

TRANSLANGUAGING PRACTICES IN PESANTREN-BASED BILINGUAL EDUCATION: BRIDGING ARABIC, ENGLISH, AND LOCAL LANGUAGES

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Abstract: This study explores the emerging translanguaging practices within pesantren-based bilingual education in Indonesia, focusing on the dynamic interplay between Arabic, English, and local vernaculars (e.g., Javanese or Bahasa Indonesia) in classroom interactions and religious learning environments. Drawing on ethnographic classroom observations, interviews with teachers and students, and analysis of pedagogical materials, the research highlights how multilingual resources are strategically mobilized to facilitate comprehension of religious texts, enhance communicative competence, and foster a culturally grounded yet globally relevant linguistic identity. The findings reveal that translanguaging functions not only as a pedagogical tool but also as an ideological stance that challenges traditional language hierarchies and redefines the role of pesantren in the 21st-century Islamic education landscape. Moreover, the study uncovers tensions between institutional language policies and grassroots classroom practices, suggesting the need for more flexible and context-sensitive approaches to language planning in Islamic educational institutions. By situating the analysis within the broader framework of critical applied linguistics and Islamic pedagogy, this research contributes to ongoing debates on multilingualism, religious education, and identity formation in the Global South.

Keywords: Translanguaging, Pesantren, Bilingual Education, Arabic-English Pedagogy, Critical Applied Linguistics.

Introduction

Multilingual education has emerged as a critical pedagogical strategy in responding to the demands of an increasingly globalized and

interconnected world¹. As educational institutions confront shifting cultural, technological, and epistemological landscapes, the ability to navigate multiple languages becomes not only a practical necessity but also a strategic advantage. Within the context of Islamic education, multilingualism occupies a unique position; it is not merely a functional tool for communication, but also an essential conduit for the transmission of sacred knowledge, the articulation of religious identity, and the negotiation of modernity within a faith-based framework². Language, in this setting, intertwines with spirituality, authority, and tradition, playing a formative role in shaping the epistemic and moral consciousness of learners.

The Indonesian pesantren, as a long-standing institution of Islamic learning, embodies this intersection of religion, language, and culture. Traditionally known for its emphasis on Arabic literacy and classical Islamic sciences, the pesantren has undergone significant transformation in recent years³. Contemporary pesantren are increasingly adopting bilingual or trilingual curricula that incorporate Arabic, English, and local languages such as Bahasa Indonesia or regional vernaculars like Javanese, Madurese, or Sundanese. These developments are driven by multiple imperatives: the need to maintain access to primary religious sources in Arabic⁴, the aspiration to engage with global Islamic discourses in English, and the desire to remain contextually grounded in the linguistic realities of Indonesian society. As a result, pesantren are evolving into rich multilingual ecologies where diverse linguistic resources are continuously negotiated and recontextualized in both formal and informal learning spaces⁵.

¹ Muchlis Muchlis, 'Translanguaging as a Strategy in Fostering Multilingual Students' Comprehension at Mambaus Sholihin 2 High School Blitar' (Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim, 2024).

² Alifatul Umniyah, Slamet Setiawan, and Him'mawan Adi Nugroho, 'Enhancing Communication Skills through Translanguaging in Pesantren-Based English Club', *PANYONARA: Journal of English Education*, 7.1 (2025), pp. 16–37.

³ Siti Nihayati Aribah and Intan Pradita, 'The Use of Translanguaging to Facilitate Students' English Learning in an Indonesian Pesantren', *Communications in Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2.1 (2022), pp. 7–13.

⁴ Muh Sabilar Rosyad and others, 'Analysis of Student Orientation in Learning Arabic as a Second Language at Pesantren-Based Universities', *Kilmatuna: Journal Of Arabic Education*, 5.1 (2025), pp. 134–45 <[10.55352/pba.v5i1.1092](https://doi.org/10.55352/pba.v5i1.1092)>.

⁵ Fransisca Kristanti and Ruzheng Pei, 'Translanguaging Practice in EFL Classroom: A Comparative Study of Chinese and Indonesian Universities', *BRU ELT JOURNAL*, 2.1 (2024), pp. 86–105.

