



CENDEKIAWAN:
JURNAL PENDIDIKAN DAN STUDI KEISLAMAN

Volume 4 Nomor 3 Tahun 2025 Page 821-829

<https://zia-research.com/index.php/cendekiawan>



**Linguistic Intelligence for Cross-Cultural Adaptation
of Indonesian Beginner Students in Egypt**

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Abstract

While previous research has extensively examined cross-cultural adaptation among international students, limited attention has been given to the specific role of linguistic intelligence in facilitating this process, particularly among Indonesian beginner students in Arab-speaking contexts. This study investigates how linguistic intelligence influences cross-cultural adaptation of Indonesian students in Egypt. Employing a mixed-method approach, this research combines field data from 120 Indonesian students' lived experiences in Egypt with a systematic literature review of relevant studies. Quantitative analysis reveals a significant positive correlation ($r=0.72$, $p<0.01$) between linguistic intelligence dimensions and adaptation outcomes, while qualitative findings highlight language learning strategies, communicative confidence, and sociolinguistic awareness as critical adaptation mechanisms. Results demonstrate that students with higher linguistic intelligence exhibit superior cultural adjustment, academic performance, and social integration. The study's implications suggest that pre-departure orientation programs should incorporate linguistic intelligence development alongside traditional language training, and educational institutions should assess students' linguistic competencies to provide tailored support systems for enhanced cross-cultural adaptation success.

Keywords: *Cross-Cultural Adaptation, Egypt, Indonesian Students, International Education, Linguistic Intelligence.*

PRELIMINARY

Linguistic intelligence, conceptualized within Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, represents the capacity to understand and manipulate spoken and written language effectively. This cognitive ability encompasses sensitivity to language sounds, meanings, rhythms, and functions, enabling individuals to think in words and use language to express complex meanings. In cross-cultural contexts, linguistic intelligence theoretically serves as a fundamental prerequisite for successful adaptation, as it facilitates communication, cultural comprehension, and social integration in foreign environments. According to Gardner's framework, individuals with heightened linguistic intelligence demonstrate superior abilities in learning new languages, understanding cultural nuances embedded in linguistic expressions, and adapting communication strategies to diverse cultural contexts. The theoretical underpinning suggests that linguistic intelligence operates as a mediating factor between language proficiency and cultural adaptation, enabling international students to navigate unfamiliar sociocultural landscapes more effectively than their counterparts with lower linguistic intelligence.

Despite theoretical assertions, Indonesian students pursuing higher education in Egypt encounter substantial cross-cultural adaptation challenges. The linguistic gap between Bahasa Indonesia and Arabic—two languages from entirely different language families—creates considerable barriers to effective communication and social integration. Indonesian students face phonological difficulties with Arabic's emphatic consonants and guttural sounds, grammatical complexities involving root-pattern morphology,

and sociolinguistic challenges related to diglossia and regional dialect variations. Beyond linguistic obstacles, cultural differences in educational practices, social norms, and daily life routines compound adaptation difficulties. Many Indonesian students report feelings of isolation, academic stress, and communication apprehension despite possessing basic Arabic language skills acquired through Islamic education in Indonesia. This reality suggests that conventional language training may be insufficient without corresponding development of linguistic intelligence—the cognitive capacity to process, analyze, and strategically deploy language in culturally appropriate ways. The disconnect between theoretical expectations of linguistic intelligence facilitating adaptation and the lived experiences of Indonesian students in Egypt necessitates empirical investigation into how linguistic intelligence specifically influences cross-cultural adaptation outcomes.

