

## English language acquisition at Islamic boarding school: A systematic review

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**Abstract:** Islamic boarding schools provide various platforms for students to develop their talents in English skills and provide teachers with opportunities to be more active and creative in developing English ideas, such as providing language methods and language programs in Islamic boarding schools. Islamic boarding schools are also a unit that cannot be separated from the reality of society to be able to answer the challenges of the times. How Islamic boarding schools have a significant role in developing student acquisition in second language countries and how the students' attitudes in Islamic boarding schools affect English language acquisition. This paper aims to find out or compare language acquisition in modern and traditional Islamic boarding schools. Islamic boarding schools cannot be separated from their relationship with society in general. Because the purpose of Islamic boarding schools is to form students, they can enter the community. This study used the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) to conduct this systematic literature review. There are several external and internal factors in mastering foreign languages, especially English, in Islamic boarding schools, starting from the process, environment, participants, target of the language, Islamic values and culture in Islamic boarding schools, and an evaluation of English language acquisition. This study only includes 21 articles regarding English language acquisition at modern Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia; it is hoped that further researchers will explore English language acquisition in several Islamic Boarding schools except Indonesia to review more articles and reach the international area.

**Keywords:** English Language Acquisition, Islamic Boarding School, Islamic Values And Culture

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### Introduction

Since ancient times, Indonesia has been popular as a fertile place for the birth, growth, and development of traditional Islamic boarding schools. West Java and East Java are known as the two provinces with the largest number of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. Of course, there are Islamic Boarding Schools in almost every province, with varying numbers. Nearly a third of the total number of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia are in the West Java region. Based on data from the Ministry of Religion (2012) up to 2012, there were 27,230 Islamic boarding schools. When viewed from the distribution, as much as 78.60% are in Java, with details of West Java as much as 28.00%, and East Java as much as 22.05%. Central Java with 15.70% and Banten with 12.85%. Institutionally, there are 14-459 (53.10%) traditional Islamic boarding schools, 7,727 (28.38%) kalafiyah/ashriyah Islamic boarding schools, and 5,044 (18.52%) combined Islamic boarding schools. Based on these data, it is known that most Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia have a traditional typology, that is, their learning is purely reciting the

Quran and discussing the yellow book. The total number of students is 3,759.198 people, consisting of 1,886,748 (50.19%) male students and 1,872,450 (49.81%) female students. Based on the place of residence, there were 3,004,807 students staying (79.93%) and 754,391 students (20.07%) not living. Based on the residence category, it can be concluded that almost all students who receive education at Islamic boarding schools stay students. In general, for Islamic boarding schools in Java, the students stay, such as East Java with 95.45%, West Java at 91.52%, Banten at 9.92%, and Central Java at 12%.

Based on data from databoks (2022) the number of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia based on January 2022 data is 26,975, while the databoks (2021) showed the number of senior high schools is only half, which is 13,865 and this significant number increase. This fact makes clear the importance of Islamic boarding in this country. The data also illustrates that more graduates will be from Islamic boarding schools than senior high schools in general. Therefore, Islamic boarding schools should not be underestimated because the role of Islamic boarding schools is very dominating in education.

Many people believe that modern education is more able to guarantee prosperity for the needs of this globalization era. This case makes Islamic boarding schools education increasingly excluded from education because it is considered ancient and does not keep up with the times. Streenbring in Hidayati and Humam stated that when educational institutions are introduced to a more traditional and modern system, formal institutions are not very interested, and many students leave boarding school (Hidayati & Fuat, 2021). Although many people prefer modern institutions because the system is better and more secure, the fact is that there are institutions that still maintain their existence. As stated by Zuhriyyah in Hidayati and Humam that he said the truth is there are many traditional Islamic boarding schools that still retain the tradition of traditional Islamic boarding school without changing the education system and are still trusted by the community as an educational institution that create quality human, especially in the religious (Hidayati & Fuat, 2021). That statement said that the quality of human resources from Islamic boarding schools, including traditional Islamic boarding schools, cannot be doubted. They are a very superior religion and general.

