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APPLYING THE CONTRASTIVE LINGUISTIC METHOD TO MINIMIZE JAVANESE INTERFERENCE IN ARABIC LANGUAGE LEARNING AT ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT: This study investigates the phonological interference of the Javanese language in Arabic communication among students at Pesantren. Arabic is a medium of instruction and daily communication within the pesantren, yet students' mother tongue often influences their mastery of Arabic. This qualitative descriptive research identifies and categorizes forms of phonological interference – such as the insertion of non-Arabic phonemes like ta, to, e, seh, and yo – which significantly alter the intended meaning in Arabic discourse. Data were collected through structured observations, interviews, and audio recordings. The findings demonstrate a persistent pattern of phonemic substitution and addition that impacts pronunciation, intonation, and syntactic fluency in Arabic speech. This study reveals the linguistic challenges posed by triglossia and bilingualism in traditional Islamic boarding schools. It provides pedagogical recommendations, including phonological awareness training and the integration of contrastive linguistic methods. These insights are vital for developing more adaptive Arabic language instruction tailored to the linguistic realities of pesantren students, thereby contributing to more effective bilingual education frameworks in Islamic learning institutions

Keywords: Communication, Interference, Language, Multi Language, Pesantren.



Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji interferensi fonologis bahasa Jawa dalam komunikasi berbahasa Arab di kalangan santri Pondok Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah, Lamongan, Indonesia. Bahasa Arab digunakan sebagai media pembelajaran dan komunikasi sehari-hari di lingkungan pesantren, namun pengaruh bahasa ibu sering kali memengaruhi penguasaan bahasa Arab santri. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif untuk mengidentifikasi dan mengklasifikasikan bentuk-bentuk interferensi fonologis, seperti penyisipan fonem non-Arab ta, to, e, seh, dan yo, yang berdampak pada perubahan makna dalam tuturan berbahasa Arab. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi terstruktur, wawancara, dan rekaman audio. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya pola substitusi dan penambahan fonem secara konsisten yang memengaruhi pelafalan, intonasi, serta kelancaran sintaksis dalam berbicara bahasa Arab. Studi ini mengungkap tantangan linguistik akibat diglosia dan bilingualisme di pesantren tradisional, serta menawarkan rekomendasi pedagogis seperti pelatihan kesadaran fonologis dan penerapan metode linguistik kontrasif. Temuan ini penting untuk mengembangkan strategi pembelajaran bahasa Arab yang lebih adaptif terhadap realitas linguistik santri, serta berkontribusi pada penguatan kerangka pendidikan dwibahasa di lembaga pendidikan Islam.

Kata Kunci: Bahasa, Interferensi, Komunikasi, Multi Bahasa, dan Pesantren.

INTRODUCTION

The Arabic language is a fundamental element in the educational curriculum of almost all Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) in Indonesia, serving as the primary medium for understanding various disciplines sourced from Arabic literature ¹. Students (santri) have diverse goals in learning this language, ranging from improving communication skills to deepening their understanding of Islamic sciences ², as well as comprehending the culture of the prophetic era ³. However, the diverse linguistic backgrounds of the students often give rise to language interference phenomena, where Arabic structures and patterns are influenced by their mother tongues ⁴. In addition to emphasizing the understanding of classical texts, this approach also integrates the use of Arabic in daily communication to

¹ Beri Nopriansyah, Inqiado Al-farisi, and Gita Fitri Ramadhani, "Exploring Codes Mixing of Arabic Language at Islamic Boarding School: A Study on Students' Daily Communication," *Journal of Language Intelligence and Culture* 6, no. 2 (August 2024): 141-52, <https://doi.org/10.35719/jlic.v6i2.141>.

² Muhamad Hafidh Asyrofi and Nur Anisah Ridwan, "Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Di MAN 1 Lampung Tengah," *Journal of Innovation and Teacher Professionalism* 1, no. 1 (April 30, 2023): 1-13, <https://doi.org/10.17977/um084v1i12023p1-13>.

³ Munassir Alhamami and Abdulrahman Almosa, "Learning Arabic as a Second Language in Saudi Universities: Ajzen's Theory and Religious Motivations," *Language, Culture and Curriculum* 36, no. 4 (October 2, 2023): 509-32, <https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2023.2242912>.

