMDg5MjgwMCZpZ3VpZD0wMzg3NDZkNy01YWVmLTZlYTctMDQ3NS01NGIyNWJmOTZmMmEmaW5zaWQ9NTIxNw&pfn=3&ver=2&hsh=3&fclid=038746d7-5aaf-6ea7-0475-54b25bf96f2a&psq=Ma%27had+PTKIN&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly9kaWt0aXMua2VtZW5hZy5nby5pZC92MS9wdWJsaWVvZmlsZXNmYyYU1ODhINDBiZmM2MmE2NTNhMWEExZWU0ODY0N2JjYzguTW9kdWwIMjBNYSdoYWQIMjBhbC1KYW1pJ2FoJTlWmJyAyMS5wZGY&ntb=1>

and 'character'. According to the,⁴² 'mindset' refers to a person's way of thinking, while 'character' refers to a combination of specific qualities in a person or thing that distinguishes them from others. Furthermore, the term 'religious' refers to meanings associated with religion, such as religious education and having a strong belief in one's deity as demonstrated by the intensity of one's worship (pious).⁴³ Since this study focuses on the Islamic religious character of students, the term 'mindset' is excluded from this definition, and the Islamic concept is highlighted. Thus, linguistically, the Islamic religious character is a distinctive combination of specific qualities within students in practically embracing Islam.

This combination of specific qualities has been delimited in this study as the religious character,⁴⁴ namely: 1) Practicing religious teachings and beliefs, 2) Respecting religious differences, 3) Upholding tolerance towards the practices of worship and beliefs of others, and 4) Living peacefully and harmoniously with adherents of other religions.

Upon careful observation and analysis of the definitions of 'character' and religious character conceptualized by Kemdikbud RI, there exists a perplexing yet unique contradiction. Character, which should be a combination of specific qualities in a person or thing that distinguishes them from others, while Kemdikbud RI sets a standard for religious character that applies uniformly across different religious adherents. This leads to two possibilities: first, the imposition of a standard, and second, that the religions practiced by the Indonesian community share the same content in the concept of religious character among their followers.

Furthermore, religious character, when viewed from its dimensional aspects, appears broad, encompassing psychological, social, and communicative aspects within the pious student. These dimensions collectively portray a positive religious image.⁴⁵

Based on the theoretical exposition above, the researcher simplifies the values that form the essence of religious character as manifestations of righteous behavior according to the respective religious doctrines and tolerance in religious practices.

Further deep observations reveal the structured learning scheme prepared at Islamic Boarding School, consisting of student dormitories, well-scheduled routines encompassing both religious practices and academic studies, and a generally informal learning system. These efforts by the institution aim to cultivate moral conduct and etiquette in students within a simulated

⁴² Cambridge Dictionary, "Character," Cambridge University Press & Assessment . Last modified 2024. Accessed March 25, 2024. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/character>.

⁴³ Cambridge Dictionary, "Religious," Cambridge University Press & Assessment , last modified 2024, accessed March 25, 2024, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/religious>.

⁴⁴ Kemdikbud RI, "Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter Jadi Pintu Masuk Pembinaan Pendidikan Nasional."

⁴⁵ Rahmawati et al., "Karakter Religius Dalam Berbagai Sudut Pandang,"

social environment. The Mudir (head) and teachers within this environment tend to simulate teaching activities in a more relaxed manner, akin to how students would behave at their own homes. They consider the students under their care as their own children, emphasizing a transfer of knowledge driven by a caring attitude towards nurturing morally upright and cultured individuals.

These findings are consistent with strategic steps in fostering religious character among students, namely family education and environmental influence.⁴⁶ Unlike schools without simulated social environments like dormitories, where teachers must actively communicate with students' parents, such measures are unnecessary at Islamic Boarding School PTKIN. This highlights the efficiency in the learning process adopted.

