

Islamic Values as Hidden Curriculum in BIPA Instruction: International Student Experiences at an Islamic University

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Abstract

This study examines how Islamic values operate as hidden curriculum within Indonesian as a Foreign Language (BIPA) instruction at Universitas Islam Bandung (Unisba). While most BIPA research in Indonesia centers on linguistic aspects, this study asks: through what mechanisms do Islamic values permeate language learning without constituting formal curricular content? Using a qualitative case study design, data were gathered from three BIPA classroom observation sessions, an in depth interview with the BIPA lecturer, and field notes documenting interactions with an Algerian international student. Analysis reveals three interlocking mechanisms: (1) Islamic linguistic scaffolding through greetings and faith based expressions; (2) the physical Islamic campus ecosystem, particularly prayer spaces, as adaptation environments; and (3) pedagogical relationships that transcend instructional boundaries. These findings suggest that in Islamic universities, language learning and value socialization occur simultaneously, producing a form of BIPA instruction inseparable from institutional identity. Implications for contextually responsive BIPA curriculum development in Islamic higher education are discussed. This study's contribution is twofold: it introduces Islamic hidden curriculum as a theoretical lens for language classrooms embedded in religious institutions, and it offers an empirical typology of the mechanisms through which this hidden curriculum operates.

Keywords: *BIPA; hidden curriculum; Islamic campus; language learning; value socialization*

Introduction

When an international student from Algeria steps into an Indonesian for Foreign Speakers (BIPA) classroom at Universitas Islam Bandung, he does not only encounter a new language. He encounters a new way of organizing daily life: the call to prayer marking the rhythm of campus activities, the greeting "Assalamualaikum" exchanged in hallways and classrooms, the prayer rooms (mushola) available in every building. None of these are listed in the BIPA syllabus. Yet all of them, as this study demonstrates, profoundly shape the language learning and cultural adaptation experience of international students at an Islamic university. These features are documented in this study's own field observations (see Method) and are consistent with broader accounts of the religiously inflected character of Islamic higher education environments (Rahman & Hidayat, 2023). These are illustrative features drawn from this study's own limited observational encounter with the campus and the lecturer-student sessions, not a systematic institutional audit of every building or moment of campus life, and should not be read as a comprehensive institutional claim.

This phenomenon points to the operation of hidden curriculum in language education: the set of values, norms, and expectations that learners absorb not from formal instruction, but from the experience of participating in an institutional community (Jackson, 1968; Margolis, 2001; Apple, 2004). In the field of language teaching, the hidden curriculum remains undertheorized, despite growing recognition that language classrooms are fundamentally cultural spaces where messages about identity, power, and belonging are constantly transmitted alongside grammatical rules (Norton, 2019; Duff, 2010; Kramersch, 2020). Read together, these three strands point in a common direction without converging on it: Norton (2019) shows that learners' investment in a language depends on whether their identities are affirmed in the classroom; Duff (2010) demonstrates that language learning is inseparable from socialization into a community's norms and values; and Kramersch (2020) frames language itself as symbolic power, carrying ideological content beyond its referential meaning. None of these accounts, however, examines what happens when the institutional setting is itself organized around a specific religious identity, which is the gap this study addresses. This gap persists even in adjacent scholarship: broad surveys of language education as a cultural enterprise (Hornberger & McKay, 2020; Zhu, 2019) and of intercultural communicative competence (Byram, 2021) treat culture as a general backdrop rather than an institutionally specific, religiously organized one, and reviews of curriculum development in Asian language education (Widodo, 2021) do not address Islamic higher education as a distinct case. To be clear, BIPA scholarship is not monolithically linguistic: it already spans error analysis, materials development, and competency assessment, as noted above. The gap this study addresses is narrower than "BIPA research ignores culture"; it is that even the existing cultural and institutional strands of BIPA scholarship have not examined religiously organized institutions as a distinct analytic category.

Islamic universities present a particularly rich site for examining hidden curriculum in language learning. Islamic values do not remain in the background; they shape communication styles, dress codes, social interactions, and the very organization of time around prayer schedules. For Muslim international students learning Indonesian in this context, language acquisition and Islamic value socialization are not sequential but simultaneous processes. The research question guiding this study is: through what specific mechanisms do Islamic values function as hidden curriculum within BIPA instruction at an Islamic university, and how do these mechanisms shape international student adaptation?