⁴ Eghy Farhan Nugraha, Wildan Taufiq, and Muhammad Abdul Halim, "Ragam Bahasa Santri Di Pondok Pesantren," *Hijai - Journal on Arabic Language and Literature* 4, no. 2 (January 12, 2022): 108-22, <https://doi.org/10.15575/hijai.v4i2.9298>.



create a more effective learning environment ⁵.

The teaching of the Arabic language in Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) serves not only as a means to comprehend religious literature but also as a practical skill that enhances students' (santri) ability to communicate effectively ⁶. This approach enables santri to become not only proficient in text comprehension but also competent in using Arabic in their everyday lives ⁷. Arabic language learning is a series of formal activities aimed at providing students with experiences and knowledge, particularly in specific language skills, as well as a deep understanding of Arabic and its culture ⁸.

However, in the practice of teaching Arabic, santri often encounter challenges, mistakes, and obstacles, including the influence of their mother tongue on the Arabic language they practice in daily activities within the pesantren environment ⁹. Language interference between the mother tongue and Arabic is often unavoidable, causing the Arabic learned and practiced to be less fluent and sometimes disorganized ¹⁰. One of the major problems is the transfer of structures and vocabulary from the mother tongue into Arabic, which can hinder proper understanding and usage ¹¹.

The influence of the mother tongue on Arabic mastery is clearly evident among the students of Pondok Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah in Lamongan. The linguistic disruptions they experience are caused by language contact between their mother tongue, Javanese, and Arabic. This phenomenon is commonly known as

⁵ Sri Wahyuningsih and Kaharuddin, "Interferensi Bahasa Daerah Dan Bahasa Indonesia Terhadap Penggunaan Bahasa Arab," *AL-AF'IDAH: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab Dan Pengajarannya* 3, no. 2 (June 2019): 90-100, <https://doi.org/10.52266/al-afidah.v3i2.336>.

⁶ Agus Yasin et al., "Development of the 'Al-Muhdastah Al-Yaumiyyah' Textbook to Improve Arabic Speaking Skills at an Islamic Boarding School," *Izdihar: Journal of Arabic Language Teaching, Linguistics, and Literature* 6, no. 2 (September 1, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.22219/jiz.v6i2.22695>.

⁷ Andiopenta Purba, "How First and Second Languages Influence Indonesian Students' English as a Third Language: Transfer and Interference Analysis," *Elsya: Journal of English Language Studies* 4, no. 2 (June 2022): 147-56, <https://doi.org/10.31849/elsya.v4i2.8704>; Zamri Arifin et al., "Language Learning Strategies of Non-Muslim Students Applied to Arabic Language Course Inside and Outside the Classroom," *Ijaz Arabi Journal of Arabic Learning* 4, no. 1 (December 10, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.18860/ijazarabi.v4i1.9995>.

⁸ Setia Wati, Ahmad Asse, and Ubadah, "Interferensi Fonologi Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Pada Peserta Didik Kelas X Agama MA Alkhairaat Pusat Palu," *Albariq: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 4, no. 1 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.24239/albariq.v4i1.44>.

⁹ Abeer Asli-Badarneh and Ibrahim Asadi, "The Impact of Lexical and Phonological Distance on Reading Acquisition: The Diglossic Context of Arabic," *Journal of Research in Reading* 46, no. 4 (November 2023): 376-92, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9817.12433>.

¹⁰ Ilia Markov, Vivi Nastase, and Carlo Strapparava, "Exploiting Native Language Interference for Native Language Identification," *Natural Language Engineering* 28, no. 2 (March 26, 2022): 167-97, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1351324920000595>.

¹¹ Hindun Hindun and Humaidi Humaidi, "Interferensi Bahasa Daerah Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab: Analisis Dampak Pada Struktur Sintaksis Dan Pemahaman Semantik," *Qismul Arab: Journal of Arabic Education* 3, no. 02 (June 29, 2024): 106-12, <https://doi.org/10.62730/qismularab.v3i02.94>.



language interference¹². Language interference can create difficulties in understanding and applying Arabic correctly. Such interference may result in grammatical errors, vocabulary differences, and sentence structures that do not conform to Arabic language norms.

