



Arabic Language Acquisition in Boarding High School Students: A Study of Environment, Motivation, and Social Interaction

Imam Asrofi¹, Amir Supriatna², Ari Abdul Kohar R³, Agus Ruswandi^{4*}

¹Universitas Islam Nusantara, Indonesia

²Universitas Islam Nusantara, Indonesia

³Universitas Islam Nusantara, Indonesia

⁴Universitas Islam Nusantara, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: Agus Ruswandi, E-mail: agus_ruswandi@uninus.ac.id

Received: July 19, 2025

Revised: August 22, 2025

Accepted: Sep 25, 2025

Online: Dec 27, 2025

ABSTRACT

Arabic language acquisition in boarding schools exhibits distinctive dynamics shaped by immersive environments, institutional policies, and social interaction. Previous studies have primarily examined these factors separately, resulting in a limited integrative understanding. This study explores patterns of Arabic acquisition through the interrelationship between environmental design, motivational mechanisms, and social interaction in three Islamic boarding senior high schools in West Java. Using a qualitative phenomenological approach, participants were purposively selected from schools implementing Arabic programs. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis, and analysed using Moustakas' thematic procedures. The findings reveal three acquisition models. SMA Asy-Syifa represents a classical, fragmented model emphasising grammatical mastery with minimal communicative exposure. FIBBIS High School applies an immersion-regulatory model through language zones and sanctions, increasing exposure but also generating anxiety and silence strategies. In contrast, Yaspida High School implements an integrative ecosystem model that combines a structured language environment, positive incentives, and layered peer support, effectively reducing affective barriers and fostering authentic communicative competence.

Keywords: *Boarding School, Environment, Motivation, Social Interactions*

Journal Homepage

<https://ejournal.uinmybatusangkar.ac.id/ojs/index.php/lughawiyah>

This is an open-access article under the CC BY-SA license

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>

How to cite:

Asrofi, I., Supriatna, A., R, K. A. A, & Ruswandi, A. (2022). Arabic Language Acquisition in Boarding High School Students: A Study of Environment, Motivation, and Social Interaction. *Lughawiyah Journal of Arabic Education and Linguistics*, 7(2), 138-153.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.31958/lughawiyah.v7i2.16488>

Published by:

Universitas Islam Negeri Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar, Indonesia

INTRODUCTION

Arabic language learning in boarding schools has unique characteristics that distinguish it from public schools. The boarding environment provides students with more opportunities to engage with Arabic in their daily lives, both through academic activities and social interactions. However, the effectiveness of Arabic acquisition in this environment is still a matter of debate. Some factors that affect the success of Arabic language acquisition include a conducive learning environment, student motivation, and social interaction among students.

(Fitriyah, 2024; Islami & Fadli, 2024; Nugraha & Sukarno, 2025; I. Oktaviani et al., 2024). Environmental factors include the accidental factor of students hearing Arabic expressions. (Ungu, 2024).

The school environment is a supporting and inhibiting factor in the acquisition of Arabic. (Muvida & Hikmah, 2024). Support Environment: Using Arabic in daily communication can improve students' language skills. However, speaking Arabic in public remains a challenge for many students. Shaharuddin's research found that although anxiety levels in speaking Arabic are pretty high, this does not always negatively impact students' motivation to learn. (Shaharuddin et al., 2024). In contrast, some students still have a strong drive to improve their language skills in a competitive and supportive environment.

In addition to the environment, motivation is an essential factor in language acquisition. Students in Islamic secondary schools who are highly motivated tend to be more active in participating in Arabic learning activities. (Wafa, 2024). This motivation is influenced not only by intrinsic factors, but also by extrinsic factors, such as encouragement from teachers, parents, and the surrounding environment. (Mahfud et al., 2023).

In almost all boarding high schools that are integrated with Islamic boarding schools, students are usually not allowed to bring *gadgets* or the like (Juniarto et al., 2012; Maskur & Yuafi, 2022; Najmuddin et al., 2019; Ulya et al., 2024). Even students who violate the rules can face punishment (*Ta'jir*) from the administrators. *Gadgets* can actually help students improve their Arabic language skills through various social media and applications. However, because it is prohibited, *gadgets* cannot be used for Arabic learning tools. On the other hand, students are required to use Arabic as a language of daily conversation. (Fakhroh & Hikmah, 2023; S. Oktaviani & Abdurrahman, 2021). While learning resources are very limited to (physical) dictionaries, there are many difficulties in their use. One consequence is that students are still subject to management sanctions for speaking in the local language. (Alwi & Salsabila, 2020). Preliminary studies on two boarding high schools in Bandung reveal the limitations of Arabic learning resources; many students still struggle with *Ta'jir* because they do not speak Arabic, and there remains a lack of exceptional guidance on Arabic language skills.

Based on the description above, the main challenge in Arabic acquisition within boarding schools lies in the interaction between limited access to learning resources, restricted digital exposure, and the highly structured nature of school environments. These conditions shape how students engage with the language, influenced by environmental constraints, fluctuating motivation, and varying opportunities for meaningful interaction. Consequently, the present study examines how these three dimensions influence students' actual experiences of learning Arabic in daily life at boarding schools.

Given these complexities, a phenomenological approach is appropriate, as the study aims to understand students' lived experiences as they navigate Arabic learning within institutional rules, peer dynamics, and environmental constraints. Rather than measuring isolated variables, phenomenology allows the researcher to explore how students perceive, interpret, and give meaning to their encounters with Arabic inside and outside the classroom. This approach is particularly relevant to uncovering how restrictive policies, motivational

structures, and interactional opportunities are internalized differently across students, shaping their unique developmental trajectories.