BIPA research in Indonesia has expanded considerably over the past decade. However, the field remains heavily oriented toward linguistic concerns: error analysis (Ardiyanti, 2024), materials development (Sari et al., 2023), and competency-based assessment (Rahman et al., 2024). Cultural dimensions of BIPA, particularly within Islamic institutional contexts, have received limited attention. Dewi (2024, 2026) has made important initial contributions by framing BIPA as an instrument of academic and cultural adaptation in Islamic higher education, and Muyassaroh et al. (2025) have mapped systemic gaps in BIPA at Islamic state universities. However, neither study examines the micro-level mechanisms through which Islamic values enter the language classroom. Dewi documents that BIPA supports academic adaptation at the institutional level, and Muyassaroh et al. catalogue systemic barriers across institutions; neither asks how, at the level of a single classroom interaction, Islamic values become embedded in language instruction without being formally taught. This is the specific gap the present study addresses. This gap is consistent with a broader pattern noted outside the Indonesian context: systematic reviews of language support for international students

(Jiang & Johnstone, 2022) and analyses of the internationalization of higher education (Knight, 2021) likewise operate at the policy or service-provision level, while overviews of Indonesian as a foreign language instruction (Suyitno & Widiati, 2021) remain oriented toward pedagogy rather than the religiously inflected institutional context this study examines.

This study addresses that gap through close ethnographic observation of three BIPA sessions at Universitas Islam Bandung (Unisba). It draws on hidden curriculum theory (Jackson, 1968; Giroux & Penna, 1979; Apple, 2004), language socialization frameworks (Duff, 2010; Norton, 2019), and acculturation theory (Berry, 2005) to analyze how Islamic values operate in BIPA learning without being formally prescribed. The study makes two contributions to the field: it introduces the concept of Islamic hidden curriculum as a theoretical framework for BIPA in Islamic institutions; and it provides an empirical typology of the mechanisms through which Islamic values enter the language classroom organically.

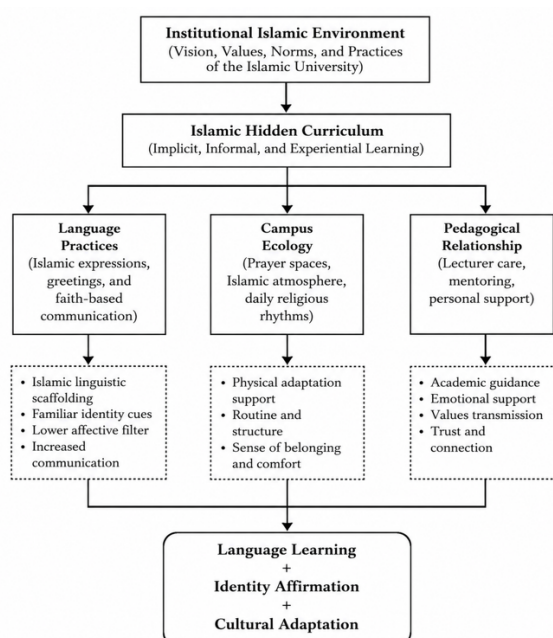


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Islamic Hidden Curriculum in BIPA

Method

This study employs a qualitative case study design (Yin, 2018), selected for its ability to generate detailed, contextually grounded understanding of a complex phenomenon within its natural setting. The case is the BIPA program at Unisba, with particular focus on one ongoing instructional relationship between the BIPA lecturer and a Doctoral student from Algeria (referred to as Ashraf throughout, a pseudonym consistent representation of the participant's identity as shared voluntarily). The case, in Yin's (2018) sense, is this single instructional dyad and the three sessions in which it was observed; it is not the Unisba BIPA program as a whole, which serves a more heterogeneous student population across different lecturers and modalities. Findings are reported at the level of this case and should not be read as claims about the program in general.

