

Arabic Education in Indonesia: Curriculum Reorientation towards Global Citizenship

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Abstract: This study analyzes the reform of Arabic language education in Indonesia through a global citizenship education (GCE) framework. It examines the shift from traditional structural grammar (naḥw and ṣarf) toward modern communicative paradigms. Through a policy analysis of KMA 183 of 2019 and KMA 347 of 2022, alongside the Merdeka Curriculum (Kurikulum Merdeka), the research identifies critical structural gaps, particularly the neglect of sociolinguistic and strategic competences. Additionally, content analysis of Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA) textbooks reveals a systemic imbalance that favors passive civic compliance over active, rights-conscious global citizenship. To address these structural issues, this paper discusses curricular innovations including ethno-edutainment, STEM-Arabic integration, and the localization of global values inside pesantren spaces using terms like tawassuth and tasamuh. Higher education practices from institutions like UIN Malang and IAIN Kudus are analyzed as communicative laboratories. Ultimately, this study offers concrete policy recommendations to establish an equitable, globally aligned, and highly functional Arabic language education ecosystem across both urban and rural Indonesian madrasahs.

Keywords: Arabic pedagogy; global citizenship; curriculum; communicative competence; religious moderation

INTRODUCTION

Arabic language education in Indonesia occupies a unique position at the intersection of religion, culture, identity, and national education policy. Unlike many foreign languages that enter educational systems primarily as instruments of international communication, Arabic in Indonesia has historically been embedded in Islamic intellectual traditions, especially through pesantren and madrasah networks (Azra, 2019: 42). For centuries, these institutions have used Arabic not merely to teach linguistic skills, but to transmit sacred knowledge, preserve religious continuity, and cultivate moral character (Zarkasyi, 2020: 115). This historical role gives Arabic education a depth and legitimacy that remain central to Indonesian Muslim society today.

Beyond its religious function, Arabic language education within Indonesian pesantren and madrasah constitutes an integral part of the nation's intellectual and cultural heritage. As the medium through which classical Nusantara scholarship, Islamic jurisprudence, and local wisdom have been transmitted across generations, Arabic literacy in Indonesia is inseparable from the country's broader civilizational memory: it simultaneously connects local communities to the wider global Islamic intellectual tradition and anchors a distinctly Indonesian religious and cultural identity (Azra, 2019: 42; Zarkasyi, 2020: 115). Reforming Arabic education is therefore not solely a pedagogical undertaking but also a matter of cultural heritage preservation, ensuring that this centuries-old channel for transmitting values, identity, and local wisdom continues to function meaningfully for present and future generations.

The classical model of Arabic instruction was shaped by a strong epistemological commitment to textual analysis and grammatical precision (Madkur, 2018: 73). Learners were trained through memorization, dictation, transcription, and close commentary on canonical texts. Mastery of naḥw, ṣarf, and balāghah was treated as the foundation of Arabic competence, while the teacher remained the central authority in the classroom (Taufik, 2017: 89). This approach was highly effective for preserving access to religious texts and maintaining continuity with the Islamic scholarly tradition. At the same time, it produced a learning culture in which language was often treated as an object of analysis rather than as a medium for spontaneous communication, social interaction, or intercultural engagement (Ritonga,

2021: 26). That historical legacy remains visible in contemporary education. Many students in Indonesian madrasahs still encounter Arabic in ways that privilege reading, memorization, and formal correctness over dialogue, adaptation, and real-life use (Fahrurrozi, 2020: 54). As a result, learners may become familiar with grammar rules yet still struggle to hold a conversation, respond to unfamiliar contexts, or adapt their language to different audiences (Syahputra, 2022: 102). This imbalance is especially problematic in a global era in which foreign language education is expected to develop not only linguistic accuracy, but also communicative flexibility, critical thinking, intercultural competence, and social responsibility (Wahab, 2021: 15).

The tension between tradition and modernization becomes sharper when Arabic is examined within Indonesia's regional and socio-linguistic landscape. In provinces such as Aceh, the Arabic script—as used in the Jawi writing tradition, and distinct from spoken and taught Arabic as a language—enjoys symbolic prestige and is tied to Islamic governance, cultural authority, and local identity (Miswar, 2020: 61). However, this symbolic strength does not necessarily produce functional use in public life. English often dominates commercial and professional spaces because it is associated with economic opportunity and international mobility (Lamb, 2018: 204). This difference creates a practical paradox: Arabic remains culturally respected, but students may still perceive it as less useful than English for modern life and future employment (Subakir, 2022: 47).