Various previous studies related to this research topic. Acquisition of Arabic affects the speaking skills of bilingual students in private schools. (Kaissi et al., n.d.). The challenge of the lack of use of technology in learning, and the limited teaching resources (Yasin & Fadhlullah, 2025). The influence of dialectology and code mixing on students' Arabic language skills in the pesantren environment (Rohmah et al., 2025). *Task-based learning and the communicative approach as strategies* to improve oral communication (Nur et al., 2025). The "bi'ah 'arabiyyah" program to improve Arabic language skills (Rahmi & Nazhyfa, 2024). Language acquisition is carried out through a dictionary, taking notes, and practicing with classmates. (Diantoro, 2024). Improving language skills with a student grouping strategy (Jundi & Hasibuan, 2023).

Although several studies have examined the environment, motivation, and social interaction in Arabic language learning, most of them have approached these factors separately or within narrowly defined instructional contexts. For example, studies on linguistic environments in boarding schools tend to focus on implementing bi'ah lughawiyyah without examining how learners' motivation interacts with this exposure. Other research highlights motivation as an isolated factor influencing students' participation in Arabic learning, yet rarely situates it within the everyday social dynamics of residential schools. Likewise, studies on social interaction frequently address peer communication or teacher–student relations independently from institutional design or motivational climates. These fragmented approaches leave an important conceptual gap: the lack of an integrative understanding of how environment, motivation, and social interaction operate simultaneously and shape one another in the lived experiences of boarding school students.

The present study addresses this gap by offering a comprehensive examination of Arabic language acquisition that integrates these three factors within a single analytical framework. Unlike previous research that treats these dimensions in isolation, this study demonstrates how environmental engineering, motivational mechanisms, and structured social interactions constitute an interconnected ecosystem that shapes students' acquisition processes. By comparing three boarding high schools with distinct institutional philosophies, this study extends previous findings by showing not only *what* each factor contributes individually, but *how* their interactions generate different acquisition models. This integrative perspective provides clearer theoretical implications and produces empirical insights that advance existing scholarship on Arabic language acquisition in faith-based residential settings.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Based on his approach, this study employs a qualitative method with a phenomenological orientation. (Adrias & Ruswandi, 2025). This method was chosen to delve deeply into students' subjective experiences of Arabic acquisition in a boarding high school environment, particularly in relation to the roles of environment, motivation, and social interaction in their daily lives. This research aims to understand the meanings students derive from their experience of using Arabic in daily life, both inside and outside the classroom. (Creswell & Clark, 2017). The sampling technique employed was purposive sampling, taking

into account schools' willingness to serve as research sites and the implementation of policies regarding the use of Arabic in daily communication within school and dormitory environments. The research location focused on boarding high schools in the Greater Bandung area of West Java Province, which offer an Arabic language program. (Patton, 2014).

The participants in this study consisted of 15 students from three boarding high schools implementing Arabic language programs in the Greater Bandung area. Each school contributed 5 students, selected through purposive sampling based on their active involvement in daily Arabic communication activities and their willingness to participate in the research. The students ranged in grade from 10 to 12. They had been residing in the boarding environment for at least 1 year, allowing them to experience the linguistic, motivational, and social dynamics of the dormitory setting.

Participants included both male and female students, and their Arabic proficiency levels ranged from beginner to intermediate, as indicated by teacher assessments. This variation was intentionally selected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how environmental exposure, motivation, and social interaction influence language acquisition across different learner profiles. Additionally, six teachers and dormitory supervisors were interviewed to provide institutional perspectives on language policy implementation, environmental engineering, and student interaction patterns.

The inclusion criteria required that participants: (1) were actively engaged in Arabic learning within the school curriculum, (2) lived full-time in the school dormitory, and (3) participated in Arabic-speaking activities mandated by the institution

The research instrument consisted of semi-structured in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation. Interviews are used to explore students' perceptions, experiences, and subjective meanings regarding Arabic language acquisition. Observation aims to document the use of Arabic in authentic situations, while documentation includes an analysis of supporting materials, such as language policies, learning materials, and student work. (Miles et al., 2014).

The data were analyzed using a phenomenological approach with thematic analysis techniques, following Moustakas' procedure, which included the epoch stage, horizon identification, grouping of significant meanings into themes, and elaboration of the essence of experience. (Moustakas, 1994). The analysis was conducted inductively to uncover the deep structure of students' Arabic language acquisition experience. Qualitative data processing and organization assisted by NVivo software, to maintain traceability and reliability of findings (Jackson & Bazeley, 2019).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and analyzes the research findings from interviews conducted in three boarding high schools, hereinafter referred to as Yaspida High School, Asy-Syifa High School, and FIBBIS High School. These findings are thematically organized to facilitate a comparative analysis of different approaches to fostering Arabic language acquisition. The analysis focuses on the key factors identified as the basis of this study: environment, motivation, and social interaction.

The data collected from these three locations revealed sharp differences in each school's approach. These differences are not only technical but also fundamental, encompassing a broad spectrum that ranges from basic elements, such as physical and regulatory environmental engineering, to complex social interaction architectures.

Linguistic Environmental Engineering (Bi'ah Lughawiyyah)

One of the fundamental factors in language acquisition in a boarding environment is the creation of an immersive language environment (*bi'ah lughawiyyah*). The creation of a supportive environment is the cornerstone of effective language programs, in line with research emphasizing the importance of sustained exposure for second-language acquisition (Nugraha & Sukarno, 2025). Field data reveal a diverse spectrum of strategies, ranging from the absence of environmental engineering to the implementation of sophisticated layered systems.