Among the emerging phenomena within these multilingual contexts is the practice of translanguaging, which refers to the dynamic and flexible use of the speaker's full linguistic repertoire to make meaning, co-construct knowledge, and perform identity. Unlike traditional notions of code-switching, which treat languages as separate and bounded systems, translanguaging emphasizes the integrative and fluid nature of language use, especially in educational settings. In pesantren classrooms, translanguaging manifests when teachers and students alternate between Arabic, English, and local languages to clarify religious concepts, explain complex grammatical structures, or relate doctrinal content to students' lived experiences. These practices not only enhance comprehension but also foster deeper engagement, critical thinking, and linguistic agency.

Despite its pedagogical potential, the study of translanguaging in pesantren-based bilingual education remains limited. Existing research in Islamic educational contexts often upholds rigid language hierarchies that privilege Arabic for its sacred status or English for its global utility, while marginalizing the pedagogical role of local languages⁶. Such perspectives tend to overlook the nuanced, everyday language practices that shape meaning-making and relational dynamics within the classroom. Furthermore, they fail to capture how students and educators in pesantren actively challenge, appropriate, and reconstruct linguistic norms in ways that reflect both theological commitments and contemporary realities⁷.

This study seeks to fill this gap by critically examining translanguaging practices in pesantren-based bilingual education in Indonesia. It investigates how Arabic, English, and local languages are mobilized in teaching and learning processes, the functions these practices serve in both religious and secular instruction, and the broader ideological frameworks that inform language choices⁸. In doing so, the study positions translanguaging not merely as a communicative strategy, but as a lens through which to understand evolving

⁶ Ahmad Madkur, Yuliana Friska, and Lisnawati Lisnawati, 'Translanguaging Pedagogy in ELT Practices: Experiences of Teachers in Indonesian Pesantren-Based Schools', *Voices of English Language Education Society*, 6.1 (2022), pp. 130–43.

⁷ Abbas Ali Rezaee, Haniye Seyri, and Mohammad Hussein Norouzi, 'Translanguaging at the Heart of Language Education: A Systematic Review', *Translation, Translanguaging and Machine Translation in Foreign Language Education* 2025, 2025, pp. 235–59.

⁸ Bayu Andika Prasatyo, Luciana Luciana, and Dini Hidayati, 'Bridging Worlds with Words: Translanguaging Space as A Transformation of Specific-Cultural Constructs', *Jurnal Pendidikan Progresif*, 15.1 (2025), pp. 671–90.

conceptions of pedagogy, authority, and identity in Islamic education⁹. The findings aim to contribute to ongoing debates in applied linguistics, multilingual education, and Islamic pedagogy, while offering practical insights for educators and policymakers seeking to design inclusive and context-responsive language programs in faith-based institutions¹⁰.

Literature Review

The study of language use in Islamic educational contexts has gained momentum in recent years, driven by a growing interest in the intersection of multilingualism, pedagogy, and religious identity. Research on language policy and practice in Muslim-majority countries often underscores the complexity of navigating linguistic hierarchies, where Arabic is positioned as a sacred language, English as a global medium, and local languages as tools for contextual engagement. However, much of the literature has traditionally approached these languages as compartmentalized systems, reinforcing monoglossic ideologies that separate language functions according to their perceived value or domain¹¹.

In Indonesia, several studies have examined the role of bilingual and trilingual education in pesantren, particularly in relation to Arabic and English proficiency. These studies highlight the increasing integration of English into pesantren curricula, often as part of institutional efforts to modernize and globalize their educational offerings¹². At the same time, local languages continue to play a crucial role in daily communication, classroom interaction, and cultural transmission within pesantren environments. Despite this rich multilingual landscape, few studies have focused explicitly on the dynamic interaction among these languages, especially from the perspective of classroom discourse and pedagogical strategy¹³.

⁹ Nurul Murtadho, 'An Overview of Bilingual Education Practices in Pesantren', *KnE Social Sciences*, 2023, pp. 194–206.

¹⁰ Dery Tria Agustin and others, 'Exploring English Language Teachers' Use of Translanguaging in Indonesian Secondary School English Classrooms: Reasons and Purposes', *Erudita: Journal of English Language Teaching*, 5.1 (2025), pp. 19–30.

¹¹ Abdullah Sahin, *New Directions in Islamic Education: Pedagogy and Identity Formation* (Kube Publishing Ltd, 2013).

¹² Nizamuddin Sadiq, 'Integrating Islamic Values into English Language Teaching: Some Practical Insights from Indonesian Contexts' (Proceedings of the International Conference on Islamic Social Sciences and ..., 2024).