Recent scholarship has increasingly examined factors influencing international students' cross-cultural adaptation. Research demonstrates that cultural intelligence significantly predicts cross-cultural adaptation among international students, with psychological resilience serving as a mediating variable in this relationship (Chu & Zhu, 2023). Studies indicate that metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral dimensions of cultural intelligence collectively contribute to adaptation success, with cognitive cultural intelligence showing the strongest correlation with adaptation outcomes. The study by Chu and Zhu (2023) involving 624 international students in China revealed significant positive correlations between cultural intelligence, psychological resilience, and cross-cultural adaptation, with resilience accounting for 56.40% of the total effect in mediating the relationship. Furthermore, investigations into Arabic language acquisition reveal that non-native learners face multifaceted challenges including phonological difficulties, grammatical complexities, and limited opportunities for authentic communication practice (Almelhes, 2024). Research emphasizes the importance of interactive teaching methods, cultural integration in language instruction, and learner-centered pedagogical approaches in enhancing Arabic language acquisition effectiveness. Almelhes (2024) identified that 59.9% of non-native Arabic learners agreed that professional development activities significantly enhance their learning outcomes, while 60.8% emphasized the necessity for teaching methods adapted to diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Language and communication have been identified as critical elements in international student adaptation, though most research focuses on general language proficiency rather than linguistic intelligence as a distinct cognitive construct. Studies on international students' intercultural adaptation reveal that cultural intelligence and linguistic confidence are significantly associated with successful cross-cultural adjustment (Liu et al., 2025). The research demonstrates that cross-cultural adaptation and interpersonal communication competence mediate the relationship between cultural intelligence and linguistic confidence, suggesting complex interrelationships among these constructs. Additionally, bibliometric analysis of global research trends indicates growing scholarly attention to international students' intercultural adaptation, with research hotspots including cultural intelligence, acculturative stress, and social support systems (Tang & Zhang, 2023). However, these studies predominantly examine adaptation in Western or East Asian contexts, with limited attention to Arab-speaking educational environments and the specific experiences of Southeast Asian Muslim students adapting to Middle Eastern academic cultures.

While existing literature addresses cultural intelligence and cross-cultural adaptation extensively, several critical gaps persist. First, linguistic intelligence as conceptualized within Gardner's multiple intelligences framework has received minimal empirical attention in cross-cultural adaptation research. Most studies conflate language proficiency with linguistic intelligence, failing to distinguish between knowledge of a language and the cognitive capacity to understand, analyze, and strategically employ language in cultural contexts. Second, research specifically examining Indonesian students' adaptation experiences in Arab-speaking contexts remains scarce, with most international student studies focusing on Western educational destinations or Chinese contexts. The cultural and linguistic proximity between Indonesia and Arab countries—both predominantly Muslim societies yet with vastly different languages—presents unique adaptation dynamics that remain underexplored. Third, the mechanism through which linguistic intelligence influences cross-cultural adaptation—whether directly or through mediating variables—remains theoretically and empirically unclear. Fourth, existing research predominantly employs either quantitative or qualitative methodologies in isolation, limiting comprehensive understanding of both measurable relationships and lived experiences. Finally, the specificity of linguistic intelligence dimensions

that most significantly impact cross-cultural adaptation has not been systematically investigated, leaving educators and policymakers without targeted intervention strategies.

This study addresses identified gaps by investigating linguistic intelligence as a distinct predictor of cross-cultural adaptation among Indonesian beginner students in Egypt, employing an innovative mixed-methods approach. The research novelty manifests in several dimensions. First, it operationalizes linguistic intelligence beyond mere language proficiency, examining cognitive capacities including metalinguistic awareness, phonological sensitivity, semantic processing, and pragmatic competence as discrete yet interrelated dimensions. Second, the study specifically targets Indonesian students in Egypt—a population experiencing unique cross-cultural transitions involving Islamic education background, linguistic distance between Indonesian and Arabic, and adaptation to Arab-Middle Eastern academic culture. Third, the research employs a convergent parallel mixed-methods design, simultaneously collecting quantitative data from Indonesian students' lived experiences in Egypt and conducting systematic literature review to triangulate findings across methodological approaches. This methodological innovation allows for comprehensive examination of both measurable correlations between linguistic intelligence and adaptation outcomes, and nuanced understanding of students' subjective experiences navigating linguistic and cultural challenges.

Fourth, the study examines both direct effects of linguistic intelligence on cross-cultural adaptation and potential mediating mechanisms including language learning strategies, communicative confidence, and sociolinguistic awareness. By investigating these mediating pathways, the research illuminates not merely whether linguistic intelligence predicts adaptation success, but how it operates through specific cognitive and behavioral processes. Fifth, this research provides actionable insights for pre-departure orientation programs, Arabic language instruction, and institutional support services specifically tailored to Indonesian students preparing for or currently studying in Arab contexts. The findings offer evidence-based recommendations for enhancing linguistic intelligence development alongside traditional language training, potentially improving adaptation outcomes for Indonesian students and similar populations facing analogous cross-cultural transitions.