On the one hand, SMA Asy-Syifa shows the absence of a structured language environment. When asked about the existence of specific rules or language zones in the dormitory environment, the response was very emphatic: "Not yet." In fact, simple and highly effective strategies, such as labeling objects in the surrounding environment with Arabic vocabulary (e.g., baboon, nafidzatun, saburotun), are also not implemented. This suggests that language acquisition primarily occurs within formal classroom instruction, without support from the surrounding physical environment.

This condition is in stark contrast to the other two schools. Yaspida High School and FIBBIS High School both consciously engineer their physical environment as pedagogical tools. Both of them implemented the "Language Zone" strategy. Yaspida High School designates language zones specifically and separately: the mosque area is defined as an Arabic-speaking zone, while the dormitory and canteen are designated as English-speaking zones. On the other hand, FIBBIS High School also implements a mandatory language zone in the dormitory and classroom corridors, but with a more flexible "bilingual" policy that allows students to choose Arabic or English. Furthermore, FIBBIS High School also implements an environmental labeling strategy, but with a more strategic approach. Labels are not placed on all objects; instead, they focus on objects whose vocabulary is still unfamiliar to students, such as the word *'imadun* for poles, to maximize learning efficiency.

This engineered environment effectively creates constant communicative pressure, albeit with different psychological nuances. In practical terms, these environmental strategies directly shape students' Arabic proficiency. In FIBBIS, mandatory Language Zones increase exposure frequency, which is known to support vocabulary retention through repeated encounters. (Webb & Nation, 2017). However, high surveillance environments often limit spontaneous oral production because learners tend to rely on memorized expressions to avoid mistakes, a phenomenon consistent with findings on anxiety-restricted language output. (Horwitz, 1983). In contrast, students in Yaspida produce longer utterances and initiate conversation more often, reflecting the role of low-anxiety environments in enabling genuine communicative development. (MacIntyre, 2017). These differences suggest that institutional environmental design shapes not only exposure but also the quality of students' Arabic use in authentic communication.

A student at FIBBIS described his experience inside the language zone, a student recounted:

“di lorong asrama itu area ‘berbahaya’. Kita harus selalu siap, karena kalau ada ‘jasus’ dan kita keceplosan pakai Bahasa Indonesia, bisa langsung kena panggil ‘mahkamah’. Awalnya stres, tapi lama-lama jadi terbiasa waspada dan mikir dulu sebelum ngomong. Kata ‘imadun’ itu saya hafal karena tiap hari lewat tiang itu dan takut ditanya.”

This quote highlights the two-sided nature of the dormitory environment. On the one hand, such environments are very effective at encouraging linguistic memory and alertness. The student admitted that he memorized the vocabulary of ‘imadun’ under environmental pressure. However, on the other hand, the use of terms such as “hazardous areas” and “vigilant” indicates the existence of an anxiety-laden climate. The environmental design in these two schools is no longer a mere implementation choice but a tangible manifestation of their pedagogical philosophy, which holds that language is learned through active use and that the physical environment is a powerful tool for encouraging such use.

A system based on supervision and high-risk sanctions raises students’ affective filters. The pressure to always be “alert” and the fear of being caught by “Jasus” can create an environment that is full of anxiety, rather than a safe environment to experiment with language. A student’s confession paints a vivid picture of this psychological impact:

“Jujur, sistem ‘jasus’ itu bikin parno (paranoid). Kadang saya lebih memilih diam daripada ngomong tapi salah dan ketahuan. Apalagi kalau di depan teman-teman, malu kalau sampai dipanggil ‘mahkamah’.”

This quote is a perfect illustration of a high affective filter. The student’s response to pressure is not more enterprising practice but rather silence (“preferring to be silent”) to avoid risk. Fear of public judgment (“embarrassment of being summoned”) is a significant barrier to communication. This phenomenon creates a paradoxical system that is designed to suppress authentic, spontaneous communication, forcing it to become overly formal and artificial. The example of an academically competent friend (“*jago nahwu-shorof*”) but communicatively silent highlights the gap between language learning and acquisition, a gap exacerbated by anxiety. The positive reinforcement-based Yaspida model, on the other hand, is inherently designed to lower affective filters by rewarding effort rather than punishing errors, thus creating a safer psychological space for students to take linguistic risks.

These findings align with Krashen’s Input Hypothesis, which argues that comprehensible input is effective only when learners’ affective filters are low. (Krashen, 1982, 2009). The anxiety observed in FIBBIS mirrors research showing that high affective states reduce the conversion of input into genuine acquisition. (Teimouri et al., 2019). The interactive opportunities at Yaspida are consistent with Long’s Interaction Hypothesis, particularly the value of negotiation of meaning for promoting deeper acquisition. (Long, 2014). Furthermore, Yaspida’s peer-assisted structures align with Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Theory, in which scaffolding within the Zone of Proximal Development fosters accelerated linguistic growth. (Lantolf, 2010). Recent studies also confirm that collaborative, dormitory-based learning enhances oral proficiency in second-language settings. (Alzubi et al., 2024), reinforcing the interpretation that Yaspida’s environment is pedagogically optimal.

Taken together, the contrast among the three schools shows that environmental design does not merely determine the quantity of exposure but directly affects the depth and

trajectory of learners' Arabic acquisition. Asy-Syifa students, who lack sustained communicative environments, display a pattern often observed in grammar-focused programs: strong metalinguistic awareness but weak spontaneous oral performance (Lightbown & Spada, 2021). In FIBBIS, elevated anxiety and strict monitoring create a high affective filter, limiting productive fluency despite adequate exposure, consistent with empirical findings on anxiety-induced silence in L2 learning (Liu & Jackson, 2008). Meanwhile, Yaspida's integrative ecosystem mirrors research demonstrating that positive reinforcement, peer collaboration, and low-stress environments predict higher oral fluency and communicative confidence (Saito & Akiyama, 2018). These patterns confirm that the three institutional models produce distinct acquisition outcomes through the different ways they structure exposure, motivation, and social interaction.

