

DIGITALIZED ARABIC LANGUAGE ENVIRONMENT IN KAMPUNG ARAB AL-AZHAR PARE

Nurul Hanani^{1*}, Putri Kholida Faiqoh², Anggi Nurul Baity³,
Hamida Gadoum⁴, Yessica Tiara Renata⁵

^{1,2,3,5} Universitas Islam Negeri Syekh Wasil Kediri, Indonesia

⁴ Emir Abdelkader University for Islamic Sciences, Algeria

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*Corresponding Author:

Name:

Nurul Hanani

Email:

nurulhananimhi@iainkediri.ac.id

Abstract

The Arabic language learning environment is evolving not only in physical (offline) settings but also in digital (online) spaces. One of the institutions fostering an Arabic-speaking environment is Kampung Arab Al-Azhar Pare. This study aims to describe and analyze the Arabic language learning process and the design of a digital Arabic environment in Kampung Arab Al-Azhar, located in Pare, Kediri, East Java. The research employs a qualitative descriptive approach, using data collection techniques such as observation, interviews, and documentation. Data were gathered following Lincoln and Guba's model through participant observation, systematic interviews with key stakeholders, and document analysis. The findings indicate that Kampung Arab Al-Azhar offers various intensive online Arabic learning programs that adhere to the principles and conditions necessary for creating a conducive language environment. The implementation of institutional policies, teacher recruitment, and digital learning integration has been carried out effectively. However, a notable challenge remains: the current understanding and use of the Learning Management System (LMS) do not fully reflect its potential as a critical component of digital learning. This limitation may hinder the optimal achievement of learning outcomes.

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Keywords:

Arabic language learning; Digital language environment; Online Arabic instruction.

مستخلص البحث

تتطور بيئة تعلم اللغة العربية ليس فقط ماديا ولكن أيضا عبر الإنترنت. واحدة من مؤسسات تعليم اللغة العربية التي تطور بيئة ناطقة باللغة العربية هي قرية عربية "الأزهر" التي تقع في باري كديري جاوى الشرقية بإندونيسيا. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى وصف وتحليل تعلم اللغة العربية وتصميم البيئة العربية الرقمية في قرية عربية "الأزهر" باري كديري جاوى الشرقية. يستخدم منهج البحث نهجًا وصفيًا كميًا، مع تقنيات جمع البيانات القائمة على الملاحظة والمقابلات والوثائق. يتم جمع البيانات من خلال نموذج لينكولن وجوبا، باستخدام الملاحظة بالمشاركة والمقابلات مع أصحاب المصلحة باستخدام دليل منهجي ودراسة الوثائق. أظهرت نتائج هذه الدراسة أنه في قرية عربية "الأزهر"، توجد برامج مكثفة متنوعة لتعلم اللغة العربية عبر الإنترنت، والتي تولي اهتمامًا لمبادئ وشروط تكوين بيئة لغوية كافية. لقد تم تنفيذ السياسات وتوظيف المعلمين والتعلم الرقمي بشكل جيد بشكل عام. أحد التحديات التي تم تحديدها هو أن الفهم الحالي أو استخدام نظام إدارة التعلم لا يعكس بعد إمكاناته الكاملة كمؤشر رئيسي لفعالية التعلم الرقمي، مما قد يحد بالتالي من تحقيق أقصى قدر من نتائج التعلم.

كلمات أساسية: تعلم اللغة العربية؛ بيئة اللغة الرقمية؛ تعليم اللغة العربية عبر الإنترنت.

Introduction

Learning is an active process of acquiring new knowledge and skills through experience, practice and behavioral adaptation.¹ The terms 'language learning' and 'language acquisition' are often used to describe our process of mastering a language other than our mother tongue. Although they are sometimes used interchangeably, they carry slightly different connotations.² The intensive use of online platforms as learning spaces is as important as conventional learning.³ Various studies reveal the effectiveness of online learning on the ability and improvement of knowledge, including language skills.⁴ An online learning system refers to a teaching and learning process that utilizes internet-based platforms and digital media.⁵

In essence, learning a language means learning to communicate. After mastering the first language, individuals typically begin acquiring a second language—often referred to as second language acquisition. Unlike the natural and unconscious process of first language acquisition, which occurs primarily through familial interaction, second language acquisition is usually intentional and conscious, especially within formal or structured learning environments.⁶ There are different terms in Arabic for language learners, namely "ناطق اللغة" (first/mother

¹ Cihad Şentürk and Gökhan Baş, "An Overview of Learning and Teaching From the Past to the Present: New Learning and Teaching Paradigms in the 21st Century," in *Advances in Educational Technologies and Instructional Design* (IGI Global, 2020), 1–19, <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-3146-4.ch001>.

