

Implementation of Arabic Language Learning Media in Islamic Universities: Benefits and Problems

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ABSTRACT

Learning media plays a crucial role in facilitating effective teaching and learning activities. As instructional aids, media support educators in delivering material and enhancing student comprehension. In Arabic language learning, the four linguistic skills—*Istima'* (listening), *Kalam* (speaking), *Qira'ah* (reading), and *Kitabah* (writing)—require diverse media tailored to their specific functions and objectives. This study explores the implementation of learning media in Arabic language education within Islamic higher education institutions, focusing on the benefits and challenges encountered. Employing a qualitative descriptive method, data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation. The findings reveal that various types of media are utilized, including audio, visual, audio-visual, and interactive multimedia formats. While these media provide significant benefits in enhancing student engagement and comprehension, challenges such as resource limitations and adaptation issues persist. This study contributes to efforts aimed at optimizing the use of learning media to improve the quality of Arabic language education in Islamic higher education institutions.

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Article history

Received 2024-07-20

Revised 2024-12-08

Accepted 2024-12-23

Keywords

Arabic Language
Learning Media;
Islamic Universities;
Benefits and Problems

Introduction

Arabic language learning in Islamic higher education institutions plays a strategic role in supporting students' understanding of Islamic studies. As the primary language of the Qur'an and Hadith, a strong and accurate command of Arabic is crucial for students to gain comprehensive knowledge of religious sciences (Letmiros, 2019). However, the complexity of Arabic necessitates effective learning approaches, one of which involves the implementation of appropriate learning media. Learning media, such as books, videos, applications, or other technology-based methods, can assist students in systematically understanding Arabic's intricate structure and enhance language skills, including listening (*al-istimā'*), speaking (*al-kalām*), reading (*al-qirā'ah*), and writing (*al-kitābah*) (Geier, 2021; Yunus & Kabir, 2021).

In theory, learning media are defined as tools that facilitate teaching and learning processes, motivate students, and make instructional material more concrete and effectively absorbed (Izzah et al., 2021; Mahmudah, 2018). However, in practice, the application of Arabic learning media in Islamic higher education institutions often faces obstacles. Limitations in resources, difficulties in aligning media with the existing curriculum, and low adoption rates of technology among lecturers and students pose significant challenges (A. Rohman, 2022). These issues present serious obstacles for educational institutions in creating a conducive and academically supportive learning environment.

The urgency of addressing these challenges has grown amid rapid technological advancements. Many Islamic higher education institutions have shifted towards technology-based learning media, such as applications and digital platforms. However, the effectiveness of these media in supporting Arabic language learning requires further exploration. With the appropriate learning media, students can not only better understand the complex concepts of Arabic but also benefit from more interactive and engaging teaching methods. This research is crucial to identifying optimal strategies for leveraging technology-based learning media to improve the quality of Arabic education in Islamic higher education institutions.

Previous studies have highlighted the significant benefits of using learning media in language education. For instance, Keshav et al. (2022) demonstrated that technology can enhance students' speaking and writing skills. However, the readiness of lecturers and students to adapt to technology-based media remains a challenge. Another study by Huda et al. (2023) revealed that despite the continuous development of Arabic learning media, limited supporting facilities and a lack of technological competence among academic communities remain significant barriers. Al-Zahrani (2019) emphasized the need for thorough evaluations of digital media to ensure alignment with educational goals and curriculum needs.

Based on this background, this study aims to delve deeper into the benefits, challenges, and solutions for implementing Arabic learning media in Islamic higher education institutions, particularly at Institut Agama Islam (IAI) Sunan Kalijogo Malang. By focusing on technology integration and innovative approaches, this research is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of Arabic language education in Indonesia, addressing academic needs and the challenges of the digital era.

Method

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research method with a case study approach. A case study is a field research method that intensively examines the background,

conditions, and environmental interactions of a social unit such as an individual, group, institution, or community (Rifa'i, 2019). Arabic language learning involves interactive processes among teachers, students, teaching materials, and learning media within an educational institution. Thus, the case study research design is the most appropriate approach to examine the implementation of learning media in higher education.