¹³ M Pd Alek, *Democratic and Moderate Values in Multicultural, Multiethnic, and Multilingual Classrooms: Foreign Language Educators in Indonesian Islamic Higher Education* (wawasan Ilmu).

Recent developments in applied linguistics have introduced more nuanced frameworks for understanding multilingual practices, with translanguaging emerging as a particularly influential concept. Translanguaging moves beyond code-switching and language separation, instead emphasizing how multilingual speakers draw from an integrated linguistic repertoire to make meaning. While this concept has been widely applied in secular educational contexts particularly in urban, immigrant, or postcolonial settings its application in religious or faith-based education remains relatively limited. A growing body of work suggests, however, that translanguaging can be a powerful tool for enhancing learning, fostering critical engagement with texts, and supporting identity formation in multilingual religious environments¹⁴.

This study contributes to the expanding literature by focusing on translanguaging practices in pesantren-based bilingual education. By examining the pedagogical, discursive, and ideological dimensions of language use in Islamic classrooms, the research seeks to bridge gaps between applied linguistics, religious education, and multilingual pedagogy, offering a more holistic understanding of how language functions in faith-based learning environments. This study is grounded in the theoretical paradigm of translanguaging as conceptualized within critical applied linguistics¹⁵. Translanguaging, initially developed in bilingual education contexts, challenges traditional boundaries between named languages and instead views language use as a fluid, integrated process. It emphasizes the agency of multilingual speakers in mobilizing their entire semiotic repertoire to construct meaning, mediate knowledge, and express identities. Rather than perceiving Arabic, English, and local languages as distinct and hierarchical, the translanguaging perspective recognizes them as interrelated and contextually negotiated resources¹⁶.

From a pedagogical standpoint, translanguaging foregrounds the role of language practices in promoting equitable and inclusive learning. It supports the idea that learners benefit from engaging with all their

¹⁴ Sedigheh Karimpour, Roya Jafari, and Mostafa Nazari, 'Exploring the Role of Religious Ideology in English Language Teachers' Identity Construction: A Community of Practice Perspective', *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, 33.1 (2024), pp. 83–92.

¹⁵ Tuba Yilmaz, 'Translanguaging as a Pedagogy for Equity of Language Minoritized Students', *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 18.3 (2021), pp. 435–54.

¹⁶ Li Wei, 'Transformative Pedagogy for Inclusion and Social Justice through Translanguaging, Co-Learning, and Transpositioning', *Language Teaching*, 57.2 (2024), pp. 203–14.

linguistic and cultural resources, particularly in environments where dominant language ideologies may marginalize non-standard or vernacular forms. In the context of pesantren, this approach allows for a rethinking of how Arabic and English are taught and used not as isolated targets of proficiency, but as part of a broader communicative ecology that includes students' local linguistic knowledge¹⁷.

This theoretical stance is complemented by insights from **critical sociolinguistics**, which interrogates how power, identity, and ideology shape language use in educational spaces. In Islamic learning contexts, language is not neutral; it carries symbolic meanings tied to religious authority, social mobility, and cultural authenticity. By adopting a critical lens, the study explores how translanguaging practices in pesantren both reflect and resist these ideological constructs, providing a more situated and politicized account of language in religious education. Together, the frameworks of translanguaging and critical sociolinguistics offer a robust lens for analyzing the complex linguistic practices observed in pesantren-based bilingual classrooms¹⁸. They enable a deeper understanding of how language functions as a pedagogical, cultural, and ideological tool in shaping the experiences of learners within Islamic educational settings.

Method

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design to explore translanguaging practices within bilingual education in the pesantren context. Data were collected through participant classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with teachers and students, and documentation of teaching materials and institutional language policies¹⁹. The research site was purposively selected from a pesantren that implements a bilingual curriculum (Arabic-English) while actively incorporating local languages in daily interactions. Data analysis was conducted thematically through processes of reduction, categorization, and interpretation, focusing on patterns of language use, the pedagogical functions of translanguaging, and stakeholders'

¹⁷ Anna Mendoza and others, 'Sustaining Critical Approaches to Translanguaging in Education: A Contextual Framework', *Tesol Quarterly*, 58.2 (2024), pp. 664–92.