According to Crystal ¹³, interference in the context of language refers to an event where habits and speech patterns of the mother tongue or dialect impact the use of another language or dialect. Language interference is a common phenomenon that often occurs during the process of learning a second language. Language learning theories suggest that individuals tend to use their native language experiences to facilitate the understanding and mastery of a second language. These native language experiences include linguistic habits and speech patterns that have been formed since early childhood ¹⁴.

In the context of second language learning, one's native language plays a significant role. The use of native language experiences can influence vocabulary choices, sentence structures, and intonation in the second language. Consequently, language interference often emerges as a subconscious effort to transfer elements of the native language into the second language. Language interference can be defined as linguistic errors arising from the tendencies and habits of one language influencing another, covering aspects such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, meaning, and even culture ¹⁵.

The linguistic background of santri plays a critical role in shaping their Arabic speaking (kalam) skills. Common mistakes in the learning process of speaking skills often result from differences between the characteristics of Arabic and their mother tongue, or the Indonesian language. When speaking Arabic, santri are frequently influenced or experience interference from their mother tongue, even if the patterns in Arabic and the students' native language differ. In everyday communication, many santri still tend to insert elements from their first language. For instance, in the expression بِكَذَاكَ to, the Arabic phrase contains the phoneme interference "to". Many aspects of interference occur when santri learn Arabic, especially in speaking skills (*maharah kalam*). Santri may not realize that what they are doing is incorrect, as habits from their previous language influence it. Therefore, educators need to be sensitive to this phenomenon to remind students and reduce the possibility of such

¹² Muhammad Arif Firmansyah, "Interferensi Dan Integrasi Bahasa," *Paramasastra* 8, no. 1 (April 2021): 46–59, <https://doi.org/10.26740/paramasastra.v8n1.p46-59>.

¹³ A. Syahid Robbani and Hisyam Zaini, "Interferensi Bahasa Sasak Terhadap Bahasa Arab Santri," *Diglosia: Jurnal Kajian Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Pengajarannya* 5, no. 2 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.30872/diglosia.v5i2.347>.

¹⁴ Niswatush Sholihah, "Interferensi Gramatikal Bahasa Indonesia Dalam Percakapan Berbahasa Arab Santri Ptyqm Kudus," *لساننا (LISANUNA): Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa Arab Dan Pembelajarannya* 9, no. 2 (April 2020): 309, <https://doi.org/10.22373/lis.v9i2.6749>.

¹⁵ Thoyib Thoyib and Hasanatul Hamidah, "Interferensi Fonologis Bahasa Arab 'Analisis Kontrastif Fonem Bahasa Arab Terhadap Fonem Bahasa Indonesia Pada Mahasiswa Universitas Al Azhar Bukan Jurusan Sastra Arab,'" *JURNAL AL-AZHAR INDONESIA SERI HUMANIORA* 4, no. 2 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.36722/sh.v4i2.257>.



interference.

This study aims to identify and analyze the phenomenon of Javanese language interference in the Arabic practiced by the students of Pondok Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah, Lamongan. This research focuses on phoneme-level interference and explains the contributing factors, such as language habits, the level of Arabic proficiency, and the influence of socio-cultural environments. Moreover, this study analyzes the impact of interference on students' communication competence, particularly in speaking skills (*maharah kalam*), and formulates solutions and teaching strategies to minimize its impact. The findings of this study are expected to provide in-depth insights into Arabic language learning in pesantren and contribute to the development of more effective and adaptive teaching methods.

METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative approach with a descriptive method to explore Javanese language interference among students of Pondok Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah Lamongan towards the Arabic language they learn as a second language. The descriptive method is chosen as it is well-suited to provide an in-depth understanding of the forms of language interference that emerge. This research implements a comprehensive approach to data collection, including interviews, listening, and observation. The steps of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and concluding are conducted following the methodology taught by Miles and Huberman ¹⁶.

The researcher actively collected utterances that contain language interference, both through interviews, attentive listening, and direct observation. Subsequently, the researcher selected information relevant to the research objectives, separating irrelevant information. The main focus is to find and analyze the language interference that appears in the observed utterances. Using a structured analysis technique, the researcher then concludes the identified findings. This process allows the researcher to systematically evaluate and present research results carefully, in accordance with the Miles and Huberman method adopted in this study ¹⁷.

