



## Ethnographic Study of the Absorption of Arabic and Arabic Phonetics in the Development of the Karimun Java National

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the absorption of Arabic and its phonetic adaptations in the cultural context and tourism development of Karimun Java, an archipelago rich in historical and cultural heritage. Through an ethnographic approach, this research documents and analyzes Arabic loanwords used in the daily language of the Karimun Java community and the phonological adaptations that occur. The findings reveal that many Arabic loanwords have undergone sound changes to adapt to the Javanese phonological system, including the substitution of consonants and vowels and the adjustment of word structures. Additionally, the absorption of Arabic plays a crucial role in the social and cultural interactions of the local community, including in religious practices and daily life. In the tourism sector, the use of Arabic terms enhances the comfort and experience of Muslim tourists, both domestic and international. This research demonstrates that the integration of Arabic not only enriches the Javanese vocabulary but also enhances Karimun Java's cultural identity and tourist appeal through harmonious cultural integration.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Karimun Java, an archipelago located in the Java Sea, is known as a national tourist destination with extraordinary natural charm (Koestoro, 1997). However, Karimun Java not only offers its natural beauty but is also rich in cultural and historical heritage that influences the social and economic development of the local community (Himawan et al., 2016). One prominent cultural aspect is the influence of the Arabic language that came along with the spread of Islam in the region.

The spread of Islam in Karimun Java began in the 13th century with the arrival of Arab scholars and traders (Saumantri, 2022). This dissemination continued with the significant role of the Walisongo, particularly Sunan Nyamplungan (Jati, 2017), who propagated Islamic teachings in the area (Suliyati, Titiek; Puguh, 2017). This Islamization brought the influence of the Arabic language into the lives of the local community, which is evident in various aspects of life, from religious practices to the use of everyday vocabulary (Masduqi, 2011).

Ethnography of language is a study that focuses on how language is used within specific social and cultural contexts (Kleden & Probonegoro, 2012). In Karimun Java, the absorption of Arabic reflects the history, values, and identity of the local community. An ethnographic study of the Arabic language in Karimun Java can reveal how this influence has developed and adapted in daily life, as well as how it interacts with the region's tourism development.

The development of Karimun Java as a national tourist destination has brought significant changes in social and economic aspects (Koestoro, 1997). This research aims to examine how the Arabic language, which has integrated into the local culture, plays a role in the context of tourism. For instance, in the context of tourism services, the use of Arabic loanwords can be seen in the communication between local residents and visiting Muslim tourists.

Arabic loanwords in Karimun Java undergo unique phonological adaptations to fit the Javanese sound system. This research will examine how these adaptations occur, including sound substitution, consonant and vowel adjustments, and other structural modifications (Amalia, 2015; Chang, 2013). Understanding the phonetics of these Arabic loanwords is crucial for a deeper insight into how the Arabic language influences the local language and culture.

## 2. METHODS

Researchers use ethnographic methods to explore and understand educational practices within a cultural context in depth (Endang Susilawati & Asmah Haji Omar, 2017; Sari et al., 2023). Ethnography is a qualitative research approach that focuses on direct observation and participation in the daily lives of research subjects (Hammersley, 2006; Walford, 2009). It aims to understand and describe in detail the daily life and culture of a group (Ploder & Hamann, 2021; Gertner et al., 2021) in this case, the predominantly Muslim community of Karimun Java, which is closely connected to Arabic loanwords. The ethnography of language focuses on how language is used in specific social and cultural contexts. In Karimun Java, the absorption of Arabic reflects the history, values, and identity of

the local community. An ethnographic study of the Arabic language in Karimun Java can reveal how this influence has developed and adapted in daily life and how it interacts with the region's tourism development.

#### *Participant*

The participants in this study involve several layers of the community from Karimun Jawa Subdistrict, Jepara Regency, Central Java Province, consisting of local residents, religious leaders, tourism actors, and tourists (see Table 1).

Table 1. Participant Demographics

Characteristic	N
Local Community	10
Religious leaders	2
Tourist agent	2
Tourist	10

Source: researcher data

#### *Collection Data*

The data collection techniques employed include:

Participant Observation (Katz-Buonincontro & Anderson, 2020). The researcher resides in the Karimun Jawa community to directly observe the use of Arabic in daily life, in religious, social, and tourism contexts.

In-Depth Interviews (Edwards & Holland, 2020). Conducting interviews with community leaders, educators, tourism business operators, and local residents to gain a deep understanding of the use of Arabic and its impact.

Documentation (Busetto et al., 2020). Collecting and analyzing texts containing Arabic loanwords, such as religious texts, educational books, and tourism brochures.

#### *Analysis Data*

Descriptive Analysis (Al-Shujairi et al., 2015). Organizing data from participant observation and in-depth interviews to describe the use of Arabic in various contexts.

