



Navigating The Terrain of Arabic Language-Based Education in Indonesia: Insight and Solution

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Abstract

Arabic-based education in some Indonesian schools offers its own complexities and challenges in the application of foreign languages to daily learning. This qualitative research delves into the dynamics of these challenges, strategies employed, and motivations driving Arabic language acquisition. The data collection involved in-depth interviews with 10 Indonesian university students, allowing for a nuanced exploration of students' experiences. These interviews were carefully transcribed and analyzed thematically to identify recurring patterns and key insights. The findings revealed obstacles such as a limited environment for oral practice, insufficient self-confidence and social support, challenges in adapting to native Arabic speakers, practice hiatus, and difficulties comprehending classical texts. The study recognizes the strategies implemented by students, encompassing aspects like goal awareness and self-confidence, persistent efforts, interactive learning, utilizing external support and collaborative learning, incorporating technology for learning, and integrating subjects for exploration. Motivation arises from a deep appreciation of Arabic for Religious Understanding, Global Attention, and Perception Shift, along with Support from Parents, Teachers, and Peers. The study underscores the pivotal role of Arabic in nurturing critical thinking skills, highlighting the wealth of opportunities inherent in the language learning process.

Keywords: *Arabic language learning, Indonesian schools, Challenges and Motivations*

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the factors that greatly influence social change. Through education, it is expected to produce young people who have the strong character to accept the baton of the nation's leadership. That way, all aspects supporting the success of an education must be properly prepared. Educational institutions, as a place for implementing learning, are expected to be a place to change individual behavior for the better.

Among the educational institutions that are growing rapidly in Indonesia are institutions based on Islamic education. Islamic education institutions in Indonesia consist of pesantren education and madrasah education institutions (Rahman, 2018).

Institutions that develop from simple to modern stages with various adequate facilities. The main concentration of Islamic-based learning is to understand the Al-Quran and Hadith as guidelines in the life of every Muslim. In order to understand both, students need good skills in Arabic.

Arabic is a discipline that consists of various aspects of the main skills in it, including listening skills (Mahârah al-Istimâ'), speaking skills (Mahârah al-Kalâm), reading skills (Maharat al-Qiraah), and writing skills (Mahârah al-Kitâbah) (Thoha, 2012). Learning methods and strategies continue to be improved with the aim of helping students easily master every lesson, including mastering foreign languages such as Arabic.

Proficiency in a foreign language is not just a skill; it is a valuable investment that opens the door to a range of significant benefits. Language, as the primary means of communication, plays a crucial role in every aspect of daily life. Experts emphasize that in human interactions, the presence of language is indispensable; without language, a person can become rigid and paralyzed (Rafsanjani et al., 2022). Mastery of a foreign language is not just a mastery of rules and vocabulary; it also opens horizons, enriches creativity, and advances oneself in an increasingly connected world.

Mastery of a foreign language allows a person to expand their social network globally, opening up opportunities for greater cross-border connectivity. As globalization advances, science-themed books and leading literature are generally written in foreign languages, reinforcing the urgency of foreign language learning. Therefore, learning a foreign language not only opens up wider scientific horizons but also provides access to a variety of global thought, knowledge, and culture.

Although different countries have different foreign languages, foreign language learning has become an integral part of the education curriculum in Indonesia, from elementary school to university level. Arabic, in particular, is not only associated with pesantren educational institutions but has also become part of the curriculum in various non-pesantren schools, from primary to tertiary levels. Arabic is identified as the language of Islam, which is the main reference for adherents of Islam. The specialty of Arabic is manifested in its use in the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, *sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam*.

In his 2020 study, Munip identified challenges in learning Arabic in Indonesia, emphasizing disparities in learning objectives, language preferences, and the choice between classical and modern teaching methodologies. Munip's focus on challenges faced by learners provides a nuanced understanding of the complexities inherent in the process of mastering Arabic.

Amrullah (2021) delves into cognitive learning strategies for Arabic language education, offering insights into factors influencing active learning. Notably, the study identifies dominant strategies such as repetition, organization, and elaboration, shedding light on the cognitive aspects of language acquisition.

Isbah et al. (2022) explore the strategies employed in teaching Arabic to young children, categorizing them into direct (memory, cognitive, compensation) and indirect (metacognitive, emotional, social) strategies. The study identifies specific methods, such as storytelling, projects, singing, and assignments, suitable for early childhood education.