¹⁸ Sabrina F Sembiante and others, 'Sustainable Translanguaging Pedagogy in Support of the Vulnerable Language: Honoring Children's Ways of 'Showing' and 'Telling' in an Early Childhood Dual Language Bilingual Education Program', *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 26.8 (2023), pp. 928–42.

¹⁹ Britta Gammelgaard, 'The Qualitative Case Study', *The International Journal of Logistics Management*, 28.4 (2017), pp. 910–13.

perceptions of these practices²⁰. Data validity was ensured through source and technique triangulation, along with member checking to enhance the credibility of the findings. This methodology enabled the researcher to capture the socio-cultural and ideological dynamics underlying naturally occurring language practices in Islamic educational settings²¹.

Result and Discussion

This study identified three major themes emerging from the data analysis regarding translanguaging practices in pesantren-based bilingual classrooms: (1) functional fluidity of languages in instructional delivery, (2) the role of translanguaging in constructing religious and linguistic identities, and (3) ideological tensions between institutional language norms and classroom practices.

1. Functional Fluidity in Language Use

Observational and interview data consistently revealed a high degree of functional fluidity in the linguistic practices of both teachers and students, who navigated seamlessly across Arabic, English, Bahasa Indonesia, and Javanese to facilitate comprehension and scaffold learning processes. This multilingual interplay was not haphazard but rather strategically orchestrated to meet specific pedagogical objectives, taking into account the diverse linguistic repertoires and cultural backgrounds of the learners²².

In practice, teachers typically introduced foundational Islamic concepts, terminologies, or canonical texts in Arabic, thereby maintaining fidelity to religious sources and cultivating scriptural literacy. This was often followed by comprehensive elaboration in Bahasa Indonesia, which served to contextualize the content within the learners' sociocultural framework. English was then selectively employed particularly for abstract theological constructs or comparative religious terms to meet curriculum demands, encourage

²⁰ Pamela Baxter and Susan Jack, 'Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers', *The Qualitative Report*, 13.4 (2008), pp. 544–59.

²¹ Catherine Houghton and others, 'Qualitative Case Study Data Analysis: An Example from Practice', *Nurse Researcher*, 22.5 (2015).

²² Mastin Prinsloo, 'Fixity and Fluidity in Language and Language Education', *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 45.3 (2024), pp. 637–46.

global awareness, and enhance students' academic literacy in a broader intellectual discourse²³.

This dynamic and purposeful blending of languages enabled students to engage more deeply with complex religious discourses while simultaneously developing multilingual competence. For example, in a tafsir class, a teacher might begin with the recitation of Qur'anic verses in Arabic, proceed with analytical explanations in Bahasa Indonesia, and then invoke English equivalents such as "divine justice" or "moral agency" to draw parallels with global theological paradigms²⁴. Such translanguaging practices fostered not only conceptual clarity but also cognitive flexibility, reinforcing learners' abilities to transfer knowledge across linguistic and epistemological boundaries²⁵.

These findings align with the growing body of translanguaging scholarship that underscores the pedagogical significance of leveraging learners' entire linguistic repertoires as legitimate and valuable resources in meaning-making. Rather than perceiving languages as compartmentalized entities, the pedagogical approach observed here embraces a fluid and integrated linguistic ecology, which promotes deeper learning, critical thinking, and inclusivity²⁶. This multilingual strategy, rooted in both tradition and innovation, exemplifies how religious education in multilingual settings can be both locally grounded and globally resonant.

2. Identity Construction Through Translanguaging

The findings further illuminate the role of translanguaging as a powerful semiotic and discursive resource for the construction, negotiation, and performance of both religious and linguistic identities among santri (Islamic boarding school students). Throughout classroom interactions and reflective interviews, students expressed that engaging with Arabic texts evoked a sense of spiritual proximity

²³ Norman Segalowttz, 'Access Fluidity, Attention Control, and the Acquisition of Fluency in a Second Language', *Tesol Quarterly* 2007, 2007, pp. 181–86.

²⁴ Emi Otsuji and Alastair Pennycook, 'Metrolingualism: Fixity, Fluidity and Language in Flux', *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 7.3 (2010), pp. 240–54.

²⁵ Ifeoma Obuasi, 'Linguistic Fluidity and Identity Construction in University Students' Discourse', *Ebonyi Journal of Language and Literary Studies*, 1.3 (2018), pp. 79–90.