This difference in environmental engineering strategies is not just an implementation choice, but a reflection of a more profound educational philosophy. The absence of *bi'ah* at Ash-Syifa High School is logically related to the orientation of their program, which prioritizes Arabic as a science, an analytical instrument for understanding classical religious texts, rather than as a tool of daily active communication (*hiwar*). A source from the school confirmed this: "*Berarti orientasinya berarti boarding school-nya itu lebih pada pesantren. Pesantrennya, tapi tidak dalam tanda petik kemampuan hiwar bahasa Arab. Kemampuan dalam menguasai ilmu alat-nya*". One student, in an interview, described his experience as follows:

"Bahasa Arab itu ya di kelas, Ustadz. Setelah bel, ya sudah, kita kembali pakai Bahasa Indonesia. Di kamar, di kantin, semua pakai bahasa biasa. Jadi, otak kita seperti punya saklar, di kelas 'on', di luar 'off'."

This quote reveals students' deep-seated perception of Arabic as a compartmentalized academic subject rather than a living language. The metaphor of "on/off switches" powerfully captures the fragmented nature of their learning experience. Arabic is "turned on" only in a formal context controlled by the teacher and "turned off" as soon as they step out of class. This is a direct consequence of a model that clearly separates "learning a language" from "using a language," a hallmark of the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) approach.

In this paradigm, the physical environment becomes irrelevant because the primary goal is text comprehension, not communicative fluency. In contrast, Yaspida High School and FIBBIS High School view the environment as an extension of the classroom, an active pedagogical tool that transforms passive spaces into dynamic learning landscapes.

The Role of Policy, Rewards, and Sanctions

To encourage the active use of Arabic, each institution develops different mechanisms to motivate its use. Research in the field of gamification indicates that integrating game elements, such as points, badges, and leaderboards, can significantly enhance student engagement and motivation in learning. (Alshuaifan, 2024; Pfeiffer et al., 2020) Data from the field show three highly contrasting models that, although not digital, apply these gamification principles in analog form.

In the absence of a structured environment, Asy-Syifa High School lacks a formal reward-and-sanction system to encourage the use of Arabic in everyday conversation. The only motivational strategy mentioned is a practice no longer used, which involves punishing

students who do not memorize vocabulary by having them stand in front of the class. This shows that the motivation to speak is left entirely to the student's intrinsic impulses.

Yaspida High School, on the other hand, developed a sophisticated extrinsic motivation system by creating a direct feedback cycle between informal practice in a dormitory environment and formal assessment in the classroom. One teacher explicitly stated that the use of vocabulary (*mufrodat*) that students acquire from the surrounding environment in classroom assignments “will affect their grades. This mechanism that “formalizes the informal” provides strong and sustainable incentives, similar to the “points” system in gamification, that can be exchanged for “rewards” in the form of academic grades ((Manzano-León et al., 2022) (Ruiz et al., 2024).

Desired behaviors (using new vocabulary in everyday conversations) are reinforced by a satisfying stimulus (higher academic scores). It provides a strong and sustained incentive for students to seek out and practice languages outside class hours actively. A student's experience illustrates the effectiveness of this approach:

“Awalnya kita ngobrol pakai mufrodat baru di kamar itu biar kelihatan keren saja. Tapi pas Ustadz bilang kalau kita pakai kata-kata itu di tugas mengarang dan nilainya bisa nambah, wah, langsung semua jadi rajin. Rasanya apa yang kita lakukan di asrama itu nggak sia-sia, ada gunanya langsung buat nilai.”

This quote shows a significant shift in motivation. The initial impulse is social and intrinsic (“to look cool”). Still, the extrinsic reward system (“the value can be added”) turns it into a purposeful, consistent academic effort (“immediately everyone becomes diligent”). The key phrase here is “not wasted,” which highlights how this system validates and values students' informal learning efforts. This creates an empowering and motivating learning circle, where efforts outside the classroom are rewarded concretely at the school.

Meanwhile, FIBBIS High School implements a highly structured and formal disciplinary system. An anonymous student surveillance corps, called “*Jasus*” (spies), is tasked with monitoring language compliance within *the Language Zone*. Students who violate will be processed in a special forum called the “*Lukbah Court*” (Language Court). This forum offers tiered pedagogical sanctions. As explained by a resource person, “*Pelanggaran pertama, biasanya mereka diberi mufrodat (kosakata) baru, lalu wajib dihafal dan disetorkan. Jika melakukan pelanggaran kedua kali, jumlah hafalan mufrodat ditambah... Untuk pelanggaran ketiga, sanksinya bisa lebih berat, misalnya disuruh melakukan tashrif (konjugasi kata)*”. This system intelligently turns moments of disciplinary violations into learning opportunities. However, some studies warn that a competitive or supervisory-based environment can also be demotivating for some students. (Nadeem et al., 2023), a risk that needs to be considered in this model.

The disciplinary structure at FIBBIS is grounded in a pedagogical aim to ensure continuous exposure and to habituate students to Arabic through mandatory compliance, regular monitoring, and the establishment of designated language-use zones. However, the interviews show that several students interpret this system as inducing a constant sense of surveillance, thereby elevating their affective filter. As one student noted, ‘...’, illustrating how fear of sanctions may reduce learners' readiness to engage in risk-taking behaviors essential to communicative development.