Furthermore, the study unveils the existence of social modeling among students, particularly concerning religious character. Students from diverse educational backgrounds, such as those from public schools and Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), interact and learn from each other. For instance, alumni of *pesantren* who are accustomed to speaking softly due to their educational background may influence alumni of vocational schools (SMK) who are accustomed to a different style of communication. This mutual modeling inevitably occurs.

Such circumstances underscore the relevance of the Arabic Teaching Efficacy Model (ATEM) proposed by Andrian & Yul. This model focuses on cultivating students' psychological aspects based on Albert Bandura's Self-efficacy theory. One highlighted dimension of this model is student persistence through social recognition.

Arabic Language in Indonesia: A Review of Its Implementation at Islamic Boarding School PTKIN

1. Concept

The Arabic language learning concept at Islamic Boarding School IAIN Kerinci has undergone three conceptual changes from 2021 to 2024. Each change was grounded in strong reasons such as policy direction from stakeholders, adapting to dynamic phenomena, and the heterogeneous student input.

The first change occurred in early 2021 in compliance with the policy direction of IAIN Kerinci's leadership. Stakeholders aimed for Islamic Boarding School IAIN Kerinci to become a pivotal institution in linguistic aspects. Therefore, Arabic language learning there aimed to ensure that students enrolled in Islamic Boarding School programs could proficiently communicate in Arabic-English.

⁴⁶ Andrianie, Arofah, and Ariyanto, "Strengthening Religious Characters: Efforts to Save Indonesia."

The second change shifted from communicative Arabic to receptive written Arabic. This change was prompted by concerns from the Mudir regarding the practicality of Arabic learned previously. Graduates from Islamic Boarding School programs in non-Arabic language education majors tended to abandon the Arabic they had learned at Islamic Boarding School once they completed the program. This was due to the minimal, sometimes negligible, use of Arabic outside of Islamic Boarding School, such as in university lectures.

The third change was a refinement of the second change. To ensure Arabic language retention among students learning Arabic, students from non-Arabic language education majors at Islamic Boarding School were only taught receptive writing skills (*maharah qiro'ah*). Meanwhile, students majoring in Arabic language education were taught all four language skills: listening (*istima'*), speaking (*kalam*), reading (*qiro'ah*), and writing (*kitabah*).

One of the strong reasons for these conceptual changes and their refinement as mentioned above was the heterogeneous student input. Specifically, 20% of Arabic language students at Islamic Boarding School come from Islamic boarding school backgrounds and are Arabic language education majors. In contrast, the majority, 80% of Islamic Boarding School students, come from public schools with non-Arabic language education majors. This diversity makes Arabic language learning at Islamic Boarding School challenging to maximize within a one-year learning period (two semesters).

As for the Arabic language learning concept at Islamic Boarding School UIN Malang, it is also nearly consistent with that of Islamic Boarding School IAIN Kerinci. However, its longstanding existence and the rapid progress occurring now have viewed this issue as technical. Conceptually, Islamic Boarding School UIN Malang has implemented a multilanguage learning concept⁴⁷ in Arabic-English-Indonesian. With strong student input capacity, a well-established system, and adequate human resources, Arabic language learning for students from non-boarding school or non-Arabic language education backgrounds has become more optimal.

2. Theoretical and Practical

a. Learning Strategies

According to Mufidah et al, a multilanguage strategy can be implemented at Islamic Boarding School despite the primary goal of Arabic language learning. This indicates that teaching Arabic using Indonesian and English as mediums of instruction is acceptable. However, considering the boarding school environment provided by Islamic Boarding School PTKIN, there are advantages that should be maximized, such as language immersion in the

⁴⁷ Nuril Mufidah, Nihayatus Sa'adah, and Nur Kholis, "Strategi Multilanguage untuk Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab: Studi Di Ma'had Mahasiswa UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim, Malang," *Al-Ma'rifah* 16, no. 01 (April 11, 2019): 1–10.

language environment.⁴⁸ Additionally, boarding schools can reduce bilingual user loyalty to their mother tongue and encourage them to use foreign languages.⁴⁹

Andrian & Yul recommend more effective learning strategies in boarding schools, such as modelling. They explain that the environment influences individuals fundamentally. Martin et al indirectly support this recommendation, stating that boarding schools provide equal learning outcomes for students with varying individual qualities due to modelling strategies.⁵⁰ This means that students with weaker motivation receive the necessary treatment through modelling by high-motivation students.