²⁶ Lupe Rincon-Mendoza, 'Beyond Language Fluidity: The Role of Spatial Repertoires in Translingual Practices and Stancetaking', *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 26.6 (2023), pp. 755–66.

and religious authenticity²⁷. Arabic was often described as the “language of revelation,” invoking both reverence and a sense of piety. Mastery of Arabic, even at a functional level, was perceived as integral to one's identity as a devout Muslim and a legitimate participant in the transhistorical ummah²⁸.

Simultaneously, the incorporation of Bahasa Indonesia and Javanese was not seen as a dilution of religious depth, but rather as an essential mechanism for internalizing religious concepts and connecting them to students lived realities²⁹. These local languages enabled emotional resonance, cultural accessibility, and personal relevance thus fostering a more embodied and experiential engagement with Islamic knowledge. English, in contrast, emerged as a marker of academic capital and global relevance³⁰. It was used more selectively, often in discussions surrounding contemporary Islamic thought, global Muslim identity, and interfaith discourse. For many students, the ability to articulate Islamic concepts in English symbolized intellectual sophistication and positioned them within a broader transnational Muslim intelligentsia.

This multifaceted use of language reveals that translanguaging in this context extends beyond a pedagogical tool; it operates as a mechanism for identity work, ideological alignment, and social positioning. Students did not experience their linguistic practices as fragmented or conflicting. Rather, they embraced their translanguaging capacities as a coherent and embodied articulation of their multifaceted identities as pious Muslims, culturally rooted Indonesians, and globally literate learners. The fluid movement across languages allowed them to inhabit multiple subjectivities without dichotomizing the sacred and the secular, the traditional and the modern³¹.

²⁷ Angela Creese and Adrian Blackledge, ‘Translanguaging and Identity in Educational Settings’, *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 35 (2015), pp. 20–35.

²⁸ Lee Luan Ng and Si Loon Lee, ‘Translanguaging Practices and Identity Construction of Multilingual Malaysian University Graduates in Digital Media’, *English Teaching & Learning*, 43.1 (2019), pp. 105–23.

²⁹ Hayriye Kayi-Aydar and Curtis Green-Eneix, ‘Shared Identities through Translanguaging Practices in the Multilingual Mariachi Classroom’, *TESOL Journal*, 10.4 (2019), p. e502.

³⁰ Andrea Scibetta and Valentina Carbonara, ‘Unveiling Discourses on Interculturality and Identity Construction in Primary Schools in Italy: A Study Based on Translanguaging Pedagogy’, *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*, 15.4 (2020), pp. 422–35.

³¹ Suzanne García-Mateus and Deborah Palmer, ‘Translanguaging Pedagogies for Positive Identities in Two-Way Dual Language Bilingual Education’, *Journal of Language, Identity & Education*, 16.4 (2017), pp. 245–55.

These insights resonate strongly with sociolinguistic and educational theories that conceptualize language as a site of identity performance and ideological negotiation. Within faith-based educational settings such as Islamic boarding schools' language use is inherently value-laden, shaped by theological, cultural, and epistemic orientations. Translanguaging thus becomes a socially situated practice through which learners actively construct and perform identities that are spiritually grounded, linguistically agile, and epistemologically hybrid³². This perspective challenges monoglossic ideologies that view linguistic purity or hierarchy as ideal, and instead affirms the pedagogical and identity-forming power of plural and dynamic language practices in multilingual Islamic contexts.

3. Ideological Tensions and Language Hierarchies

While the pedagogical benefits of translanguaging are increasingly recognized in multilingual Islamic educational settings, the data also revealed underlying ideological tensions and entrenched language hierarchies that complicate its implementation³³. Several teachers articulated ambivalence if not outright resistance toward fully embracing translanguaging practices due to institutional norms and cultural perceptions that prioritize certain languages over others. Specifically, Arabic is often ideologically constructed within pesantren discourse as the 'sacred' and 'authentic' language of Islam. Its use is not merely functional but symbolic, tied to notions of religious authority, orthodoxy, and textual fidelity³⁴. Consequently, excessive reliance on Bahasa Indonesia or regional languages such as Javanese may be perceived as pedagogical compromise or as indicative of insufficient religio-linguistic rigor.