Diana and Rosyadi (2022) investigate the influence of teaching methods on student motivation, particularly noting the role of less engaging methods in diminishing motivation. The authors then discuss interactive methods as potential strategies to heighten motivation in Arabic language learning.

In their 2021 research, Sa'diyah and Abdurahman focus on understanding students' motivations for learning Arabic in Indonesia, analyzing varied motivations across regions. The study encompasses motivations such as a desire to comprehend Islam, engage with Arabic media, pursue teaching, and embrace challenging opportunities.

In amalgamating these insights, our review aspires to present a comprehensive global outlook on the intricate facets of language learning. However, what distinguishes this paper is its distinct focus on the dynamics of Arabic language acquisition within the Indonesian context. By contextualizing and applying these global perspectives to the unique landscape of Indonesia, our study endeavors to make a distinctive contribution to the literature. It specifically addresses the challenges, strategies, and motivations intrinsic to the Indonesian educational system, offering insights that are crucial as Arabic language education gains increasing prominence in the country. Recognizing the evolving sociocultural context of Indonesia, understanding these dynamics becomes imperative for the formulation of targeted and effective educational strategies.

Education plays a pivotal role in molding societal transformations, and this research is dedicated to unraveling the intricate dynamics of Arabic language learning in Indonesia. Our primary goal is to pinpoint the essential challenges, propose potential solutions, and dissect the motivations propelling efforts in Arabic language education within the Indonesian educational landscape. By delving into these aspects, our aim is to provide profound insights that can guide the development of more effective strategies. This research offers a nuanced understanding of the challenges, potential solutions, and motivations, establishing a critical foundation for crafting optimal and sustainable educational approaches in the future. This understanding is vital, recognizing the urgency and complexity of foreign language learning within the Indonesian context.

Research Questions

This research investigates the main challenges students in Indonesia face while learning the Arabic language within Islamic education institutions and the broader educational system. It explores how students navigate and overcome these challenges, shedding light on their adaptive strategies. Additionally, the study delves into the motivations propelling students to pursue proficiency in Arabic, particularly considering its importance in Islamic education and global communication. Overall, the research aims to offer insights into the dynamics of Arabic language learning in the Indonesian educational context.

1. What are the main challenges faced by students in Indonesia in learning the Arabic language?
2. How do students address and overcome the challenges associated with learning Arabic in Indonesia?
3. What motivates students in Indonesia to pursue proficiency in the Arabic language?

METHODS

The research method in this article takes a qualitative approach with field research to explore the challenges and solutions faced by Indonesian students when using Arabic as the language of instruction in lectures. In this concept, Creswell emphasizes that qualitative research is a scientific process that aims to understand human problems in a social context, create a comprehensive and complex picture, and

report detailed views from various sources of information. This approach is carried out in a natural setting without intervention from the researcher (Herdiansyah, 2019).

The research subjects were students from various universities in Indonesia, where Arabic is used as the main language of instruction. Through interviews as the primary data source, the researcher gained in-depth insights into the challenges faced and solutions implemented by Indonesian students in using Arabic. Specifically, 10 students were interviewed to gather comprehensive information. This study aims to explore in more detail the challenges and solutions faced by Indonesian students in dealing with the use of Arabic as a medium of instruction in lectures.

This article is a compilation of insights derived from in-depth interviews, aiming to shed light on the challenges and solutions faced by Indonesian students in implementing Arabic as the primary language of instruction. The interview questions were meticulously crafted with the goal of gaining valuable insights. The research objectives were deconstructed into key themes, and open-ended questions were constructed to elicit detailed responses. The interview process began with icebreaker questions, gradually progressing from general to specific inquiries to create a comfortable atmosphere. Questions were tailored for relevance, and prior to the interviews, a pilot test refined the questions, incorporating probing inquiries to explore emerging topics. The ethical approach maintained a balanced and neutral tone, considering the cultural context. The designed interview questions aimed to extract rich data, aligning with the objective of understanding the dynamics of implementing Arabic in an educational context.