Although the discipline-based system at FIBBIS is pedagogically intended to cultivate consistent Arabic use and maintain linguistic discipline, the empirical accounts suggest that some students experience heightened vigilance and performance anxiety. This indicates that while the system promotes structured engagement, it may introduce affective risks for learners who are more sensitive to monitoring pressure, potentially limiting their willingness to initiate spontaneous communication.

From Isolated Practices to Integrated Ecosystems

Social interaction is a crucial component in language acquisition because it allows students to practice language in meaningful contexts. (Gilbert, 2021) (Alzubi et al., 2024). Field data showed that opportunities to interact meaningfully in Arabic varied widely across the three schools.

At SMA Asy-Syifa, opportunities to practice language are limited to formal teacher-led conversations in class and ceremonial events such as speeches or plays. There is an explicit acknowledgment of the existence of discontinuity (*“not yet in sync”*) between the material learned in class and the activities in the dormitory. In this model, social interaction in Arabic is not an organic part of everyday life.

At FIBBIS High School, social interaction is driven primarily by functional needs. The school deliberately engineered situations where students *had to* use Arabic or English to meet their basic needs, such as *“asking for pocket money, or permission to borrow a laptop”* from the Guardian. This makes language proficiency no longer just an academic requirement but a practical tool for survival and success.

The most complex form of social interaction is found at Yaspida High School, which actively implements collaborative learning strategies. The system built is multi-layered and includes intensive peer guidance, namely senior students or teachers acting as *“Wali Santri”* who guide one dormitory room. This system creates intensive “learning cells”, where *“one guardian of the student supervises one room”*. Second, the practice of multi-level speech involves schools offering a speech training program (Muhadoroh), structured into two levels: small-scale (*Sugro*) and large-scale (*Kubro*), to build confidence gradually. Third, peer tutors are formalized. More competent students are explicitly used as tutors. One teacher explained: *“In class, I sometimes use them as peer tutors to help their friends.”*

The approach at Yaspida High School aligns closely with extensive research on *peer tutoring* and *cooperative learning*. Studies show that this strategy not only accelerates learning for the students being assisted (*tutee*) but also strengthens understanding for the students who are teaching (*tutors*), while increasing confidence, motivation, and interpersonal skills for both. (Alzubi et al., 2024; Nhi Ha et al., 2022) By formalizing social interaction into a supportive structure, Yaspida High School has successfully created an ecosystem where every student is a potential source of learning.

To summarize these findings, a comparison matrix is presented that highlights the differences in strategies in the three schools.

Table 1. Arabic Language Immobilization Strategies for Boarding Students

Strategic Dimension	Ash-Syifa School (Classical-Fragmented Model)	FIBBIS School (Immersion-Regulatory Model)	Yaspida School (Integrative Ecosystem Model)
Philosophy Program	Focus on <i>tool science</i> (grammar) for text comprehension.	Focus on <i>bi'war</i> (communication) through forced immersion.	Focus on <i>the war</i> through holistic integration.
Environmental Engineering	There is no (<i>bi'ah</i> ignored).	Available: flexible bilingual “Language Zone”, strategic object labeling.	There are language-specific “Language Zones” (such as Arabic in mosques).
Motivation Mechanism	There is no formal system; it depends on intrinsic motivation/class.	Extrinsic (Negative): “ <i>Jasus</i> ” <i>supervision system</i> and pedagogical sanctions, “ <i>Mahkamah Lughah</i> ”.	Extrinsic (Positive): Academic incentives (informal practices influence class grades).
Forms of Interaction	Isolate: Only in classes and formal events.	Functional: Language as a prerequisite for dormitory services (permit, allowance).	Integrated & Layered: Mentor per room (<i>Wali Santri</i>), multi-level speech practice (<i>Mubadoroh</i>), peer tutor.
Class-Dorm Sync	In the absence of synchronization, programs run in parallel.	Synchronization is through general policies, not curriculum.	Strong synchronization through value incentive systems and integrated projects.

The design of the language environment, or *bi'ah lughawiyah*, has proven to be a direct reflection of each institution's philosophy of language acquisition. These findings suggest that the physical and linguistic environment can serve as active pedagogical tools or, conversely, be ignored altogether, depending on the ultimate goal of the language program.

At SMA Asy-Syifa, the absence of structured environmental engineering (“Not yet”) is logically intertwined with the program's focus on *tool science*. Students' experiences describing their learning process as an “on/off switch,” where Arabic is “turned on” in class and “turned off” outside the classroom, manifest a compartmentalized learning model. This condition is in line with the fundamental distinction proposed by Stephen Krashen between ‘acquisition’ and ‘learning’ (Krashen, 1981). The Ash-Syifa model clearly prioritizes learning, a conscious process of acquiring knowledge of grammatical rules primarily through formal instruction. In this paradigm, the environment outside the classroom becomes irrelevant because the main goal is not communicative fluency, but rather the analytical ability to read the text, a hallmark of GTM.

Diametrically different, Yaspida High School and FIBBIS High School have consciously engineered their environments to encourage acquisition, a process that occurs unconsciously through meaningful interaction in the target language. The implementation of

“Language Zones” and object labeling in these two schools is a concrete effort to create an immersive environment rich in language exposure. Such an environment is designed to provide Krashen’s concept of comprehensible input constantly, a significant prerequisite for language acquisition. (Krashen, 1981). The boarding school context itself offers the unique advantage of creating this kind of immersive environment, a potential widely noted in SLA studies. (Nugraha & Sukarno, 2025). An analysis of the motivation mechanisms in the three schools showed that psychological factors played a central role in language acquisition. Using Krashen’s Affective Filter Hypothesis as a theoretical framework, it can be seen how sanctions and incentives directly affect students’ emotional states, which in turn can inhibit or facilitate language acquisition.