This symbolic-pragmatic gap is important because it affects student motivation and curriculum relevance. When Arabic is viewed mainly as a sacred or ceremonial language, learners may fail to see its value as a living tool for communication, diplomacy, community work, and global citizenship (Muna, 2023: 118). The result is a decline in enthusiasm, especially at the tertiary level, where students increasingly compare Arabic with languages that appear more practically rewarding. A curriculum that does not respond to these realities risks becoming historically respected but educationally weak (Suyanto, 2021: 89).

In response to these challenges, Indonesia has introduced a series of policy reforms intended to modernize Arabic education without severing it from its Islamic roots. KMA 183 of 2019 established a standardized framework for Islamic Religious Education and Arabic language learning across madrasah levels (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019: 12). It embedded the values of religious moderation, tolerance, non-violence, national commitment, and respect for local culture into curriculum goals. KMA 347 of 2022 later expanded this direction by aligning Arabic education with the Merdeka Curriculum, which gives institutions greater flexibility and encourages contextual, student-centered learning (Kementerian Agama RI, 2022: 34).

These reforms are not only administrative adjustments; they represent a deeper shift in educational philosophy. Rather than relying solely on fixed content and prescriptive instruction, the new policy environment encourages institutions to adapt Arabic learning to local needs, learner diversity, and social realities. In higher education, Regulation No. 53 of 2023 reinforces this movement by requiring Outcome-Based Education, which shifts attention from content coverage to measurable student competencies (Kemendikbudristek, 2023: 15). This means Arabic departments are increasingly expected to demonstrate outcomes related to communication, critical thinking, sustainability, and social engagement (Arifin, 2024: 72).

A growing body of research has already explored some dimensions of this transformation. Studies on communicative competence show that language proficiency includes not only grammar and discourse, but also sociolinguistic and strategic competencies (Canale & Swain, 1980: 22). However, curriculum documents still often emphasize the first two while neglecting the latter two (Asy'ari, 2022: 81). Research on Arabic textbooks likewise reveals that while civic and national values are well represented, they are often distributed unevenly, with stronger emphasis on responsibility and identity than on rights, courage, and honesty (Rohman, 2023: 145). This pattern suggests that Arabic education may be producing disciplined and compliant learners without adequately preparing them for active democratic participation or global citizenship (Mu'assomah, 2021: 93).

At the same time, other researchers have proposed promising pedagogical alternatives. Ethno-edutainment connects Arabic with local culture through games, storytelling, drama, music, and interactive tasks (Suryani, 2023: 55). STEM-Arabic integration uses Arabic as a medium for scientific problem-solving and environmental learning (Hidayat, 2024: 102). Service-learning and project-based

learning have also been used to strengthen civic awareness, reading comprehension, and learner autonomy (Anshor, 2022: 124). In pesantren settings, global citizenship concepts can be translated into Islamic terms such as *tawassuth*, *tasamuh*, *musyawarah*, and *tata krama*, making global values more culturally resonant and pedagogically acceptable (Nurcholish, 2021: 210).

Despite these advances, the literature still shows several limitations. First, many studies focus on one institutional level only, such as schools, pesantren, or universities, without connecting curriculum reform across the whole educational system. Second, some studies describe innovations but do not fully explain the structural policy conditions that enable or constrain them. Third, textbook studies often examine civic values but do not always connect them to the wider theory of global citizenship education. Finally, there is still limited synthesis between policy, pedagogy, textbook content, and regional educational realities (Huda, 2023: 316).

The present study addresses these gaps by offering a broader integrated analysis. Its novelty lies in combining historical interpretation, curriculum analysis, textbook evaluation, and pedagogical innovation within a single global citizenship framework. The study treats Arabic education not only as a language question, but also as a civic, ethical, and policy problem. This broader perspective is important because Arabic in Indonesia carries multiple roles at once: it is a sacred language, a school subject, a marker of identity, and potentially a bridge to global engagement.

