

Sociolinguistic Implementation in *Qiroah* Learning to Enhance Merdeka Belajar's Educational Effectiveness at University

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Abstract:

This study addresses the critical need to enhance the effectiveness of Arabic reading (*Qiro'ah*) instruction within Indonesia's *Merdeka Belajar* (Freedom to Learn) program by integrating sociolinguistic approaches. Previous research has primarily focused on traditional pedagogical methods, overlooking the influence of social and cultural contexts on language comprehension, particularly within the flexible framework of *Merdeka Belajar*. This research aims to analyze the role of sociolinguistics in *Qiro'ah* learning at UIN KHAS Jember, with a focus on bridging comprehension gaps among students from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected through classroom observations, interviews, focus group discussions, and documentation involving students and lecturers. The findings reveal that applying sociolinguistic strategies—such as contextualizing language use according to social factors like dialect, status, and educational background—significantly improves students' reading comprehension, cultural sensitivity, and classroom participation. The study concludes that sociolinguistically informed teaching methods align effectively with the *Merdeka Belajar* program's goals, promoting an inclusive, adaptive, and socially responsive curriculum for Arabic language education.

Keywords: Sociolinguistic Approach; *Qiro'ah* Instruction; *Merdeka Belajar* Program;

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Implementasi Sociolinguistik pada Pembelajaran *Qiro'ah* untuk Peningkatkan Efektifitas Pembelajaran Program Merdeka Belajar di Universitas

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Abstrak:

Penelitian ini menjawab kebutuhan mendesak untuk meningkatkan efektivitas pembelajaran membaca bahasa Arab (*Qiro'ah*) dalam program Merdeka Belajar dengan mengintegrasikan pendekatan sociolinguistik. Studi terdahulu umumnya berfokus pada metode pengajaran tradisional tanpa mempertimbangkan pengaruh konteks sosial-budaya terhadap pemahaman bahasa, terutama dalam kerangka fleksibel Merdeka Belajar. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis peran sociolinguistik dalam pembelajaran *Qiro'ah* di UIN KHAS Jember, khususnya untuk menjembatani kesenjangan pemahaman mahasiswa dari berbagai latar belakang bahasa. Metode deskriptif kualitatif digunakan dengan pengumpulan data melalui observasi kelas, wawancara, diskusi kelompok terarah, dan dokumentasi yang melibatkan mahasiswa dan dosen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan strategi sociolinguistik—seperti kontekstualisasi penggunaan bahasa berdasarkan faktor sosial seperti dialek, status, dan latar pendidikan—secara signifikan meningkatkan pemahaman bacaan, kepekaan budaya, serta partisipasi aktif mahasiswa. Disimpulkan bahwa pendekatan pengajaran berbasis sociolinguistik sejalan dengan tujuan program Merdeka Belajar dalam menciptakan kurikulum bahasa Arab yang inklusif, adaptif, dan responsif terhadap keragaman sosial mahasiswa.

Kata Kunci: Pendekatan Sociolinguistik; Pembelajaran *Qiro'ah*; Program Merdeka Belajar;

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INTRODUCTION

The increasing need for contextually adaptive language pedagogy in Indonesia's higher education landscape is driven by the national implementation of the *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) policy, which mandates curriculum flexibility and student-centered learning (Sintiawati et al., 2022). This transformative shift creates a significant challenge for specialized subjects like Arabic *Qiro'ah* (recitation) instruction, where traditional, often structural, teaching methods may not adequately address the diverse sociolinguistic realities of students from varied regional, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds (Akkus & Doymuş, 2022; Naibaho & Manik, 2023). A notable gap emerges as the pedagogical potential of sociolinguistics—which examines the interplay between language and social factors such as status, education, and ethnicity (Tseng & Hinrichs, 2021)—remains largely underexplored within MBKM-aligned Arabic curricula. This oversight is critical because effective religious literacy in a multicultural archipelago like Indonesia requires more than grammatical mastery; it demands an understanding of how social context shapes textual interpretation and communication (S. Almelhes, 2024). Consequently, there is an urgent need to investigate integrative solutions. This study responds by exploring the implementation of a sociolinguistic approach in *Qiro'ah* learning at UIN KHAS Jember, aiming to bridge the comprehension gap for diverse learners and develop a more inclusive, effective pedagogical model that aligns with the transformative goals of the MBKM program, ultimately fostering both linguistic competence and cultural sensitivity (Yu et al., 2021).