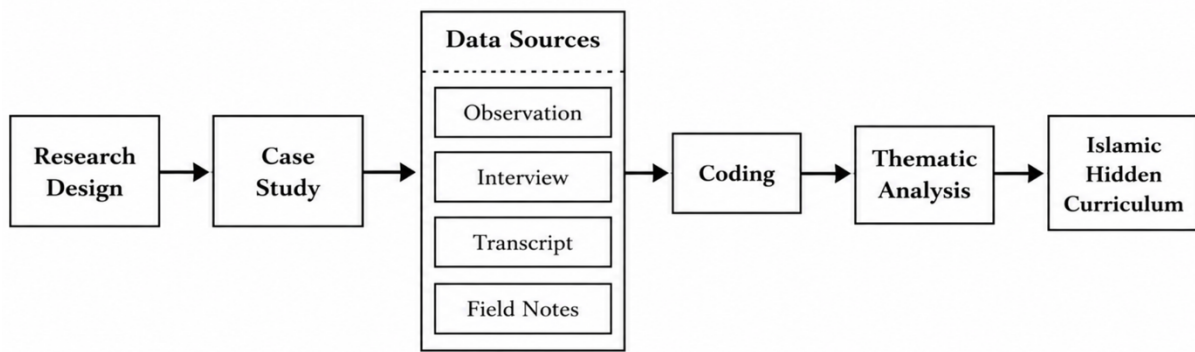


Figure 2. Research Design

Data were collected through three methods. First, participant observation of three full BIPA class sessions conducted online via video call. Structured observation checklists were supplemented with detailed narrative field notes capturing moments, exchanges, and nuances not captured by the checklist categories. Second, a semi-structured in depth interview with the BIPA lecturer lasting approximately 45 minutes. Third, analysis of session transcripts across all three observation sessions to identify the frequency, context, and function of Islamic expressions, references, and relational behaviors. The student participant was not separately interviewed; his perspective enters the data only as it surfaces in classroom talk captured in the observation sessions and field notes. Claims in this article about his experience are therefore researcher-observed and lecturer-mediated rather than independently self reported testimony, and the title's reference to "student experiences" should be read with this constraint in mind.

Data analysis proceeded through thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) guided by the theoretical framework of hidden curriculum (Jackson, 1968; Apple, 2004; Margolis, 2001). A constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was used to identify patterns of Islamic value integration across sessions. Trustworthiness was established through source triangulation (lecturer interview, student participant responses, session transcripts), method triangulation (observation, interview, document analysis), and member checking with the lecturer informant. Coding proceeded in stages consistent with the constant comparative method: open coding of field notes and interview transcripts to identify recurring references to Islamic practice, vocabulary, and relational behavior; axial coding to group these codes into candidate mechanisms; and selective coding to consolidate them into the three mechanisms reported in the Results section. Observation coding also drew on established categories of communicative and task-based language teaching (Richards & Rodgers, 2014) to distinguish instructional strategy from the Islamic content that is this study's primary focus.

Results

Thematic analysis of observation data, interview transcripts, and session field notes yielded three primary mechanisms through which Islamic values function as hidden curriculum in BIPA instruction at Unisba. These mechanisms are not mutually exclusive; they frequently co-occur within a single session, reinforcing one another and collectively producing a distinctive language learning experience characterized by simultaneous language acquisition and value socialization.

Table 1. Mechanisms of Islamic Hidden Curriculum in BIPA at Unisba

Mechanism	Manifestation in Instruction	Frequency (Sessions 1-3)
Islamic linguistic scaffolding	Islamic greetings, <i>insyaallah</i> , <i>alhamdulillah</i> in conversation; Islamic etiquette-based vocabulary correction	Very frequent (Session 2 and 3; absent in Session 1)
Physical Islamic campus ecosystem	References to <i>mushola</i> , <i>adhan</i> , prayer schedules woven into conversational context	Frequent (sessions 2 and 3)
Relational transcendence of instructional boundaries	Lecturer as psychosocial companion, significant other, pastoral care provider	Consistent (all sessions)