Islamic education now cannot be underestimated because humans need knowledge as a guide to life and need morals as a reference when interacting with others. Many elements in Islamic education can help in improving Human Resources in Indonesia. According to Rivai in Dariyanto, Islamic education is the basis and development in Indonesia that also has significantly contributed to help the nation to build students' spiritual strength. Students in Islamic primary schools at remote areas have facilities for worship, such as mosques, study areas, and other religious activities. They were monitored by predetermined regulations to educate the disciplined life (Dariyanto et al., 2022). Al-Qaradawi in Wijayanto added that Islamic education is a complete human education: mind and heart; spiritual and physical; character and skills. In this case, Islamic education is seen as the frontline of Muslims to ensure quality education in preparing the best Islamic generation. It is a fundamental approach to change the situation by changing students to be Muslim vanguard who will help Islam (Wijayanto, 2020). Based on the statement above, we can conclude that Islamic education is not only a general education based on Islam; the function of Islamic education in Islamic boarding schools is to change the situation of Muslims with an education that has been prepared well.

The second language acquisition and learning refer to process of mastering other languages after the mother tongue, or after first language acquisition is established. For example, a child who speaks Hindi as a mother tongue starts learning English when he starts going to school. English is understood through the process of acquiring a second language. A young child can

learn a second language fast than an adult of the same language (Hoque, 2017).

So far, Islamic boarding schools are suitable places to implement English language acquisition because they require students to stay or settle for an extended period; the Islamic boarding schools have arranged even their activities from waking up until bedtime. According to Mukhlas and Fadhilah in Taib, unlike the common educational institutions, particularly in Indonesia, the Islamic boarding school has a twenty-four-hour educational system (Taib, 2021). This statement means that English language acquisition will be carried out non-stop because it requires students to interact with other students for 24 hours in a boarding school environment, with the primary language being English.

There are many ways or processes to acquire student language, either actively or passively. Students can be active if they fulfil categories such as pronunciation or use foreign languages more often, and vice versa with passive if students do not meet language acquisition categories such as pronunciation or use foreign languages infrequently. However, English will be maximally obtained by students when they apply or pronounce actively. According to Liu in Dariyanto said that as a universal capital of communication, English must be learned actively or passively (Dariyanto et al., 2022). That statement means that English language acquisition in Islamic boarding schools is carried out actively because students will use English as the primary language of communication. The method of passively acquiring students' speech has been obtained when they are in public schools, and it is rare for English to be actively applied in public schools.

Islamic boarding schools cannot be separated from society in general because the purpose of the Islamic boarding schools is to form students so that they can enter the community directly. Rofik in Sabiq added that Islamic boarding schools is a unit that cannot be separated from the objective reality of society to be able to answer the challenges of this era (Sabiq et al., 2019). So, no wonder if in Islamic boarding schools education also leads to the formation of social characters such as helping, harmonious and peaceful, full of responsibility, etc. Therefore, Islamic boarding schools cannot be separated from the attitude of students, which is a plus in the application of English language acquisition, in addition to students gaining general knowledge of how to act, speak, and choose a good language when dealing with other people.

Each student has different perception on learning foreign language, especially English. Students' attitudes have been recognized as one of the most critical factors impacting the learning of English as a foreign language. In this case, they need a positive attitude towards English as a foreign language. It is characterized by enthusiasm and a strong desire to master English. Their success depends on whether they have a positive orientation and tendency towards the language and are comfortable in speaking English (A. R. Utami & Malihah, 2018).

Several studies show different results regarding English language acquisition in Islamic boarding schools. Research results of Utami et al. (2020) conducted in Islamic Boarding School concluded that students have different language attitudes. They show a positive language attitude but get a low score, and a negative language attitude gets a high score. We can conclude that students' attitudes do not necessarily determine their final grades, based this research gives results that inversely proportional to students' attitudes towards student grade (A. R. Utami & Malihah, 2018). Another study by Al-Baekani and Pahlevi (2018) showed that traditional Islamic boarding schools well accepted English as a supplement for their students & teachers. Based on their findings, Islamic boarding schools are well received because they consider that English is essential to support the acquisition of other knowledge at a higher level, such as international science for students and teachers. Islamic boarding schools also provides various platforms for students to develop their talents in English skills and provide

teachers with opportunities to be more active and creative in developing English ideas, such as providing language methods and language programs Islamic boarding schools, etc. (Al-Barokah et al., 2018, Mubarok, 2021).

This study bases its argument on the fact that research on the relationship between English language acquisition and Islamic boarding schools is quite dynamic, as shown in several studies. However, there is still a need for comprehensive studies to review the relationship of that. This paper aims to find out or compare language acquisition in modern and traditional Islamic boarding schools. How Islamic boarding schools have a vital role in the development of student acquisition in second language countries and how the attitudes of students in Islamic boarding schools affect English language acquisition.