Previous research establishes a foundational link between sociolinguistic approaches and language pedagogy; however, a significant gap persists regarding their application within specific national educational frameworks, such as Indonesia's *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM). Existing literature broadly confirms that integrating sociocultural context into language teaching enhances learner comprehension and engagement (Aminah et al., 2025). For instance, studies on Arabic pedagogy demonstrate that methods acknowledging dialectal variations (*fusha* and *amiyah*) can bridge comprehension gaps for students from diverse linguistic backgrounds, thereby fostering more inclusive classroom dynamics (S. A. Almelhes & Alsaiari, 2024). Furthermore, general sociolinguistic theory posits that language acquisition is inextricably tied to social identity and contextual use, suggesting that effective curricula must account for factors such as socio-economic background, age, and situational formality (Wang et al., 2023). However, a critical review of recent publications reveals that most empirical investigations remain confined to traditional curricular settings or general language acquisition, without explicitly intersecting with the principles of learner autonomy, curricular flexibility, and experiential learning that define the MBKM policy (Supriati et al., 2022). Consequently, while the beneficial role of sociolinguistics in Arabic reading (*Qiro'ah*) instruction is acknowledged, there is a lack of concrete, context-specific research on how these principles are operationalized, measured, and optimized within the innovative and decentralized structure of the MBKM program at the university level. This study therefore positions itself to address this empirical void by investigating the practical implementation and impact of a sociolinguistic approach in *Qiro'ah* learning at UIN KHAS Jember, aiming to translate established theoretical advantages into actionable strategies for the contemporary Indonesian higher education landscape.



This research offers a unique contribution by addressing a critical gap in the intersection of sociolinguistic pedagogy and the *Merdeka Belajar* (Freedom to Learn) curriculum within Arabic reading (*Qiro'ah*) instruction at UIN KHAS Jember. While previous studies have examined sociolinguistics in language teaching (Hovy & Yang, 2021) or the structural implementation of MBKM (Rahayu et al., 2022), they often treat these domains separately. For instance, prior works, such as those by Al-Ghozali & Alfinnaturrohmah (2024), focus on general learning methods in *Qiro'ah*, while Setyaningsih et al. (2024a) analyze the impact of MBKM on teacher behaviour, without integrating a sociolinguistic lens specifically within this autonomous learning framework. This study's unique contribution lies in its empirical demonstration of how a sociolinguistic approach—such as contextualizing lessons with local dialects or varying formality levels based on social scenarios—directly enhances student comprehension and participation within the *MBKM*'s flexible structure (as evidenced by interview and observation data showing improved engagement). For example, findings reveal that using both formal (*fusha*) and informal (*ammiyah*) Arabic varieties helped bridge comprehension gaps for 30.8% of students with basic skills, a strategy not deeply explored in earlier MBKM-related language research. By providing concrete evidence from classroom observations and FGDs that link specific sociolinguistic strategies (e.g., status-based language analysis) to measurable outcomes in the *MBKM* context, this research fills a substantive void. It moves beyond theoretical curriculum design to offer a replicable model for making national educational autonomy policies more linguistically responsive and culturally inclusive in practice.

This study is critically important as it addresses a significant gap in contemporary higher education pedagogy by integrating sociolinguistic principles into *Qiro'ah* (Arabic reading) instruction within Indonesia's *Merdeka Belajar* (Freedom to Learn) program. The urgency stems from the persistent challenge of low Arabic literacy among students, as evidenced by preliminary data showing that 53.8% of learners at UIN KHAS Jember struggle profoundly with reading comprehension (Authors' data, 2024). Solely relying on traditional, structural linguistic methods has proven insufficient for engaging a diverse student body with varied dialectal and socio-cultural backgrounds (Kawar, 2024). The sociolinguistic approach becomes essential because language acquisition is not merely a cognitive process but is deeply embedded in social interaction and identity; effective pedagogy must therefore bridge the gap between formal *fusha* Arabic and the students' lived linguistic realities (Tseng & Hinrichs, 2021). For instance, incorporating contextual examples that reflect different social statuses, economic conditions, and formal versus informal settings allows students to see language as a dynamic social tool, thereby enhancing both comprehension and cultural sensitivity (Gu & Manan, 2024). Furthermore, the national *MBKM* policy explicitly advocates for contextual, flexible, and student-centered curricula, making this integration not just pedagogically sound but also a direct response to national educational mandates (Panduan, 2020). In conclusion, without such an adaptive approach, the goals of the MBKM program to create competent, culturally-aware graduates remain unattainable for many. This research provides a vital framework for transforming Arabic language education into a more inclusive, effective, and socially-relevant discipline.