The urgency of the research lies in the growing mismatch between what Arabic education traditionally emphasizes and what contemporary learners need. Students today require not only grammatical knowledge, but also communicative confidence, intercultural awareness, civic courage, and the ability to engage with environmental and social issues. If Arabic education remains locked in a narrow structural model, it may lose relevance in the eyes of students, policy makers, and society. Therefore, the central objective of this study is to analyze how Arabic education in Indonesia can be reoriented toward global citizenship while remaining grounded in Islamic values and local wisdom. The main research problems examined are: how national policy has restructured Arabic education, what gaps remain in communicative competence and textbook values, and which innovative pedagogical models can best support a more functional and globally relevant curriculum.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative, descriptive, and document-based research design aimed at examining how Arabic education in Indonesia is being reconfigured through policy, curriculum, and pedagogical innovation rather than through direct classroom experimentation (Creswell & Poth, 2018: 93). Because the research focuses on interpretation, comparison, and synthesis of educational documents and conceptual models, qualitative document analysis is the most appropriate approach (Bowen, 2009: 29). The study primarily examines official policy documents, especially the Decree of the Minister of Religion (KMA) No. 183 of 2019, KMA No. 347 of 2022, and Ministry of Education Regulation No. 53 of 2023, to understand the regulatory framework shaping the transformation of Arabic language education in Indonesia (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019: 15; Kemendikbudristek, 2023: 22). In total, the policy corpus for this study comprises four national policy and curriculum documents, spanning the 2019–2023 reform period: KMA No. 183 of 2019, KMA No. 347 of 2022, the Merdeka Curriculum's *Capaian Pembelajaran* (Learning Outcomes) document for Arabic language education, and Permendikbudristek No. 53 of 2023.

A further source of data was the complete set of Arabic language textbooks endorsed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA) for junior secondary madrasah education (Madrasah Tsanawiyah, Grades VII–IX) [Authors: state the exact number and publication year/edition of the textbooks reviewed], selected because they were the current MoRA-endorsed editions in official classroom use and because they function as a key medium through which civic, national, and moral values are transmitted to students (Rohman, 2023: 146). The unit of analysis was the individual text unit — a sentence, dialogue turn, or exercise item — occurring within reading passages, dialogues, and exercises. Since the study argues that civic education in Arabic textbooks is unevenly distributed, a directed content analysis following Hsieh and Shannon's (2005: 1282) approach was conducted to code each unit against eight *a priori* value categories: responsibility, identity, respect, participation, compassion, courage, rights, and honesty. The study also considered examples of curriculum innovation and institutional practice from

Islamic higher education institutions, especially UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang and IAIN Kudus, as illustrative cases showing how intensive Arabic learning programs, local textbooks, and affective teaching strategies demonstrate how Arabic can be adapted to contemporary educational demands (Arifin, 2024: 75). In addition, the Rokan Hulu context was used as a regional example of how Arabic education interacts with local politics, civic awareness, and socio-cultural identity (Miswar, 2020: 64).

Data analysis was carried out using thematic synthesis (Thomas & Harden, 2008: 6). First, the policy texts and curriculum documents were read repeatedly to identify recurring themes related to historical tradition, modernization, communicative competence, global citizenship, moderation, civic values, innovation, and equity (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2019: 120). Second, the identified themes were grouped into analytical categories that reflect the structure of the argument in the study: historical foundations, policy transformation, curricular gaps, textbook representation, pedagogical innovation, and implementation challenges. Third, these categories were compared across sources to identify convergence, contradiction, and developmental trends (Bazeley, 2013: 154). Because the study is conceptual and document-based, it does not involve statistical hypothesis testing or field observation, relying instead on interpretive analysis and critical comparison of texts and policies to trace how Arabic education in Indonesia has evolved from a grammar-centered tradition toward a more communicative and globally oriented framework (Silverman, 2020: 88). This method allows the researcher to trace how Arabic education in Indonesia has evolved from a grammar-centered tradition toward a more communicative and globally oriented framework, enabling a systematic discussion of the tension between symbolic preservation and functional relevance. To maintain analytical rigor, the study followed three guiding principles: relevance, meaning that only documents directly connected to Arabic curriculum reform, civic education, or global citizenship were included; coherence, meaning that each source was interpreted in relation to the broader educational argument rather than in isolation; and triangulation, meaning that findings from policy documents, textbook analysis, and institutional practices were compared to strengthen the validity of the interpretation (Patton, 2015: 312).