The data analysis process follows the Miles & Huberman technique, which includes data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing ¹⁸. With this approach, the researcher can ensure the accuracy and precision of the

¹⁶ Umrati Umrati and Hengki Wijaya, *Analisis Data Kualitatif Teori Konsep Dalam Penelitian Pendidikan* (Sekolah Tinggi Theologia Jaffray, 2020).

¹⁷ Humaidi Humaidi, "Interferensi Antara Bahasa Arab Dengan Bahasa Madura (Studi Kasus Pada Mahasiswa Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab STAI Syaikhona Moh. Cholil Bangkalan," *Syaikhuna: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pranata Islam* 10, no. 1 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.36835/syaikhuna.v10i1.3473>.

¹⁸ Humaidi.



research results and gain a deeper understanding of Javanese language interference in the context of Arabic language learning at Pondok Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah Lamongan.

RESULTS

From the research we conducted, there is Javanese language interference in Arabic daily conversations (*muhadatsah yaumiyah*) among the students of Pondok Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah, primarily in the form of Javanese phoneme interference. The details are as follows:

1. Phonological Interference

This occurs when sound changes appear during pronunciation. It is often found among students who use Javanese as their mother tongue, resulting in the insertion of distinct Javanese sounds like *to*, *seh*, *leh*, *lo*, *eh*, *ta*, and *yo* into Arabic words.

Table 1. Examples of Phonological Interference in Sound Insertion

Speaker's Sentence	Inserted Sound
كذلكto?	Insertion of "to" after كذلك
كيفseh?	Insertion of "seh" after كيف
لا أحب أناlo	Insertion of "lo" between أنا and لا أحب
لا أدريeh	Insertion of "eh" after لا أدري
انتظرنيyo	Insertion of "yo" after انتظرني
أنت مازلت طويلta?	Insertion of "ta" after the sentence

2. Phoneme Interference in Word Emphasis (Pentaukidan Kata)

In Javanese, the emphasis of the meaning "very" is often done by adding vowels like "ua" or "ui". This phenomenon is carried into students' pronunciation in Arabic.

Table 2. Examples of Phoneme Interference in Word Emphasis

Speaker's Sentence	Inserted Sound	Intended Meaning
ج (أ)ميلة	Insertion of "u-a" in جميلة	Very beautiful
م (أ)هر	Insertion of "u-a" in ماهر	Very smart/skilled
صوغب	Insertion of "u-a" in صعب	Very difficult

3. Word Reduplication Interference (Reduplikasi)



Word reduplication is used to clarify meaning or to create a different interpretation. This phenomenon is carried over to the students' Arabic pronunciation, as found in the field.

Table. 3 examples of Phoneme interference in Word Repetition

Speaker's Sentence	Inserted Sound
ضَحْكُ-ضَحِيكُ (Dhohak-Dhohek)	Insertion of "ak-ek" between the words
طَرَقُ-طَرِيقُ (Thoraq-Thoriq)	Insertion of "aq-iq" between the words
صَحْخُ-صَحِيحُ (Shahah-Shohih)	Insertion of "ah-ih" in the word

4. The Insertion of the "e" Sound for Possessive Forms

The sound "e" at the end of nouns in Javanese is often used to indicate ownership, such as **kopi-e** or **kopine Pak Roihan**, which means "Pak Roihan's coffee." Field data shows similar insertions in Arabic as listed in Table 4.

Table 4. Sound interference e

Speaker's Sentence	Inserted Sound
مَلَابِس_e	Insertion of "e" in مَلَابِس
قَلَم_e	Insertion of "e" in قَلَم
كِتَاب_e	Insertion of "e" in كِتَاب
صَحْن_e	Insertion of "e" in صَحْن

DISCUSSION

1. The Concept and Types of Language Interference

Interference is a deviation from the rules of a language that occurs in bilingual individuals due to the use of two languages, either in writing or speaking ¹⁹. Bhatia, as cited in ²⁰, defines Interference as a language transfer process, which is a mechanism where a person brings structural elements from their original language (source language) into the new language (second or target language). It is also mentioned that there is a connection between the two languages, with a close relationship between lexicon and grammar, which is compared to the relationship between a hand and a glove ²¹. In certain situations, especially when speakers encounter difficulties in pronouncing the new language, cognitive processes bring out elements from the original language. In another understanding, Interference

¹⁹ Dina Gasong and Rita Tanduk, "Interferensi Bahasa Toraja Ke Penggunaan Bahasa Indonesia Pada Khotbah Di Gereja Katolik Makale," *Bahtera Indonesia; Jurnal Penelitian Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia* 7, no. 2 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.31943/bi.v7i2.214>.