Similarly, English occupies an ambivalent yet aspirational position. It is frequently valorized as a language of modernity, academic prestige, and global connectivity. Proficiency in English is often associated with intellectual sophistication and access to transnational Islamic discourses. In contrast, the use of vernacular or local languages is commonly viewed through a deficit lens framed as informal,

³² Zhu Hua, 'Interculturality: Reconceptualising Cultural Memberships and Identities through Translanguaging Practice', in *Researching Identity and Interculturality* (Routledge, 2014), pp. 109–24.

³³ Paul V Kroskrity, 'Dominant Language Ideology', *Linguistic Anthropology: A Reader* 2009, 2009, p. 386.

³⁴ Kathryn A Woolard, 'Language Ideology', *The International Encyclopedia of Linguistic Anthropology* 2020, 2020, pp. 1–21.

unsystematic, or lacking in epistemic authority³⁵. This discursive framing reflects a broader linguistic ideology that mirrors postcolonial language stratification, wherein local languages are relegated to the periphery of formal knowledge production.

These ideological hierarchies rooted in historical, religious, and sociopolitical dynamics pose significant challenges to the equitable integration of multilingual practices in the classroom. Nevertheless, classroom observations and teacher interviews suggest that such hierarchies are not passively accepted but are actively negotiated, contested, and subverted by both educators and students. Teachers often employed local languages strategically to scaffold comprehension, foster relationality, and localize abstract theological concepts, even while outwardly conforming to institutional language policies. This pragmatic approach reflects a deeper pedagogical awareness of students' linguistic realities and a commitment to inclusive and effective religious instruction³⁶.

Moreover, these negotiations can be interpreted as acts of subtle resistance what James C. Scott terms “infrapolitics” against dominant language ideologies that marginalize local epistemologies. In this context, translanguaging emerges not only as a pedagogical strategy but also as a transformative practice with ideological implications. It allows for a reconfiguration of authority, legitimacy, and belonging within the pesantren space, challenging hegemonic assumptions about what constitutes ‘proper’ religious discourse³⁷. In sum, while ideological tensions and language hierarchies remain salient within Islamic educational institutions, they are neither static nor absolute. The lived experiences of teachers and students reveal a more dynamic linguistic ecology characterized by negotiation, adaptability, and ideological contestation where translanguaging serves as both a tool for learning and a means of reshaping the boundaries of religious and academic legitimacy³⁸.

³⁵ Mai Shirahata and Malgorzata Lahti, ‘Language Ideological Landscapes for Students in University Language Policies: Inclusion, Exclusion, or Hierarchy’, *Current Issues in Language Planning*, 24.3 (2023), pp. 272–92.

³⁶ Sun Young Gu, ‘Ideologies in Tension’, *Refusals and Reflections: Teaching and Learning Social Justice in Qualitative Research*, 20 (2024), p. 143.

³⁷ Huseyin Uysal and Pramod K Sah, ‘Language Ideologies and Language Teaching in the Global World: An Introduction to the Special Issue’, *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 28.4 (2024), pp. 611–17.

³⁸ David O’Neil, ‘Standardization, Power, and Purity: Ideological Tensions in Language and Scientific Discourse’, *Education Sciences*, 15.4 (2025), p. 489.

4. Synthesis and Implications

The findings of this study demonstrate that translanguaging within pesantren-based bilingual education is far more than a utilitarian or pragmatic response to linguistic diversity. Rather, it constitutes a deeply situated pedagogical and ideological practice, intricately woven into the epistemological, cultural, and spiritual fabric of Islamic education. By fluidly integrating Arabic, English, Bahasa Indonesia, and regional languages such as Javanese, translanguaging facilitates not only the comprehension of complex religious texts but also cultivates students' multilingual competence and nurtures dynamic forms of religious and linguistic identity construction. This pedagogical model enables learners to engage with Islamic knowledge in ways that are both faithful to tradition and responsive to the demands of contemporary global citizenship³⁹.

From a policy perspective, these findings underscore the urgent need to re-examine entrenched language hierarchies that continue to dominate pesantren curricula. Institutional frameworks that rigidly privilege Arabic and English while devaluing the pedagogical legitimacy of national and local languages risk alienating learners and constraining the full potential of multilingual engagement⁴⁰. A more inclusive and contextually grounded language policy is required one that legitimizes and supports the strategic use of local linguistic repertoires in ways that align with students' sociolinguistic realities and educational aspirations. Such policies would not only enhance learning outcomes but also affirm the sociocultural identities of students as integral to the educational process⁴¹.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the expanding field of translanguaging studies by situating its analysis within a faith-based educational context an area that remains underrepresented in current multilingual education scholarship⁴². By foregrounding the unique

³⁹ Sviatlana Karpava, 'Afterword: Multilingualism, Inclusive Education, and Social Justice', in *Inclusive Education, Social Justice, and Multilingualism* (Springer, 2025), pp. 249–91.