In practice, both Islamic Boarding School institutions have implemented this approach. At IAIN Kerinci, teachers reside in the dormitories with students. Students with varying levels of learning motivation share the same dormitories. At UIN Malang, graduates from top boarding schools are recruited by the institution to serve as teachers and role models for new students.

Not only do students model each other, but teachers also serve as effective models for language learning.⁵¹ Ellman explains the effectiveness, efficiency, and principled nature of this strategy. Philosophically, students will practice what their teachers practice, including continuous use of Arabic.⁵² This is undeniable as teachers and students live together for extended periods within the boarding school environment.

The steps in Arabic language learning at Islamic Boarding School PTKIN through modelling strategies include: 1) teachers consistently communicate in Arabic; 2) students are corrected if they do not communicate in Arabic. The emphasis of the modelling strategy lies in teachers using Arabic to set an example for students. Subsequently, teachers easily correct students if they do not communicate in Arabic, having used it themselves first. Conversely, the modelling process diminishes if teachers start abandoning Arabic in their communications.

Overall, the theoretical and practical exposition of Arabic language learning strategies above fulfills the core elements of Bandura's modelling steps: attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation. Various factors can enhance the amount of attention given by an individual, whether due to complexity, frequency, or functional value. After paying attention, the next step is retention, where individuals remember what they have observed.

⁴⁸ World Schools Redacture, "Benefits of Boarding Schools: What Experts Say."

⁴⁹ Kartini and Sahidin, "The Language Loyalty of Bilingual People in Boarding School Environment."

⁵⁰ Andrew, "Boarding and Day School Students."

⁵¹ Ellman, Matthew. "Key Concepts in Teacher Training."

⁵² Warren Haston, "Teacher Modeling as an Effective Teaching Strategy."

Reproduction follows, where individuals replicate what they have observed. The final factor is motivation, where individuals find sensible reasons to imitate what they have seen.⁵³

b. Teaching Materials

The teaching materials used for learning Arabic at Islamic Boarding School PTKIN include the *kitab kuning* (classical Islamic texts). Several subjects emerged from the researcher's observations at two Islamic Boarding School PTKIN institutions:

Table 1. Learning materials in boarding school of Islamic University State in Indonesia

	IAIN Kerinci	UIN Malang
<i>Akhlāq</i>	<i>Washoya min al aba' ila al abna'</i> ⁵⁴	<i>Tafsir Ayat al Akhlak wa al Adab</i> ⁵⁵
<i>Fiqh</i>	<i>Matn safinah al najah</i> ⁵⁶	<i>Al Tahzib</i> ⁵⁷
<i>Nahw</i>	<i>Matn al jurumiyah</i>	<i>Kitab Ta'lim al Lughah al 'Arabiyah</i> ⁵⁸
<i>Shorf</i>	<i>Al amsilah al tashrifiyah</i> ⁵⁹	
<i>Mufrodat</i>	<i>Al asma' al yaumiyyah dan Kalimatul Af'al Al Yaumiyyah</i> ⁶⁰	
<i>Muhadatsah</i>	<i>Al Muhadatsah Al Ula</i> ⁶¹	

The selection of teaching materials at Islamic Boarding School IAIN Kerinci is based on the mapping of students' abilities, which tend to be at a basic level. Therefore, the chosen teaching materials are foundational. However, teachers innovate for students with better Arabic language skills by providing special treatments such as developing practical understanding from the texts within relevant contexts beyond the instructional materials.

At Islamic Boarding School UIN Malang, the teaching materials consist of classical texts (*kitab turas*) presented in a modernized deductive format. Upon deeper examination, it is evident that the instructional materials used to teach subjects other than Arabic, such as ethics and jurisprudence, maintain an Arabic-language nuance throughout. This is demonstrated by the Arabic language used comprehensively in the books.