² Raazia Kanwal, Muhammad Sabboor Hussain, and Aisha Farid, "Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and Bilingualism: Impact of Mother Tongue on English as a Second Language (ESL) Learners," *Research Journal of Social Sciences and Economics Review* 3, no. 3 (September 30, 2022), <https://ojs.rjsser.org.pk/index.php/rjsser/article/view/520>.

³ Panos Vlachopoulos, Shazia K. Jan, and Lori Lockyer, "A Comparative Study on the Traditional and Intensive Delivery of an Online Course: Design and Facilitation Recommendations," *Research in Learning Technology* 27, no. 0 (March 7, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.25304/rlt.v27.2196>.

⁴ I Nyoman Kardana, Ni Made Dwi Utari Pusparini, and Ni Wayan Kasni, "The Effectiveness of Applying Online Learning Methods to Improve the Speaking Skills of English Education Students During the Covid-19 Period," in *Proceedings of the 2nd International Student Conference on Linguistics (ISCL 2022)* (Paris: Atlantis Press SARL, 2023), 363–71, https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-014-5_33; Yaruiningam Phungshok Shimray, "The Effectiveness of Online Speaking Tasks (OST) on English Communication Ability of Thai EFL Undergraduates," *IJELTAL (Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics)* 8, no. 2 (November 1, 2023): 25, <https://doi.org/10.21093/ijeltal.v8i2.1445>; Endah Hendarwati and Naili Sa'ida, "The Effectiveness of Online Learning in Improving Students' Problem Solving Skill," in *Proceedings of the 1st UMSurabaya Multidisciplinary International Conference 2021 (MICon 2021)*, vol. 708, Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research (Paris: Atlantis Press SARL, 2023), 178–85, https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-022-0_19.

⁵ Murat Cilduz, "Benefits and Challenges of E-Learning, Online Education, and Distance Learning," in *Incorporating the Human Element in Online Teaching and Learning* (IGI Global Scientific Publishing, 2024), 1–27, <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-4131-5.ch001>.

⁶ Arsena Shkurti, "The Importance of Second Language Acquisition: Prioritizing Development in Educational and Social Context," *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research and Development* 11, no. 3 (December 3, 2024): 151, <https://doi.org/10.56345/ijrdv11n320>.

tongue) and "غير ناطق اللغة" (second/foreign language). "ناطق اللغة" is the everyday or national language used by parents from the child's birth. "غير ناطق اللغة" is a language used in the wider or global community. In this context, the appropriate term for a speaker of Bahasa Indonesia (B1) is "ناطق اللغة", while for a learner of Arabic, it is "غير ناطق اللغة", where Arabic is learned consciously and intentionally, thus the appropriate term is "language learning".

A person's speaking ability is acquired from the surrounding environment, developing naturally through imitation.⁷ Without a supportive language environment, there is no automatic effort to acquire language.⁸ Therefore, to acquire language and use it skillfully, a language environment is needed. Sholeh in Abdullah elaborates that the right strategy is needed in the formation of the language environment.⁹ Students who actively socialize in a conducive language environment tend to learn more quickly and interact more easily compared to those outside such an environment.¹⁰

These platforms integrate various features that enable users to communicate and socialize as they would in real-life settings.¹¹ Accessible from anywhere with an internet connection, virtual environments allow users to create and share content, simulating real-world interaction. When implemented effectively, virtual learning can provide a more efficient and engaging educational experience, while also promoting active learner participation.¹²

Digital-based learning is a learning practice that uses technology effectively to strengthen the learning experience of students.¹³ This term has developed and is found in many other mentions, for example Virtual Learning. Virtual education comes from two words: virtual, which means pseudo, simulated, unreal, and

⁷ Ladan Ghazi-Saidi and Ana Ines Ansaldi, "Second Language Word Learning through Repetition and Imitation: Functional Networks as a Function of Learning Phase and Language Distance," *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience* 11 (September 28, 2017): 463, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnhum.2017.00463>.

⁸ Mardiya Ezlouki, "The Role of the Learning Environment and the Language of Communication in Second Language Acquisition," *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4924981>.

⁹ Irhamudin Abdullah, Novita Rahmi, and Walfajri Walfajri, "Pembentukan Lingkungan Bahasa Arab Untuk Mengembangkan Keterampilan Berbicara," *Taqdir* 6, no. 2 (January 15, 2021): 71–83, <https://doi.org/10.19109/taqdir.v6i2.6283>.

¹⁰ Luh Putu Artini, "Rich Language Learning Environment and Young Learners' Literacy Skills in English," *Lingua Cultura* 11, no. 1 (May 31, 2017): 19, <https://doi.org/10.21512/lc.v11i1.1587>.