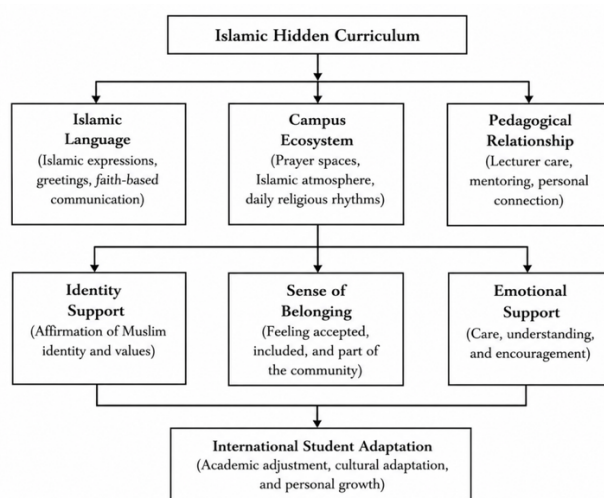


Figure 3. Mechanisms of Islamic Hidden Curriculum

Mechanism 1: Islamic Linguistic Scaffolding

The first mechanism involves what this study terms Islamic linguistic scaffolding: the use of Islamic greetings, expressions, and vocabulary as building blocks in language instruction, without these elements being formally designated as curricular content. Across two of the three observed sessions (Sessions 2 and 3), expressions such as "*Insyaallah*", "*Alhamdulillah*", "*Subhanallah*", and Islamic greetings ("*Assalamualaikum*" / "*Waalaikumsalam*") appeared organically in conversation between the lecturer and student.

Crucially, these expressions were not introduced as BIPA vocabulary items to be memorized. The student, as a Muslim Arabic speaker, already knew and used them; their appearance in Indonesian language conversation created a bridge between his existing linguistic cultural repertoire and the new language he was acquiring. The effect, observed consistently, was a marked reduction in the affective filter (Krashen, 1982): when familiar Islamic expressions appeared in Indonesian conversational context, the student visibly relaxed, spoke more freely, and demonstrated greater risk taking in his language use. An important qualification follows from the fact that the student already possessed these expressions before entering BIPA instruction: their appearance is better described as the activation of a religious repertoire he and the lecturer already shared, not as new content being taught. What this study terms a mechanism of hidden curriculum is therefore not the expressions themselves but the classroom's implicit sanctioning of that shared

repertoire as legitimate to use inside language instruction, which is what appears to produce the affective effect described above.

The lecturer also used Islamic cultural context to anchor grammatical instruction. When explaining the use of time adverbs in Indonesian (a language without tenses), she referenced prayer times as culturally meaningful time markers: "*We say setelah Subuh, after Subuh prayer, instead of saying past tense.*" This is a form of cross linguistic Islamic scaffolding: Islamic reference points familiar to the Muslim student are recruited to explain grammatical structures in the target language. Vygotsky's (1978) concept of scaffolding holds that effective support builds on what is already known to the learner. This finding extends Vygotsky's insight into the domain of religious and cultural familiarity as a scaffold for language acquisition. This pattern is not anecdotal: as Table 1 indicates, Islamic linguistic scaffolding appeared in all three observed sessions, making it the most consistently occurring mechanism recorded in this study's field notes.

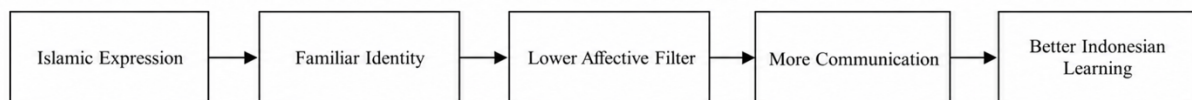


Figure 4. Islamic Linguistic Scaffolding Process

Norton (2019) argues that learner investment in language study is deeply shaped by whether their identity is affirmed or marginalized in the language classroom. The Islamic linguistic scaffolding observed here functions as a form of identity affirmation: it communicates to the Muslim international student that his identity is not incidental to, but actively welcomed within, the language learning space. This has direct consequences for motivation, engagement, and persistence in language learning.