Thematic Analysis (Busetto et al., 2020). Identifying key themes emerging from interview and observation data, and analyzing how these themes reflect the use and influence of Arabic.

Phonological Analysis (Gafos et al., 2014). Analyzing the phonological adaptations of Arabic loanwords in the Javanese language.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **Phonetic understanding of Arabic loan words in the Karimun Java location**

The spread of Islam in Java began with Arab traders and scholars who arrived in the region since the 13th century. They not only brought goods but also their language and culture (Koestoro, 1997). The interaction between the local population and these newcomers introduced many new terms related to Islam into the Javanese language (Suliyati, Titiek; Puguh, 2017). The spread of Islam in Karimun Java began in the 13th century with the arrival of Arab scholars and traders. This dissemination continued with the significant role of the

Walisongo, particularly Sunan Nyamplungan, who spread Islamic teachings in the area. This Islamization brought the influence of the Arabic language into the local community's life, which is evident in various aspects of life, from religious practices to the use of everyday vocabulary (Jati, 2017).

In Karimun Java, the established pesantren and madrasah play a crucial role in spreading Islamic teachings and Arab culture (Wulandari et al., 2023). These educational institutions use many Arabic terms in their curriculum, reflecting the strong influence of the Arabic language in the region.

In pesantren, education often includes teaching Arabic in various forms. One main component is reading the Qur'an, where students learn tajweed and tafsir to understand the meanings contained in the holy text. Additionally, students also study classical Arabic books covering various Islamic disciplines such as fiqh, hadith, and tafsir (Basid et al., 2022).

The use of Arabic terms in education at pesantren and madrasah not only enhances religious understanding but also enriches the vocabulary and language skills of the students. This Arabic language instruction enables them to access Islamic literature directly and gain a deeper understanding of religious teachings. Thus, pesantren and madrasah in Karimun Java serve as guardians and carriers of the rich Islamic intellectual tradition while simultaneously reinforcing the local cultural identity influenced by Arabic language and culture (Baharuddin, 2015).

Words like "salat" (sholat), referring to the prayer ritual, "zakat," meaning obligatory charity, "puasa," describing the obligation to fast during Ramadan, and "imam," meaning leader in prayer, are examples of words borrowed from Arabic. These loanwords not only enrich Javanese vocabulary but also reflect how Islam began to become an integral part of daily life for the Javanese people. The integration of these terms demonstrates the cultural adaptation that occurred through the process of spreading Islam in the region (Jenuri dan Echa Putri Sutrisno, 2023).

Many religious texts are written in Arabic or use numerous Arabic terms, making the Javanese community familiar with this vocabulary. These texts, which cover various aspects of Islamic teachings such as fiqh, hadith, tafsir, and ethics, become primary references in religious education in Java (Qodariyah et al., 2020).

Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), as traditional educational institutions in Java, play a crucial role in introducing and reinforcing the use of the Arabic language. Their curriculum often includes the teaching of classical Arabic texts. Students are taught to read, understand, and interpret these texts, which not only deepens their religious knowledge but also enriches their Arabic vocabulary (Wulandari et al., 2023).

The use of Arabic in texts and pesantren curricula helps integrate the language into the daily life of the Javanese community. This creates an environment where Arabic terms become part of everyday conversation, especially in religious contexts. As a result, the Javanese community, particularly those involved in pesantren education, gains a good understanding of vocabulary and concepts derived from Arabic, which reinforces their Islamic identity and enriches the local culture. Pesantren play an important role not only as centers of religious

education but also as preservers of the intellectual tradition of Islam in Indonesia (Nurbayan et al., 2022).

#### Phonology of Arabic Loan Words in Karimun Java

The phonology of Arabic loanwords (Rohmah et al., n.d.) in Javanese shows several adjustments to fit the Javanese sound system. Here are some key phonological patterns:

##### Phoneme Substitution:

Sounds not present in Javanese are often replaced with the closest equivalent. For example, the Arabic sound /ʔ/ (ain) is usually replaced with /a/ in Javanese.

The sound /ɣ/ (ghain) is often replaced with /g/ in Javanese.

##### Consonant Adjustments:

Double consonants in Arabic are often simplified (Algethami, 2022). For instance, the Arabic word "shaddah" becomes "syahada" in Javanese.

Uvular consonants like /q/ are often adapted to /k/. For example, "Qur'an" becomes "Kuran."

##### Vowel Adjustments:

Long vowels in Arabic (Amalia, 2015) are typically shortened in Javanese. For instance, the long vowel /ā/ in the Arabic word "salāt" becomes the short vowel /o/ in Javanese "sholat".

Front vowels like /i/ and /e/ in Arabic are often merged in Javanese, leading to variations in pronunciation.