The Immersion-Regulatory Model at FIBBIS High School, with its “Jasus” supervision system and the “Lughah Court” forum, inherently creates an environment with a high affective filter. A student said, “Honestly, the ‘jasus’ system makes you paranoid. Sometimes I prefer to be silent rather than talk, but I am wrong and get caught,” which is strong empirical evidence of this psychological impact. Anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, and public embarrassment are the primary triggers for high affective screening. Various studies have consistently shown a significant negative correlation between language anxiety and performance. (Tu, 2014). Ironically, systems designed to force students to speak instead result in defensive silence (“preferring to be silent”) as a strategy to avoid risk.

The findings of this study confirm that social interaction in a boarding environment is not just a by-product of communal life, but a pedagogical component that can be strategically engineered to optimize language acquisition. Analysis from the perspective of Sociocultural Theory (SCT), pioneered by Lev Vygotsky, highlights how the quality and structure of social interaction determine success. (Kao, 2010). SCT views learning not as an individual cognitive process, but as a social phenomenon that occurs through mediation and collaboration (Lantolf, 2000).

The model at Ash-Syifa High School, where Arabic-speaking interaction is limited to a formal teacher-led context, fails to capitalize on the immense potential of the dormitory’s social environment. This model reflects the view that learning is the transmission of knowledge from teacher to student rather than a co-construction process. At FIBBIS High School, interaction is driven by functional needs, such as asking for permission or pocket money, which makes language a transactional tool. While this creates authentic communicative needs, those interactions tend to be limited and not inherently developmental or collaborative in nature.

The sharpest contrast is evident in the Integrative-Ecosystem Model at Yaspida High School, which can be viewed as a real-world implementation of Vygotsky’s principles. The layered system they built includes a senior mentor per room (“Wali Santri”), a tiered speech practice (“Muhadoroh”), and formalized peer tutors, effectively creating a social learning architecture.

CONCLUSION

The research question guided this study: *How do boarding high school students acquire Arabic language skills through the interrelated roles of environment, motivation, and social interaction?* The findings

of this research explicitly demonstrate that the three factors operate in different configurations across the institutions, producing distinct patterns of acquisition.

First, in relation to the environmental dimension, the absence of structured linguistic exposure at Asy-Syifa resulted in a compartmentalized learning experience in which students developed grammatical knowledge without communicative fluency. In contrast, the immersion–regulatory environment of FIBBIS increased the quantity of exposure but simultaneously elevated students’ affective filters, limiting the extent to which environmental input translated into spontaneous oral production. Yaspida’s integrative ecosystem, which combines structured exposure with supportive conditions, provided the most conducive environment for meaningful and sustained Arabic communication.

Second, regarding motivation, the findings show that extrinsic pressure in the form of supervision and sanctions at FIBBIS generated compliance but not communicative confidence. In contrast, students at Yaspida benefited from positive reinforcement mechanisms that connected informal language practices to academic rewards. This alignment strengthened their intrinsic motivation to use Arabic authentically. At Asy-Syifa, the lack of motivational structures outside the classroom limited students’ opportunities to internalize Arabic’s relevance beyond formal instruction.

Third, in terms of social interaction, the study found that limited peer engagement at Asy-Syifa confined Arabic use to teacher-led contexts. At the same time, FIBBIS created transactional interactions driven by procedural necessity rather than communicative intent. Yaspida’s layered peer-mentoring system fostered collaborative learning and scaffolded speech practices, contributing to more advanced communicative competence.

Taken together, these findings directly answer the research question by showing that Arabic language acquisition in boarding schools is shaped not by isolated factors but by the alignment or misalignment of environmental structures, motivational climates, and social interaction patterns. The study contributes to the broader literature by demonstrating that integrative and low-anxiety ecosystems support more authentic acquisition outcomes compared to fragmented or coercive models. These insights offer a conceptual foundation for redesigning Arabic language programs in boarding schools to promote more sustainable communicative proficiency.

This study is limited by its focus on three boarding schools within a single regional context, which may constrain the transferability of its findings to other institutional or sociolinguistic settings. Further research is recommended to expand the study to more boarding schools across various regions, integrate quantitative measurement of language skills, and explore the role of digital media in supporting language acquisition, especially in schools that still implement restrictions on the use of gadgets.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors sincerely express their gratitude to the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia for the funding support provided through the Beginner Lecturer Research Scheme in the 2025 fiscal year, based on Master Contract Number 125/C3/DT.05.00/PL/2025 and Derivative Contract Number

7985/LL4/PG/2025, 050/K.PEN/LPPM/UNINUS/2025. This support was instrumental in completing this research.