¹¹ Miguel Barreda-Ángeles and Tilo Hartmann, "Psychological Benefits of Using Social Virtual Reality Platforms during the Covid-19 Pandemic: The Role of Social and Spatial Presence," *Computers in Human Behavior* 127 (February 2022): 107047, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2021.107047>; Abid Haleem et al., "Understanding the Role of Digital Technologies in Education: A Review," *Sustainable Operations and Computers* 3 (2022): 275–85, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.susoc.2022.05.004>.

¹² Tommaso Santilli et al., "Virtual vs. Traditional Learning in Higher Education: A Systematic Review of Comparative Studies," *Computers & Education* 227 (April 2025): 105214, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2024.105214>.

¹³ Ali Ahmad Al-Barakat et al., "Learning through Digital Technology: Role of National and International Education Teachers," *Journal of International Students* 13, no. 4 (December 26, 2023), <https://ojs.org/jis/article/view/6577>.

moving around. However, learning means a change in behavior, values, understanding, and measured abilities. The purpose of learning itself is this right.

Digital higher education is categorized into three main types, based on when and where learning occurs. First, online education. In this format, all teaching is conducted online, using synchronous, asynchronous, or a mix of both methods. Although the learning process is remote, students might have opportunities for face-to-face interactions with classmates or teachers, or to utilize campus resources. This differs from "distance education," which includes all educational methods where students and teachers are physically separated, such as instruction via the internet, radio, television, or printed materials.¹⁴ Second, hybrid education. This approach combines online and on-campus instruction, with online elements that can be synchronous, asynchronous, or a combination. The online parts substitute for some traditional classroom time, thus reducing the frequency of in-person meetings.¹⁵ Third, blended education. This method involves primarily in-person instruction that is integrated with or enhanced by online resources and activities, like virtual learning environments (VLEs) or learning management systems (LMS), open educational resources (OER), simulations, or games. Unlike hybrid education, the online elements in blended learning are intended to support and expand on classroom discussions, rather than take the place of traditional class time.¹⁶

Regarding policy and quality assurance in digital learning, quality assurance (QA) agencies and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in OECD member countries and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) ensure the quality of digital higher education.¹⁷ The support provided by public institutions includes guidance from international and regional QA organizations on how to evaluate and maintain the quality of digital education. This involves external quality assurance processes, institutional quality management, and the development of support structures for digital learning. Additionally, transnational organizations influence national QA systems by offering policy frameworks, technical support, and strategic direction, helping institutions align with global best practices in digital education.

¹⁴ Catherine Nabilem Akpen et al., "Impact of Online Learning on Student's Performance and Engagement: A Systematic Review," *Discover Education* 3, no. 1 (November 1, 2024): 205, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s44217-024-00253-0>.

¹⁵ Daina Gudoniene et al., "Hybrid Teaching and Learning in Higher Education: A Systematic Literature Review," *Sustainability* 17, no. 2 (January 19, 2025): 756, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su17020756>.

¹⁶ Lisa R. Halverson and Charles R. Graham, "Learner Engagement in Blended Learning Environments: A Conceptual Framework," *Online Learning* 23, no. 2 (June 1, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v23i2.1481>.

¹⁷ François Staring et al., "Digital Higher Education: Emerging Quality Standards, Practices and Supports," OECD Education Working Papers, vol. 281, OECD Education Working Papers, November 18, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.1787/f622f257-en>.

A number of recent studies have examined the design and impact of virtual learning environments (VLEs) on language learning and student engagement. Halverson and Graham, for instance, emphasize the importance of clearly defining and measuring learner engagement—particularly its cognitive and emotional dimensions—in technology-enhanced and blended learning contexts.¹⁸ Meanwhile, Wahab and Aisyah investigated student engagement in online learning, identifying emotional, behavioral, cognitive, and skill-related factors, with results showing that students generally responded positively to online education.¹⁹ In contrast, Jusuf et al. developed a VLE to address the lack of structure in online learning during the pandemic, highlighting key features such as video conferencing, discussion forums, time management, and real-time feedback, all of which contributed to increased student motivation and learning outcomes.²⁰ Bergdahl, through a multi-case study, identified twelve design elements in second language online learning that effectively supported learner engagement, stressing the need for locally adapted digital pedagogies.²¹ Collectively, these studies suggest that well-designed virtual learning environments hold great potential for enhancing engagement and success in language education.