This study aims to investigate the implementation and impact of a sociolinguistic approach in *Qirā'ah* instruction within the *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM)* program at UIN Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember. The primary objective is to analyze how integrating sociolinguistic principles—such as understanding language variation based on social status, educational background, and cultural context— affects the effectiveness of Arabic reading comprehension among students (Al-Ghozali & Alfinnaturrohman, 2024). Specifically, the research seeks to answer whether this pedagogical approach can bridge comprehension gaps for students from diverse linguistic backgrounds and foster a more inclusive, context-sensitive curriculum. The central hypothesis posits that applying a sociolinguistic framework in *Qirā'ah* instruction significantly enhances students' linguistic comprehension and cultural sensitivity, thereby increasing learning engagement and academic outcomes within the flexible MBKM structure. This is supported by the notion that language learning is deeply embedded in social practice, where acknowledging students' varied sociolinguistic realities makes instruction more relevant and effective (Kawar, 2024). For example, the observed use of both formal (*fusha*) and colloquial (*amiyah*) Arabic in classroom interactions suggests that such contextual adaptation can lower affective barriers and improve participation (Grieve et al., 2025). Consequently, this research hypothesizes that strategic sociolinguistic integration will directly contribute to achieving the MBKM's goals of creating adaptive, student-centered learning environments that prepare graduates for multicultural professional settings.

METHOD

The selection of sociolinguistics as a focal lens for examining *Qirā'ah* instruction within the *Merdeka Belajar* framework stems from a critical gap identified in contemporary pedagogical literature. While the program champions adaptive and student-centred learning, a notable absence remains in empirical research exploring how students' diverse social and linguistic backgrounds influence their acquisition of complex Arabic religious texts (Setyaningsih et al., 2024b; Sucipto et al., 2024). This study posits that language learning, particularly *Qirā'ah*, is not a neutral, context-free activity but is deeply embedded in social reality. The core issue, therefore, is the underexplored intersection between curriculum flexibility and the sociolinguistic realities of learners. To address this, the research employs a qualitative descriptive approach, which is deemed most appropriate for capturing the nuanced, in-depth perspectives of participants within their natural educational setting (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This methodological choice enables a rich exploration of how social factors manifest in the classroom, moving beyond quantitative metrics to understand the lived experiences of both students and lecturers as they adapt to a more autonomous learning model.

Data for this inquiry were primarily drawn from the academic community of UIN Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember, specifically targeting stakeholders directly involved in the *Qirā'ah* course under the *Merdeka Belajar* program. The primary sources included students enrolled in the Maharah *Qiro'ah* class and the lecturers facilitating it, selected through purposive sampling to ensure participants had direct, relevant experience with the phenomenon under study (Naibaho & Manik, 2023). Supplementary data were gathered from academic documents and policy guidelines related to the MBKM curriculum at the university. To collect



comprehensive data, a multi-method strategy was implemented. This involved direct classroom observations to document linguistic interactions and teaching practices, semi-structured interviews with both students and lecturers to gather personal insights and experiences, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with academic experts to deliberate on curricular strategies and challenges (SEVİLMİŞ & YILDIZ, 2022). This triangulation of methods was crucial for cross-verifying findings and constructing a holistic understanding of the sociolinguistic dynamics at play.