REFERENCES

- Adrias, & Ruswandi, A. (2025). *Desain Penelitian Kuantitatif Kualitatif dan Mix Method*. Rajawali Pers.
- Alshuaifan, A. S. (2024). Effectiveness of a Gamification-Based Enrichment Program in Developing EFL Creative Writing Skills among the Intermediate School Students. *Journal Of Educational and Psychological Research*, 21(81), 650–702.
- Alwi, S., & Salsabila, A. (2020). Pengaruh Reward Dan Punishment Terhadap Motivasi Siswa Dalam Muhadatsah Yaumiyyah Di Pondok Pesantren Modern Tgk. Chiek Oemar Diyan Aceh Besar. *لساننا (LISANUNA): Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa Arab Dan Pembelajarannya*, 9(1), 60–77. <https://doi.org/https://dx.doi.org/10.22373/lis.v9i1.6733>
- Alzubi, A. A., Nazim, M., & Ahamad, J. (2024). Examining the effect of a collaborative learning intervention on EFL students' English learning and social interaction. *Journal of Pedagogical Research*, 8(2), 26–46. <https://doi.org/10.33902/JPR.202425541>
- Asrofi, I., & Taryana, A. (2021). Pengaruh Penggunaan Metode Qiroah Terhadap Prestasi Belajar Siswa Dalam Pelajaran Bahasa Arab di MDT Al-Qona'ah Kabupaten Bandung. *Tarling: Journal of Language Education*, 5(2), 219–238. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24090/tarling.v5i2.5920>
- Creswell, J. W., & Clark, V. L. P. (2017). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Sage Publications.
- Diantoro, H. (2024). *Pemerolehan Bahasa Arab (Studi Kasus pada Siswa Asrama di MAN I Lampung Timur)*. IAIN Metro.
- Fakhroh, N., & Hikmah, K. (2023). Enhancing Arabic Language Proficiency in Islamic Boarding Schools: A Comprehensive Study. *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Studies*, 11(3). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.21070/ijis.v11i3.1673>
- Fitriyah, A. (2024). Menggali Motivasi Serta Menghadapi Hambatan Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Sebagai Bahasa Kedua. *TADRIS AL-ARABIYAT: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Pendidikan Bahasa Arab*, 4(2), 170–181. <https://doi.org/10.30739/arabiyat.v4i2.3051>
- Gilbert, J. (2021). Mentoring in a cooperative learning classroom. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 15(2), 2. <https://doi.org/10.20429/ijsoitl.2021.150202>
- Handayani, D., & Asrofi, I. (2023). Penerapan Role Playing Teknik Muhawaroh Bahasa Arab Di Program Kesetaraan Berbasis Keagamaan. *Comm-Edu (Community Education Journal)*, 6(2), 197–213. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.22460/comm-edu.v6i2.17279>
- Horwitz, E. K. (1983). Foreign language classroom anxiety scale. *Revista Argentina de Clínica Psicológica*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/t60328-000>
- Islami, F., & Fadli, A. (2024). Pengaruh Lingkungan Asrama dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab di Pondok Pesantren Syech Ahmad Chatib. *Journal of Educational Management and Strategy*, 3(02), 145–152. <https://doi.org/10.57255/jemast.v3i02.124>
- Jackson, K., & Bazeley, P. (2019). *Qualitative data analysis with NVivo*.
- Jundi, M., & Hasibuan, R. (2023). Enhancing Arabic language proficiency among students: A case study of language matriculation strategies at Al-Hasyimiyah Darul Ulum Sipaho Islamic Boarding School. *Kilmatuna: Journal Of Arabic Education*, 3(2), 114–129. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.55352/pba.v3i2.619>
- Juniarto, A. L. J. A. L., Hasyim, A., Hasyim, A., & Hay, J. A. H. J. A. (2012). *Discipline School's Influence on Not Bringing a Handphone Towards Freshment Learns of Student in Junior High School 7 at Kotabumi*. Lampung University.
- Kaissi, F. S., Oweini, A. A., & ElZein, H. L. (n.d.). *The impact of Arabic on oral language*.

-
- Kao, P.-L. (2010). EXAMINING SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING: TAKING A SOCIOCULTURAL STANCE. *Annual Review of Education, Communication & Language Sciences*, 7.
- Krashen, S. (1981). Second language acquisition. *Second Language Learning*, 3(7), 19–39.
- Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*.
- Krashen, S. (2009). The comprehension hypothesis is extended. *Input Matters in SLA*, 1(4), 81–94.
- Lantolf, J. P. (2000). *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (Vol. 78, Issue 4). Oxford University Press.
- Lantolf, J. P. (2010). *Sociocultural theory and the pedagogical imperative*.
- Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (2021). *How Languages Are Learned (5th Edition)*. Oxford University Press.
- Liu, M., & Jackson, J. (2008). An exploration of Chinese EFL learners' unwillingness to communicate and foreign language anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 92(1), 71–86. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2008.00687.x>
- Long, M. (2014). *Second language acquisition and task-based language teaching*. John Wiley & Sons.
- MacIntyre, P. D. (2017). An overview of language anxiety research and trends in its development. *New Insights into Language Anxiety: Theory, Research and Educational Implications*, 11–30.
- Mahfud, M., Marsiah, M., Rahman, N. F., & Wahdah, N. (2023). Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Di Sekolah Islam Berbasis Boarding School. *EL-IBTIKAR: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab*, 12(2), 146–161. <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.24235/ibtikar.v12i2.14239>
- Manzano-León, A., Rodríguez-Ferrer, J. M., Aguilar-Parra, J. M., Fernández-Campoy, J. M., Trigueros, R., & Martínez-Martínez, A. M. (2022). Juega y aprende: la influencia de la gamificación y del aprendizaje basado en el juego en los procesos de lectura del alumnado de secundaria. *Revista de Psicodidáctica*, 27(1), 38–46.
- Maskur, M., & Yuafi, M. (2022). PERSEPEKTIF SOSIOLOGI-KOMUNIKASI PENERAPAN QONUN-QONUN LARANGAN MEMBAWA HANDPHONE PADA SANTRI PESANTREN MAMBA'UL HUDA. *JDARISCOMB: Jurnal Komunikasi Dan Penyiaran Islam*, 2(I). <https://doi.org/10.30739/jdariscomb.v2i1.1441>
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, M. A., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook* (Third edition). SAGE Publications Inc.
- Moustakas, C. E. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. SAGE Publications Inc.
- Muvida, F., & Hikmah, K. (2024). Arab Culture and Community at Al-Maun Muhammadiyah Boarding School. *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Studies*, 12(1). <https://doi.org/10.21070/ijis.v12i1.1755>
- Nadeem, M., Oroszlanyova, M., & Farag, W. (2023). Effect of digital game-based learning on student engagement and motivation. *Computers*, 12(9), 177. <https://doi.org/10.3390/computers12090177>
- Najmuddin, N., Fauzi, F., & Ikhwan, I. (2019). Program kedisiplinan siswa di lingkungan sekolah: Studi kasus di dayah terpadu (boarding school) sma babul maghfirah aceh besar. *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 8(02), 183–206. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.30868/ei.v8i2.430>
- Nhi Ha, T. Y., Bich Ngoc, N. T., Lynh Dan, N. N., & Nghia, T. T. (2022). The Effects of Collaborative Learning on Young ESL Learners' L2 Anxiety and Speaking Performance. *Online Submission*, 3(2), 125–137. <https://doi.org/10.46966/ijae.v3i2.286>
- Nugraha, I. S., & Sukarno, S. (2025). Environmental Support in Promoting Students' English Language as a Second Language Acquisition: A Case in at-Tawazun Modern Islamic Boarding School. *Formosa Journal of Sustainable Research*, 4(2), 219–236.
-