The approach to Arabic language learning is the philosophical framework that underlies the teaching method. There are four main approaches commonly applied: (1) the Humanistic Approach, which emphasizes the active role of learners in the learning process, positioning the teacher as a facilitator; (2) the Communicative Approach, which focuses on the practical use of language in real-life communication, with teaching materials designed to be functional and relevant; (3) the Contextual Approach, which connects language learning to learners' real-life contexts, ensuring that materials are adapted to their needs and environments; and (4) the Structural Approach, which highlights the importance of mastering grammatical rules and language structures as a foundation for proficiency.²²

The primary goal of learning Arabic is to enable learners to use the language both orally and in writing with accuracy and fluency, allowing effective communication with native Arabic speakers. To achieve this, learners must

¹⁸ Halverson and Graham, "Learner Engagement in Blended Learning Environments."

¹⁹ Isnaeni Wahab and Sitti Aisyah, "Analyzing Students' Engagement in Online Learning Environment," *Seltics Journal: Scope of English Language Teaching Literature and Linguistics* 5, no. 2 (December 30, 2022), <https://ejournals.umma.ac.id/index.php/seltics/article/view/1571>.

²⁰ Heni Jusuf, Nurdin Ibrahim, and Atwi Suparman, "Development of Virtual Learning Environment Using Canvas To Facilitate Online Learning," *JTP - Jurnal Teknologi Pendidikan* 23, no. 2 (August 28, 2021): 153–68, <https://doi.org/10.21009/jtp.v23i2.22240>.

²¹ Nina Bergdahl, "Second Language Learning Designs in Online Adult Education," *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, December 28, 2022, 1–27, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2022.2158202>.

²² Ahmad Fuad Effendy, *Metodologi Pengajaran Bahasa Arab* (Malang: Misykat, 2006).

develop four essential language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.²³ Regarding learning objectives, Tayar Yusuf and Syaiful Anwar in Nginayatul classify learning objectives into two main categories: general objectives and specific objectives.²⁴ The general objectives include: (a) the ability to comprehend religious texts such as the Qur'an and Hadith, which serve as the foundations of Islamic teachings and law; (b) the ability to understand classical and modern literature written in Arabic; (c) the development of speaking and writing proficiency in Arabic; (d) the use of Arabic as a functional tool in various academic or professional settings; and (e) the preparation of students to become professional linguists.

One of the course institutions that organizes online learning programs and implements an online language environment is Al-Azhar Pare Course Institute. This course institution has a superior program of Arabic Language Environment intensively online and offline, starting istima', kalam, qira'ah, kitabah, mufradat, qawa'id. Arabic learning strategies and methods are quite innovative and always follow technological developments. The focus of this institution is not only through the formation of a physical language environment, but also non-physical or online.

Related to the description above, researchers are interested in conducting research at Al-Azhar Pare course institution. The researcher wants to describe online Arabic learning at Al-Azhar institution, the design of the virtual Arabic environment, as well as the obstacles faced and the solutions to overcome them.

This research aims to examine in depth the virtual Arabic language learning process that takes place in Al-Azhar Arabic Village Pare. Specifically, this research will analyze how the Arabic learning mechanism is implemented virtually, as well as how the virtual learning environment is designed to support the teaching and learning process. In addition, this research will also identify various obstacles faced by learners and teachers in the implementation of virtual learning, and explore effective solutions to overcome these obstacles. Thus, this research is expected to contribute to the development of a more effective and efficient virtual Arabic language learning model.

Method

This research was descriptive qualitative research because it aimed to describe the condition of the object being studied, and explain the phenomena that

²³ Anggi Nurul Baity and Putri Kholida Faiqoh, "Optimizing Arabic Learning for University Students through 4C Skills of 21st Century," *Kilmatuna: Journal Of Arabic Education* 2, no. 2 (October 1, 2022), <https://ejournal.unsuda.ac.id/index.php/pba/article/view/79>.

²⁴ Triadi Wicaksono and Nisa Fitriani, "Implementing The Arabic Language Curriculum for The Purpose of Studying Fiqh and Hadith in The Language Preparation Department at Imam Shafi'i University, Jember," *IJIE International Journal of Islamic Education* 2, no. 2 (December 31, 2023): 73–88, <https://doi.org/10.35719/ijie.v2i2.1904>.

occur in it.²⁵ This descriptive research is also related to social situations related to linguistic activities.²⁶ It is to describe and analyze digital Arabic learning in Kampung Arab Al-Azhar Pare. The primary data sources in qualitative research are words and actions, which, in this study, include interviews with teachers and course participants in Kampung Arab Al-Azhar Pare.²⁷

The research was conducted at Kampung Arab Al-Azhar Pare which is located at Jalan Cempaka No. 22 Dsn. Tegalsari Ds. Tulungrejo Kec. Pare Kab. Kediri East Java, offline and online. The duration of the research conducted was from November 1-30, 2024. The rest is additional which includes written sources such as journals, magazines, archives, documents, photos related to the research. Next is data reduction, where the collected data will be summarized, sorted out and focused on important things, then the data is presented through a brief description and continued with drawing conclusions.²⁸

This research used primary data from the Learning Management, online classes, and stakeholders like administrators, tutors, and participants, along with secondary data from relevant books and journals, to study Arabic language learning in the digital environment at Al-Azhar Pare. Data was collected through the Lincoln and Guba model, employing participant observation, interviews with stakeholders using a systematic guide, and document study involving archives and photos. The analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model, involving data reduction, presentation in various visual formats, and field-based conclusions, while data validity is ensured using Lincoln and Guba's criteria: credibility (verification and triangulation), transferability (detailed reporting), dependability (consistency with sources and theory), and confirmability (in-depth review and informant validation).