The data analysis process was systematic and iterative, adhering to established qualitative analysis frameworks. Following data collection, the raw information from transcripts, field notes, and documents underwent data reduction, in which it was condensed and organized into meaningful units (Brailas et al., 2023). Subsequently, the data were classified and coded according to emerging themes related to sociolinguistic implementation, including "use of language variation," "contextual teaching methods," and "student linguistic background." This thematic organization facilitated a deeper understanding of how these elements interrelated within the MBKM framework. Throughout the analysis, techniques such as peer debriefing and member checking were employed to enhance the credibility and validity of the interpretations, ensuring the findings remained grounded in the participants' actual experiences and perspectives (Chuaychoowong, 2022; Sun et al., 2020). This rigorous analytical process ultimately enabled the synthesis of complex data into coherent findings that articulate the role and impact of sociolinguistics in this specific educational context.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

The implementation of sociolinguistics in *Qiro'ah* learning at UIN Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember as part of the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka Program.

A survey of 65 students enrolled in the *Qiro'ah* course at UIN Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember revealed significant challenges in reading and comprehending Arabic texts. The data, visualized in the table below, indicates that only a small fraction of students have achieved proficiency.

Table 1. Frequency of Student Ability in Reading and Understanding Arabic Texts

No.	Response Category	N	F	P (%)
1	Proficient	65	10	15.4%
2	Basic / Limited Ability	65	20	30.8%
3	Not Able	65	35	53.8%
Total	-	65	65	100%

N = Total respondents; F = Frequency of responses; P (%) = Percentage of total.

In an interview on August 10, 2024, the course lecturer, Mr Romli, explained his pedagogical approach: "In teaching sociolinguistics within the *Qiro'ah* course, I frequently employ communicative approaches and group discussions. I guide



students in analyzing texts that exhibit linguistic variation, including dialects and stylistic differences shaped by social context. They also conduct observations of language use outside the classroom through media or social interactions they monitor."

A student participant, Tholibah (pseudonym), shared her learning experience in the same interview: *"Studying sociolinguistics in the Qiro'ah course is fascinating because it allows me to understand how Arabic is used across various social situations deeply. Group discussions are constructive, especially when examining language variations among native speakers from different countries."*

The research process included a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) held on August 20, 2024, involving Arabic language education experts and researchers. The session, moderated by Dwi Khoirotun Nisa, M.Pd., aimed to formulate implementation strategies. Key outputs from this discussion were synthesized into a strategic framework diagram (Bagnan 4.3) outlining a comprehensive approach to integrating sociolinguistics into the curriculum, teaching methodology, and contextual language use.

The presented data highlight a pressing concern regarding students' Arabic reading comprehension competency at UIN Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember. Survey results indicate that over half of the assessed students (53.8%) struggle significantly with understanding Arabic texts, while only 15.4% are proficient. Feedback from both the instructor and students underscores the active use of interactive, context-based teaching methods—such as group discussions, communicative tasks, and social observation—to link linguistic forms with their social functions. Furthermore, structured expert discussions have culminated in a strategic model that systematically embeds sociolinguistic principles into the *Qiro'ah* learning process, aligning with the broader objectives of the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) program.

Three distinct tendencies emerge from the analysis of the collected data:

A Significant Competency Gap: The majority of students (53.8%) lack fundamental skills in reading and comprehending Arabic texts. This indicates a substantial disconnect between current instructional outcomes and desired proficiency levels, necessitating urgent pedagogical intervention and curriculum reassessment.

Positive Reception of Contextual Pedagogy: Both instructor testimony and student feedback affirm the effectiveness of interactive, sociolinguistically-informed methods. Approaches that emphasize real-world language variation, group analysis, and observational learning are reported to enhance engagement and deepen contextual understanding of Arabic.