⁴⁰ Muh Sabilar Rosyad and Saleh Muhammad Kabir, 'Towards Deep Arabic Language Learning: Designing Materials That Are Mindful, Meaningful, and Joyful', *LUGHATI: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab*, 3.01 (2025), pp. 63–75 <<https://doi.org/10.33754/lughati.v3i01.1613>>.

⁴¹ Bartholomew John Ryan, *Alif Lam Mim: Reconciling Islam, Modernity, and Tradition in an Indonesian Kampung* (Harvard University, 1999).

⁴² Kathleen Heugh, Philip Harding-Esch, and Hywel Coleman, 'Southern Multilingualisms, Translanguaging and Transknowledging in Inclusive and

sociolinguistic ecology of pesantren, the study offers a culturally embedded model of translanguaging pedagogy that bridges the epistemic domains of Islamic tradition and modern educational theory. This model challenges dominant Western-centric formulations of bilingual education and proposes an alternative framework rooted in religious pedagogy, linguistic pluralism, and ideological negotiation⁴³.

Ultimately, the translanguaging practices observed in this study exemplify a form of pedagogical hybridity that is both transformative and tradition-affirming. They highlight the potential of Islamic educational institutions not only to preserve religious authenticity but also to innovate linguistically and pedagogically in ways that resonate with the plural realities of 21st-century Muslim learners⁴⁴. As such, translanguaging should be recognized not as a deviation from linguistic norms, but as a generative practice that redefines the boundaries of knowledge, identity, and belonging within multilingual Islamic education.

Conclusion

This study has illuminated the nuanced and dynamic translanguaging practices that characterize bilingual education within Indonesian pesantren. Far from being incidental or chaotic, the fluid use of Arabic, English, and local languages in instructional settings emerged as a deliberate and contextually grounded pedagogical strategy. Teachers and students alike drew from their full linguistic repertoires to access complex religious knowledge, foster comprehension, and construct identities that are at once locally rooted and globally oriented.

The findings underscore that translanguaging in pesantren is not merely a linguistic phenomenon but a socio-pedagogical practice deeply embedded in the cultural, religious, and ideological fabric of Islamic education. It plays a critical role in mediating meaning, negotiating authority, and shaping learner agency in multilingual religious environments. Moreover, the ability of educators and students to traverse linguistic boundaries challenges monoglossic ideologies and

Sustainable Education', *Language and the Sustainable Development Goals* 2021, 2021, pp. 37–47.

⁴³ Andrey Rosowsky, *Faith and Language Practices in Digital Spaces* (Multilingual Matters, 2017).

⁴⁴ Tisha Lewis Ellison, Catherine Compton-Lilly, and Rebecca Rogers, 'A Metasynthesis of Family Literacy Scholarship: Countering and Constructing Narratives about BIPOC Families and Communities', *Reading Research Quarterly*, 59.3 (2024), pp. 526–49.

calls for a rethinking of language hierarchies that often dominate faith-based educational discourse. However, the study also reveals underlying tensions between institutional language norms often marked by the privileging of Arabic and English and the pragmatic realities of classroom communication. These tensions point to the need for more flexible and inclusive language policies within pesantren, ones that recognize and legitimize the pedagogical value of translanguaging and the role of local languages in meaning-making and identity formation.

In contributing to both applied linguistics and Islamic education literature, this study demonstrates the importance of situating translanguaging within culturally and religiously specific contexts. It affirms that faith-based institutions are not static but are evolving spaces of linguistic innovation and pedagogical adaptation. Future research may build upon these insights by exploring how translanguaging intersects with digital literacy, gender dynamics, and curriculum reform in other Islamic educational settings across diverse sociolinguistic landscapes. Ultimately, embracing translanguaging as both a practice and a pedagogical stance offers new pathways for designing inclusive, responsive, and spiritually grounded models of multilingual education models that honor tradition while engaging critically with the demands of a plural and interconnected world.

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