Result and Discussion

Implementation of Digital Learning in Al-Azhar Pare

Policy and Socialization

The policy of conducting digital or online learning began in 2019, before the pandemic. At that time, the use of social media was widespread and there were many requests to organize online learning. The manager immediately compiled several programs that were possible to be carried out intensively. Information and promotion were carried out via advertisements on several social media including; Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok, Telegram, and Whatsapp.

²⁵ Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif Dan R&D* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2019).

²⁶ Izzuddin Musthafa and Acep Hermawan, *Metodologi Penelitian Bahasa Arab : Konsep Dasar Strategi Metode Teknik* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2018).

²⁷ Wildan Taufiq, *Metode Penelitian Bahasa Arab* (Bandung: Refika Aditama, 2018).

²⁸ Syahrums and Salim, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif* (Bandung: Cita Pustaka Media, 2007); Ariesto Hadi Sutopo and Adrianus Arief, *Terampil Mengolah Data Kualitatif Dengan NVIVO* (Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media Group, 2010).

“We implemented this online program in 2019, at which time there were many requests from members who had limited time and distance. With this online learning, it is hoped that it can help members to improve Arabic language skills intensively”.

From the interview with Mr. Anas, as the manager of online learning, it can be seen that the policy taken by Al-Azhar is a responsive action in responding to the changing times and rapid digital progress. In terms of socialization, the Al-Azhar team is able to utilize promotion effectively and efficiently through paid advertising, which will attract more social media users.

The importance of policy and support from various stakeholders is a key factor in implementing digital learning policy and quality assurance. In this regard, Staring shows policy levers to support the quality enhancement of digital teaching and learning in higher education.²⁹

Table 1. Policy levers to support the quality enhancement of digital teaching and learning in higher education

Government co-ordination and support for the institutional quality enhancement of digital teaching and learning in higher education					
What?	Policies	Resources	People	Processes	Implementation
How?	Strategy setting and guidance	Financial support and incentives	Stakeholder capacity building and collaboration	Performance monitoring and evidence collection	Who?
Vision, mission and strategy for digitalisation and innovation	✓				Government, QA agency, sectoral associations, NREN, national centre for teaching and learning
Organisational quality culture centred on digitalisation, innovation and collaboration	✓				Government, national centre for teaching and learning, NREN, QA agency, Rectors' Conference
Digital education infrastructure		✓			Government, NREN, international funds
Digital course content, design, delivery and assessment		✓			National centre for teaching and learning, national research centre, sectoral associations
Supporting and incentivising staff professional development			✓		National centre for teaching and learning, Rectors' Conference, sectoral associations
Preparing and supporting students for digital learning			✓		School education system (development of digital skills), national student union
Monitoring the quality of digital teaching and learning				✓	National statistics office, sectoral associations, national centre for teaching and learning, national research institute, QA agency, NREN
Strengthening feedback and monitoring practices				✓	National centre for teaching and learning, QA agency, NREN

National Research and Education Networks (NRENs) are internet providers specifically focused on meeting the unique needs of the research and education sectors within a nation. Beyond their well-known role in maintaining high-speed network infrastructure, they are also tasked with ensuring easy and secure access to digital learning materials.

²⁹ Staring et al., “Digital Higher Education.”

From the table above, it can be seen that policy and support from various stakeholders are key factors in implementing digital learning policy and quality assurance. Meanwhile, interviews and observations conducted by the researchers indicate that the Al-Azhar institution formulates its quality assurance policies independently. The support provided by the government consists of operational permits and some necessary facilities. Educational institutions surrounding Al-Azhar also view Al-Azhar as an institution that can complement their curriculum. Community support plays a crucial role in fostering an Arabic-speaking environment. Local businesses—such as shops and food stalls—contribute by displaying menus, signage, and price lists in Arabic, thereby reinforcing language exposure and practical usage in everyday settings.