According to Sulistyowati, the cultivation of religious character is effective, efficient, and engaging when textbooks combine Islamic education with character content.⁶²

⁵³ Besjana Rexhepi, "The Modelling Processes as an Instructional Strategy in Language Language Teaching Process: Strategies in Language Teaching Process," *Pendas Mahakam : Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran Sekolah Dasar* 6, no. 1 (June 30, 2021): 8–16.

⁵⁴ Muhammad Syakir, *Washoya al Aba' Li al Abna'*, n.d.

⁵⁵ Badruddin et al., *Tafsir Ayat al Akhlak Wa al Adab* (Malang: Ma'had Al Jami'ah - Jami'ah Maulana Malik Ibrahim Al Islamiyah Al Hukumiyah, 2023).

⁵⁶ Syaikh Salim, *Matan Safinah An-Naja* (Beirut: Darul Minhaj, 2009), accessed March 27, 2024, <https://www.santripedia.com/download-matan-safinah-naja-pdf/>.

⁵⁷ Mustafa Dib Al Bugha, *Al Tadzhib* (Ma'had Al Jami'ah - Jami'ah Maulana Malik Ibrahim Al Islamiyah Al Hukumiyah, n.d.).

⁵⁸ (Tim Bahasa Islamic Boarding School UIN Malang, n.d.)

⁵⁹ Muhammad Ma'shum, *Amsilatatus Tahsriyyah* (Surabaya: Salim Nabhan, n.d.).

⁶⁰ Al Habib Hasan, *Kalimatul Af'al Al Yaumiyyah*, ed. Shalahuddin Hasim (Pasuruan: Percetakandalwa, 2013).

⁶¹ OCEAN, *Al Muhadatsah Al Ula* (Kediri, n.d.).

⁶² Sulistyowati, "Menanamkan Karakter Religius Siswa Melalui Buku Ajar Tematik Terintegrasi PAI Dan Budi Pekerti," 10, no. 1 (2017). Accessed March 27, 2024, <http://ejournal.uin-malang.ac.id/index.php/madrasah/index>.

Interestingly, this study mentions that the majority of instructional materials used have Islamic nuances and are employed for teaching Arabic at Islamic Boarding School PTKIN.

This approach is actively implemented in the learning process at Indonesian Islamic Boarding School PTKIN. If the teachers there recognize this early on, the fundamental step in nurturing students' Islamic character is through maximizing their learning of Arabic, particularly in qiro'ah proficiency.

c. Assessment

The assessment typically applied at Islamic Boarding School IAIN Kerinci and UIN Malang focuses on students' understanding of the instructional materials. Assessment is conducted through both oral and written exams. Since the teaching materials are packaged with Arabic as the medium of instruction, students must be able to translate and comprehend written Arabic texts (*fahm al-maqrū'*) found in the instructional materials.

Understanding (*fahm al-maqrū'*) of written texts is a key objective of Arabic language learning, especially in qiro'ah proficiency. Moreover, to achieve the goal of *fahmul maqrū'*, students must also have a good understanding of nahw/syntax and ṣarf/morphology.⁶³ In addition to linguistic rules, vocabulary (*mufrodāt/kosakata*) learning supports students' ability to comprehend written texts (*fahm al-maqrū'*).⁶⁴