For the data analysis, a thematic analysis approach was chosen, involving distinct stages. Initially, interviews were meticulously transcribed for accuracy. The theme detection stage followed, aiming to identify emerging patterns and themes organically derived from the interviews. Data classification based on these themes ensued, involving the construction of an analytical framework for a structured examination. The systematic presentation of data aligned with the identified themes. In the interpretation stage, the researcher elucidated meanings and significance embedded in the emerging findings. Conclusions drawn from the research findings provided a comprehensive overview of insights into the phenomenon of marriage postponement among career women. The chosen thematic analysis approach, emphasizing uncovering underlying meanings and experiences, distinguished itself from the more structured nature of content analysis. This intentional choice aimed to offer a profound and holistic understanding of the research context, capturing nuanced participant perspectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Challenges Faced by Students

1. Limited Oral Practice Environment

In interviews with respondents from I'dad Lughawi LIPIA alumni such as Zainab, who has been studying Arabic for 7 years, and Alya, who has been into Arabic since junior high school, it was revealed that the Arabic-speaking educational environment provides significant hurdles.

Zize, a fifth-year student majoring in Arabic with a deep interest in the language since boarding school, stated, "It is not easy to find interlocutors who are willing to always speak in Arabic."

Silmi, a student at two Arabic-speaking campuses, LIPIA in her 5th semester and Buhuty in her 4th semester, noted, "The environment is inadequate, with few friends

who have an interest in learning Arabic, and if they do, it is mostly just to complete class assignments."

Arabic language learners face a significant obstacle—finding a conducive oral practice environment. The inherent complexities of the Arabic language are compounded by the scarcity of opportunities for students to engage in sustained oral communication. This section delves into the pervasive issues students encounter, highlighting the urgent need to address the environmental constraints that impede oral practice in Arabic language learning.

In any educational process, challenges are an integral aspect that cannot be avoided. This includes the recognition that learning, especially in the context of Arabic language acquisition, does not always go smoothly. Complexities in understanding and mastering linguistic structures and meanings require perseverance.

The main focus of this study is on the issue of Arabic language implementation, where students face various obstacles in their efforts to understand and master linguistic structures and meanings. Learning a foreign language, including Arabic, is a challenge that cannot be taken lightly. The importance of language in the context of everyday communication lays the foundation for the realization of the need to master multiple languages. A broad knowledge of various languages enriches individuals personally and enhances their ability to convey ideas.

According to Putri and Febriani Sya (2023), the more proficient a person is in various languages, the more opportunities they have to communicate effectively in various contexts. This study supports the view that a supportive language environment is essential for language learning.

The difficulties encountered by learners are mainly related to the limited oral practice environment. This can be explained by the close relationship between language and oral skills as a means of communication, where interaction with interlocutors is essential. Arabic language teaching in schools and colleges faces problems, including the lack of students able to speak Arabic, causing the loss of Arabic learning objectives (Husni Shidqi & Mudinillah, 2021).

Efforts are needed to create a language environment that supports the learning of Arabic for non-native speakers. This reinforces the urgency of overcoming environmental constraints that limit oral practice in Arabic language learning amidst contemporary challenges and realities.

2. Lack of Self-Confidence and Social Support

Mar'ah, a distinguished graduate in the Arabic language category at STDI Imam Syafi'i Jember, frequently encounters discouragement from peers. The recurring sentiment expressed is, "Ugh, you're pretentious. If the accent is Indonesian, just talk in Bahasa Indonesia; no need to talk in Arabic."

Zize also expressed constraints in interacting with native Arabic-speaking lecturers, stating, "Why not improve interactions with native-speaking lecturers, where we are unlikely to communicate with them using Indonesian? The answer is that not everyone has confidence, and we will definitely be judged by classmates."

Within the realm of Arabic speaking practice challenges, learners frequently face discouragement from peers, which hinders their confidence in using Arabic. This social resistance is a significant obstacle that prevents learners from cultivating their Arabic-speaking skills. Additionally, interactions with native Arabic-speaking lecturers are limited by students' lack of confidence and fear of judgment from classmates.

The lack of self-confidence and social support is a critical barrier in the foreign language learning process. This challenge is reflected in the experiences of learners who feel judged or discouraged when attempting to speak Arabic. The issue is not isolated, as research by Rosyada and Ramadhianti (2021) indicates that 87.5% of students consider it crucial to learn to speak English to enrich their knowledge and increase confidence, suggesting a similar need for Arabic learners.

Addressing psychosocial factors influencing foreign language learning is essential. Effective learning strategies must consider these confidence challenges and work towards creating a supportive environment that encourages speaking practice. Strengthening social support and self-confidence can significantly enhance the learning experience and help learners overcome these barriers.