Recruitment of Educators

Educators at Al-Azhar are recruited through two main channels: (1) public vacancy announcements and open selection, and (2) curriculum vitae (CV) assessment. Given that Arabic language instruction at Al-Azhar follows a distinct pedagogical model not typically found in other Arabic language programs, teacher recruitment is conducted with careful consideration. Mr. Anas noted that former top-performing students are also considered for recruitment if they express interest in teaching. Currently, Al-Azhar Pare Arabic Village employs 40 instructors, who are distributed across various online and offline learning programs.

Farisa outlined several core competencies required of teachers in the digital era, including: (1) the ability to design digital learning media, (2) the ability to integrate social media into instructional activities, and (3) proficiency in using search engines.³⁰ These competencies are regarded as essential for online instruction. During the recruitment process, Al-Azhar administrators assess prospective instructors to ensure they possess these digital teaching skills.

Establishing a Digital Arabic Language Environment

There are several efforts made to revive the atmosphere of digital Arabic. Learning via Zoom Premium which is carried out intensively Monday-Friday. Online learning modules that contain Arabic and Indonesian culture, then discussed in large class discussions in the Whatsapp group. There are two groups, namely the discussion group and the material group. d) Training/webinars on weekends (Saturday-Sunday). On Saturdays and Sundays, Webinars are sometimes held by Educators as resource persons, sometimes inviting Native Speakers. On the weekend there is also an additional program called extracurricular. The program is filled with Native Speakers who teach Amiyah Arabic expression patterns and Arabic Culture. The digital Arabic environment formation program provided is

³⁰ Hernik Farisia and Imam Syafi'i, "Professional Development on Digital Literacy for Teachers in Early Childhood Education in the Digital Era," *Tafkir: Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Education* 5, no. 3 (June 7, 2024): 360–75, <https://doi.org/10.31538/tijie.v5i3.820>.

adequate, it's just not integrated with the system cohesively. For example in attendance, still using google form. In addition, there is no reward and punishment system like in dormitory learning. So, the improvement of members' abilities in this case cannot be identified.

Learning techniques at Al-Azhar continue to evolve, particularly in adapting to digital platforms through both synchronous and asynchronous methods. Synchronous learning is conducted in real time via platforms such as Zoom and webinars, while asynchronous learning utilizes pre-prepared modules and WhatsApp forums for discussion and task completion. The instructional strategies employed include the Drill Method, *Ṭarīqah Mubāsyarah* (direct method), Cooperative Learning, and Game-Based Learning.

Monthly monitoring is carried out by the online Arabic instructors to identify challenges and propose solutions related to digital learning implementation. Evaluation is conducted at the end of each course cycle, which typically spans five months for the online Arabic program.

One major challenge in the online learning context, as explained by Ust. Anas in an interview, is that student outcomes often do not match those of offline learning. This discrepancy is attributed to the less intensive duration and engagement in the online format. Nevertheless, the online program offers a viable alternative for learners who are limited by distance, time constraints, or financial barriers, as it is more affordable than offline courses.

This issue gained further attention when, during the interview, it was noted that 200 participants—mostly university students—had registered for the upcoming two-month online class cycle. Managing teaching and monitoring with such a large number of participants presents a significant challenge. As such, continuous improvement in the management of the online learning system is imperative to ensure quality instruction and learner support.

Digital Arabic Learning Process at Kampung Arab Al-Azhar Pare

Digital-based learning includes many different aspects, tools, and applications to support and empower teachers and students, including online courses, blended or hybrid learning, or digital content and resources. In general, from the 2 models of digital Arabic courses provided by Al-Azhar, there are several steps in learning;

Preparation

Admin sends learning zoom link 30 minutes before class starts. The tutor informs the members about the material that will be covered in the lesson so that they can get ready. E-modules are accessible at any time and from any location, allowing members to study flexibly. Tutors are expected to be punctual and manage class time effectively to ensure that learning objectives are achieved efficiently from the opening to the closing of the session.

Each lesson begins with the tutor greeting the members, using Arabic expressions, and creating an engaging atmosphere through motivational songs or selected mufradat (vocabulary). Students are encouraged to imitate and memorize the content according to the tutor's guidance.

Interaction

Tutors require members to keep their cameras on during the lesson, ask questions with the raise hand feature, and mute the microphone during the lesson. Tutors deliver materials in Arabic 99% of the time (for classes entering the 3rd month of online learning), while for new members (1 or 2 months) are assisted with Indonesian translation. For language skills material (istima', kalam, qira'ah, and kitabah), instructional delivery typically lasts 10–15 minutes, followed by individual practice by the members. As for the qawa'id material, the theory is delivered for approximately 30 minutes, then the deepening of the questions.

Evaluation for each meeting is carried out to determine the extent to which members understand the material. Evaluations are in the form of online quizzes, guessing, practice, and presentations, both synchronously and asynchronously. If there are mistakes in answering or practicing, members receive feedback from the system, tutors or fellow members.