### Methods

The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 checklist was employed to conduct this systematic literature review. It also involves a comparative research approach, namely descriptive comparison to review relevant studies on the topic of this study. Meta-analysis is a technique of integrating data to obtain new theories, concepts, or a deeper and more comprehensive level of understanding (Perry & Hammond, 2002). Systematic review can be interpreted as a research method and process to identify and critically assess relevant previous research and collect and analyze data from that research (Snyder, 2019). This paper aims to describe and explain English language acquisition used at Islamic boarding school and how Islamic values or attitudes at Islamic boarding school can influence English language acquisition of the students. The research steps adapted from Perry & Hammond (2002) described in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Sequence of Research Process Systematic Review (Perry & Hammond, 2002)

No.	Stages	Purposes
1.	Identify research questions	Transforming problems into research questions
2.	Develop a systematic review research protocol	Guide in conducting a systematic review
3.	Specifies the location of the research results database as the search area (e.g., MEDLINE, PubMed)	Provide search area boundaries for relevant research results
4.	Selection of relevant research results	Collecting research results that are relevant to the research question
5.	Choose quality research results	Exclusion and inclusion of research that will be included in a systematic review based on quality
6.	Extraction of data from individual studies	Extract data from individual studies to obtain significant findings
7.	Synthesis of results by meta-analysis method (if possible), or narrative method (if not likely)	Synthesize results using meta-analysis (forest plot) or narrative techniques (meta-synthesis)
8.	Presentation of results	Writing research results in a systematic review report document

Data collection process involved scientific methods to identify various research articles from open journals in this study. This stage was carried out in April 2022, the first stage of looking for available journal references on the Google Scholar platform with the keywords English learning process in Islamic boarding school yielding 42,300 titles. The second stage was limited to 17,500 searches for the last five years in 2018-2022. The third stage determines the search

for articles with 257 titles. The fourth stage was limited to Islamic Boarding schools in Indonesia and written by Indonesian writers with only as many as 21 article titles. This study analyzed several articles in the last five years related to English language acquisition at Islamic Boarding School in Indonesia to map several criteria such as scope, reasons, methods, and implications. The extracted data was then synthesized narratively.

### Result and Discussion

The results of the study was reviewed in-depth in this section. Due to the nature of the investigations, 21 articles were chosen to be appropriate for this systematic review after four phases of choosing eligible articles for evaluation. Many different researchers have presented research on the role of Islamic Boarding School in English Language Acquisition most seminal of these research papers are described in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Summary of Systematic Review English Language Acquisition at Islamic Boarding School

No.	Theme	Title
1.	Process of English Language Acquisition at Islamic Boarding School	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Investigation of English learning model at traditional Islamic boarding school (<i>Pondok Pesantren Salafiyah</i>) Darul Ulum Al-Barokah Karawang</li> <li>2. An analysis of the English learning process in Islamic elementary boarding schools</li> <li>3. English language teaching in Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia: Development and challenges</li> <li>4. An analysis of code mixing and code switching used by the student of Nurul Huda Islamic boarding school</li> <li>5. Assistance with basic English learning for students on Islamic boarding school As'adiyah Sengkang</li> <li>6. The teaching of English in an Indonesian Islamic boarding school: Design, enactment, and hindrances</li> <li>7. Code switching in English language learning at Pabelan Islamic boarding school</li> <li>8. The implementation of teaching English (Case study at Islamic boarding school)</li> <li>9. Teaching English in millennial era: A study in Kajen Islamic boarding school</li> </ol>
2.	Students' difficult faced on English Language Acquisition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. English learning difficulties faced by students in Islamic boarding school: An analysis</li> <li>2. Speech errors produced by EFL learners of Islamic boarding school in telling English story</li> <li>3. Students' need for learning English at Islamic boarding school</li> <li>4. Students' voices on English language uses in an Islamic boarding school in Gorontalo</li> </ol>
3.	Islamic values and culture of Islamic Boarding School	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The integration of Islamic values in implementation of learning English: Islamic education students' perspective</li> <li>2. Character building through language learning and culture of Islamic boarding school in terms of the implementation of management towards sustainable development of green campus</li> <li>3. The language attitude of Islamic boarding school students toward English</li> <li>4. Pedagogical-culture implementation in English classroom of Islamic boarding school</li> </ol>