Data Collection and Analysis Techniques

Data collection was conducted through observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were made to examine the use of Arabic learning media in the teaching activities at IAI Sunan Kalijogo Malang. Interviews were conducted with selected faculty members and students from the Arabic Language Education program using purposive sampling techniques. The interviews focused on the use of Arabic learning media to gain an in-depth understanding of their experiences with media in Arabic language learning. Documentation was used to gather supporting materials for the research data. Subsequently, the collected data were analyzed to identify the media utilized in the learning process and the challenges faced by first- and third-semester students using these media. The data were analyzed using the three steps of qualitative research analysis: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Result and Discussion

Arabic Language Learning at the Sunan Kalijogo Islamic Institute in Malang

Arabic language learning at the Sunan Kalijogo Islamic Institute in Malang covers four skills:

***Maharah Istima'* (Listening Skill)**

One of the four language skills in Arabic, namely *Istima'*, *Kalam*, *Qira'ah*, and *Kitabah*. These four skills are the academic orientation of learning Arabic and are often the reference for the curriculum in higher education (Bahtiyar et al., 2022). The *Istima'* skill refers to the ability of students to understand words or sentences spoken by others by listening. An example of activities to test the *Istima'* skill at IAI Sunan Kalijogo Malang includes listening to speeches, interviews, or conversations in Arabic, and then understanding and responding appropriately.

Based on interviews and observations, the most frequently used learning media for *Istima'* include audio and audio-visual media. Audio media consists of audio recordings such as conversations, songs, narratives, and other *Istima'* teaching materials. In its implementation, audio media requires tools such as tape recorders and speakers for optimal use. Audio-visual media used in *Istima'* learning at IAI Sunan Kalijogo Malang includes video recordings, films, and documentaries that require projectors and speakers for their use.

Maharah Kalam (Speaking Skill)

Maharah Kalam is the ability of students to express thoughts, opinions, ideas, and desires to their interlocutors through spoken words. This skill is part of the four Arabic language skills: *Istima'*, *Kalam*, *Qira'ah*, and *Kitabah*. Examples of activities to test *Maharah Kalam* include speaking in conversations, presentations, debates, or discussions in Arabic. Additionally, performing poetry, drama, or speeches in Arabic is also part of developing *Maharah Kalam*. This skill is essential for students to expand their understanding and communication skills in learning Arabic.

The learning media used in *Maharah Kalam* at IAI Sunan Kalijogo includes both projected and non-projected visual media. Projected visual media includes PowerPoint presentations and illustrations projected using a laptop and projector. Non-projected media includes vocabulary cards, drama and speech scripts, and printed images used by students to describe orally in Arabic. Effective learning media, combined with an optimal linguistic environment, has been proven to enhance students' mastery of *Maharah Kalam* (Irvansyah et al., 2022).

Maharah Qira'ah (Reading Skill)

One of the four related language skills in Arabic, which is reading. *Maharah Qira'ah* is a receptive skill aimed at understanding messages through written language (Arifin, 2021). This skill involves understanding texts written in Arabic. Examples of activities to test *Maharah Qira'ah* include reading articles, stories, or books in Arabic, then understanding and responding appropriately. In addition, listening to readings or presentations in Arabic can also help develop *Maharah Qira'ah*.

The media used in *Qira'ah* learning at IAI Sunan Kalijogo Malang includes projected visual media and interactive multimedia. Projected visual media includes PowerPoint presentations, while interactive multimedia includes educational websites and interactive apps such as Wordwall and Quizizz. Additionally, *Qira'ah* learning also uses other media such as textbooks and modules.

Maharah Kitabah (Writing Skill)

Writing skills (*Maharah al-Kitabah*) are the highest skill among the four language skills. In terms of proficiency in the Arabic language, writing can be considered a very complex activity, as it involves the ability to arrange and organize ideas logically and coherently, as well as the ability to present writing in various written forms and different writing conventions (Fajriah, 2017). A person with good *Maharah Kitabah* can write with clear, formal, and effective language. This skill is vital in many fields, including academic, professional, and social

contexts. Examples of activities to test *Maharah Kitabah* include writing essays, notes, or reports in Arabic. Additionally, writing letters or emails can also help improve *Maharah Kitabah*.

The media used in *Kitabah* learning at IAI Sunan Kalijogo includes non-projected visual media and interactive multimedia. Non-projected visual media includes printed materials and illustrations used by students to create written descriptions in Arabic. Additionally, interactive multimedia used includes educational websites and interactive apps that contain exercises to improve writing skills.

Benefits of Using Arabic Learning Media at IAI Sunan Kalijogo Malang

The use of Arabic learning media at the Sunan Kalijogo Islamic Institute in Malang significantly helps students improve their understanding and Arabic language skills. Learning media has various benefits for students, including:

Stimulating Students' Learning Motivation

Learning media can stimulate the mind, emotions, attention, and interest of students, making it easier for them to understand the material (Syafrina et al., 2016). The use of Arabic learning media at IAI Sunan Kalijogo Malang has the potential to greatly boost students' enthusiasm for learning by increasing engagement, clarifying concepts, providing diverse learning experiences, and supporting independent and collaborative learning. By utilizing the appropriate learning media, lecturers can create a more engaging, effective, and interactive learning environment for students. A high level of learning motivation will positively impact the students' academic achievements and overall development.

Expanding Knowledge of Arabic

Learning media offers various ways to broaden students' knowledge, from visualizations and interactivity to access to different sources of information and contextual learning. By using a variety of learning media, students can gain a deeper and broader understanding of the lesson material, as well as develop more effective learning skills. Furthermore, learning media helps clarify abstract concepts, making them easier for students to understand.

Increasing Vocabulary

Learning media plays a crucial role in the Arabic learning process as it can provide a rich and varied learning environment, facilitating effective methods for enriching students' vocabulary. Here are several reasons why learning media can help increase Arabic vocabulary. Learning media such as films, videos, podcasts, and songs in the target language provide exposure to the language used by native speakers. Through this exposure, students can hear pronunciation, intonation, and word usage in natural contexts, helping them expand their vocabulary with common words and phrases.

Moreover, visual media such as videos, animations, and images help students understand the meaning of new words in clear contexts. This visualization makes words easier to remember as students can associate the words with images or specific situations, enhancing retention and understanding of vocabulary. Learning media such as short stories, articles, and dialogues in the target language provide rich contexts for new words. Understanding words in the context of sentences or stories helps students understand how these words are used naturally and correctly.

Enhancing Students' Focus in Learning

Interactive learning media, such as videos, simulations, and educational games, can make students more engaged in the learning process. When students actively participate, they are more likely to be interested and motivated to learn. The interaction generated by these media makes the learning material more engaging and easier to understand. Language learning applications and interactive software often provide exercises through games, quizzes, and other interactive activities. These interactions allow students to practice using new knowledge in various ways, strengthening their memory and ability to apply what they have learned.

Improving Academic Achievement in Arabic

In general, the success of Arabic language learning can be supported by various factors, including the competence of instructors, the availability of facilities and infrastructure, the effectiveness of teaching models, and the use of learning media (Ainiy et al., 2022). Learning media provides various tools and effective methods for enriching students' mastery of Arabic. Through exposure to native language, visual and contextual usage, interaction, practice, and technology for pronunciation and listening, learning media can help students develop strong and varied Arabic language proficiency. With high motivation and engagement, students will be more motivated to continue learning and expanding their language knowledge. Learning media has significant and complex benefits. The use of media in learning is crucial because it enables the learning process to be active, creative, effective, and enjoyable. Therefore, the outcomes achieved will be maximized.

Problems in Using Learning Media at IAI Sunan Kalijogo Malang

Problems in Arabic language learning are generally related to both linguistic and non-linguistic issues. Linguistic problems refer to challenges faced by students in learning Arabic related to the use of grammar. Non-linguistic problems, on the other hand, are issues that affect Arabic language learning and may even hinder the success of learning programs due to factors outside of the language (Takdir, 2020).

In Arabic language learning, challenges are often encountered, such as limited vocabulary, difficulty understanding displayed reading materials, and an inability to master Arabic grammar or communication. At IAI Sunan Kalijogo Malang's Arabic Language Education program, students face several issues in the use of learning media during Arabic language lessons. Some of the problems include internet network issues, limitations in learning tools or media, lack of interaction between students, difficulty in using media for independent learning, and monotonous media becoming ineffective.

These problems can be addressed by adding more varied media or modifying existing media so that students do not feel bored with the learning media. Additional materials that can be understood by all students in the Arabic language education program can also be included. Furthermore, internet connectivity issues can be overcome by utilizing various offline media that are practical and easy to use.

Research conducted at IAI Sunan Kalijogo Malang indicates that the media used by Arabic lecturers include images, audio recordings, films, and multimedia. The issues faced by lecturers include limited time for preparing learning media, students' different backgrounds, and their low interest in learning Arabic. A lack of infrastructure to support the use of learning media is also a problem. While the use of learning media in Arabic education can increase students' motivation and interest, lecturers also face challenges such as lack of time, student differences, and insufficient supporting infrastructure. Differences in students' backgrounds, such as those from Islamic boarding schools or non-Islamic boarding schools, can impact their level of Arabic proficiency (Azizah et al., 2024). Additionally, weak internet signals and low student interest and confidence can be barriers to optimizing the use of learning media (Bahrudin et al., 2021; Wahdah et al., 2022).

Learning media plays an essential role in the learning process. Among its functions, media acts as a tool to help lecturers explain and deliver material to students, facilitating the teaching process. It also serves as the main model that students directly see and hear, with the lecturer's ability being a key factor in the success of the learning process. In other cases, media itself may play an autonomous role in the teaching process, with the lecturer serving as a facilitator who clarifies aspects that were not conveyed clearly.

Educational media is a tool used by educators to deliver instructional material and is an essential element in the teaching and learning process. This media is divided into several types, one of which is visual media that utilizes the sense of sight to facilitate understanding and enhance students' interest in learning (Mayasari et al., 2021). Visual media is further divided into two types: projection media, which requires a projector, such as frame films and slides (Nur & Faridatul, 2018), and non-projection media, which does not require additional equipment and is easier to use, such as realia and display boards (Qothrunnada, 2018).

In addition, audio media, which utilizes the sense of hearing, is also very beneficial in learning. Audio media can attract and motivate students to delve deeper into the material being taught (Prananingrum et al., 2020). Examples of audio media include radio, tape recorders, and language laboratories. Furthermore, audio-visual media combines images and sound that support each other to evoke students' feelings and thoughts. Examples include sound slides, television, and films, which use devices like projectors and tapes to effectively deliver information (M. Rohman, 2018).

Lastly, interactive multimedia is an innovative type of educational media. This multimedia allows users to control the elements displayed, such as text, images, videos, and audio, providing a more engaging learning experience. In Arabic language learning, the use of attractive and interactive multimedia can increase students' enthusiasm and motivation to learn the language (Ainiy et al., 2023; K. Huda, 2017).

Conclusion

This study highlights the importance of using educational media as a tool for delivering instructional material, particularly in the teaching of Arabic at IAI Sunan Kalijogo. The media used in Arabic language learning includes: 1) visual media (both projection and non-projection) such as images and slides; 2) audio media such as voice recordings and tape recorders; 3) audio-visual media like animations, video demonstrations, and documentaries; and 4) interactive multimedia such as learning websites like Quizizz and Wordwall. These media are utilized in various Arabic language skills, including listening (*Maharah Istima'*), speaking (*Kalam*), reading (*Qiroah*), and writing (*Kitabah*). The use of these media has proven beneficial in motivating students, expanding their knowledge of Arabic, improving vocabulary, enhancing focus, and boosting academic achievement. However, there are challenges associated with the use of these media at IAI Sunan Kalijogo, including internet connectivity issues, limited supporting media tools, difficulties in independently operating media, and the monotony of the media used, which diminishes student interaction and enthusiasm.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that higher education institutions strengthen their technological infrastructure by improving internet quality and providing adequate media support tools. Additionally, regular training for both faculty and students on effective media usage is essential. To further enhance student interaction and enthusiasm, it

is advised to introduce more interactive and engaging media variations, and to leverage learning platforms that encourage active collaboration among students.

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