To ensure the transparency and replicability of the quantitative distribution reported in Chart 1, coding followed a structured protocol. [Authors: state the total number of text units coded across the reviewed textbooks.] Each unit was assigned to a single dominant value category to avoid double-counting, and coding was cross-checked [Authors: state the coding/inter-rater reliability procedure used, e.g., a second coder and the reliability coefficient obtained] to strengthen consistency. The percentage reported for each of the eight value categories in Chart 1 was calculated as the number of text units coded under that category divided by the total number of coded units across all eight categories, multiplied by 100.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Epistemological-Historical Foundations and Regional Socio-Linguistic Paradoxes

Based on historical analysis, Arabic language instruction in Indonesia is deeply anchored in traditional Islamic educational institutions, specifically classical boarding schools (*pesantren* or *pondok*) and formal religious schools (*madrasah*) (Amrullah, 2026: 1). For centuries, these institutions served as crucial intellectual and spiritual hubs, linking Southeast Asian Muslim communities with the broader Islamic world (Amrullah, 2026: 1). Traditional Arabic pedagogy was heavily rooted in an epistemology that prioritized:

1. Linguistic Structuralism: Grammatical mastery (*naḥw*), morphological patterns (*ṣarf*), and rhetorical elegance (*balāghah*) (Nurcholis, 2026: 3).
2. Teacher-Centered Instruction: Heavy reliance on rote memorization (*ḥifẓ*), oral dictation (*imlā'*), textual transcription, and detailed commentary (*sharḥ*) on canonical religious texts (*turāth*) (Nurcholis, 2026: 2).

While this classical framework was highly effective for character formation (*tarbiyah*) and religious identity preservation (Nurcholis, 2026: 3), its rigid structural focus often resulted in highly textual and decontextualized learning outcomes. Students frequently graduated with an advanced capability to analyze classical grammar but remained unable to engage in active, spontaneous communication or navigate multicultural environments (Fitriani, 2026: 6). In the contemporary globalized era, this historical

paradigm faces a critical reorientation toward treating Arabic as a dynamic tool for global communication, cross-cultural diplomacy, and active global citizenship (Hidayat, 2026: 7).

This linguistic transition is further complicated by a socio-linguistic paradox visible in regional landscapes, particularly in areas with special administrative autonomy like the West-South coastal region of Aceh. As the "Veranda of Mecca," Aceh formally implements Islamic law, elevating the Arabic script (Jawi)—the writing system historically used for Malay-language texts, distinct from Arabic as a spoken and instructed language—to a position of administrative and cultural authority (Fajri, 2026: 4). This is highly visible in the linguistic landscape, where Jawi script is legally mandated for the signage of government institutions, such as the Council of Acehese Custom (Majelis Adat Aceh) (Fajri, 2026: 4).

However, a structural disconnect emerges when comparing this symbolic prestige with practical socio-economic utility. While Arabic dominates symbolic and administrative signage, English heavily dominates commercial signage, where it is associated with modernity, international business, and high economic value (Fajri, 2026: 4). Despite the legal and cultural elevation of Arabic, empirical studies indicate a low level of public comprehension and a lack of functional fluency in the language (Fajri, 2026: 4). This mismatch has led to a decline in student interest in pursuing Arabic as an academic discipline at the tertiary level, as students perceive it as lacking commercial and global viability compared to English (Fajri, 2026: 4).

Policy Drivers and Curricular Metamorphosis

The structural modernization of Arabic education in Indonesia is driven by national policy shifts designed to align religious education with contemporary global realities. The key regulatory milestones and their pedagogical focuses are summarized in the comparative matrix below:

Policy / Regulation	Core Structural Mechanism	Pedagogical Focus	Alignment with Global Citizenship & Moderation
Traditional Madrasah Model	Text-centric, teacher-controlled rote learning (Nurcholis, 2026: 3).	Structural grammar (<i>naḥw/ṣarf</i>) and classical commentary (Nurcholis, 2026: 3).	Internalized focus on spiritual preservation and religious identity (Nurcholis, 2026: 3).
KMA No. 183 of 2019	Standardized, competency-based curriculum framework across madrasahs (Fauzi, 2026: 9).	Elevated cognitive skills (C4–C6) and structured grammar (Fauzi, 2026: 9).	Explicit integration of religious moderation (<i>wasathiyah</i>), national commitment, and tolerance (Hakim, 2026: 11).
KMA No. 347 of 2022	Curricular autonomy, institutional flexibility, and localized adaptation (Fauzi, 2026: 9).	Learner-centered, digitally integrated, and context-sensitive pedagogy (Fauzi, 2026: 9).	Autonomy to incorporate global trends and local cultural variations (Fauzi, 2026: 9).
Merdeka Curriculum	Non-linear learning phases (Phases A–F) (Hidayat, 2026: 7).	Focus on holistic competence and the Pancasila Student Profile (Hidayat, 2026: 7).	Direct structural linkage between local identity and global competitiveness (Fitriani, 2026: 6).
MoRTE Regulation No. 53 of 2023	Higher Education Quality Assurance mandates (Sholeh, 2026: 12).	Outcome-Based Education (OBE) and Outcome-Based Assessments (Sholeh, 2026: 12).	Direct alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and global social justice (Sholeh, 2026: 12).