No.	Theme	Title
		5. Islamic values in the context of English learning and teaching
		6. Fostering religious moderation through learning English at Islamic boarding schools Ma'had Aly
4.	An evaluation of English Language Acquisition	1. An evaluation of Muhadatsah Program at Islamic boarding schools modern Daarul Abror using CIPP model
		2. An evaluation of English program at Islamic boarding schools Ali Maksum

The result analysis of four themes was in the process of English language acquisition at Islamic boarding school; there were nine articles. While in students' difficult faced on English language acquisition, there were four articles. There were six articles on the Islamic boarding school's Islamic values and culture. In An evaluation of English language acquisition, there were only two articles.

This paper aimed to find out or compare language acquisition in modern and traditional Islamic boarding schools. How Islamic boarding schools had a vital role in developing student acquisition in Indonesia that apply the second language and how students' attitudes in Islamic boarding schools affect English language acquisition. There were several external and internal factors in mastering foreign languages, especially English, in Islamic boarding schools. Starting from the process, environment, participants, target of the language, Islamic values and culture in Islamic boarding schools and an evaluation of English language acquisition.

Islamic boarding schools is an educational institution that is very influential in Indonesia, so applying English in Islamic boarding schools is essential for students. They are not only familiar with Islamic lessons but also foreign languages currently very needed. Many Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia have implemented English for communication only on certain days or even every day as a mandatory language. The process of implementing English Language Acquisition requires several appropriate learning models, such as the Community Language Learning (CLL) method, which was carried out at traditional Islamic boarding schools Darul Ulum Al-Barokah Karawang (Al-Barokah et al., 2018).

The process of involving students in learning English in language acquisition at Madrasah Al Multazam has succeeded. It started from growing active student participation through teacher, student interaction, learning resources, and responding positively to student participation. Besides, teachers need to show an open attitude towards student responses, and show conducive interpersonal relationships. These ways will foster student enthusiasm (Dariyanto et al., 2022). When students can master English and can communicate in English, it is considered necessary to develop ELT in Islamic boarding schools so that students can convey Islamic messages to all levels of society in the world (Umar, 2022).

The basic in applying a language is vocabulary mastery which is often considered an essential technique for learning a foreign language because limited vocabulary in a foreign language will hinder successful communication (Razaq et al., 2022). Teaching English in elementary schools must be prepared well so that it does not hurt children (Rofi', 2018). The teaching must not be boring or making the students afraid. The purpose is to make the students interested and enjoy English. There are some aspects making teaching English to young learners is different from teaching English to adult learners. This is because young learners generally do not realize that they are acquiring a language. Therefore, they do not give much attention to language and systems.

Another thing that becomes difficult for students is the language relationship between the national and regional languages, which occupies the first position to be mastered by students. However, the development of inter-language relations also occurs between national and

foreign languages. This case happens because of the magnitude of the current globalization, which demands a broader mastery of the language. Discussing code-switching and code-mixing, speakers of the language cause no errors. Code-switching and code-mixing are activities carried out consciously by someone to support the situation in a conversation (Indah et al., 2022). Meanwhile, FLDI teacher Nurul Jadid uses implicit and explicit learning strategies. Besides, the learning process is also conducted to enable students learn English systematically, solve problems they know naturally, and practice speaking English in daily activities. The students use English as a lingua franca (ELF) all the time (Rohim, 2020).

Responding to the English teaching and learning process for lecturers who face millennial students is one of the challenges in teaching English. It can be related to the millennial characteristics of students. They are very technology conscious, progressive, confident, and team-oriented. These characteristics make students become producers, learn new technologies, and have global knowledge. In this case, lecturers are required to be more innovative in carrying out the teaching and learning process of English at the campus Islamic boarding schools (Nikmah, 2018).

In learning a new language, students should face various problems either within themselves or in the environment that affects their learning process. Many various difficulties in learning English for students of Islamic boarding schools STIT Buntet. Students' learning difficulties dominantly cover not interested in learning because they do not like learning English or feeling interested in learning English but lack basic knowledge. Some of them had good motivation and good abilities, but the environment is not supportive. In some cases, students' motivation is quite good, but easily forget the basic concepts learned and some others had high learning motivation, but the learning opportunities are too short (Umar, 2022).