The significance of this research extends beyond academic contribution to practical implications for international education stakeholders. For Indonesian educational institutions preparing students for study abroad, the findings illuminate specific linguistic competencies requiring development beyond grammar and vocabulary mastery. For Egyptian universities hosting Indonesian students, the research provides insights into linguistic and cultural support mechanisms that facilitate smoother adaptation processes. For international education policymakers, the study demonstrates the necessity of distinguishing linguistic intelligence from language proficiency in assessment and support frameworks. Moreover, the research contributes to theoretical development by clarifying relationships among linguistic intelligence, language proficiency, and cross-cultural adaptation—constructs often treated as interchangeable in existing literature but representing distinct phenomena with unique implications for international student success.

By bridging theoretical constructs of linguistic intelligence with practical realities of cross-cultural adaptation, this study contributes unique knowledge to international education scholarship. The research addresses calls for more nuanced understanding of cognitive factors influencing adaptation beyond personality traits and general intelligence measures. It responds to gaps in geographic and demographic representation within international student research by centering Indonesian students' experiences in Egyptian contexts. Furthermore, the mixed-methods approach advances methodological sophistication in cross-cultural adaptation research by integrating quantitative measurement of relationships with qualitative exploration of lived experiences. The convergence of field data from students' actual adaptation journeys with systematic synthesis of existing scholarship produces robust evidence for both theoretical advancement and practical application.

This introduction has established the theoretical foundation of linguistic intelligence in cross-cultural contexts, documented the real challenges faced by Indonesian students in Egypt, synthesized relevant scholarship while identifying critical gaps, and articulated the study's novelty and significance. The following sections will detail the research methodology, present empirical findings, discuss theoretical and practical implications, and offer recommendations for enhancing Indonesian students' cross-cultural adaptation success through linguistic intelligence development.

METHOD

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative analysis, to explore the role of linguistic intelligence in the cross-cultural adaptation of Indonesian students in Egypt. This descriptive-explanatory study employed a sequential design that integrated field data from the lived experiences of Indonesian students in Egypt with a systematic literature review of relevant studies. The quantitative approach was used to measure the correlation between dimensions of linguistic intelligence and adaptation outcomes, while the qualitative approach explored language learning strategies, communicative self-confidence, and sociolinguistic awareness as critical adaptation mechanisms.

The primary data source for this study was 120 Indonesian students currently studying in Egypt, selected through a purposive sampling technique based on the criteria of beginner-level Indonesian students who had lived in Egypt for at least six months. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire to measure linguistic intelligence using an adaptation of Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Scale, as well as a validated cross-cultural adaptation questionnaire. Additionally, qualitative data were collected through in-depth interviews with 20 students, selected purposively, to explore their adaptation experiences in greater depth. Secondary data was obtained through a systematic literature review of scientific publications related to cross-cultural adaptation of international students in the Arab-Indonesian context.

Quantitative data analysis was conducted using Pearson correlation techniques to examine the relationship between linguistic intelligence and cross-cultural adaptation, and multiple regression analysis to identify predictive factors of adaptation. Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis with an inductive approach to identify key themes related to students' adaptation strategies. The validity of the quantitative data was tested through construct validity using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and reliability using Cronbach's Alpha ($\alpha > 0.70$). For qualitative data, data validity was ensured through source triangulation (students with diverse backgrounds), method triangulation (interviews and observations), and member checking to verify the researcher's interpretation of participants' experiences. The entire research process adhered to ethical research principles, with informed consent obtained from all participants.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Linguistic Intelligence Becomes Skilled Capital for the Future

Linguistic intelligence has been shown to be a dominant factor in determining the success of Indonesian students in Egypt. Quantitative data shows a significant positive correlation between linguistic intelligence and academic ability ($r=0.72$, $p<0.01$). This finding confirms that language proficiency is not merely a means of communication but also a key instrument in accessing knowledge, interacting across cultures, and building broader social networks.

Students with high levels of linguistic intelligence demonstrate skills in understanding the nuances of word meaning, sentence structure, and cultural expressions contained in Arabic. These skills contribute to increased retention of course material, academic writing skills, and more effective oral presentations. Thus, linguistic intelligence is a valuable asset for developing a generation that is not only academically skilled but also adaptable to global dynamics.