3. Difficulty in Adapting to Native Arabic Speakers

In our interview, Zize explains, "The Arabic language is very broad, divided into various tribes that have differences, both in conventions and daily usage. It's complex because we need to have a deep understanding of their culture and civilization."

Tina, a second-year shariah student at LIPIA and an Arabic language administrator at a pesantren, noted the differences between the dialect of Arabic used by native speakers and that used by foreign speakers, such as Indonesians, which can affect understanding. Tina stated, "The difference between the Arabic vocabulary I understand and the native speaker's vocabulary may be due to a lack of deep understanding in the past, where knowledge was simply passed down without deeper analysis."

Adapting to native Arabic speakers is a significant challenge due to the broad and diverse nature of the Arabic language, which is divided into various dialects with different conventions and daily usage. This complexity requires a deep understanding of the culture and civilization of native speakers. Additionally, translating Arabic into Indonesian often leads to misunderstandings and inappropriate vocabulary choices.

The difficulty in adapting to native Arabic speakers is compounded by the need for a deep cultural understanding and the differences in dialects between native and foreign speakers. This challenge reflects a broader issue in language learning, where direct interaction with native speakers is crucial for mastering the language. Tina's experience highlights the importance of detailed explanations and deeper analysis, which she only received at college from her shaikh, a native speaker and lecturer.

Direct interaction with native speakers is essential for effective language learning. This is supported by Kustanti & Prihmayadi's (2017) research, which asserts that learning from native speakers is one of the best methods to master a language. The challenge of adapting to native speakers is also seen in other language learning contexts, such as the obstacles faced by Japanese language teachers in Wawan Danasasminta's research (Danasasminta, 2007), who noted the lack of opportunities to interact directly with native speakers.

4. Practice Hiatus

Tina encountered challenges communicating in Arabic within the university environment after a gap-year period and became passive in using Arabic following graduation from a boarding school.

Language, being a communication science, necessitates consistent maintenance through active practice. Proficiency in speaking a foreign language is directly proportional to the intensity of practice. When individuals infrequently engage in

speaking a foreign language, their skills may deteriorate, and their cognitive responsiveness diminishes, leading to difficulties in oral communication.

Tina's experience illustrates the impact of a practice hiatus on language proficiency. After a gap year, her challenges in communicating in Arabic within the university environment highlight the importance of continuous practice. This issue is not exclusive to Arabic but extends to other foreign languages, including English. Thariq et al. (2021) emphasize that students must actively familiarize themselves with speaking and communicating in a foreign language for quick and accurate mastery.

Recognizing the importance of active language practice as an ongoing effort to uphold and enhance communication skills is a pivotal scientific concept in language learning. Consistent engagement in active practice allows learners to sustain and progress in their linguistic proficiency, fostering effective communication and cognitive responsiveness in foreign language contexts.

5. Difficulty in Comprehending Classical Texts

Tina pointed out that the language employed by classical scholars in religious books is often deemed more challenging compared to contemporary scholars, primarily due to the utilization of a denser vocabulary.

The intricacies of Arabic language learning extend beyond speaking skills to encompass reading proficiency, particularly in the context of using Arabic books as instructional materials. Students often encounter difficulties in grasping the intricacies of 'kitab-kitab turats' (classical texts), especially due to the classical and unembellished Arabic used (Setyo Rini et al., 2021).

Tina's observation highlights that the language employed by classical scholars is more challenging due to its dense vocabulary. Addressing this challenge requires learning approaches that acknowledge the linguistic complexity of Turats books, emphasizing optimized strategies and focused attention on the vocabulary used by classical scholars. This can enhance students' comprehension of religious materials and lead to the development of more effective learning methods within the context of Turats book study.

The challenges of learning Arabic, both in oral communication and reading Turats books, extend beyond educational institutions. This underscores the need for comprehensive and targeted learning strategies capable of overcoming the diverse obstacles students encounter in understanding and mastering the Arabic language.

The challenges faced by learners extend beyond linguistic barriers to encompass crucial psychosocial aspects, including self-confidence and social support. Hence, there is a shared responsibility for educators and learners to foster an environment that encourages, motivates, and actively supports the practice of Arabic.

The recognition of the linguistic intricacies found in Turats books, especially in the use of bare Arabic, underscores the necessity for a more targeted learning approach aligned with the unique characteristics of these texts. Optimized learning strategies, with a specific focus on comprehending the vocabulary used by classical scholars, emerge as pivotal in achieving a profound understanding of religious material.