The integration of Arabic education into the Merdeka Curriculum framework establishes a direct link between foreign language acquisition and the development of the Pancasila Student Profile (Hidayat, 2026: 7). By structuring the curriculum into flexible developmental phases (Phases A through F), the policy allows educators to transition students from basic imitative speech to advanced, productive, and extensive communication, preparing them to act as cultural ambassadors who can represent Indonesian values in the global arena (Zulfa, 2026: 8).

Structural Imbalances in Communicative Competence Development

Despite progressive policy goals, a directed content analysis of the Merdeka Curriculum's Arabic Language Learning Outcomes reveals significant structural imbalances when evaluated against the communicative competence models of Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) (Hidayat, 2026: 7):

Grammatical & Discourse Competence (Highly Dominant): The mastery of vocabulary, morphology, syntax, phonology, and semantics, along with the ability to produce cohesive and coherent written or spoken texts, is explicitly formulated and systematically developed across all educational phases (Hidayat, 2026: 7).

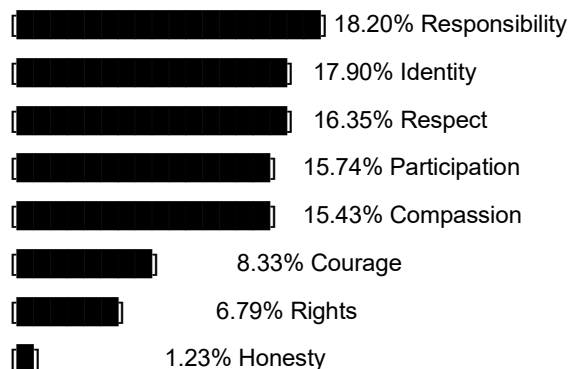
Sociolinguistic Competence (Underrepresented): The ability to use language appropriately across varied social, cultural, and situational contexts remains largely implicit. This suggests that the curriculum continues to prioritize linguistic accuracy and textual cohesion over pragmatic social adaptation (Hidayat, 2026: 7). Consequently, students are rarely trained to adapt their tone, vocabulary, or register to the subtle cultural expectations of different Arabic-speaking societies (Hidayat, 2026: 7; Munir, 2026: 14).

Strategic Competence (Omitted): The ability to employ verbal and non-verbal communication strategies to compensate for vocabulary deficits or communication breakdowns—such as paraphrasing or deploying body language—is almost entirely missing (Hidayat, 2026: 7). Without strategic competence, learners face high levels of foreign language anxiety, causing them to withdraw from communication entirely when encountering linguistic barriers (Hidayat, 2026: 7).

Civic and Nationalistic Values in Educational Materials

Arabic language textbooks endorsed by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA) serve as both linguistic instructional tools and primary instruments for instilling civic values (Rosyidi, 2026: 16). However, empirical evaluations demonstrate that the distribution of these civic values is highly unequal, prioritizing passive civic compliance over active democratic engagement (Subhan, 2026: 17):

Chart 1. Quantitative Distribution Of Civic Values In Mora Textbooks:



The dominant values of responsibility, identity, and respect are structured to cultivate a passive, compliant citizen who respects social harmony, adheres to state laws, and displays patriotism (Wahyudi, 2026: 10; Rosyidi, 2026: 16). Conversely, the values necessary for active, critical democratic citizenship—specifically courage, rights, and honesty—are highly marginalized (Subhan, 2026: 17). This pedagogical approach aligns with "affective nationalism," which secures state loyalty through emotional connections but limits the student's global critical consciousness and transformative agency (Rosyidi, 2026: 16).