##### Structural Adaptation:

Arabic words are often adapted to follow Javanese syllable patterns, which typically consist of consonant-vowel (CV) structures. For example, the Arabic word "kitāb" becomes "kitab" in Javanese.

##### Phonological Case Examples:

"Salāt" (Arabic) → "Sholat" (Javanese):

The substitution of /s/ with /sh/, reflecting the Arabic influence on the sound /s/. The long vowel /ā/ is adjusted to the short vowel /o/.

"Imām" (Arabic) → "Imam" (Javanese):

Minimal phoneme adjustment since this sound is already present in Javanese. The long vowel /ā/ is shortened to /a/.

As in other Javanese regions, Arabic loanwords in Karimun Java undergo several phonological adjustments to fit the local sound system. These adaptations occur to facilitate pronunciation and integrate the words into the local daily language. Here are some key phonological patterns found in Karimun Java:

##### Sound Substitution:

Sound /ʔ/ (ain):

The Arabic sound /ʔ/ is often replaced with /a/ in Javanese. For example, the Arabic word "عَمَل" (amal) remains "amal" in Javanese, but the pronunciation of the letter 'ain is changed to a simpler vowel sound.

Sound /ɣ/ (ghain):

The sound /ɣ/ is often adapted to /g/ in Javanese. For instance, the Arabic word "غَفُور" (ghafur) is pronounced closer to "gafur" in Javanese.

Consonant and Vowel Adjustments:

Double Consonants:

Double consonants in Arabic are often simplified in Javanese. For example, the Arabic word "شَدَّة" (shaddah) is adapted to "syahada" in Javanese, with the reduction of consonant doubling to ease pronunciation.

Long Vowels:

Long vowels in Arabic are usually shortened in Javanese. For example, the long vowel /ā/ in the Arabic word "إِيمَان" (īmān) becomes /a/ in the Javanese word "iman."

Examples of Loanwords:

"Amal" (Arabic) → "Amal" (Javanese):

Means "good deed." This word is used in the same context in both languages, referring to good deeds or charitable work.

"Ilmu" (Arabic) → "Ilmu" (Javanese):

Means "knowledge." This word highlights the importance of education and knowledge in both cultures.

"Iman" (Arabic) → "Iman" (Javanese):

Means "faith." Used in a religious context, this word signifies a person's belief or faith in Islam.

Arabic-Javanese Loanwords

Arabic loanwords have become an integral part of the Javanese language, especially in religious and social contexts. Here are some examples of Arabic loanwords in Javanese, along with their meanings and origins:

Amal

Meaning in Javanese: Good deeds or charitable actions.

Origin from Arabic: "Amal" (عَمَل), meaning deeds or actions. This word is commonly used in the context of charity and social activities aimed at helping others.

Iman

Meaning in Javanese: Faith or belief, particularly in a religious context.

Origin from Arabic: "Īmān" (إِيمَان), meaning faith or belief. This term reflects a person's belief in Islamic teachings and trust in God.

Ilmu

Meaning in Javanese: Knowledge or science.

Origin from Arabic: "‘Ilm" (عِلْم), meaning knowledge or learning. The use of this word highlights the importance of education and knowledge in Javanese culture influenced by Islamic teachings.

Syukur

Meaning in Javanese: Gratitude or thankfulness.

Origin from Arabic: "Shukr" (شُكْر), meaning gratitude or thanks. This word is used to express appreciation and thanks for blessings received from God.

Fakir

Meaning in Javanese: Poor or needy person.

Origin from Arabic: "Faqīr" (فقير), meaning poor or someone in material need. This term is often used in social contexts to refer to people in need of assistance.

Barakah

Meaning in Javanese: Blessing or grace.

Origin from Arabic: "Barakah" (بركة), meaning blessing or grace. This word is frequently used to describe the blessings or divine grace bestowed upon someone's life.

Arabic loanwords not only enrich the Javanese language but also bring significant concepts from Islamic teachings that influence social and cultural life. Words like "amal," "iman," and "ilmu" demonstrate how religious and educational values are integrated into Javanese culture.

Words such as "syukur," "fakir," and "barakah" reflect the influence of moral and social values from Islam, which emphasize the importance of gratitude, helping others, and appreciating blessings in life. The integration of this vocabulary (Marlina, 2019; Alwan & Maulani, 2023) strengthens the Islamic identity of the Javanese community and demonstrates how the Arabic language has become an inseparable part of their daily life.

### **The Influence of Arabic on the Development of Language and Culture in Karimun Jawa**

The influence of Arabic on the development of language and culture in Karimun Jawa is profound (Humaedi, 2015). The absorption of Arabic has not only enriched the local vocabulary but also strengthened the cultural and religious identity of the local community. Education and phonological adaptation contribute to the harmonious integration between Arabic and Javanese, while cultural influence and its role in tourism enhance the social and economic life in Karimun Jawa.