Integration of Religi-Linguistics

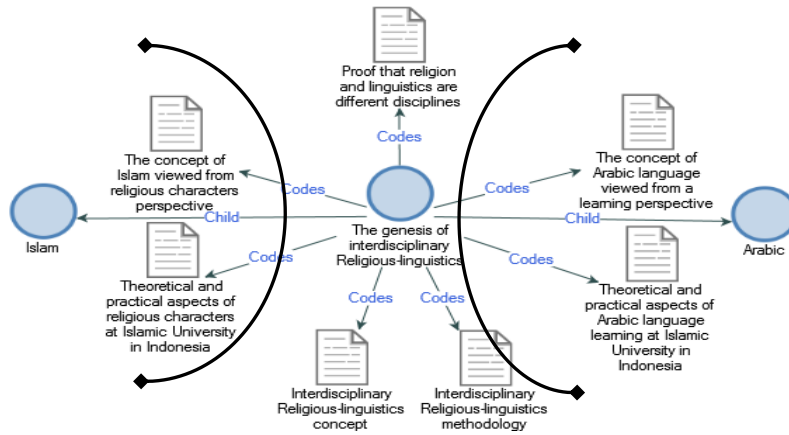
1. Genesis

Deeply, Religi-Linguistics emerged from factual origins within PTKIN (State Islamic Religious Colleges) in Indonesia. This can be understood through the following illustration:

Figure 4. The genesis of interdisciplinary Religious Linguistics at State Islamic University in Indonesia

⁶³ Karunia Krisnawilujeng, Ahmad Fatoni, and Renat Sarimov, "The Relationship Between Mastery of Nahwu Sharf and The Ability to Translate Arabic Texts," *Arabi : Journal of Arabic Studies* 8, no. 2 (December 27, 2023): 183–192.

⁶⁴ Haris Arrasyid, "Mufrodāt Fahmul Maqrū'," *SCRIBD*, last modified 2024, Accessed March 28, 2024, <https://www.scribd.com/document/418139865/mufrodāt-Fahmul-maqrū>.



The above figure illustrates the foundational origins of religi-linguistic integration. The first explanation concerns the central vertical section of the figure. It signifies the genesis of religi-linguistics, rooted in the evidence that these disciplines were initially separate before their successful integration. Moreover, the robust concepts and methodologies employed in this study serve as guiding frameworks for researchers seeking to integrate religious and linguistic dimensions.

The second aspect, depicted horizontally within the figure, represents the primary source for each discipline before the researcher identifies their intersection. This foundational basis includes empirical findings relevant to both conceptual, theoretical, and practical dimensions of religi-linguistics integration.

Mastery of the Arabic language is crucial for individuals deeply engaged in Islamic studies, particularly for preachers (dai). Without this proficiency, the concern raised by Khalwani, becomes significant: preachers and ustadz who lack an understanding of Arabic, especially in qiro'ah (reading skills), are more likely to interpret the Qur'an according to their own preferences. This tendency arises from their inability to access and comprehend classical Arabic exegeses (tafsir).⁶⁵

Furthermore, Suprayogo emphasizes that mastering the Arabic language should be mandatory for anyone studying at Islamic Higher Education Institutions, such as UIN, IAIN, STAIN, or PTAIS, regardless of their chosen field of study.⁶⁶ The rationale is that Islamic studies including disciplines such as tafsir (Qur'anic exegesis), hadith, Islamic thought, and others generally rely on Arabic-language literature as primary references.

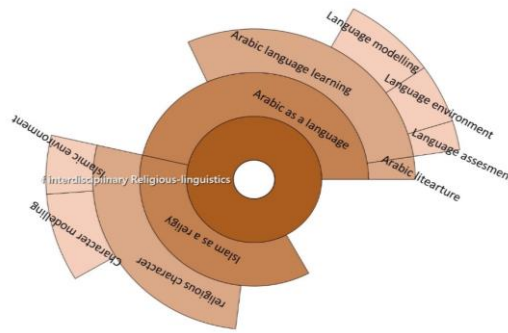
2. Dimension

From the above foundational origins arise dimensions within religi-linguistics:

⁶⁵ A Khalwani, "Pentingnya Kemampuan Bahasa Arab untuk Belajar Agama Islam," Accessed December 20, 2024, <https://pendis.kemendiknas.go.id/read/pentingnya-kemampuan-bahasa-arab-untuk-belajar-agama-islam>.

⁶⁶ Imam Suprayogo, "Bahasa Arab Dan Kajian Islam Di Perguruan Tinggi," Accessed December 20, 2024, <https://uin-malang.ac.id/r/150801/bahasa-arab-dan-kajian-islam-di-perguruan-tinggi.html>.