While these challenges present a complex landscape, concerted efforts, ongoing research, and the development of innovative learning methods offer hope for students to overcome these obstacles and enhance their Arabic proficiency sustainably. In doing so, Arabic education can significantly contribute to cultivating a generation capable of fluent communication and a deep understanding of religious knowledge.

Applied Strategies

From the description of the challenges of Arabic language implementation described earlier, it can be seen that the problems faced are very complex. Even so, the students do not remain silent; they play an independent role in finding solutions and designing strategies to exist and continue to develop their abilities in learning foreign languages. This strategy-building effort is done by considering the internal and external aspects that affect students.

1. Goal Awareness & Self-Confidence

Zainab's experiences highlight the pivotal role of heightened awareness of intentions and goals in surmounting obstacles. Mar'ah's words: "Close our ears and focus on the goal."

Initiating the journey toward linguistic success involves a fundamental process of self-reflection, intention refinement, and the revisiting of original learning goals. It is crucial to acknowledge that the absence of clear learning intentions significantly impacts students' grasp of educational materials (Andini, 2020), reinforcing the notion that a robust intention foundation is paramount for achieving profound understanding.

Equally integral to this journey is the role of self-confidence in the attainment of foreign language proficiency. Research by Syafitri (2019) underscores that learners with elevated self-confidence levels demonstrate superior performance and are perceived as adept participants in the learning process. Even in the face of low self-confidence, students actively persevere in honing their Arabic-speaking skills. Confronting self-doubt, they embody an unwavering attitude, as demonstrated by Mar'ah's resilient mindset, which illuminates the power of determination in navigating linguistic challenges and propelling the learner forward.

2. Persistent Efforts

Ulfa states, "The more I immerse myself in Arabic conversations, the more effortless it becomes for me to grasp the meaning behind spoken words." Ulfa further emphasizes, "Upon acquiring a new set of Arabic vocabulary, I conscientiously integrate these linguistic elements into my day-to-day conversations, reinforcing my language skills through consistent application."

Confronted by the formidable challenge of initially grappling with foreign languages, these resolute students showcase exceptional tenacity in their journey to refine their speaking skills. They recognize the pivotal role of spoken proficiency as a linchpin for augmenting overall language comprehension.

Ulfa's proactive methodology highlights the importance of immersion and consistent application in language learning. Her strategy of integrating new vocabulary into daily conversations underscores the deliberate and strategic use of spoken language as a catalyst for enhancing comprehension. This narrative reveals the unwavering dedication of learners and their thoughtful approach to navigating the intricacies of language acquisition with a focus on active communication.

3. Interactive Learning

Tina consistently engages with native-speaking lecturers, placing special emphasis on interactions with the esteemed ustazah at LIPIA, holding the title of shaikhah.

Amid challenges arising from limited interactions with native speakers, Tina exhibits a proactive and strategic approach within the campus environment to enhance her proficiency in spoken and auditory aspects of the Arabic language. Recognizing

the significance of authentic linguistic exposure, she regularly engages in meaningful conversations with native speakers.

Tina's commitment to maximizing speaking practice opportunities and deepening her comprehension highlights the heightened validity and superior quality of language acquired directly from native speakers. Her concerted effort to engage with native-speaking lecturers, particularly the esteemed shaikhah at LIPIA, reflects her dedication to overcoming language barriers and cultivating a nuanced, authentic, and profound understanding of the Arabic language within the constraints of her learning environment.

4. Utilizing External Support and Collaborative Learning

Alya strategically employs external motivators, drawing inspiration from her close relationships and their impactful life stories. Silmi emphasizes the adoption of a collaborative learning approach, interacting with like-minded peers.

In the pursuit of personal and academic growth, Alya has deliberately surrounded herself with supportive individuals and motivational narratives to sustain her drive for success. Studies, including Rozi's research (2021), affirm that heightened motivation contributes to increased work enthusiasm, enhanced task performance, and a positive work environment. The significance of external motivation is evident in its impact on employee engagement and efficiency.

Alya's approach to drawing inspiration from her immediate social circle highlights the universal importance of external motivation in fueling individual aspirations. The value of external support and motivation becomes central in catalyzing personal enthusiasm and success across various life domains.