Closing

The tutor closes the class by giving mahfudzat or matsal arabiy as a motivation for the members, with the aim of introducing Arabic culture, loving Arabic more and being eager to learn it. The lesson is closed with a prayer.

In this learning process, if there are members who have difficulty understanding the material, they can ask and discuss the issue via whatsapp group. Members submit some assignments in the whatsapp group to be corrected together, if there is 1 member wrong, sometimes corrected by tutors or fellow members in the group. Tasks are sometimes in the form of voice notes, typing Arabic sentences, ta'bir shurah, and others that utilize the features of whatsapp or other social media. The approaches used in learning Arabic include communicative, contextual, and collaborative. And for the material arranged by level.

From the process of this learning stage, it is known that Kampung Arab Al-Azhar applies digital Arabic learning, through various aspects, tools, and different applications to support and empower tutors and members, blended or hybrid learning, or digital content and resources. The approaches used include communicative, contextual, and collaborative, which are in line with current digital learning models.

Design of Virtual Arabic Language Environment at Kampung Arab Al-Azhar Pare

Online language environment design refers to how we create a digital space where users can interact and communicate effectively using language. This design

involves various aspects, from visual displays to interactive features that encourage the participation of Arabic language learner members at Al-Azhar Arabic Language Course.

Some important elements in the design of the Digital Language Environment can be seen from some of these findings:

Learning Support interactive features

The Digital Environment is a virtual place that can be accessed through internet connectivity.³¹ In realizing the digital environment, various learning applications and social media are utilized by the Al-Azhar teaching team, including: Whatsapp group, Zoom, Instagram, Telegram, Quizizz, Youtube and several Google features. These interactive features provide discussion forums, real-time chat, comments, ratings and feedback, and gamification.

High-quality and Stage-appropriate Content

The collection of materials compiled into modules and e-books at Al-Azhar Arabic Course Institute is relevant to the interests and needs of members. The arrangement of materials is based on the principle of gradation or according to the level. Arabic learning is taught with the introduction of Arabic culture but also adapted to the local wisdom of the Nusantara.

Easy Accessibility

Easy accessibility in designing digital learning will facilitate users from the registration stage until the learning is completed. If users type keywords in Google such as “Arabic online course” or “best Arabic online course” then certainly what appears in the initial display is Al-Azhar Pare. Looking at the al-Azhar channel or web, users will be presented with a variety of programs that can be adjusted to the competence and needs of each user in mastering Arabic. The smooth use of zoom without obstacles, the orderly and good class organization, will provide a pleasant Arabic learning experience.

The design of the formation of online bi`ah Arabiyah in Al-Azhar Pare is in accordance with the principles presented by Muhibb, including the integration of the relationship with the vision, mission, and orientation of Arabic learning. One of the missions embedded in Al-Azhar's Generation Arabiyah digital platform is to modernize the institution's systems and facilities. The creation of an online language environment that supports the achievement of learning objectives will make the atmosphere conducive and active learning.

The principles of prioritization and gradation are also appropriate, as seen in the implementation that prioritizes beginners regardless of age. Language elements and skills are applied gradually. In addition, the principle of active participation from various parties also supports the formation of this bi`ah. Some vendors in the Arab village write their menus and services in Arabic.

³¹ Katherine B. Forrest and Jerrold Wexler, *Is Justice Real When “Reality” Is Not?* (Elsevier, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.1016/C2021-0-02774-7>.

The principles of consistency and sustained participation among community members are reflected in the diversity of learning activities and the presence of various challenges aimed at fostering healthy competition. However, this aspect remains under-optimized due to the absence of structured reward and punishment systems, such as those implemented in dormitory-based or offline bi'ah 'arabiyah (Arabic-speaking environments). One contributing factor is the limited functionality of the current Learning Management System (LMS). If gamification features could be implemented more effectively within the LMS, learner engagement and overall learning outcomes would likely improve.

From the explanation above, it can be seen that Al-Azhar Arabic Course has tried to realize a representative digital language environment. However, the absence of an integrated LMS (Learning Management System) makes the management of the digital environment inadequate.

Obstacles in the Digital Arabic Learning Process at Al-Azhar Pare

Based on interviews conducted with the managers and tutors of the Al-Azhar Arabic Course, several challenges persist in the implementation of digital Arabic learning. One of the primary concerns is the quality of student outcomes. Students who reside in dormitories tend to demonstrate stronger Arabic language skills due to the intensity of face-to-face monitoring and immersion in a structured bi'ah 'arabiyah (Arabic-speaking environment). While the online program has broadened access—especially for those limited by financial constraints, geographic distance, or time—it inevitably presents certain limitations in terms of interaction, accountability, and immersion.