Mechanism 2: The Physical Islamic Campus Ecosystem as Adaptation Environment

The second mechanism operates at the spatial and ecological level. Perhaps the most striking piece of evidence came in Session 3 (6 May 2026), when Ashraf spontaneously, without any prompt from the lecturer, identified the abundance of prayer rooms (*mushola*) across Indonesia as the thing he loved most about his new environment: "*Here you have mushola mau masuk everywhere. My country, even we are Muslim, but you cannot find mushola everywhere.*" This unprompted declaration reveals that the physical infrastructure of the Islamic campus functions as a powerful adaptation environment for Muslim international students. The three mechanisms are analytically separated above for clarity, but field notes show them co-occurring in single episodes rather than operating independently. In the closing exchange of Session 3, for example, the *mushola* comment (Mechanism 2) was immediately followed by repeated natural use of "*insyaallah*" (Mechanism 1) and closed with the reciprocal exchange "I'm sorry if the Indonesian class wasn't as good as it could have been" / "believe me you were very very good in teaching" and a mutual "*Assalamualaikum/Waalaikumsalam*" (Mechanism 3), within the space of a few minutes. This single episode illustrates how linguistic, spatial, and relational mechanisms can reinforce one another in real time rather than functioning as separate channels.

This finding reframes what "cultural learning" means in the BIPA context. Mainstream conceptualizations of cultural content in BIPA typically focus on Indonesian customs, cuisine, arts, and social norms (Sari et al., 2023; Widodo & Fang, 2022). This study suggests that at an Islamic university, the most affectively significant cultural

learning for Muslim international students may not concern Indonesian culture per se, but rather the Islamic identity of the institutional environment: the landscape of prayer spaces, the presence of Islamic dress, the rhythm of campus life organized around prayer times.

Illich (1971) argued that the most powerful learning occurs through environment and relationship rather than formal content transmission. The BIPA classroom, in this case, extends beyond its physical or virtual boundaries to encompass the entire Islamic campus as a learning environment. When the lecturer references her own practice of waking for *Subuh* prayer to prepare feedback on student's writing, she is not teaching Islamic practice; she is modeling Islamic professional identity, which the student observes and implicitly learns from. This is hidden curriculum operating through everyday institutional narrative rather than explicit instruction. This reading requires a caveat that applies throughout the Results section: the labeling of specific lecturer behaviors, working after *Subuh* prayer, referencing prayer times, offering practical and emotional support, as instances of Islamic value transmission (*amanah, rahmah, ukhuwah*) is this study's analytic interpretation, developed against the literature on Islamic ethics and hidden curriculum, and was not independently confirmed by the student as the meaning he took from these moments. Preparing feedback after *Subuh*, for instance, may simply reflect the lecturer's personal daily routine rather than a deliberate or perceived act of modeling; without the student's own account of how he interpreted it, the study can document the behavior and offer a theoretically grounded reading of it, but cannot claim that this is the meaning the student himself assigned to it.

Berry (2005) has established that perceived environmental support and identity alignment are significant protective factors in the acculturation process. The present findings specify a mechanism through which this alignment operates in the context of Islamic higher education: the visible and accessible Islamic infrastructure of the campus serves as a continuous, non-verbal affirmation of shared identity for Muslim international students, facilitating rather than impeding their adjustment. As Table 1 indicates, this mechanism was documented in Sessions 2 and 3, with the *mushola* exchange quoted above the clearest single instance; its recurrence across two independently observed sessions, rather than a single remark, is what supports classifying it as a mechanism rather than an isolated observation.

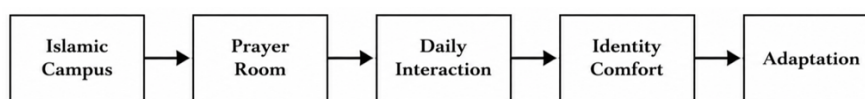


Figure 5. Islamic Campus Environment Supporting International Students

Mechanism 3: Pedagogical Relationships That Transcend Instructional Boundaries

The third and most substantive mechanism concerns the character of the pedagogical relationship itself. Across three sessions, the relationship between the BIPA lecturer and the student evolved well beyond the conventional instructor learner dynamic. The lecturer functioned as what Mead (1934) termed a significant other: a person whose sustained engagement meaningfully shapes how an individual perceives themselves and their environment.

This became most visible in Session 2. The student disclosed that during his first week in Bandung, he had no internet access, no social contacts, and was experiencing significant isolation. His BIPA sessions were, in his words, the only meaningful communication he had. The lecturer's response went beyond empathy: she had prepared

written feedback on his assignment before dawn (after *Subuh* prayer), sent WhatsApp messages with practical recommendations (nearby cafes, transport options), and committed to continued support beyond the formal program.