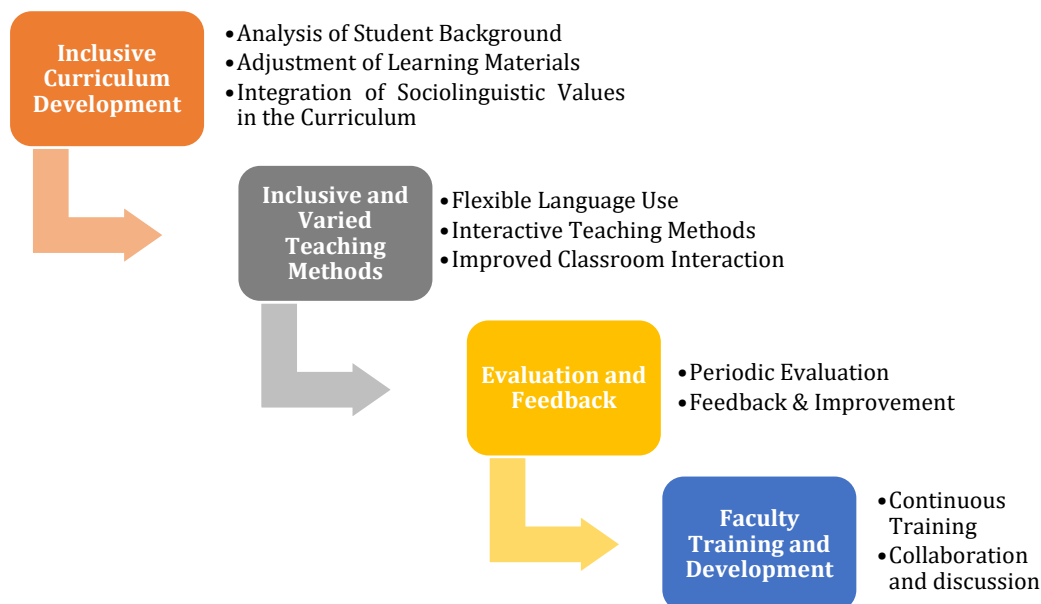
Strategic Institutional Alignment: The development of a formal implementation framework, derived from expert FGDs, reflects a concerted institutional effort to bridge theory and practice. This strategy deliberately aligns the integration of sociolinguistics with the MBKM program's goals, aiming to create a more adaptive, relevant, and socially aware learning environment that prepares students for diverse professional and academic contexts.

This report concludes that integrating sociolinguistics into *Qiro'ah* instruction is crucial not only for mastering reading skills but also for strengthening the



connection between language and social context—a key competency in the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka framework. The findings from the FGD are summarized in the strategic diagram below (Figure 1):

Figure 1. Strategic Steps for a Comprehensive Sociolinguistic Implementation Strategy



The chart above shows that the implementation of sociolinguistics in *Qiro'ah* learning at UIN Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember is carried out through the development of an inclusive curriculum that begins with an analysis of students' social, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. The learning materials are adapted to be relevant to students' lives and reflect cultural diversity, and they integrate sociolinguistic values to build an understanding of language variation. The teaching approach uses interactive methods and flexible language between *fusha* and *amiyah* to suit students' needs and encourage collaborative interaction. Periodic evaluation and feedback are important parts of this process, along with training for lecturers to optimize the application of sociolinguistic principles. These steps are expected to create a learning environment that is responsive to social diversity, in line with the objectives of the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) program in improving the relevance and quality of education.

The impact of sociolinguistic aspects on the effectiveness of *Qiro'ah* learning at UIN Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember in the context of the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka Program.

Observational data collected from *Qiro'ah* classrooms at UIN Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember revealed distinct patterns in teaching methodology and student engagement. As documented in Table 3 (Observational Results), instructors strategically employed a mix of formal (*fusha*) and colloquial (*amiyah*) Arabic during lessons. This approach was found to correlate with increased student participation in class discussions and more positive student responses to the instructional methods.



Complementing these observations, interviews provided qualitative depth. Lecturer Mr. Romli explained, *"By weaving sociolinguistic awareness into the curriculum, we move beyond grammar and vocabulary to explore how Arabic functions in real social contexts. This helps students see the language as a living system."* A student informant, Sari, shared her perspective: *"Previously, texts felt distant. Now, when we analyze how a merchant in a market speaks versus a professor in a lecture, the language becomes relatable and much easier to understand."* These insights are summarized in the following tables derived from the interview data:

Table 2. Summary of Lecturer Interviews

No.	Topic	Interview Summary
1	Role of Sociolinguistics	Lecturers state that understanding students' linguistic backgrounds helps develop effective teaching strategies.
2	Teaching Method	Using variations of formal and colloquial Arabic based on student proficiency increases active participation.
3	Challenge	The primary challenge is adapting materials to be relevant to students' diverse social and cultural contexts.