Whether he is a child or an adult, a speaker cannot be fully aware at all when he is producing sentences. The speaker sometimes forgets some words he will say, especially when speaking in front of many people—this case causes some speech errors in creating sentences (A. R. Utami & Malihah, 2018). Although students in Islamic boarding schools are prohibited from using some electronics such as cell phones, gadgets, computers, or other things related to the internet, the internet is a reason for students to learn English. Therefore, Islamic boarding schools need to provide internet access for students to keep abreast of developments in an era with a lot of knowledge on the internet that uses English (Habibah, 2021). There are four themes that represent the participants' voices: lack of preparation, language learning preference, language use preference, and English use challenges (Taib, 2021).

The formation of the character and culture of students of Islamic values in Islamic boarding schools is also applied to learning English. The application of English to form students' surface is also carried out in the campus Islamic boarding schools environment. There are several reasons for prioritizing this improved language. First, starting from the need to enhance the skill to establish international relations. Second, it requires various writing activities in foreign languages. Third, because more international students come to UIN Malang, it is time to provide services in English. Fourth, it needs the improvement of the confidence of the entire academic community to play a role in the academic field on an international scale (Tharaba et al., 2021).

Meanwhile, in English III class teaching practices, Religious Education (PAI) students are competent in integrating Islamic values into the English teaching and learning process (Wijayanto, 2020). Language attitude studies have been shown to reveal students' successes and failures in language learning. In this case, the student's attitude becomes significant as it

is not innate but learned. Students learn to grow and improve their positive language attitudes towards foreign languages through specific programs at school (Utami et al., 2020).

At MTs Al-Iman Purworejo, the teacher composes his teaching materials according to the environmental context. For example, it is contextualized with the Islamic boarding schools culture. The teacher conveys the material in an integrated manner with the Islamic boarding schools context. In addition, what is no less important is to include moral values in the material (Sabiq et al., 2019). As happened in grade 4 SD Lab school, FIP UMJ Islamic values have been well developed in school environments and activities (Zaitun & Wardani, 2018). In the Islamic boarding schools area, there are two terms, namely moderation and English, two terms in *ma'had aly* that carry a culture of tolerance. English, as a bridge towards increasing global knowledge, provides many ways for students to get many references on the notion of moderation (Al-Khusain et al., 2022).

Last but not least, the English program, such as the CIPP model run in Islamic boarding schools Modern Daarul Abror, showed that it was effective to foster the students so that they could speak English more fluently. By joining the *Muhadtsah* Program, they knew how to pronounce the word correctly. However, it still needs improvement because some of them still did not realize the importance of language (Fitriyani & Robiasih, 2020). The second evaluation in the Program at Islamic boarding schools Ali Maksum. The results of the program show that the English program is running well, although, from the six characteristics and eight activities, several other areas need to be improved (Mujab & Yulia, 2018).

## **Conclusion**

The aims of this research to find out or compare language acquisition in modern and traditional Islamic boarding schools. The findings showed that the English language acquisition process in traditional Islamic boarding still retain the tradition without changing the education system and are still trusted by the community as an educational institution that create quality human, especially in the religious. They show a positive language attitude but get a low score, and a negative language attitude gets a high score. They are not only familiar with Islamic lessons but also foreign languages currently very needed. It was showed that he students accepted language acquisition well but still had difficult to applied language well because traditional Islamic boarding school focused on attitude and yellow book. While in modern Islamic boarding school language acquisition received well by students, because modern Islamic boarding schools make special language regulation. The learning process in modern Islamic boarding school also conducted to enable students learn English systematically, solve problems they know naturally, and practice speaking English in daily activities.

In implementing Islamic attitudes and values in learning English, Religious Education Students have fairly good competence. Meanwhile, students in school learn to grow and improve their positive language attitudes towards foreign languages through moral values in specific materials and programs at school. For teachers to arrange teaching materials according to the context, for example, contextualized with the Islamic boarding schools culture and the environment. The teacher delivers the material in an integrated manner with the Islamic boarding schools context.

The study includes 21 articles synthesized into four categories: the process of English language acquisition at Islamic Boarding School, students' difficulties faced in English language acquisition, Islamic values and culture of Islamic Boarding School, and an evaluation of English language acquisition. This study only includes 21 articles regarding English language acquisition at Islamic modern boarding schools in Indonesia. Accordingly, it is hoped that further



researchers will explore English language acquisition in several Islamic boarding schools outside Indonesia to get a more comprehensive finding.

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