Islamic educational institutions such as pesantren and madrasah in Karimun Jawa play a central role in disseminating Arabic language and culture (Sauri, 2020). These institutions serve as centers for Islamic education, teaching various Islamic disciplines including Arabic. They are crucial for learning religious teachings and internalizing Islamic values into daily life.

#### Arabic Curriculum in Madrasah

The curriculum in pesantren and madrasah often includes Arabic language instruction in various forms, particularly through:

**Qur'anic Reading:** Students are taught how to read the Qur'an correctly, including tajweed (pronunciation rules) and memorization of verses. This helps them understand the holy text in its original language and appreciate the nuances of Arabic (Fadillah, 2019).

**Study of Classical Texts:** Students also study classical Arabic texts covering various fields such as fiqh (Islamic law), hadith (Prophet's traditions), tafsir (Qur'anic exegesis), and akhlaq (ethics). These texts are primary sources of Islamic knowledge and are written in Arabic, making proficiency in the language essential (Siswanto, 2021).

Through an intensive curriculum, students in pesantren and madrasah develop their Arabic language skills comprehensively. This instruction covers the following aspects:

Reading: Students learn to read Arabic texts fluently, which is a fundamental skill for understanding Islamic literature.

Writing: The ability to write in Arabic is also taught, enabling students to compose essays, notes, and even scholarly work in Arabic.

Listening and Speaking: Listening to lectures and engaging in discussions in Arabic helps students hone their communication skills, making them capable of participating in academic and religious discussions in Arabic.

#### Understanding Islamic Teachings

Teaching Arabic in pesantren and madrasah not only enhances students' linguistic abilities but also deepens their understanding of Islamic teachings. By mastering Arabic, students can:

Access Original Texts: Reading Islamic texts in their original language allows for a deeper and more authentic understanding of Islamic teachings.

Understand Historical and Cultural Contexts: Arabic provides insight into the historical and cultural contexts in which Islamic teachings developed, enriching students' understanding of Islam as a religion and civilization.

Develop Critical Thinking: Studying classical Arabic texts teaches students critical and analytical thinking skills, helping them develop strong intellectual abilities.

#### Preservation of Arab-Islamic Culture

In addition to enhancing Arabic language skills, pesantren and madrasah also play a role in preserving Arab-Islamic culture. This is reflected in:

Scholarly Traditions: Pesantren and madrasah maintain the rich scholarly traditions of Islam, including classical teaching methods and the study of ancient texts.

Religious Practices: Arab-Islamic culture is also manifested in daily religious practices, such as congregational prayers, study circles, and the celebration of Islamic holidays.

Arts and Aesthetics: Arabic calligraphy and mosque architecture influenced by Arab styles are part of the cultural heritage preserved by these educational institutions.

Islamic educational institutions in Karimun Jawa, such as pesantren and madrasah, play a vital role in disseminating Arabic language and culture. Through a rich and comprehensive curriculum, students not only strengthen their Arabic language skills but also deepen their understanding of Islamic teachings. Additionally, these institutions help preserve Arab-Islamic culture, making Karimun Jawa an important center for the development of Islamic education and culture in Indonesia.

An ethnographic study of the absorption of Arabic and its phonetics in Karimun Jawa reveals extensive and profound impacts on the local community. Social implications of Arabic language usage include the strengthening of cultural identity, increased social interaction, and enhanced education and literacy. Practically, the use of Arabic contributes to the development of Muslim-friendly tourism, local economic empowerment, and improved human.



#### 4. CONCLUSION

The phonological adjustments of Arabic loanwords in Karimun Jawa illustrate how Arabic has been adapted to fit the phonetic system and structure of the Javanese language. This process not only facilitates pronunciation but also aids in the integration of these words into the everyday life of the local community. Examples of loanwords such as "amal" (good deeds), "ilmu" (knowledge), and "iman" (faith) reflect the profound influence of Arabic on the culture and language of Karimun Jawa, enriching the vocabulary and strengthening local cultural identity.

The integration of Arabic loanwords into Javanese demonstrates how cultural and religious contact can impact language. These loanwords not only expand the Javanese vocabulary but also adapt to the phonological and structural systems of the Javanese language. This adaptation highlights the flexibility and capacity of Javanese to absorb foreign influences while maintaining its distinctive characteristics.

Arabic loanwords in Karimun Jawa undergo unique phonological adaptations to align with the Javanese sound system. This study will examine how these adjustments occur, including sound substitutions, consonant and vowel modifications, and other structural adaptations. Understanding the phonetics of Arabic loanwords is crucial for comprehending how Arabic has more deeply influenced the local language and culture.

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