Shifting the focus to internal strategies, collaborative learning emerges as a potent tool for reinforcing students' intrinsic motivation and enhancing their Arabic language proficiency. Silmi's adoption of a collaborative learning approach, emphasizing interactions with like-minded peers, aligns with the efficacy of methods such as the Think Pair and Share (TPS) learning model, proven to enhance learning outcomes (Nur Ayuningtyas, 2017). Silmi's emphasis on seeking out peers with similar language-learning goals underscores the pivotal role of positive peer interaction in achieving success in Arabic language acquisition.

Alya's external motivation-seeking strategy and Silmi's endorsement of collaborative learning shed light on the multifaceted dynamics of motivation and support in the pursuit of success, both in language learning and broader life contexts. The collaborative environment not only enhances linguistic proficiency but also fosters a sense of community and shared success, contributing to a more enriching and supportive learning experience.

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5. Incorporating Technology as a Learning Facilitator

Zainab emphasized the importance of utilizing social media as a means of finding sources of learning materials with diverse and easier-to-understand delivery methods. Silmi and Zize each create their own learning ecosystem by utilizing internet facilities and seeking inspiration from various online sources. Tina provided an

example of how technology offers easy access to scholarly studies through platforms such as Zoom and YouTube.

Technological development, especially in the digital age, provides a significant boost to the world of education (Umaroh, 2023). This research explores how technological advancements, particularly digital tools, can effectively address challenges in learning Arabic. Students like Zainab, Silmi, and Tina leverage technology to create enhanced learning environments and improve the quality of Arabic language education.

Zainab's use of social media to find diverse and accessible learning materials illustrates the positive impact of technology on making learning more dynamic and engaging. Silmi and Zize's approach of creating personalized learning ecosystems through online resources further demonstrates the innovative application of technology in education. Tina's experience with platforms like Zoom and YouTube highlights how technology can expand learning spaces and provide flexible access to knowledge.

However, it is crucial to ensure the selection of reliable sources, as the effectiveness of technological tools depends significantly on the quality of the information accessed. Technology serves as a valuable facilitator for overcoming some obstacles in learning Arabic, provided that students remain mindful of the credibility of the resources they use.

6. Subject Integration and Exploration

Silmi actively seeks to intertwine Arabic with the Shar'i sciences, exploring diverse fields in a captivating and enjoyable manner. Zize dedicates considerable time to reading to comprehend the cultural and civilizational nuances of Arabic. Tina employs a strategic reading tactic, focusing on syarh (books of explanation) from various sources to grasp the intricacies of the language used by classical scholars.

In navigating the complexities of Arabic language acquisition, students have discovered that integrating their linguistic studies with subjects they are passionate about can be transformative. Interest plays a pivotal role in shaping learning activities and motivation. The absence of genuine interest can impede immersion in an activity, highlighting the need to cultivate this intrinsic motivator. Ubaidillah (2020) suggests that interest in learning can be ignited by external stimuli, leading to a more engaged educational experience.

Silmi's approach, which integrates Arabic with Shar'i sciences, exemplifies how blending interests with language studies can enhance both engagement and learning outcomes. By connecting Arabic with her passion for Shar'i sciences, Silmi addresses linguistic challenges and fosters a deeper, more holistic learning experience. This integration of personal interests into Arabic education highlights the importance of creating a curriculum that resonates with students on a personal level, offering a more comprehensive and relevant educational experience.

In addition, Zize and Tina's commitment to extensive reading further demonstrates the significance of reading in mastering Arabic. Zize's proactive reading strategy and Tina's focus on syarh from various sources reflect a shared belief in the crucial role of reading for understanding the cultural and civilizational aspects of the language. This collective approach underscores the enduring importance of reading in acquiring knowledge and appreciating the intricacies of Arabic, both historically and in contemporary contexts.

Motivations for Learning Arabic

1. Religious Understanding

Zainab emphasized the importance of learning Arabic to understand the science of shari'a, including the Qur'an, hadith, and the works of scholars. Mar'ah highlighted the relevance of Arabic in exploring Islamic religious literacy, such as the Qur'an and the works of scholars.

Success in the learning process is influenced by various factors, with motivation playing a crucial role in initiating and sustaining educational activities. Motivation drives students, ensuring the continuity of learning and providing direction towards achieving goals (Prabowo et al., 2023). In the context of learning Arabic, motivation is essential for understanding the language's role in religious texts and practices.

Arabic is intrinsically linked to the Islamic faith, making it vital for understanding religious texts. Its integration into educational curricula, particularly in religious schools, is crucial for providing a deep comprehension of Islamic teachings (Miftahun Ni'am, 2022). This necessity underscores the connection between language and religion, which is central to the educational process in these settings.