²⁰ Firmansyah, "Interferensi Dan Integrasi Bahasa."

²¹ François Grosjean, *Bilingual: Life and Reality* (Harvard University Press, 2010), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt13x0ft8>.



involves changes in the language system related to contact with another language²².

According to other experts, Interference is the use of distinctive elements from one language that are carried over into another language, both in oral and written communication²³. In this context, Interference occurs when elements such as vocabulary, grammar, or pronunciation from the first language (source language) are unconsciously or unintentionally inserted into the second language (target language). This process often happens to bilingual speakers, where features from their original language interfere with or influence their use of the second language, creating forms that are not aligned with the target language's norms.

Language interference has various types of classifications based on the forms of vocabulary changes that emerge²⁴. The results of the research conducted by the researcher show that Javanese language interference in Arabic during daily conversations (*muhadatsah yaumiyah*) of students at the Tarbiyatut Tholabah Islamic Boarding School in Lamongan is primarily characterized by Javanese phoneme interference and others. The details are as follows:

a. Phonological Interference

This type of Interference occurs when there are sound changes in pronunciation²⁵. This is often found among students (*santri*) who use Javanese as their primary language and then attempt to pronounce words in Arabic (as the daily learning language) by inserting distinctive Javanese sounds. Common examples include the insertion of sounds like **to**, **seh**, **leh**, **lo**, and **eh** in the pronunciation of certain words.

b. Interference of Distinctive Javanese Sounds: *to*, *seh*, *leh*, *lo*, *ta*, and *eh*

Specifically, pronunciation patterns rooted in the mother tongue (Javanese) are often carried over when students attempt to articulate words in Arabic. For example, unique phonemic elements such as the addition of *to*, *seh*, *leh*, or *lo* frequently appear when they speak in Arabic. This happens because students are more accustomed to the sound patterns and intonations of Javanese, which significantly differ from Arabic.

²² Siti Mariana Ulfa, Udjang Pairin M. Basir, and Yulianah Prihatin, "Faktor Penyebab Terjadinya Interferensi Bahasa Indonesia Tuturan Mahasiswa Thailand Pada Pembelajaran PPL Dasar Di Universitas Hasyim Asy'ari," *Jurnal Disastri (Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia)* 2, no. 1 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.33752/disastr.v2i1.876>.

²³ N H Hornberger and S McKay, *Sociolinguistics and Language Education, New Perspectives on Language and Education (Multilingual Matters, 2010)*.

²⁴ Benjamin A. Parris et al., "The Loci of Stroop Effects: A Critical Review of Methods and Evidence for Levels of Processing Contributing to Color-Word Stroop Effects and the Implications for the Loci of Attentional Selection," *Psychological Research* 86, no. 4 (2022): 1029-53, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00426-021-01554-x>.

²⁵ Sylviane Valdois, Jean-Luc Roulin, and Marie Line Bosse, "Visual Attention Modulates Reading Acquisition," *Vision Research* 165 (December 2019): 152-61, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.visres.2019.10.011>.



When students encounter certain Arabic sounds that do not exist in Javanese, they tend to replace them with familiar or more comfortable sounds ²⁶. This phonological Interference is often also caused by a lack of exposure or intensive practice in Arabic pronunciation, making the original Arabic sounds difficult to access naturally ²⁷. As a result, the Arabic spoken by the students is "colored" by the accent or phonemic structure of the Javanese language.

This phonological Interference not only affects pronunciation but can also impact the overall understanding of Arabic. Javanese-speaking students tend to retain the intonation, rhythm, and pronunciation of words according to their mother tongue patterns, sometimes resulting in pronunciations that do not conform to Arabic language norms. This phenomenon highlights the importance of phonetic practice and deeper phonological understanding in the learning process of Arabic so that students can minimize Interference from Javanese.

c. Phoneme Interference in Word Emphasis

In Javanese, the expression of something significant or intense is marked by emphasizing the word with the addition of the vowels "ua" or "ui," such as "very beautiful" becoming *cuantik* and "very smart" becoming *puintar*, as shown in Table 2.