Despite these challenges, the course administrators and tutors continue to make concerted efforts to maintain an engaging and active digital learning environment. Key strategies to address these obstacles include: (1) enhancing the functionality of the Learning Management System (LMS) to support integrated and interactive online instruction, and (2) recruiting additional teachers to reduce instructional burden and allow for more personalized monitoring of students' language development.

Conclusion

The 21st century has ushered in a wide range of innovative methods, strategies, and approaches in foreign language education, including Arabic. Language learning is no longer confined to traditional classroom settings where students passively listen to lectures; instead, it can now take place intensively through online platforms that support interactive and learner-centered instruction.

The Al-Azhar Pare Arabic Language Course offers several Arabic language mastery programs for beginners to advanced, including; Regular and Premium Online Arabic Go Courses, Tamyiz, Takallam, TOAFL, and Bi'ah Lughawiyah. These

programs can improve oral and written Arabic language skills. Language skills, grammar and knowledge of Arabic culture are taught in a fun way, with innovative and contemporary methods and strategies. Online digital learning is increasingly in demand due to its efficiency in saving time, cost, and effort. However, several challenges persist—most notably, the lack of integrated systems in the learning process, which often results in learning outcomes that fall short compared to those achieved through offline instruction. With careful planning, implementation, and adherence to essential principles and conditions, an ideal Digital Arabic Learning Environment can be effectively established.

While this research offers valuable insights, there is still room for further development. Future studies could delve deeper into the effective integration of Learning Management Systems (LMS) within online Arabic learning environments. Additionally, examining the impact of increased teacher recruitment on student learning outcomes and language proficiency would contribute significantly to advancing best practices in digital Arabic language education.

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Author Contribution Statement

NH designed the study framework and coordinated the research process. PKF conducted data collection and participated in drafting the methodology. ANB contributed to the analysis and interpretation of the results. HG provided insights into the theoretical framework and helped refine the manuscript. YTR assisted with data processing and supported the literature review. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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Biography of Authors





Nurul Hanani   is a lecturer at the Syekh Wasil State Islamic University, Kediri, Indonesia, specializing in Arabic Language Education. She holds a Ph.D. in Arabic Language Education from State Islamic University of Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang Indonesia. Currently, she is a professor at Syekh Wasil State Islamic University Kediri, focusing on Arabic Language Learning. She has extensive experience in Development of Arabic language Learning in Digital Era, with a particular focus on Turats Books and Pesantrens. In addition to her research, she is actively involved in supervising the implementation of academic norms, codes of ethics, and the implementation of established policies, serving as senate at Syekh Wasil University. She can be contacted at nurulhananimhi@iainkediri.ac.id.





Putri Kholida Faiqoh   is a lecturer at Arabic Language Education Program at the Syekh Wasil State Islamic University Kediri, Indonesia, specializing in Arabic Language Education. She holds a Master's degree in Arabic Language Education from Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah State Islamic University, Tulungagung, Indonesia. She has an interest in research on Arabic Language Skills for Non-native Speaker, particularly in pronunciation, building vocabulary and grammar through practice and immersion. She has been actively involved in various academic initiatives to improve Arabic language teaching in higher education. She can be contacted at putrikholidafaiqoh@iainkediri.ac.id.



Hamida Gadoum   is a Research Professor at Emir Abdelkader University of Islamic Sciences, Constantine, Algeria. She holds a Master's Degree in Modern Arabic Literature and a Doctorate in Modern and Contemporary Literature from Badji Mokhtar University, Annaba. Hamida is a lecturer in the Arabic Language Department at Emir Abdelkader University and a member of the Research Laboratory for Literary and Human Studies. She has an interest in Cultural Studies and Arabic Language Education, Hamida has published several scientific books and articles in International and national journals. She can be contacted at gadoum.hamida@hotmail.fr.



Anggi Nurul Baity   is a lecturer in the Arabic Language Education Program at the Syekh Wasil State Islamic University, Kediri, Indonesia. She holds a Master's degree in Arabic Language Education from Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University, Yogyakarta. Her teaching and research focus on Arabic language pedagogy, particularly in curriculum development, assessment, and instructional design. She has been actively involved in various academic initiatives to improve Arabic language teaching in higher education. She can be reached via email at anggibaity@iainkediri.ac.id.



Yessica Tiara Renata is a student in the Arabic Language Education Program at the Syekh Wasil State Islamic University, Kediri, Indonesia. He has a great interest in learning Arabic skills. Yessica won 1st Arabic speech and 3rd place in the National English Language Dakwah Competition. She has been actively involved in various academic initiatives to improve Arabic language teaching in higher education. She can be reached via email at renata061229@gmail.com.