Zainab's and Mar'ah's statements underscore that learning Arabic is not merely an academic pursuit but a fundamental aspect of religious understanding for Muslims. By mastering Arabic, individuals gain access to key Islamic texts such as the Qur'an and hadith, enhancing their intellectual and spiritual exploration of Islam. This motivation reflects the critical role of Arabic in grasping the richness of Islamic literature and the principles of shari'a. Thus, Arabic learning is articulated as an essential pursuit for those aiming to deepen their religious knowledge and engage with Islamic scholarship.

2. Global Attention to Arabic and Shift in Perception

Zize states, "I want to change people's view that Arabic is not an ancient language, not an obsolete language; on the contrary, it is an eternal language that never dies and always lives." Alya argues, "At the institute, the atmosphere of learning Arabic is very pleasant, with the lecturers coming from Arab countries, providing an exciting learning experience."

Historically, Arabic was often viewed as a language confined to Islamic boarding schools and religious contexts. However, its status has evolved significantly. Arabic is now recognized as one of the five official languages of the UN General Assembly and has gained prominence in various global contexts. This change is reflected in the proliferation of Arabic language institutions and the growing interest in Arabic among both academics and the general public (Makki Hasan, 2021).

The shift in perception is accompanied by a movement away from negative stereotypes that depict Arabic as difficult and outdated. Instead, Arabic is increasingly appreciated for its beauty and relevance in the modern world. The language's presence and influence extend beyond traditional religious studies, encompassing a broader range of communication skills essential for both oral and written interactions (Hadiyanto et al., 2020).

Zize's and Alya's statements illustrate the evolving perception of Arabic from an archaic and restricted language to one that is dynamic and engaging. The contemporary view of Arabic reflects its enhanced role in global communication and education. By challenging outdated stereotypes and highlighting the enriching experiences associated with learning Arabic, these perspectives demonstrate the language's modern relevance and appeal. This shift underscores the growing

recognition of Arabic as not only a vital tool for religious and classical understanding but also a language of significant contemporary importance.

3. Support from Parents, Teachers, and Peers:

Tina, reflecting on her motivation to pursue Arabic studies, stated, "Ummi rahimahallah had wanted me to pursue my education there, and the sense of responsibility to be a fully dutiful child encouraged me to carry out her messages to the best of my ability." Zize shared, "The lecturer provides motivation to practice more and not get too hung up on the theoretical aspects. Confidence in communicating using Arabic becomes the main focus. This encouragement creates rules in the classroom, where communicating in Arabic becomes an obligation, and this is very encouraging."

Tina noted, "Alhamdulillah, I am surrounded by a supportive environment, where my friends also encourage me to consistently use Arabic." Alya mentioned, "I feel encouragement from my peers and various media channels. I force myself to keep listening to and watching Arabic materials, which increases my motivation to understand the language." Alya also remarked, "Arabic is very stimulating to the brain; it requires effort to understand the structure of the Arabic language and the learning material." Mar'ah stated, "Although the difficulty level of Arabic is higher than English, learning Arabic has helped me in speaking English."

The support and encouragement from parents, teachers, and peers play a crucial role in motivating students and enhancing their learning experience in Arabic. Tina's reflection reveals how parental expectations and a sense of duty can drive academic pursuit. The influence of teachers, seen in Zize's comments, emphasizes the importance of motivational strategies and creating an environment where active communication in Arabic is encouraged.

Peer support also proves to be a significant motivational factor. Tina and Alya's experiences highlight how a positive and encouraging peer environment can sustain and boost students' dedication to learning Arabic. The broader impact of a supportive learning environment is evident, aligning with research that shows the importance of peer influence in fostering educational independence and success (Arista et al., 2022).

The involvement of parents, teachers, and peers underscores a supportive network that greatly impacts students' motivation and success in learning Arabic. Parental encouragement and teacher motivation are foundational in shaping students' attitudes and perseverance. The influence of peers adds another layer of support, enhancing motivation through shared goals and collective encouragement.

Alya's observation about Arabic's cognitive benefits, and Mar'ah's experience with cross-language learning, further illustrate how mastering Arabic can provide broader educational advantages. This supportive environment not only facilitates the learning process but also reinforces the belief that overcoming the challenges of Arabic can yield significant cognitive and academic benefits.