The data above indicates Arabic words that convey the meaning of "very." However, in the students' daily use, there is a phenomenon of phonological Interference, where they insert sounds influenced by Javanese. This happens because certain phonemes in Javanese resemble those in Arabic, leading students to replace or add Javanese phonemes when pronouncing Arabic words subconsciously.

This influence illustrates how the students' mother tongue, Javanese, affects their Arabic pronunciation. Although these Arabic words have clear and standard meanings, the insertion of Javanese phonemes can alter the way they are pronounced, ultimately affecting the smoothness and understanding of communication. This is an example of phonological Interference that occurs when two languages interact in daily communication practices, frequently experienced by students in Islamic boarding schools.

d. Sound Interference in Word Reduplication

In Javanese, word reduplication sometimes involves vowel modification in the duplicated word, such as *ngguya-ngguyu* (laughing), *mloka-mlaku* (walking), *bolak-balik* (back and forth), and others. Similarly, students tend to perform Interference in the reduplication of such words.

²⁶ Muhammad Ibnu Pamungkas et al., "Error Analysis of Consonant Pronunciation in Arabic Language among Fifth-Grade Students," *Ta'lim Al-'Arabiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab & Kebahasaaraban* 8, no. 1 (June 30, 2024): 56–71, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpba.v8i1.34596>.

²⁷ Hindun and Humaidi, "Interferensi Bahasa Daerah Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab: Analisis Dampak Pada Struktur Sintaksis Dan Pemahaman Semantik."



This phenomenon of word reduplication is not present in Arabic's structure. However, in these examples, students unconsciously replicate this pattern as a form of alignment with Javanese patterns. In Javanese, word reduplication is often used to emphasize or clarify meaning, and applied by students when speaking in Arabic, even though Arabic does not recognize this concept.

Javanese word reduplication serves to emphasize or strengthen a meaning, but in Arabic, it is neither applicable nor conventional, causing the sentences to sound awkward or unnatural. This reflects a form of phonological Interference where mother tongue elements, in this case, Javanese, influence how students construct sentences or choose words in Arabic. This adaptation often goes unnoticed and disrupt accuracy and effectiveness of communication in Arabic.

e. Sound Interference of "e" Indicating Possession

In Javanese, the concept of possession is often expressed by adding the phoneme *-e* at the end of a word, such as "his/her clothes," which in Javanese becomes *klambine*. This pattern has become ingrained among some students, even when using Arabic in daily conversations (*muhadatsah yaumiyah*). Consequently, Interference emerges in the form of the application of this Javanese linguistic pattern to Arabic structure.

In Arabic, however, possession is expressed through the use of *dhamir* (possessive pronouns), which must correspond to the form of the noun (*isim*) and the intended pronoun. For instance, to say "his clothes" in Arabic, one would use *ثوبه* (*thawbuhu*) for a male subject, or *ثوبها* (*thawbuhā*) for a female subject. This phenomenon shows the need for greater attention to establishing the correct patterns to minimize Interference from Javanese.

Ism munfaṣil (detached pronouns) and ism ḍamīr muttaṣil (attached pronouns)²⁸. The attached pronouns (ism ḍamīr muttaṣil) are more commonly used for expressing possession. For example, in the phrase "kitābī" (my book), the suffix *-ī* denotes first-person singular possession. Other variations, such as *-ka* for the masculine second person ("your") or *-hu* for the masculine third person ("his"), offer considerable syntactic flexibility in Arabic.

The substitution of the possessive system with the phoneme "e" not only simplifies the structure but also undermines the grammatical precision of Arabic. This deviation signals the strong influence of the student's mother tongue in shaping their communicative habits. Beyond affecting the accuracy of Arabic usage, such interference may also hinder the development of formal communicative competence.