Table 3: Summary of Student Interviews

No.	Topic	Interview Summary
1	Material Comprehension	Students find Qiro'ah material easier to grasp when delivered with consideration for their linguistic background.
2	Class Participation	Students feel more motivated to participate actively due to the inclusive teaching approach.
3	Lecturer Interaction	Interaction with lecturers is smoother and supports a more effective learning process.

The collected information indicates a clear connection between sociolinguistically-informed teaching practices and several positive outcomes in the Qiro'ah learning environment. Specifically, when lecturers consciously integrate an understanding of social language variation—such as adjusting their use of formal and everyday Arabic—students report a firmer grasp of reading materials. Furthermore, this inclusive approach appears to foster a more engaging classroom atmosphere, encouraging active discussion and facilitating more effective communication between students and lecturers.



An analysis of the integrated data reveals three predominant tendencies:

Enhanced Contextual Comprehension: There is a marked tendency for students' comprehension of Arabic texts to improve when instruction acknowledges linguistic diversity. The deliberate use of both *fusha* and *amiyah* by lecturers acts as a bridge, making complex texts more accessible and relatable to students from varied dialectal backgrounds.

Promotion of an Inclusive Learning Climate: The data strongly suggests that teaching methods informed by sociolinguistic principles cultivate a more **participatory** and motivating classroom environment. Students express feeling valued and understood, which directly correlates with their increased willingness to engage in discussions and activities.

Optimization of Pedagogical Interaction: A clear tendency emerges towards more fluid and effective lecturer-student interactions. By adapting **communication** strategies to align with students' linguistic competencies, lecturers reduce potential barriers. This facilitates a smoother pedagogical exchange, directly supporting the core learning and teaching process.

Sociolinguistic applications impact language teaching. The role of sociolinguistics in determining content and the sequence of material delivery is vital in language teaching. According to Macalister (2010: 26), determining content in language curriculum development is closely related to needs analysis, as illustrated in a chart outlining this process.

Diagram 1. The Role of Sociolinguistics

Goals	Questions	Types of information in the answers
Language	What will the course be used for? How proficient does the user have to be? What communicative activities will the learner take part in? Where will the language be used?	sounds vocabulary grammatical structures functions set phrases and set sentences tasks
Ideas	What content matter will the learner be working with?	topics themes texts
Skills	How will the learner use the language? Under what conditions will the language be used? Who will the learners use the language with?	listening speaking reading writing degree of accuracy degree of fluency
Text	What will the language be used to do? What language uses is the learner already familiar with?	genres and discourse types sociolinguistic skills

Based on this analysis, sociolinguistics plays a key role in selecting texts for learning, as texts must be adapted to the language already familiar to students in the class being taught.



DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Summary of Findings

The research findings indicate that the implementation of sociolinguistics in the Qiro'ah learning process at UIN Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember has positively impacted students' comprehension and participation. The teaching methods employed include communicative approaches and group discussions, which focus on Arabic language variations and social context (Haeri, 2000). Furthermore, the analysis of students' reading abilities revealed that 15.4% of students possess high proficiency, while 53.8% face significant difficulties (Astifo, 2022). Student attendance rates also show encouraging results, with 69.2% attending class consistently (Vélez-Rendón, 2002). Based on the Focus Group Discussion (FGD), the development of an inclusive curriculum and the adoption of contextual teaching methods are recommended as strategic steps to enhance students' understanding and engagement in Qiro'ah learning (Richards, 2008; Savignon, 2007).

Reflection on Findings

The obtained data underscores the importance of social factors and cultural context in language learning. The use of both formal (fusha) and colloquial (amiyah) Arabic varieties is one reason students feel more involved and motivated to participate in class (Alsalami, 2025). This aligns with sociolinguistic theory, which posits that language cannot be separated from the social context in which it is used (Meyerhoff, 2018). Higher student engagement can be linked to material adjustments that align with their linguistic backgrounds, enabling them to grasp the taught concepts more easily (Davies & Elder, 2004). Therefore, educators must consider students' social backgrounds when designing more effective instruction (Abney & Krulatz, 2015).