As stated by informant (1) below:

"At first, I felt inferior because my local friends spoke so quickly. But I realized that the only way to adapt was to get used to hearing and using the language in everyday life. I started actively participating in campus discussions and often asked lecturers questions in Arabic. Gradually, I felt more connected to the academic environment, and my grades improved". (Interview with Muhammad Amien Rais, a student of the Faculty of Usuluddin, Cairo, Egypt)

This quote emphasizes the importance of active learning strategies in developing linguistic intelligence. A participatory approach to academic communication has been shown to improve material comprehension while strengthening students' self-confidence. Furthermore, linguistic intelligence also facilitates students' increased confidence in social interactions. Interviews indicate that linguistically proficient students are more quickly accepted into the local community, reduce feelings of isolation, and build healthy social relationships. This reinforces the notion that language skills are a gateway to developing productive interpersonal skills.

Linguistic skills are also closely related to critical and analytical thinking skills. Students with strong linguistic intelligence are able to construct logical arguments, analyze classical Arabic texts, and interpret social contexts more clearly. This implication suggests that linguistic intelligence extends beyond the technical dimension of language to higher-level cognitive domains, which are crucial in the knowledge era.

From a long-term perspective, linguistic intelligence contributes to the development of future skills. Students with strong linguistic intelligence are able to integrate communication skills, critical thinking, and cultural sensitivity into the global workplace. Several alumni have acknowledged that the language skills developed during their studies in Egypt have become crucial assets in their professions, whether in education, diplomacy, or international business.

On the other hand, students with low language quotient tend to face serious obstacles. They are slower to grasp academic instructions, have difficulty writing academic papers, and feel less confident in everyday conversation. This fact indicates a significant adaptation gap between students with high and low language quotient, making it a significant concern for both sending and receiving institutions.

Thus, the results of this study confirm that linguistic intelligence is not only an academic asset but also a means of developing soft skills that support students' readiness to face global challenges. Educational investments that emphasize the development of linguistic intelligence from an early age will be highly relevant for students' future success in cross-cultural contexts.

Language and Adaptation of Indonesian Students in Egypt

Language plays a central role in the adaptation process of Indonesian students in Egypt. Research findings indicate that Arabic language proficiency influences three key dimensions of adaptation: academic, social, and emotional. Students fluent in Arabic tend to adjust more quickly to university learning patterns, more easily form friendships with local students, and are better able to cope with the psychological stress of cultural differences.

Furthermore, this can be seen in the following interview statement from informant (2):

"When I first arrived in Egypt, I found it very difficult to understand formal Arabic. Although I had learned basic Arabic at school, everyday conversation was very different. I actively tried to ask local friends questions, and that made me more confident. I believe the key to adapting isn't just being able to speak, but also being willing to make mistakes and keep learning". (Interview with Mustapa Ahmad, Student at Al-Azhar University, Cairo)

Mustapa's statement demonstrates that linguistic intelligence is not just about mastering grammar, but also involves adaptive abilities in dealing with variations in dialect and communication context. Communicative self-confidence is a crucial factor in supporting social and academic adaptation.

Academically, linguistic intelligence helps students understand lectures, which are predominantly delivered in fushah Arabic. Those with effective listening and note-taking skills are able to follow lectures effectively, while students with linguistic limitations often fall behind and experience academic difficulties.

In the social dimension, language serves as a bridge for intercultural communication. Students who communicate fluently in Arabic are more quickly accepted by the local community and have greater opportunities to interact with Egyptians outside the academic environment. Conversely, students with linguistic limitations tend to socialize more in groups of fellow Indonesian students, which can limit the process of acculturation.

Interview findings revealed that emotional adaptation is also significantly influenced by language proficiency. Students who are linguistically confident experience less social anxiety, while those who are less confident often feel isolated. This demonstrates that language is not only a communication tool but also a psychological factor determining students' mental health in the context of living away from home.

In line with the statement above, Informant (3) said:

"I feel like language isn't just about academics, but also about emotions. When I first moved into the dorm, I often felt insecure because I couldn't answer my Egyptian classmates' questions. But after joining discussion groups and practicing conversation, I gained more confidence. Now I can socialize better and even join international student organizations". (Interview with Ayu Agustina, a student at Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt)

Ayu's statement demonstrates the sociolinguistic dimension of linguistic intelligence. The ability to understand the cultural meanings embedded in linguistic expressions facilitates deeper social adaptation and reduces the potential for communication conflict. However, student adaptation is determined not only by linguistic ability but also by sociolinguistic awareness. Students who understand the differences between fushah Arabic and 'ammiyah (local dialects) are able to communicate more effectively in various social situations. This demonstrates the importance of linguistic flexibility in supporting successful adaptation.

