

Analysis of Arabic Language Learning Strategies at Institut Pesantren Sunan Drajat

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Abstract: This study aims to investigate the strategy and problem of Arabic language learning at Institut Pesantren Sunan Drajat Lamongan, as well as to explore the solutions provided to address the challenges of Arabic language learning in this institution. A qualitative research approach was employed, utilizing a descriptive analysis model. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis involved data reduction and presentation. The findings of this study reveal that Arabic language learning at Institut Pesantren Sunan Drajat is grounded in contemporary digital-based strategies that foster students' autonomy in accessing learning materials. Despite the effectiveness of this strategy, which incorporates digital-based audio-visual media and adequate time allocation, challenges such as students' heterogeneous abilities and learning opportunities emerge. To mitigate these challenges, lecturers provide active digital-based mentoring, material guidance, discussions, and student motivation. The research findings suggest that efforts are needed to develop Arabic language learning strategies that are tailored to contextual and personal factors of students.

Keywords : *Strategy, Learning, Arabic Language*

Introduction

Arabic is an international language, just like English, which is an important language to learn nowadays as it is a widely used international language for communication with people from other countries (Saputra, 2024). Arabic language learning is the process of developing proficiency in Arabic, encompassing the four language skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Aziza, 2020). Speaking is the paramount skill, entailing the articulation of thoughts, emotions, or viewpoints to others through verbal communication, with the objective of informing, persuading, or entertaining. Essentially, students acquire the ability to convey their thoughts, emotions, and opinions to others through spoken language, utilizing words and phrases as the primary medium of communication. (Saputra, 2023).

The acquisition of these skills necessitates an understanding of the grammatical structure, vocabulary, and cultural expressions inherent in the Arabic language. Throughout the Arabic language learning process, students typically acquire knowledge of the Arabic alphabet, right-to-left writing, fundamental vocabulary, grammatical rules, and communication skills across diverse contexts (Sulaiman, 2023).

During the learning process, many factors need to be prepared by the teacher and learner, including internal and external factors. This is because obstacles do not only come from the teacher's aspect, but also from the learner's aspect, and tend to become serious problems that hinder the development of their language skills. The problems that often arise include the learner's personal problems, such as lack of commitment to mastering Arabic language materials, caused by mental and physical factors as well as their learning motivation.

Additionally, linguistic and non-linguistic factors pose significant challenges in acquiring Arabic. Linguistic obstacles may arise from difficulties with phonetic systems, orthography, morphology, and syntax. Conversely, non-linguistic factors, including historical and socio-cultural contexts, also play a substantial role (Rohman, 2022).

To ensure that Arabic language learning is effective, a well-planned approach is necessary. This includes careful consideration of the material, teaching strategies, and media used, as these facilitate interaction between teachers and learners, making the learning process more effective, efficient, and engaging (Widodo, 2022). Given the significant contributions of both, it is noteworthy that Arabic language learning in schools typically relies on the qawaid and tarjamah methods (Hamdan, 2020). This traditional approach prioritizes students' receptive skills, namely reading and listening, while neglecting the development of productive skills, particularly speaking, which is a crucial aspect of modern Arabic language instruction. Moreover, there exists a societal misconception that Arabic is not essential for understanding other Islamic sciences, such as tafsir, fiqh, hadith, and others (Hermawan, 2021).

The Institut Pesantren Sunan Drajat Lamongan exemplifies the integration of contemporary learning strategies through digitalization. Lecturers assign online tasks, facilitating students' online research and aligning with the principles of digitalization, which leverages modern technology and applications to enhance the learning experience. Additionally, a self-directed learning approach is employed, empowering students to explore tailored learning materials, culminating in reporting and presentation stages, undertaken independently or in groups.

The Arabic language learning strategy employed on this campus is carefully selected, taking into account the situational and field conditions that facilitate the implementation of innovative, digital-

based approaches. To enhance students' listening skills, maharah istima', in Arabic language proficiency, one strategy utilized in the classroom involves leveraging Android smartphones, which offer multifunctional, audio-visual capabilities. By utilizing these devices, students can engage in active and productive learning, listening to online learning materials prepared by native speakers, thereby enhancing their phonological aspects to improve pronunciation and increase understanding of Arabic language pronunciation. The implementation of this strategy has also proven effective in improving students' Arabic speaking skills, as they have been exposed to various everyday Arabic expressions.

The incorporation of diverse thematic activities and integrated speaking exercises within the learning materials provides students with extensive opportunities for independent practice, thereby enhancing their fluency in oral communication across various themes. The allocated classroom time for Arabic language instruction consists of 14 sessions, each lasting two hours. Nevertheless, beyond the classroom setting, students have unlimited time to explore course materials, enabling them to manage their time flexibly and accommodate more comprehensive learning requirements while maintaining productivity and efficiency.

The implementation of the Arabic language learning strategy above has a significant positive impact on achieving maximum learning outcomes. The carefully selected strategy by the lecturer, based on situational and field condition analysis and the characteristics of the subject matter being taught, has proven effective in improving students' understanding and Arabic language skills, particularly in terms of listening skills (maharah istima') and speaking skills (maharah kalam).

Additionally, the presentation of materials focuses on themes that reflect everyday communication. These relatable themes, such as "in the market", "at the airport", "at school", and "at a restaurant", are packaged in an online simulation model, where native speakers demonstrate authentic language usage. This approach provides students with a psychological connection to the language, while also serving as a vital resource for enhancing their Arabic vocabulary (mufradat) and expressions.