This relational dimension is not incidental; it is saturated with Islamic ethical values. The principles of *ukhuwah* (brotherhood and solidarity in Islam), *rahmah* (compassion and mercy), and *amanah* (faithful fulfillment of responsibility) are visibly enacted in every dimension of the lecturer's engagement with student, without ever being named as such. Herein lies the defining characteristic of hidden curriculum: values are taught not through articulation, but through exemplification and relational practice. A competing, non-religious explanation should be acknowledged: emotional support, transport and cafe recommendations, and informal WhatsApp communication are also documented features of humanistic pedagogy and international-student support more broadly, independent of any religious framing (Andrade, 2006; Thomas, 2023). What this study can claim is that the lecturer and student themselves discursively framed aspects of the relationship in terms consonant with Islamic ethical vocabulary (e.g., the language of friendship and care in the closing exchange); it cannot claim that humane, attentive mentoring of this kind is unique or specific to an Islamic institutional context, since comparable relational practices are reported at non-religious institutions as well.

At the close of the final session, student offered perhaps the most revealing testimony: *"Believe me, you were very very good in teaching... this made my journey here in Indonesia, because I see that people consider me as a friend more than student."* The values most deeply absorbed were precisely those never formally taught. This confirms Apple's (2004) argument that hidden curriculum transmits the most enduring lessons in any educational setting. Read against the three Islamic ethical principles named above, the lecturer's specific actions map onto each in turn: preparing feedback before dawn enacts *amanah* as faithful fulfillment of an entrusted responsibility; the unsolicited practical WhatsApp support enacts *rahmah* as compassion extended beyond what the instructional role requires; and the student's framing of the relationship as one between "a friend more than student" reflects *ukhuwah* as solidarity that treats the learner as a member of a shared community. This mapping is what marks the relationship as hidden curriculum rather than simply good teaching: the values are never named to the student, yet they organize every observed action.

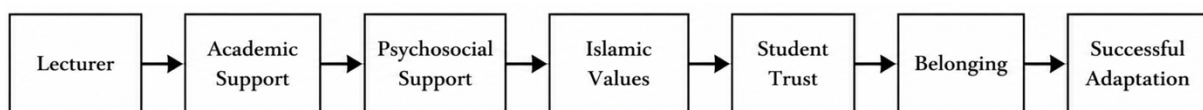


Figure 6. Pedagogical Relationship Beyond Instruction

Discussion

Islamic Hidden Curriculum: A Reconceptualization

The concept of hidden curriculum originates in critical educational theory as a lens for exposing how schools reproduce social inequalities and dominant ideologies through non-formal channels (Jackson, 1968; Giroux & Penna, 1979; Margolis, 2001). This study deploys the concept differently: not to critique values being transmitted, but to illuminate how Islamic values organically enter the BIPA learning space and what effects they produce for Muslim international students. This distinction matters for scope: not every visible marker of Unisba's Islamic identity, such as its official mission statements, branding, or formally listed campus facilities, counts as hidden curriculum in the sense

used here. The analysis below is restricted to instances in which Islamic values were transmitted through unlabeled, informal classroom and relational practice rather than through the university's explicit institutional identity or public self-presentation.