Interpretation of Impacts

From the reflection above, it can be interpreted that the sociolinguistic approach in teaching Qiro'ah not only enhances students' academic understanding but also encourages active participation in the teaching-learning process (Ashari et al., 2023; Mocozet et al., 2021). This involvement creates a more inclusive learning environment where students feel valued and motivated to contribute (Al Matalaka et al., 2024). Material adaptation that incorporates social context also helps students understand the nuances and variations in Arabic, which is essential for daily communication (Walz, 1989). However, challenges remain in implementing this approach, particularly in adapting materials to students' cultural diversity (Alsaawi, 2022).

Comparison with Previous Studies

A comparison with previous studies shows that this research is consistent with findings indicating that language instruction that considers social and cultural contexts can improve students' understanding and engagement (Ellis, 1982). However, some previous studies placed less emphasis on students' linguistic diversity, a primary focus of this research (Nassif, 2021). Additionally, prior research also suggests that a sociolinguistic approach can reduce learning disparities among students from different backgrounds (Fathy & Alansary, 2022). This affirms that the current study provides a novel contribution to understanding the role of sociolinguistics in Qiro'ah learning at UIN Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember.



Recommendations for Future Studies

Based on the findings and discussion above, it is recommended that further research be conducted to explore the long-term effects of the sociolinguistic approach in *Qiro'ah* learning and its implications for the Arabic language curriculum as a whole (Lionyza Zaneta Rasendria Kirana et al., 2025; Nabila Nashfati & Salamuddin, 2025). Recommendations also include the need for policy development that supports the integration of sociolinguistic aspects into the Arabic curriculum, involving educators, students, and industry stakeholders (Wilhelm, 2019). Furthermore, training educators to master contextual teaching strategies is essential to ensure the sociolinguistic approach is implemented effectively (Kamal, 2025). Through these measures, it is hoped that *Qiro'ah* learning can become more relevant and responsive to student needs in the era of the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (Freedom to Learn - Independent Campus) Program.

CONCLUSION

This study's key findings indicate that applying sociolinguistics in *Qiro'ah* learning at UIN Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember, within the framework of the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) program, has a significant impact on students' language comprehension and active participation. Through this approach, students are encouraged to connect their Arabic language skills with relevant social contexts, including factors such as social status, age, and educational background. The research results indicate that the use of both formal (*fusha*) and colloquial (*amiyah*) Arabic in *Qiro'ah* classes enhances students' linguistic abilities, as evidenced by their active participation in discussions and their comprehension of texts. Interviews with students revealed that they find it easier to access and understand *Qiro'ah* material when instruction takes their linguistic background into account. These findings confirm that integrating sociolinguistics into *Qiro'ah* teaching not only adds value to the learning process but also increases the effectiveness and relevance of language education under the MBKM policy.

In terms of contribution, this study offers a new perspective for developing more adaptive and inclusive language learning by integrating a sociolinguistic viewpoint into the *Qiro'ah* curriculum. The sociolinguistics-based teaching methods applied at UIN Jember have the potential to serve as a model for other educational institutions in designing curricula that consider the social dimensions of language use. Furthermore, observations of students' linguistic backgrounds and the implementation of various teaching methods, such as group discussions and social observation, demonstrate that this approach deepens students' understanding of Arabic texts. Thus, the sociolinguistic approach contributes not only to improving language skills but also to building cultural sensitivity and cross-cultural communication abilities, which are highly relevant in the MBKM context for preparing students to face challenges in a multicultural workplace.

However, this study also has several limitations that should be considered in future research. First, adapting curricula and teaching practices to sociolinguistics requires additional resources, including teaching materials and instructor training to present language variations appropriate to students' social contexts. Additionally, the diversity of students' cultural backgrounds demands a more personalized and flexible teaching approach, which can be challenging in large classes or with limited instructors. Therefore, recommendations for future research include conducting a



more in-depth assessment of the long-term impact of the sociolinguistic approach on students' linguistic skills. Furthermore, the development of digitally based teaching materials that can be accessed flexibly should also be considered to support the achievement of MBKM's goals in creating a more inclusive and responsive curriculum that meets the needs of students and the wider community.

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