1. Challenges in Implementing Arabic Language Learning Strategies at Institut Pesantren Sunan Drajat Lamongan

According to the data analysis performed by the researcher, several challenges were identified in the field of Arabic language learning at Institut Pesantren Sunan Drajat Lamongan, specifically:

a. Optimization of Learning Time in the Classroom

Among the fundamental problems that are still frequently encountered is the difficulty in optimizing the time allocated to students according to the existing schedule. This is evident from the data analysis on the Arabic language learning process at Institut Pesantren Sunan Drajat, which shows

that the time allocated for the learning process in the classroom has not been utilized optimally. This condition is caused by a lack of time discipline, resulting in much time being wasted not on learning, but on other things, such as late arrivals, prolonged discussions, and students' lack of focus in following the learning materials.

Some students tend to underestimate the available time, resulting in suboptimal presentation and discussion processes when requested. When assigned tasks outside of class, many students still fail to complete them on time. This situation can hinder the learning process and achievement of learning objectives designed according to the course syllabus or learning contract.

b. Heterogeneity of Students' Abilities

The students' background, which serves as the initial input for Arabic language learning, poses a separate problem in the classroom. Some students have a good experience learning languages prior to this and are alumni of Islamic boarding schools (madrasah mualimin mualimat). However, others are below the standard of their peers due to limited or no prior experience learning Arabic. As a result, the standard materials designed for the course are often difficult for some students to follow, particularly online materials with contemporary Arabic content..

Although the learning process has been enhanced by technological advancements and digitalization, students who continue to struggle with reading Arabic script without diacritical marks, writing in Arabic, and comprehending its meaning will encounter substantial obstacles in leveraging these resources efficiently. This challenge will inevitably lead to disparities in Arabic language learning abilities.

c. Student Engagement with Digitalized Arabic Language Learning Approaches

Students' interest in the learning strategies employed by lecturers in the classroom and beyond to convey material effectively is also a crucial factor in determining the success of learning. This is because many students show limited respect for traditionally taught materials, such as classical lectures and grammar-translation models, commonly used in Arabic language learning in Indonesia. Although some students demonstrate enthusiasm for these contemporary digital-based strategies, others show limited interest. Students' interest is evident in their eagerness to work on projects using mobile devices with online material support. On average, students who already possess language potential and skills in listening, writing, reading, and speaking in Arabic tend to be more enthusiastic about following these strategies, whereas students with limited competence and lack of respect for the Arabic language are less motivated..

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d. Digitalization-Based Arabic Language Learning Media Strategy

The strategy implemented by the lecturer has a significant impact on students' learning activities in the classroom. This is because each individual is required to complete online learning materials that cannot be completed without activating their personal digital devices. Moreover, students need to focus on completing these tasks within the allocated time frame. However, some students do not possess digital devices, hindering their learning process and task completion. This issue not only affects in-class learning but also other assignments that require the use of digital devices.

2. Solutions to Overcome Arabic Language Learning Problems at Institut Pesantren Sunan Drajat Lamongan

Based on the problems previously explained, to address the issues in the Arabic language learning and teaching process at Institut Pesantren Sunan Drajat Lamongan, the lecturer provides several solutions to minimize these problems, namely:

a. Providing Special Attention and Periodic Evaluation

The lecturer always provides supervision and accompaniment to students who struggle to follow the learning flow, even though they have been given the freedom to explore and gather information. Through this activity, the lecturer can freely evaluate the success of the strategies used to optimize the allocated time and activate classroom activities more maximally. The lecturer can also monitor the students' progress, provide accompaniment and special attention if there are students who are negligent in performing tasks or experience difficulties in understanding the learned material.

b. Providing Special Guidance for Students with Limited Competence

To mitigate the disparity in Arabic language proficiency among students, the instructor offers targeted support through comprehensive consultations held outside of regular class hours. These consultations, which are conducted both online and offline via WhatsApp, provide students with an opportunity to reinforce their understanding and enhance their academic quality. By adopting this approach, students with below-average proficiency levels can better align with their peers and improve their comprehension of the subject matter, ultimately achieving the desired learning outcomes in Arabic language skills.

c. Motivating and Instilling Academic Values

The lecturer consistently stimulates students' interest in applying Arabic language learning strategies to ensure the success of the course and the graduation of all students. This stimulation is achieved by providing periodic motivation and incentives in the form of maximum scores for completing learning tasks well. On the other hand, the lecturer also imposes minor penalties that affect students' psychology, such as asking late students to stand up and engaging in games that boost learning enthusiasm. The lecturer does this to create a competitive atmosphere that stimulates students' interest and encourages them to be more enthusiastic. As a result, students will be more motivated to actively participate in Arabic language learning.

d. Digital Device Elaboration

The lecturer distributes students into groups with varying abilities. This mixing is intended to support and assist students with weaker abilities through the role of their peers. Additionally, through

this elaboration, students without access to digital devices can utilize their group to complete assigned tasks. With the consistent and continuous implementation of these solutions, it is hoped that the problems that arise in Arabic language learning at Institut Pesantren Sunan Drajat Lamongan can be effectively and efficiently anticipated. The lecturer's role is crucial in overseeing the program and implementing the necessary strategies and solutions, enabling the learning process to become more effective, efficient, productive, and innovative..

Conclusion

Based on the above explanation, the researcher concludes that Arabic language learning at Institut Pesantren Sunan Drajat Lamongan has been based on contemporary digital-based strategies that support student independence and activate classroom engagement. Although this strategy is effective with the use of digital devices and sufficient time allocation, there are several challenges faced in the learning process, such as optimizing time allocation, student skill heterogeneity, and digital device facilities. To overcome these problems, teachers provide active supervision, guidance, and motivation to students.

Furthermore, the researcher suggests that Institut Pesantren Sunan Drajat Lamongan develop more innovative and productive learning designs in line with technological advancements and oriented towards student needs according to the subject matter, implement digitalization in Arabic language learning, including the use of e-learning platforms for Arabic language and interactive Arabic language learning applications, and consistently motivate students..

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