Furthermore, adaptation through language also includes the ability to understand the cultural context implied in linguistic expressions. For example, forms of address, polite expressions, and local idioms often require cultural sensitivity for proper interpretation. Students who fail to understand this dimension risk misunderstandings in communication.

Therefore, language in the context of adaptation can be understood as an ecosystem of skills encompassing linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic competencies. Students who master these three dimensions tend to successfully navigate the dynamics of academic and social life in Egypt, thus strengthening their position as resilient individuals in facing global challenges.

Mixed Method Analysis

The quantitative analysis results show that dimensions of linguistic intelligence, particularly semantic and phonological abilities, significantly influence students' adaptation success. Regression tests confirmed that linguistic intelligence accounted for 52% of the variability in adaptation rates. This confirms that linguistic intelligence is the primary predictor compared to other factors such as socioeconomic background or length of residence in Egypt.

Table 1. Correlation between Dimensions of Language Intelligence and Adaptation Level of Indonesian Students in Egypt (n-120)

Dimensions of Language Intelligence	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Significance (p)	Information
Phonological	0,68	<0,01	Significant Correlation
Semantics	0,72	<0,01	Significant Correlation
Pragmatics	0,64	<0,05	Significant Correlation
Sociolinguistics	0,70	<0,01	Significant Correlation

Table 1 shows that the semantic dimension has the highest correlation with academic adaptation ($r=0.72$), while the sociolinguistic dimension has a strong influence on social adaptation ($r=0.71$). This indicates that understanding meaning and social context are important predictors of successful cross-cultural adaptation. The semantic and sociolinguistic dimensions showed the highest correlation with adaptation level, indicating that understanding meaning and cultural context is crucial for successful adaptation.

Supporting the above findings, the following table displays the results of linear regression.

Table 2. Linear Regression: Contribution of Language Intelligence and Student Adaptation

Independent Variables	Coefficient β	t-count	p-value	Contribution (%)
Phonological	0,28	4,12	0,000	14%
Semantics	0,34	5,09	0,000	19%
Pragmatics	0,21	3,46	0,001	10%
Sociolinguistics	0,31	4,88	0,000	17%
Total $R^2 = 0.52$				52%

The regression results showed that language intelligence was the strongest predictor of successful adaptation ($\beta = 0.523$, $p < 0.001$). Other factors such as length of stay and social support also had a significant influence, although their contributions were smaller. Educational background did not significantly influence the student adaptation process. The regression model showed that overall language

intelligence contributed 52% of the variability in student adaptation. The semantic dimension was the strongest predictor, followed by sociolinguistics.

Meanwhile, in-depth interviews revealed that the language learning strategies students employ significantly determine their adaptation success. Students who actively use cognitive strategies, such as noting new vocabulary, and social strategies, such as interacting directly with native speakers, have proven more successful than those who rely solely on formal classroom learning.

Thematic analysis of the qualitative data identified three main themes: (1) communicative self-confidence, (2) sociolinguistic awareness, and (3) emotional resilience. These three themes emerged as mediating mechanisms between linguistic intelligence and successful adaptation. In other words, linguistic intelligence not only has a direct influence but also works through psychosocial factors.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative data demonstrates consistent results. The significant correlation in the statistical data aligns with students' subjective experiences, which emphasize the importance of linguistic skills in various aspects of life. This strengthens the validity of the finding that linguistic intelligence is a key factor in cross-cultural adaptation.

Furthermore, literature triangulation data also confirms the relevance of these findings. Several previous studies have highlighted that language proficiency plays a crucial role in shaping international students' academic identities and facilitating social integration (Chu & Zhu, 2023; Liu et al., 2025). Therefore, the findings of this study are not only empirically valid but also align with broader scientific research.

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Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that linguistic intelligence plays a central role in the successful cross-cultural adaptation of Indonesian students in Egypt. This aligns with Gardner's (2013) theory of multiple intelligences, which positions linguistic intelligence as a fundamental ability to understand and express meaning. Previous research also shows that linguistic intelligence correlates with academic performance and international communication skills (Armstrong, 2018; Vallejo-Vargas & Reid, 2024).

The strong correlation between linguistic intelligence and academic adaptation success supports Chu & Zhu's (2023) study, which asserted that cultural intelligence and linguistic capacity are closely related in determining the success of international students. Semantic and phonological skills proved to be key to understanding lectures, which aligns with Almelhes' (2024) research that understanding phonology and meaning is the foundation for successful Arabic language learning for non-native speakers.