DISCUSSION

Ethno-Edutainment and STEM-Arabic Integration as Curricular Innovations

To bridge the gap between traditional structures and contemporary communicative demands, the "ethno-edutainment" curriculum model resolves learning anxieties by integrating four complementary theoretical frameworks (Fitriani, 2026: 6):

1. Ethno-pedagogy: Uses local culture, traditions, and folklore as authentic learning resources, allowing students to learn Arabic by describing their own indigenous practices (Fitriani, 2026: 6).
2. Edutainment: Incorporates engaging and playful media—such as storytelling, educational games, drama, and songs—to lower affective barriers and enhance vocabulary retention (Fitriani, 2026: 6).
3. Constructivism: Dictates that language is acquired most effectively when students actively construct meaning through direct experience and social interaction (Fitriani, 2026: 6).

Multiple Intelligences: Diversifies media to accommodate verbal-linguistic, visual-spatial, musical, kinesthetic, interpersonal, and naturalistic learning styles (Fitriani, 2026: 6).

Furthermore, the multidisciplinary STEM-Arabic integration model challenges the traditional separation of foreign languages and sciences by using Arabic as a medium for active scientific exploration, collaborative project design, and environmental discussion (Abdurrahman, 2026: 19). Guided by core Islamic values—amanah (trustworthiness), adab (ethical behavior), ta'āwun (cooperation), and ṣidq (honesty)—students work in groups to design solutions for local environmental issues and present their findings entirely in Arabic (Abdurrahman, 2026: 19). Empirical studies on Project-Based Learning (PjBL) within this integration show a significant positive impact on Mahārah Qirā'ah (reading comprehension skills), replacing rote memorization with active critical thinking (Anwar, 2026: 22; Sholeh, 2026: 12).

Translating Global Citizenship Education (GCE) into the Islamic Vernacular

A critical challenge in implementing GCE in highly religious contexts is the perception that global citizenship is a secular, Western-centric concept. Within the Indonesian pesantren sector, this challenge is addressed by translating the universal principles of GCE into local Islamic terminology (Syaifullah, 2026: 2):

1. Tawassuth (Moderation): Emphasizes balance and a middle path, directly countering extreme textualist or secularist positions. It aligns with GCE's cognitive domain by encouraging balanced, critical, and objective analysis of complex global issues (Syaifullah, 2026: 2).
2. Tasamuh (Tolerance): Fosters respect and open-mindedness toward diverse viewpoints, corresponding directly to the socio-emotional domain of GCE by cultivating empathy and cultural sensitivity (Syaifullah, 2026: 2).
3. Musyawarah (Deliberation): Promotes collaborative, consensus-based decision-making, mapping onto the behavioral domain of GCE by preparing students to participate in cooperative global problem-solving (Syaifullah, 2026: 2).
4. Tata Krama (Etiquette/Adab): Guides respectful social interaction and ethical communication, supporting GCE's behavioral domain by fostering peaceful cross-cultural engagement (Syaifullah, 2026: 2).

By anchoring GCE in traditional terminology, the pesantren transforms from a space traditionally focused on classical language analysis into an alternative locus for global education. Pushing past grammar rules, educators introduce pressing global challenges—such as climate change, migration, and inequality—directly into classical Arabic study, allowing students to analyze contemporary global issues through the lens of classical Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) and ethics (Syaifullah, 2026: 2; Syarif, 2026: 5).

Higher Education as a Laboratory for Global Citizenship

Indonesian Islamic Higher Education Institutions (PTKI) serve as primary laboratories for refining modern Arabic pedagogy. In particular, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang and IAIN Kudus have designed intensive Arabic programs that integrate linguistic mastery with intercultural competence (Huda, 2026: 23):

Ability Grouping: Students are grouped into classes based on their baseline proficiencies to ensure personalized and effective instruction, especially accommodating those with zero prior exposure to Arabic (Kamil, 2026: 13).

Affective Pedagogy & Differentiated Instruction: Instructors lower foreign language anxiety by using empathetic communication, humor, positive reinforcement, and treating grammatical errors as natural learning phases (Kamil, 2026: 13).

Innovative Textbook Design: UIN Malang uses the internally developed *al-'Arabiyyah lil-Hayāh* ("Arabic for Life") textbook, which balances target Arabic culture with Indonesian national policies and local wisdom to prevent cultural alienation (Huda, 2026: 23). IAIN Kudus utilizes *Tsaqāfah Muta'addidah* ("Multicultural Culture") to develop students' critical capacity to compare and synthesize cultural practices, reducing stereotypes (Huda, 2026: 23; Munir, 2026: 14).