Figure 5. Dimensions of Religious-linguistics



These dimensions emerge from research exploration in two selected PTKIN samples. These dimensions include: within the discipline of Islam as a religion, there exist religious characters. These characters can also be referred to as indicators of adherence to the Islamic faith. They are instilled in students and adopted through processes of modeling and influence within an Islamic environment.

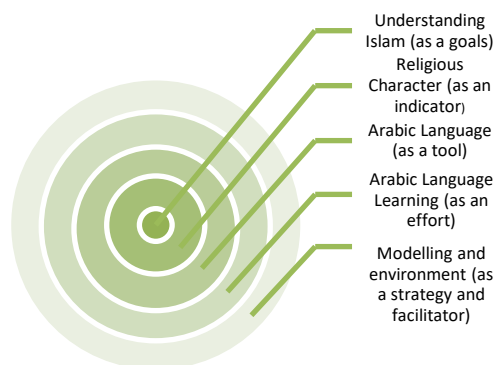
Furthermore, there is the dimension of Arabic language as a foreign language for students. This involves learning Arabic language and literature in practice. Both are cultivated through language modeling, language environment, and rigorous assessment.

Based on the explanations above, it is understood that these dimensions exhibit similar patterns, except for the 'assessment' dimension, which is specific to Arabic language learning. Therefore, further studies on assessing religious character are crucial to explore.

3. Religi-linguistic Findings

The researcher's final endeavor to refine this study is to present the interdisciplinary aspect of religio-linguistics as depicted in the following figure:

Figure 6. Interdisciplinary of Religi-linguistics



Interdisciplinary religi-linguistics integrates the discipline of Islam as the religious component and Arabic language as a foreign language for students. Firstly, the dominant discipline focuses on Islam by understanding and delving into it as the goal of religio-linguistics. Secondly, the new interdisciplinary indicator is religious character. Thirdly, the tool or medium used to achieve this indicator is the Arabic language. Fourthly, the efforts or series of interdisciplinary

steps involve Arabic language learning. Fifthly, modeling and the environment constitute a unified approach as a learning model and ideal facilitator in achieving these goals.

4. Hypothesis Premises

Based on the data presented in this research, a tentative theory emerges that religious education, particularly in Islam, is integrated with foreign language learning, specifically Arabic. This theory generates the following hypothesis premises:

Firstly, students proficient in Arabic tend to deepen their understanding of Islam.

Secondly, students proficient in Arabic tend to exhibit Islamic religious character.

Conversely:

Firstly, students with a deep understanding of Islam tend to be proficient in Arabic.

Secondly, students with Islamic religious character tend to be proficient in Arabic.

Verification of these premises is urgently needed through further research.

CONCLUSION

Interdisciplinary Religious-Linguistic refers to an academic approach that integrates religious studies and linguistic analysis, emphasizing qiro'ah (reading proficiency) as a fundamental skill for comprehensively understanding religious concepts, practices, and texts. This approach highlights the critical role of Arabic language mastery as a tool for accessing authentic religious knowledge while connecting linguistic competence to the cultivation of moral and ethical values. Within this framework, qiro'ah is not merely a technical skill but serves as a vital bridge to achieving a holistic understanding of religious teachings across diverse educational and sociocultural contexts.

Religi-linguistic integration acknowledges that religion and linguistics are distinct disciplines before being successfully integrated. The dimensions emerging from this study underscore the significance of the religious aspect within Islam as a key indicator, with Arabic language learning serving as a tool to achieve this goal. The processes of modeling and the influence of the Islamic environment are central to these efforts, while the evaluation of religious character, particularly in the context of Arabic language learning, remains a priority for further research. Religi-linguistic integration combines Islamic studies as a religious aspect with Arabic language learning as a means to deepen understanding of Islam, with ideal learning models and environments being crucial to the success of this interdisciplinary approach.

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