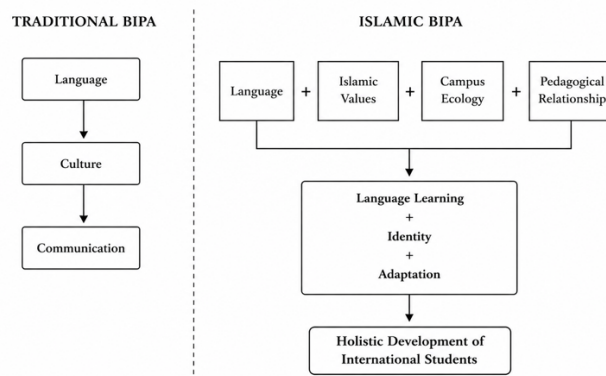


Figure 7. Proposed Islamic Hidden Curriculum Model for BIPA

The Islamic hidden curriculum identified in this study is notably different in character from the problematic forms of hidden curriculum critiqued by Giroux and Penna (1979) as hegemonic and exclusionary. In this context, the Islamic values embedded in BIPA instruction are inclusive and affirmative for Muslim students: they create rather than foreclose belonging. This distinction matters theoretically: it suggests that hidden curriculum is not inherently oppressive; its ethical valence depends on the relationship between the values transmitted and the identities of the learners who receive them. This claim should not be read as a general verdict that Islamic hidden curriculum is benign. Even a hidden curriculum experienced as welcoming by this participant still operates by establishing an implicit norm of what a Unisba student's identity and practice look like; for a student positioned differently in relation to that norm, whether non-Muslim, a Muslim from a different tradition or with different observance, or otherwise outside it, the same unlabeled transmission of value could function as pressure to conform or as a marker of not belonging rather than as affirmation. The present data cannot adjudicate between these possibilities because the participant shares the campus's dominant religious identity; the analytic stance taken here is that Islamic hidden curriculum in BIPA is double-edged in principle, and only its effect on this particular participant is evidenced.

For Muslim international students from countries like Algeria and Palestine, where Islamic practice is normative but not always institutionally visible in the way it is at Unisba, the Islamic hidden curriculum functions as what Berry (2005) would call a facilitative acculturation environment: a context in which the incoming individual does not have to abandon or suppress their existing cultural identity to participate successfully. This represents a significant extension of Berry's acculturation framework: the Islamic hidden curriculum is a previously unnamed mechanism through which Islamic higher education institutions create facilitative acculturation environments for Muslim international students. The clearest evidence for this claim is Ashraf's own framing, in Session 3, of Indonesia's *mushola* infrastructure as something his home country lacked despite its Muslim majority; the comparison he draws functions as a spontaneous acculturation assessment, identifying the institutional visibility of Islamic practice, rather than the presence of Islam as such, as the operative variable in facilitative acculturation.

This is consistent with earlier work identifying environmental and institutional factors, not only individual disposition, as key adjustment variables for international students (Andrade, 2006). It also has a practical corollary documented in this study's interview data: the lecturer reported that standard BIPA textbooks felt “too rigid” for this population and that she designed her own supplementary materials around students' fields of study and campus life, a strategy consistent with recommendations for context-responsive materials development in language teaching (Tomlinson, 2011). One further caveat is warranted: this study did not administer any validated measure of acculturation or adaptation outcomes. What the data show directly is that the student expressed appreciation for the *mushola* infrastructure and for the lecturer's support; “facilitative acculturation” is this study's theoretical interpretation of those expressions through Berry's framework, not an independently measured adaptation outcome, and should be read with that distinction in mind.

This finding also extends Dewi's (2026) argument about BIPA's role in Islamic higher education internationalisation. Where Dewi focuses on BIPA as an instrument of academic adaptation, this study demonstrates that BIPA in an Islamic campus context simultaneously functions as a vehicle of value socialization. The two functions are not sequential but intertwined: Islamic values, when encountered through the scaffolding of language learning, become embedded in the student's emerging linguistic competence and sense of belonging.

Implications for BIPA Curriculum Design in Islamic Higher Education

The findings carry several practical implications for those who design and deliver BIPA programs at Islamic universities. First, curriculum designers need to recognize the Islamic hidden curriculum as a genuine pedagogical resource, not merely an institutional backdrop. Designing BIPA materials that explicitly incorporate Islamic cultural reference points, not in a doctrinaire manner, but through authentic conversational texts, situational vocabulary, and cultural scenarios rooted in campus Islamic life, would bring the hidden curriculum into the open and make it accessible to all international students, including those who are not Muslim.

Table 2. Implications for Islamic BIPA Curriculum Design

Hidden Curriculum	Current Practice	Proposed Curriculum
Greeting	Natural	Explicit dialogue
Mushola	Observation	Campus orientation
Lecturer Support	Individual	Structured mentoring
Islamic Values	Implicit	Contextual learning

Second, BIPA lecturer training in Islamic higher education should extend beyond linguistic-pedagogical competence to include intercultural and Islamic-cultural literacy: the capacity to recognize, reflect on, and strategically deploy hidden curriculum mechanisms for the benefit of diverse international students. The lecturer observed in this study possesses this competence intuitively; the goal should be to develop it explicitly and systematically.