-
- <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.55927/fjsr.v4i2.26>
- Nur, M. F., Zaeni, R. A., & Uqba, M. S. S. (2025). LEARNING MODEL OF SPEAKING SKILLS OF STUDENTS OF PONDOK PESANTREN MADINAH LABUHAN MARINGGAI EAST LAMPUNG BASED ON THE THEORY OF CONSTRUCTIVISM. *Shibghob: Prosiding Ilmu Kependidikan UNIDA Gontor*, 3(1), 1001–1016.
- Oktaviani, I., Sekarningrum, R., Syahrisharifah, M., & Bakar, M. Y. A. (2024). Dinamika Pembelajaran dan Pemerolehan Bahasa Arab. *Journal Sains Student Research*, 2(6), 526–538. <https://doi.org/10.61722/jssr.v2i6.3015>
- Oktaviani, S., & Abdurrahman, M. (2021). Analisis Pembelajaran Komunikasi Arab Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Di SMA Aisyiyah Boarding School Bandung. *Tsaqofiya: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab*, 3(2), 148–157. <https://doi.org/10.21154/tsaqofiya.v3i2.73>
- Patton, M. Q. (2014). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice*. Sage Publications.
- Pfeiffer, A., Bezzina, S., König, N., & Kriglstein, S. (2020). Beyond classical gamification: in- and around-game gamification for education. *ECEL 2020 19th European Conference on E-Learning*, 415.
- Rahmi, W. N., & Nazhyfa, A. (2024). EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION: FROM BOARDING SCHOOL TO PESANTREN WITH BI'AH ARABIYYAH. *Al-Masail: Journal of Islamic Studies*, 2(1), 49–60. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.61677/al-masail.v2i1.130>
- Rohmah, L., Maulana, A., & Anam, S. (2025). PENGARUH DIALEKTOLOGI DAN CAMPUR KODE MELALUI KAJIAN SOSIO DAN EKOLINGUISTIK TERHADAP KEMAMPUAN BAHASA ARAB MAHASISWA. *Al-Lisan: Jurnal Bahasa (e-Journal)*, 10(1), 146–161. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.30603/al.v10i1.5929>
- Ruiz, J. J. R., Sánchez, A. D. V., & Figueredo, O. R. B. (2024). Impact of gamification on school engagement: A systematic review. *Frontiers in Education*, 9, 1466926. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2024.1466926>
- Saito, K., & Akiyama, Y. (2018). Effects of video-based interaction on the development of second language listening comprehension ability: A longitudinal study. *TESOL Quarterly*, 52(1), 163–176.
- Shaharuddin, H. N., Yahaya, H., Abdelhamid, I. Y., Shafri, M. H., & Najwa, N. (2024). The Level of Student Anxiety in Arabic Speaking Skills. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 8(8), 2563–2571.
- Teimouri, Y., Goetze, J., & Plonsky, L. (2019). Second language anxiety and achievement: A meta-analysis. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 41(2), 363–387. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263118000311>
- Tu, J. (2014). *The effects of anxiety on second language acquisition*.
- Ulya, Z., Abubakar, M., & Hidayatullah, L. D. (2024). Peran Pondok Pesantren dalam Mengentaskan Kenakalan Santri: Studi Kasus Pondok Pesantren Al-Ikhlas Al-Islamy Kalijati Desa Monggas. *Putih: Jurnal Pengetahuan Tentang Ilmu Dan Hikmah*, 9(2), 77–98. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.51498/mtqswa44>
- Ungu, F. N. W. (2024). Peran Lingkungan Bahasa Dalam Pemerolehan Bahasa Arab Sebagai Bahasa Kedua (Kajian Teoritis Pemerolehan Bahasa Arab Pada Siswa Non-Native di Pondok Thursina IIBS Malang). *Shibghob: Prosiding Ilmu Kependidikan UNIDA Gontor*, 2(1), 573–589.
- Wafa, M. A. S. (2024). دافعية التلاميذ التعليمي في تعليم مهارة الكلام في ضوء النظرية الهرمية للاحتياجات لأبراهيم
-

جامعة مولانا مالك إبراهيم الإسلامية الحكومية باتو. Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim.

Webb, S., & Nation, P. (2017). *How vocabulary is learned*. Oxford University Press.

Yasin, A., & Fadhlullah, M. (2025). The Problems of Arabic Language Learning at an Islamic Boarding School. *Aphorisme: Journal of Arabic Language, Literature, and Education*, 6(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.37680/aphorisme.v6i1.6442>

Copyright Holder :

© Imam Asrofi et al. (2025).

First Publication Right :

© Lughawiyah Journal of Arabic Education and Linguistics

This article is under:

