



Research Article

Innovative Media Applications in Facilitating Arabic Language Learning for Students in Madrasah

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Abstract

Arabic is essential for Muslims, as it is both the language of the Qur'an and an important part of Islamic tradition. Arabic is also the official language of Saudi Arabia and widely spoken around the world. Learning Arabic can be considered both a native and a foreign language, depending on the learner's background. The process of learning Arabic requires effective learning media. In recent years, Arabic learning media has evolved to align with the rapid technological advancements of the digital era. Such media plays a crucial role in enhancing the success of teaching and learning activities. With the proliferation of innovative apps, many teachers can now use their mobile phones to integrate these tools into their teaching practices. The use of media has become a key teaching skill for educators in the classroom. In Arabic language education, there are four main skills to master: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills can be easily acquired if teachers effectively use media as learning aids. This study employed a library study methodology, including data processing, analysis, and summarization. The aim was to explore the role of innovative media in Arabic language learning and to assess how it contributes to the effectiveness of Arabic language education.

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INTRODUCTION

Language plays a vital role in human life as an essential tool for communication, enabling individuals to express their ideas, intentions, and goals effectively. Arabic, recognized as one of the major global languages, holds particular significance for Muslims, given its deep connection to religious practices and scholarly traditions. Designed as a medium to facilitate interaction, language is indispensable in virtually every human activity, ensuring seamless communication in diverse contexts. In Indonesia, Arabic is systematically introduced as a foreign language across various educational levels, starting from early childhood education in kindergartens to elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and even higher education institutions. Its inclusion in the curriculum not only fosters linguistic proficiency but also highlights its dual role as the language of religion and a gateway to accessing a wealth of knowledge.

The rapid advancement of technology and science has significantly impacted the learning process. In today's world, society must adapt to technological developments to enhance skills and competencies. This

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indicates that every learning process is inherently linked to technological progress (Wakhidati, 2017: 2). As technology continues to evolve rapidly, educators inevitably face numerous challenges, both directly and indirectly. Technology is increasingly being utilized in Arabic language learning, with educational media now available in various technological forms, ranging from simple tools to complex systems.

The role of instructional media is crucial in the process of learning Arabic. Media should be tailored to the needs of students and the content being taught, ensuring it supports students and facilitates their understanding of the material. Using appropriate media in learning significantly enhances the effectiveness and efficiency of the process. One of the key functions of media is to boost students' interest in learning, assist them in maintaining focus and actively participating in lessons, encourage holistic thinking, and enhance their skills during the learning process. Additionally, it creates an engaging experience and delivers meaningful content, ultimately improving comprehension in Arabic language learning (Mualimah, 2023).

Technological advancements and innovations in the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 have become fundamental aspects driving changes in various areas of life. These innovations lead to new discoveries based on the principle of speed, which closely relates to daily human activities (Arnyana, I. B. P. (2019). However, many educators still rely on outdated software, such as PowerPoint, for developing learning media. This often results in less engaging lessons, where students tend to focus on traditional and classical teaching methods. In contrast, modern technology offers a wide range of advanced and user-friendly tools for creating Arabic language learning media. To prevent students from feeling bored and monotonous during Arabic lessons, teachers should develop sufficient skills in designing and utilizing learning media effectively. Innovative and effective applications like Canva, Quizizz, ICT, and other similar tools can enhance Arabic learning experiences. Teachers should also select media that align with their specific needs, such as innovative quiz applications to assess students' Arabic learning progress at home.

Previous studies indicate that Arabic language instruction at the elementary level often relies on lecture-based methods. As a result, many students struggle to understand the material effectively and accurately, ultimately leading to difficulties in mastering the language. Such teaching practices frequently lack meaningful interaction between teachers and students regarding the learning process (Isnaini, Huda: 2020). This highlights the need for developing engaging and effective learning media for Arabic instruction. This study focuses on exploring innovative applications as media for enhancing Arabic language learning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Arabic Language Education

Arabic language education is an essential subject for Muslims to learn. In Arabic, education is referred to as *ta'lim*, *mashdar*, derived from the root word *'alima*, which means "to know" or "to understand." (Atabik Ali, 1998:1313). Arabic has now been recognized globally as an international language, making it widely used by people across the world. Compared to other languages, Arabic is considered one of the oldest languages, although it cannot be definitively stated that it is significantly younger than other languages (Hidayat, 1988:57).

Arabic Language Skills

In learning Arabic, there are four essential skills that students must master:

1. *Maharat al-Istima'* (Listening Skill): This is the foundational skill in learning Arabic, often influenced by the native or foreign languages a child frequently hears. Listening involves sound features that include vocabulary (*mufrodāt*). It is a fundamental skill for children as they begin to learn Arabic.
2. *Maharat al-Kalam* (Speaking Skill): Speaking is the second skill developed after listening. A person can speak well because they have good listening skills, and vice versa. They transfer what they hear and then articulate it. Therefore, speaking skills progress alongside listening skills.