Service-Learning (KKN): Through Student Community Service (*Kuliah Kerja Nyata*), higher education institutions promote global citizenship skills including reflexivity (examining social positions), relationality (building relations across socio-economic groups), criticality (analyzing local-global dynamics), and social imaginary (working toward an equitable social reality) (Rasyid, 2026: 18).

Additionally, regional initiatives like those at the Sheikh Ibrahim Islamic Institute of Sciences in Rokan Hulu, Riau, show that experiential, field-based Arabic pedagogical approaches can revive active civic consciousness, helping students bypass regional political patronage by connecting their local heritage with global democratic values (Suryadi, 2026: 24).

Navigating Systemic Resource Deficits and Regional Inequities

Despite progressive policy designs, the reorientation of Arabic education faces persistent systemic challenges. At the higher education level, the practical integration of SDGs and global citizenship principles remains hindered by a shortage of appropriate teaching resources and resistance from lecturers who prefer familiar, teacher-centric methods (Sholeh, 2026: 12).

These challenges are further exacerbated by sharp regional disparities. While urban universities benefit from digital infrastructure, diverse student populations, and collaborative academic networks, rural educational institutions face severe resource limitations (Ghazali, 2026: 25). Rural madrasahs and colleges often lack access to digital learning platforms, modern multimedia tools, and certified language instructors (Rahman, 2026: 15).

To build an equitable system, Indonesia's policy interventions must move beyond mere regulatory updates and actively address these rural-urban imbalances. Fostering global citizenship requires targeted funding, technology transfers, and continuous professional development to ensure that rural institutions can implement interactive, project-based models successfully (Fauzi, 2026: 9; Anwar, 2026: 22).

Toward an Operational Policy-to-Outcome Framework

The preceding analysis suggests that translating policy intent into functional global citizenship outcomes requires more than isolated reform at any single level; it requires an explicit, sequential implementation chain linking regulation to classroom practice. Building on the policy, curricular, and pedagogical findings discussed above, this study proposes the following operational mechanism: Policy → Curriculum → Pedagogy → Teacher Competence → Assessment → Global Citizenship Outcomes. At the policy level, KMA No. 183 of 2019 and KMA No. 347 of 2022 establish the regulatory mandate for moderation, flexibility, and local adaptation (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019: 12; 2022: 34). This mandate is then operationalized at the curriculum level through the Merdeka Curriculum's *Capaian Pembelajaran*, which rebalances grammatical, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence rather than privileging grammatical mastery alone (Hidayat, 2026: 7). At the pedagogy level, ethno-edutainment and STEM-Arabic integration translate this rebalanced curriculum into classroom practice by embedding local culture, affective learning, and project-based inquiry (Fitriani, 2026: 6; Abdurrahman, 2026: 19). None of these curricular and pedagogical shifts can be sustained, however, without corresponding investment in teacher competence: instructors require targeted professional development in affective pedagogy and differentiated instruction so that they model, rather than merely prescribe, communicative and strategic competence (Kamil, 2026: 13). Finally, assessment must shift from grammar-based testing

toward Outcome-Based Assessment aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, so that measurable global citizenship outcomes—communicative confidence, civic courage, and rights-conscious participation—become the explicit target of evaluation rather than an incidental byproduct of language instruction (Sholeh, 2026: 12). Framed this way, the recommendation moves beyond identifying the need for reform to specifying the mechanism through which that reform can be implemented and monitored across policy, institutional, and classroom levels.

CONCLUSION

The reorientation of Arabic language education in Indonesia toward a global citizenship framework represents a strategic convergence of religious tradition, national identity, and 21st-century competencies. The integration of local wisdom (ethno-pedagogy) and religious moderation (wasathiyah) within pesantrens and universities successfully demystifies GCE as a secular Western agenda. However, full implementation remains hindered by the curricular neglect of sociolinguistic and strategic competences, the uneven distribution of active civic values in school textbooks, and the digital divide separating rural and urban institutions—all of which require structured, equitable policy interventions. The Policy → Curriculum → Pedagogy → Teacher Competence → Assessment → Global Citizenship Outcomes framework proposed in this study offers one concrete pathway for operationalizing such interventions across policy, institutional, and classroom levels.

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