Third, the pastoral dimension of the BIPA lecturer's role observed in this study cannot remain dependent on individual goodwill. Formalizing a psychosocial support dimension within the BIPA program, through structured student buddy programs, peer mentoring, and formalized pastoral check-in procedures, would institutionalize what is

currently individual practice. Thomas (2023) has demonstrated through meta-analysis that formalized student support services significantly improve academic outcomes for international students; the present findings suggest that the relational dimension identified here is a specific, high-impact component of such support.

Fourth, for non-Muslim international students, the Islamic hidden curriculum may function differently. Future research should examine experiences of non-Muslim international students in Islamic campus BIPA contexts to determine whether the mechanisms identified here remain facilitative or produce friction for students from different faith backgrounds. Designing explicitly inclusive orientations that present Islamic campus culture as context rather than prescription would be a prudent institutional response to this concern. This is not a concern that can wait for future research to resolve before institutions act: given that this study's own data cannot establish whether the identified mechanisms are facilitative or exclusionary for non-Muslim or differently observant students, BIPA programs at Islamic universities should treat inclusive design, explicit orientation to campus Islamic practice as shared context rather than assumed norm, optional rather than default framing of religious content, and monitoring of non-Muslim students' experience, as a present design requirement rather than a contingent future recommendation.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This study is bounded by several limitations. The primary case is a single instructional relationship observed over three sessions with one international student who is himself Muslim. Experiences of non-Muslim international students, and of international students with different language backgrounds, may reveal different patterns. The study also focuses on a single lecturer whose pedagogical approach may not be representative of BIPA instruction across the institution.

Future research directions include: comparative analysis of Islamic hidden curriculum mechanisms across multiple Islamic universities in Indonesia; a systematic study of non-Muslim international students' experiences in Islamic campus BIPA contexts; and curriculum development research exploring how hidden curriculum insights can be productively incorporated into explicit BIPA syllabus and materials design. A longitudinal design following international students across a full academic year would also enrich understanding of how the mechanisms identified here evolve over time. Positioning this study alongside adjacent research on international student adaptation in religious and non-religious institutions alike (Rahman & Hidayat, 2023; Glass & Westmont, 2021; Zhou et al., 2008) suggests that institutional-identity alignment, rather than religiosity as such, may be the broader explanatory variable of which the Islamic hidden curriculum identified here is one instance; testing this proposition across institutional types is an important direction for future theory-building grounded in Berry's (2005) acculturation framework and Norton's (2019) identity based account of investment.

Conclusion

BIPA instruction at an Islamic university is not merely language teaching. It is a site of simultaneous value socialization, operating through what this study terms Islamic hidden curriculum: informal but powerful mechanisms through which Islamic values enter the language learning space without constituting formal curricular content. Three such mechanisms are identified: Islamic linguistic scaffolding, the physical Islamic campus ecosystem as adaptation environment, and pedagogical relationships that

transcend instructional boundaries. These three mechanisms directly answer the question that opened this study: Islamic values function as hidden curriculum in BIPA instruction not through explicit teaching but through language, environment, and relationship, and they shape international student adaptation by supplying continuous, unspoken affirmation of the student's own identity within an unfamiliar institutional setting. These conclusions are drawn from, and bounded by, a single instructional dyad observed over three sessions with one Muslim international student; they describe what these mechanisms did for this participant in this setting, not a general law about Islamic hidden curriculum, BIPA instruction, or international student adaptation at Islamic universities more broadly.

For Muslim international students, these mechanisms function as facilitative acculturation resources: they create a sense of identity affirmation and belonging that supports language learning motivation and cultural adaptation simultaneously. The student who described his BIPA sessions as the only meaningful communication he had in his first lonely weeks in Bandung, and who left the final session saying he was treated "as a friend more than student," is testimony to the affective power of the Islamic hidden curriculum that surrounds and permeates language instruction at an Islamic campus.

The challenge for institutions and curriculum developers is to render this hidden curriculum visible: to design BIPA programs that consciously and inclusively harness these mechanisms, making the distinctive affordances of the Islamic campus environment accessible to all international students rather than leaving them to chance discovery. In doing so, Islamic universities can develop a genuinely distinctive and contextually grounded model of BIPA instruction that reflects and strengthens their institutional identity.

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