3. *Maharat al-Qira'at* (Reading Skill): Reading is considered more advanced than listening alone. It is a skill aimed at expanding vocabulary (*mufrodāt*) and broadening knowledge of the Arabic language. This skill involves reading Arabic literature to deepen understanding.
4. *Maharat al-Kitābah* (Writing Skill): Writing is the final skill in language learning, as it involves expressing thoughts through written form. This skill encompasses various aspects of language, such as mastery of grammar (*qawā'id*), vocabulary (*mufrodāt*), rhetoric (*balaghah*), and the selection of appropriate diction (*ikhtiyār al-kalimah*) (Rusydy Ahmad Tho'imah, 1989: 45).

Elementary School Students

Elementary school students, aged 6 to 12 years, are considered at-risk children. They tend to be stronger, more active, and exhibit a stronger sense of individuality, along with a playful attitude. As such, elementary school students are in a transitional phase, moving from early childhood into later stages of development.

METHOD

This study utilized a combination of the library study method and a qualitative descriptive approach. This type of study is also known as a literature review, involving the collection of data and information from accredited sources such as Sinta, Google Scholar, Garuda, and other accredited journals. The literature review served as an additional analysis and reference when writing this study. The methodological steps included data collection, data processing, data analysis, and summarization to address the study problem (Sari & Asmendri, 2020). Analyzing and reviewing academic journals that continuously discuss this study topic was one approach to data collection. After gathering the data, it was analyzed to determine whether the items were interconnected and presented in this study. All sources are used as references and are included in the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Innovative Media Applications in Madrasahs

Learning media can be defined as anything that provides information or learning materials to students through intermediaries or facilitators (Deyisnil and Khoirunnisa, 2020: 113). Learning media is a tool that teachers can use to make the learning process more effective and efficient. In Arabic, media is called *وسيلة*, with the plural form *وسائل*, meaning an intermediary or a channel between the sender and the recipient of the message (Salimatul Fuadah, 2020: 140). Innovative application media refers to software tools that act as intermediaries in creating and utilizing works developed for achieving learning objectives. This means using expertise to carry out new and beneficial tasks. Educators today can use various types of learning media, including visual, audio, and audiovisual media. Currently, media plays a critical role in the learning process. Students today, in particular, get bored easily, and if the learning methods do not keep up with technological advancements, they may fall behind. Therefore, educators are challenged to transform their teaching approaches into engaging and effective methods. Mastery of learning media is a pedagogical skill that teachers use to guide the learning process. Teachers play a significant role in helping students learn Arabic. This is especially important given the current decline in interest in learning Arabic in elementary and Islamic elementary schools (MI/SD). To counter this trend, innovative learning media is needed to inspire and motivate students in learning Arabic. Thus, innovative application media serves as a tool for creating new innovations through the use of evolving applications and software. The advantage of innovative application-based media is that it provides students with a real-life learning experience of Arabic, aids both students and teachers in learning Arabic in the classroom, and revitalizes the monotonous teaching of Arabic to stimulate the interest of students who are experiencing this. Currently, there is an urgent need for the use of innovative, practical, and relevant media to improve the effectiveness of education.

Types of Innovative Applications Used in Arabic Language Teaching in Madrasahs

Digital media and innovative applications vary depending on the needs to be achieved. Several innovative media that educators can use for learning Arabic include Quizizz, Canva, ATi Studios, ICT, Google Classroom, YouTube, and Kahoot. In this study, the researcher focused on two innovative application media: Quizizz and Canva. Quizizz is a widely used application for learning Arabic. This platform enables collaborative and enjoyable learning, enhances student performance, and allows students to learn in a fun way, preventing boredom. Moreover, it can be used throughout Arabic language instruction, particularly in *Maharat al-Qira'at* (reading comprehension skills), due to its flexibility. This quiz application can be used not only for material delivery but also for evaluation, featuring tools like pre- and post-tests, practice questions, and material reinforcement. Quizizz has features that allow teachers to create five types of questions, including checkboxes, essays, multiple-choice questions, or surveys. However, a limitation of this application is that mobile phones are not allowed at the MI/SD level, so it can only be used for Arabic assignments at home or online.

The second application is Canva, which is often utilized by teachers to teach Arabic. One of the main reasons is the Fourth Industrial Revolution, which allows students to leverage technology to learn new skills. Canva is another popular learning media. Teachers can use it to provide lessons to students. Furthermore, they can create their own lesson presentation models using the various components available on Canva. Currently, teachers face the preferences of Gen Z students, who tend to prefer visual, interactive, and enjoyable content. They can use innovative media such as Canva, including tools like PowerPoint, videos, and flashcards, when teaching Arabic. In this case, Canva helps them easily teach Arabic content, especially the four key Arabic language skills: *Maharat al-Istima'* (listening skills), *Maharat al-Kalam* (speaking skills), *Maharat al-Qira'at* (reading skills), and *Maharat al-Kitabah* (Writing Skill). Below is an example of a media created using Canva:

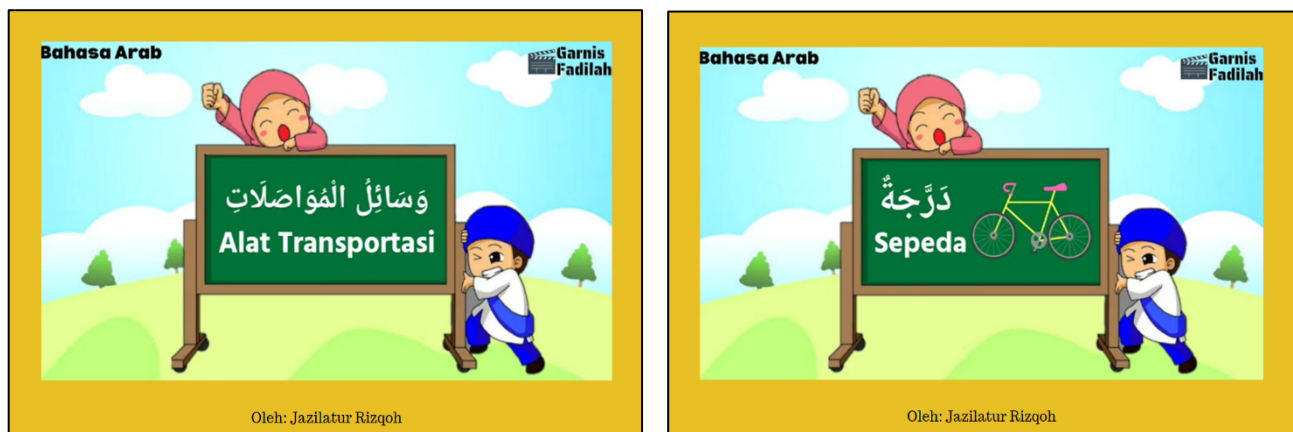


Figure 1.1 Canva PowerPoint with Video



Figure 1.1 Canva Flashcard Vocabulary

Canva provides an easy-to-use PowerPoint feature. Not only can materials be created within Canva, but videos can also be included in the PowerPoint presentations. Additionally, Canva offers a flashcard feature that can help teachers present vocabulary (*mufrodāt*) to students. The four key Arabic language skills are integrated into this process: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The sequence starts with the teacher demonstrating reading to the students, after which the students listen (listening skill). Next, students are asked to repeat what they have heard (speaking skill). For reading skills, the teacher can provide simple sentences for students to read. Lastly, the teacher asks the students to write the vocabulary they have learned (writing skill). The availability of Canva as a media tool helps teachers conduct Arabic language lessons that are both effective and enjoyable for students. The Canva-based application greatly assists students in understanding Arabic lessons. They will feel that learning Arabic is not as monotonous as they might have imagined, but rather engaging and exciting.

The Use of Media in Arabic Language Learning

As we move into the era of Gen Z, there is a noticeable shift in attitudes and mindsets, driven by rapid technological innovation. Today's students, particularly in educational settings, exhibit a high level of dependency on technology. This reliance necessitates the need for educators to possess an understanding of these technological advancements to provide adequate supervision and guidance. Therefore, learning media has several important functions in Arabic language education, including:

1. **Message Delivery and Student Engagement:** Media in Arabic can effectively convey messages and stimulate students' emotions and interests, making them more engaged in the learning process. However, it is crucial for teachers to manage the use of media creatively and simply to ensure that it supports learning objectives rather than overwhelming students.
2. **Overcoming Sensory, Time, and Space Limitations:** Every student has unique learning abilities in Arabic language acquisition. Some find it easier, while others face more challenges. Students learning Arabic at the madrasa level may not be able to learn at a rapid pace, as they require more time to understand the language. Media can help bridge these gaps by presenting content in more accessible and digestible formats.
3. **Clarifying Complex Content:** Long and convoluted Arabic texts, which students must understand and memorize, can be challenging. Media can help break down these texts by presenting them in clearer, more concise formats, aiding comprehension. Additionally, using everyday language that students encounter regularly can make the learning process more relatable and easier to grasp.
4. **Addressing Passive Behavior:** The use of appropriate and varied media can also help address passive student behavior.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study and analysis presented in the previous chapter show that media significantly facilitates the learning process. Innovative media applications are tools that utilize software as intermediaries in creating new works or applications. In the context of Arabic language learning at MI/SD levels, there are numerous media that can be used to enhance students' learning abilities, such as Quizizz, Canva, Classroom, YouTube, and other innovative Arabic language learning applications. The benefits of using media in Arabic language learning are substantial; they can convey messages, stimulate students' emotions and interests, making the learning process more engaging and preventing monotony. Media can also overcome limitations related to students' sensory abilities, time, and space constraints, clarify complex Arabic material, and transform passive learners into active participants. Therefore, a professional teacher will employ creative ideas when using innovative Arabic language media applications in their teaching practice.

RECOMMENDATION

In the future, this study can be continued by subsequent studies that focus on the same variables, namely Arabic language education at MI/SD levels and Arabic language learning media. Given that media in Arabic language learning needs to be continuously developed in the educational field, this will foster innovations in media usage, particularly at the elementary level. Such advancements will help facilitate students' understanding of Arabic and enhance their learning experience.

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