4. Gratitude for Learning Opportunity

Ulfa expressed her determination to fully engage with all subjects, stating, "I am committed to completing all subjects earnestly without neglecting half-measures. Many people desire to enter this institution but cannot, so my good fortune to be here drives me to persevere and complete my education well." Tina reflected, "I feel grateful for this opportunity and recognize the need to stay persistent and face every challenge. I approach each problem with introspection and a strong intention to continue learning and improving. There's no word strong enough to describe the importance of this learning journey."

Ulfa and Tina's reflections highlight a profound sense of gratitude and a strong personal commitment to their learning journey. Ulfa's determination to make the most of her educational opportunity underscores the value she places on her access to education, especially given the challenges faced by others who wish to enter similar institutions. Tina's attitude reflects a deep appreciation for her learning opportunities, coupled with a persistent resolve to overcome obstacles and continually improve.

The sentiment of gratitude expressed by Ulfa and Tina illustrates the motivational power of recognizing and valuing educational opportunities. This appreciation not only fuels their perseverance but also reinforces their commitment to excel in their studies. The realization that not everyone has the chance to pursue such learning further strengthens their resolve to succeed and make the most of their opportunities.

The complex interplay of motivation, support, and personal gratitude significantly shapes the learning experience. Understanding the importance and relevance of Arabic, both as a religious and a modern communication tool, provides a robust motivational foundation. By internalizing these motivations, learners are better equipped to achieve sustained success and contribute to the preservation and effective use of Arabic in the future.

DISCUSSION

The findings from the study highlight the multifaceted nature of Arabic language learning, revealing key challenges, effective strategies, and motivating factors that influence students' experiences.

Challenges

Learners face several significant challenges in acquiring Arabic. These include difficulties with self-confidence, limited exposure to native speakers, and issues with understanding classical texts. The lack of self-confidence can impede learning, while limited interaction with native speakers affects language practice and fluency. Additionally, the complexity of classical Arabic texts presents a barrier to comprehension, requiring specialized strategies to address these linguistic intricacies.

Strategies

To overcome these challenges, students employ various strategies. Enhancing self-awareness and self-confidence is crucial, as it fosters a more resilient approach to learning. Persistent practice and immersion in the language are vital for skill development. Interactive learning with native speakers and the use of technological tools, such as online resources and digital platforms, also play a significant role in enhancing language proficiency. Furthermore, integrating Arabic with subjects of personal interest helps make the learning process more engaging and relevant.

Motivations

The motivations driving Arabic language learning are diverse. Religious understanding is a primary motivator, as many learners seek to deepen their knowledge of Islamic texts and teachings. The global recognition of Arabic as an important international language has also shifted perceptions, making it a more attractive language to learn. Support from parents, teachers, and peers provides additional motivation, creating a conducive environment for learning. Finally, a sense of gratitude for the opportunity to study Arabic further fuels learners' dedication and perseverance.

In summary, addressing the challenges of Arabic language learning through effective strategies and understanding the underlying motivations can significantly enhance the learning experience. Future efforts should focus on refining educational approaches and leveraging motivational factors to support learners in achieving proficiency and engagement with the Arabic language.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research has unveiled significant insights into the challenges, strategies, and motivations surrounding Arabic language learning. The identified challenges, such as the lack of opportunities for communication with native speakers, internal motivation deficits, and low self-confidence, underscore the need for targeted interventions in educational institutions. Policymakers and educators can utilize these findings to develop tailored support systems, including creating opportunities for meaningful interactions with native speakers and fostering a motivational environment.

Furthermore, the strategies implemented by students, such as focusing on learning goals, seeking inspiration from success stories, and utilizing social media, present practical approaches that can be integrated into language education curricula. Educators can incorporate these strategies into their teaching methodologies to enhance the effectiveness of Arabic language programs.

Considering the implications of this research for educational institutions, it is recommended that institutions invest in resources and programs that facilitate interactions with native speakers and provide motivational support. Policymakers can consider incorporating language practice components into the curriculum and promoting the integration of Arabic with other disciplines. Additionally, future research avenues may explore the long-term impacts of these strategies on language proficiency and academic success.

In summary, the practical recommendations derived from this study emphasize the need for a holistic approach to Arabic language education. By implementing these insights, educational stakeholders can contribute to the continuous improvement of Arabic language learning methods, fostering a more conducive and effective learning environment.

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