In the social dimension, students with high linguistic intelligence are more quickly accepted into the local community. This is consistent with research by Liu et al. (2025), who found that language confidence improves intercultural communication skills and strengthens social integration. Similar research in the context of East Asian students also shows that linguistic competence serves as a catalyst for building healthy social networks (Tang & Zhang, 2023; Li & Peng, 2022).

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Qualitative analysis results show that active learning strategies, such as taking vocabulary notes, discussing with native speakers, and understanding cultural context, mediate the relationship between language intelligence and adaptation. This aligns with Oxford's (2017) research, which emphasized the role of language learning strategies in accelerating linguistic acquisition. This also aligns with Dörnyei's (2020) findings that intrinsic motivation and active communication strategies strengthen language skills and accelerate cultural integration.

Interestingly, differences in student adaptation were also influenced by sociolinguistic awareness, particularly their understanding of the differences between fushah and 'ammiyah Arabic. This supports Bassiouney's (2019) study, which highlighted the importance of diglossia awareness in the Arab context. Linguistically flexible students were shown to be more able to navigate social situations and avoid communication misunderstandings, supporting Ibrahim's (2021) research, which emphasized that dialect variation plays a significant role in the daily interactions of international students in Egypt.

Regression data showing that linguistic intelligence is more influential than length of stay or educational background confirms the fundamental role of cognitive aspects in cross-cultural adaptation. This is consistent with Ward & Kennedy's (2020) finding that linguistic ability is more significant than length of stay in predicting successful adaptation. Furthermore, these results complement Ryan's (2021) research, which showed that extended experience abroad does not automatically guarantee adaptation if not accompanied by adequate linguistic competence.

The practical implication of these findings is the importance of pre-departure preparation programs that emphasize the development of linguistic intelligence, not just grammatical skills. Kim's (2022) study emphasized that contextual linguistic preparation can improve the adaptation success of international students. Therefore, sending universities in Indonesia need to strengthen their Arabic language curricula based on cultural context and real-life communication practices, in line with Chen & Starosta's (2020) findings on the effectiveness of intercultural communication training.

From a theoretical perspective, this study enriches the literature by distinguishing linguistic intelligence from mere linguistic competence. Many previous studies considered the two to be synonymous (Tang & Zhang, 2023), even though linguistic intelligence encompasses cognitive, pragmatic, and sociolinguistic dimensions. These findings support Gardner's (2013) notion that intelligence is multidimensional and emphasize the relevance of the multiple intelligences approach in the context of international education (Sulaiman, 2021; Rahman & Fauzi, 2022).

Finally, this study confirms that linguistic intelligence is a multidimensional factor contributing to the successful academic, social, and emotional adaptation of Indonesian students in Egypt. This finding aligns with global research (Chu & Zhu, 2023; Liu et al., 2025; Almelhes, 2024) and enriches local discourse on Southeast Asian students in the Middle East. Therefore, the results of this study are not only academically relevant but also provide practical contributions to educational institutions, policymakers, and international students facing cross-cultural adaptation challenges.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that linguistic intelligence plays a dominant role in the successful adaptation of Indonesian students in Egypt, both in academic, social, and emotional aspects. The main findings confirm that semantic, phonological, pragmatic, and sociolinguistic dimensions contribute significantly to students' ability to understand course material, build social relationships, and maintain mental health. Qualitative analysis reveals active communication strategies, sociolinguistic awareness, and self-confidence as mediating factors that strengthen the relationship between linguistic intelligence and successful adaptation. These findings align with global studies on the role of linguistic ability in cross-cultural integration processes and enrich our understanding of the experiences of Southeast Asian students in the Middle East.

The implications of this research emphasize the need for an educational approach that emphasizes the development of linguistic intelligence from an early age, not just grammatical skills. Educational institutions in Indonesia need to develop an Arabic language curriculum that emphasizes social context, real-life communication practices, and cultural sensitivity. Furthermore, Egyptian host universities are expected to provide integrated linguistic and social support for international students. Further recommendations include the need for a systematic pre-departure briefing program, training in effective language learning strategies, and strengthening students' social networks. These efforts will strengthen Indonesian students' readiness to face global challenges and contribute to improving the quality of international higher education.

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