Therefore, a more structured pedagogical approach is necessary to enhance students' understanding and application of possessive structures in Arabic. At the same time, this approach should reduce the influence of Javanese language interference, particularly in contexts requiring formal or academic Arabic

²⁸ Abu Dzar Al-gifari, "Nakirah Dan Ma'Rifah Fii Al-Qur'An," *Shaut Al Arabiyyah* 10, no. 1 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.24252/saa.v10i1.29432>.



proficiency.

2. Factors Contributing to Language Interference

Language interference can occur due to several contributing factors. According to Weinreich²⁹, there are three primary reasons for interference: (1) bilingual competence in speakers, (2) habitual use of the first language or mother tongue (L1), and (3) limited mastery of new vocabulary in the second language. Interference is influenced by two main factors: language contact and linguistic competence. Language contact arises in bilingual communities, while interference may also result from an incomplete acquisition of a second or foreign language, particularly among language learners³⁰.

In this study, interference is attributed to these two key factors—language contact and linguistic competence—as observed in students' interactions at the Tarbiyatut Tholabah Islamic boarding school. Language contact occurs because the students live in a bilingual environment, where Javanese, as their mother tongue (L1), dominates daily communication. At the same time, Arabic is used as a second language in formal learning contexts and specific religious or academic activities. This situation creates opportunities for elements of Javanese to influence the structure and use of Arabic among the students.

Moreover, interference is also shaped by the students' still-developing proficiency in Arabic. Some students continue to face difficulties in understanding and applying Arabic grammar rules correctly, especially in phonology, morphology, and syntax. For instance, the Javanese phoneme "e" is often used to denote possession in Arabic, despite Arabic having a far more specific and complex possessive system through *ism ḍamīr*. This phenomenon illustrates that limited mastery of Arabic, combined with strong influence from the mother tongue, contributes significantly to interference, ultimately affecting both the accuracy and effectiveness of the student's communication in Arabic.

The interference of the Javanese language in the *muhādathah yaumiyyah* (daily conversations) of students at Pondok Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah in Lamongan represents a linguistic phenomenon shaped by various interrelated factors. Based on interviews and field observations conducted by the researcher, these contributing factors can be explained as follows:³¹:

a. The Influence of the Mother Tongue as the Primary Language

Most students (*santri*) studying at Pondok Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah in Lamongan come from Javanese-speaking communities. As such, Javanese—used as their mother tongue or first language in daily communication—

²⁹ Ulfa, M. Basir, and Prihatin, "Faktor Penyebab Terjadinya Interferensi Bahasa Indonesia Tuturan Mahasiswa Thailand Pada Pembelajaran PPL Dasar Di Universitas Hasyim Asy'ari."

³⁰ Irni Cahyani Lili Agustina, "Interferensi Bahasa Katingan Lisan Dan Tulisan Di Smp Katingan Tengah Kabupaten Katingan Kalimantan Tengah," *JURNAL BAHASA, SASTRA DAN PEMBELAJARANNYA* 7, no. 2 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.20527/jbsp.v7i2.4421>.

³¹ Interview with Vika Madinatul Ilmi (language supervisor) on November 5, 2024



significantly shapes their linguistic thought patterns. The structure and pronunciation patterns of the mother tongue are often transferred into the target language, particularly when students are not yet fully accustomed to the rules of Arabic grammar.

b. Limited Mastery of Arabic Language Rules

Students required to speak Arabic in *muhādathah yaumiyyah* (daily conversation) are typically those in Grade 10 of the upper secondary level. However, most students had not yet acquired sufficient Arabic proficiency prior to this stage. Incomplete mastery of Arabic—especially in terms of phonology (sound), morphology (word formation), and syntax (sentence structure)—leads students to rely on elements of the Javanese language to fill gaps in their understanding. When they struggle to comprehend or apply Arabic rules, they tend to revert automatically to familiar Javanese linguistic patterns.

c. Linguistic and Cultural Habits

The Javanese language features distinctive vocabulary, grammar, and expressions deeply rooted in the students' culture and daily habits. When speaking Arabic, students may unconsciously insert Javanese elements—such as local greeting particles like *to*, *seh*, or *leh*, or intonational shifts that align with their native speech patterns.

d. Cognitive Processes in Language Learning

When students encounter challenges in using Arabic, they tend to cognitively "activate" elements from their native Javanese as linguistic support. This reflects a natural tendency in second language acquisition, where learners draw on prior language knowledge to interpret and produce the new language. Consequently, interference arises because the first language is more familiar and accessible, becoming an automatic reference point whenever students struggle with Arabic usage.

e. Limited Correction and Supervision in Language Practice

Although Pondok Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah assigns one *musyrifah* (language supervisor) to each *ribath* (dormitory unit), the researcher found that the number of supervisors remains insufficient. More *musyrifah* are needed to effectively assist students in practicing Arabic. It becomes difficult to prevent interference without consistent correction and close supervision during the language learning process. Without ongoing instructor feedback, students may continue using Arabic influenced by Javanese without realizing their errors.

3. The Impact of Language Interference

Indonesian society generally operates in a bilingual context, using two languages in daily communication: regional languages as mother tongues and Bahasa Indonesia as the national language. The simultaneous use of these languages in everyday interactions results in frequent language contact, which can lead to mutual influence between the two. This phenomenon is evident in the common blending of Bahasa Indonesia with regional vocabulary or vice versa. In



informal contexts, such mixing is often not considered problematic. However, in formal contexts, such language blending can raise serious concerns regarding clarity, accuracy, and linguistic formality³².

Mother tongue interference – such as from Javanese – can significantly affect various aspects of students' (santri) Arabic language acquisition. One notable impact is pronunciation difficulty, where distinctive Javanese sounds replace Arabic phonemes that do not exist in the native language. This leads to inaccurate and sometimes unintelligible pronunciation. Moreover, interference also influences sentence structure and vocabulary selection, where students tend to apply direct translations or syntactic patterns from Javanese, potentially resulting in sentence construction errors and semantic inaccuracies. These issues can hinder communication fluency and reduce learners' confidence in using Arabic.

Another consequence is diminished comprehension of Arabic texts. Interference may lead to misinterpretations or misunderstandings of Arabic literature and complicate adaptation to Arabic sociolinguistic norms. It also obstructs mastery of speaking skills (mahārah kalām), making students sound rigid and overly influenced by their native language, thus decreasing the overall effectiveness of learning Arabic.

This study successfully identified various forms of Javanese phonological interference in Arabic during students' muhādathah yaumiyyah (daily conversation) practices at Pondok Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah, Lamongan. However, the study has several limitations. First, it focuses solely on phonological interference without exploring other possible forms, such as syntactic, morphological, or semantic interference, which may also occur in students' Arabic usage. Second, the data analyzed were drawn from only one pesantren, making it difficult to generalize the findings to other pesantren environments that may differ in sociolinguistic context. Third, the study used a descriptive qualitative approach without incorporating detailed quantitative instruments to measure the extent of phonological interference in each category. Furthermore, other influential factors such as educational background, learning motivation, family environment, and exposure intensity to Arabic were not examined in depth, even though these factors play a crucial role in determining students' ability to acquire Arabic without the influence of their mother tongue.

CONCLUSION

Mother tongue interference – specifically Javanese – on Arabic language learning at Pondok Pesantren Tarbiyatut Tholabah Lamongan demonstrates that

³² Sevtya Zahrotul Audina et al., "Interferensi Dialek Bahasa Jawa Terhadap Penggunaan Bahasa Indonesia Sebagai Bahasa Komunikasi," *Jurnal Multidisiplin Indonesia* 2, no. 6 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.58344/jmi.v2i6.252>.



transferring linguistic elements from the native language to the target language significantly affects various aspects of students' language proficiency. Phonological, morphological, and syntactic interference arises from language habits formed through the daily use of Javanese. The insertion of Javanese-specific sounds into Arabic pronunciation, sentence structures that do not conform to Arabic grammatical rules, and the influence of Javanese vocabulary in Arabic communication all challenge the learning process.

The impact of such interference is considerable, ranging from pronunciation difficulties that render spoken Arabic inaccurate to compromised comprehension of Arabic texts, which diminishes students' understanding of religious literature. Interference also hinders the development of speaking skills, as students often lack confidence and struggle to adapt to the sociocultural norms of the Arabic language. Therefore, pesantren must enhance phonological training, implement intensive error correction, and provide consistent guidance in Arabic practice. These efforts will help students minimize the influence of Javanese interference and achieve greater proficiency in Arabic.

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