



UTILIZATION OF ARABIC ANIMATED FILMS TO ENHANCE VOCABULARY MASTERY (*MUFRADĀT*) OF SEVENTH-GRADE STUDENTS AT SMP ISLAM AR-RAAFI' MAKASSAR

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the process, identify supporting and inhibiting factors, and formulate solutions to the obstacles in utilizing Arabic animated films to enhance the vocabulary mastery (*mufradāt*) of seventh-grade students at SMP Islam Ar-Raafi' Makassar. This research employs an action research design with an applied research approach. The research subjects consist of seven seventh-grade students. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings indicate that the use of Arabic animated films makes a significant contribution to improving students' vocabulary mastery. This medium offers high visual and auditory appeal, facilitating comprehension and retention of the material. The learning process was carried out through the stages of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection in each cycle, with continuous improvements based on field findings. Supporting factors include the availability of multimedia equipment, teacher support, and students' learning interest. Inhibiting factors involve time constraints, limited teacher training in the use of digital media, and technical obstacles such as power outages or device malfunctions. The proposed solutions include enhancing facilities, providing teacher training, and managing learning schedules effectively. This study recommends the utilization of animated films as an effective alternative learning medium and encourages schools and teachers to integrate creative technology into the Arabic language learning process.

Keywords: Arabic language; Animated Films; Vocabulary Mastery; Instructional Media; Action Research

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INTRODUCTION

مقدمة

Language is a system of arbitrary sound symbols used by a community to convey thoughts, emotions, and cultural values. In the educational context, language mastery serves as a fundamental foundation for understanding various subjects. Arabic, as the language of the Qur'an and one of the official international languages of the United Nations, plays a strategic role both in religious contexts and in international relations (Al Yamin, 2023). Arabic language learning in Islamic educational institutions aims to develop four main skills: *istimā'* (listening), *kalām* (speaking), *qirā'ah* (reading), and *kitābah* (writing) (Sudirman et al., 2021). One fundamental aspect of this learning process is the mastery of *mufradāt* (vocabulary), as it forms the basis for other language skills. Without adequate vocabulary mastery, students will struggle to understand texts, express ideas, and participate effectively in oral communication.

However, in practice, Arabic language instruction is still often dominated by conventional,

text-based, teacher-centered methods. Learning materials are frequently delivered through vocabulary memorization from textbooks, translation exercises, and lectures, with minimal integration of technology. In today's digital era, the use of educational technology has been expanding, offering significant opportunities to improve the quality of instruction. One widely used medium is animated film, which excels in visualization by presenting learning materials in an engaging and contextual manner (Maryam et al., 2020). This medium integrates visual, auditory, and narrative elements, which can help students grasp concepts more easily. While such methods may facilitate information delivery, they often fail to stimulate students' learning motivation, resulting in passive participation, rapid loss of interest, and difficulty retaining vocabulary in the long term.

This study aligns with Indonesia's Merdeka Belajar policy, which promotes student centered and contextual learning through the integration of technology in classroom practices, as well as the Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs (KMA) Number 183/2019, which emphasizes the use of innovative instructional media to strengthen Arabic vocabulary (*mufrodāt*) mastery as a foundation for language skills development.

Furthermore, the development of educational technology and the changing characteristics of today's student generation necessitate the renewal of instructional strategies. Digital-native learners tend to be more responsive to visual- and interactive-based learning, which allows them to learn while engaging with appealing content. In this context, animated films emerge as a promising instructional medium. Animated films are audiovisual media that combine sound and moving images, making them effective in delivering educational messages in an engaging and interactive manner (Sumiharsono & Hasanah, 2017).

Animated films have the advantage of integrating visual, auditory, and narrative elements within a storyline, thereby presenting vocabulary not merely in isolation but within a clear context of use (Nazilatul Maghfirah et al., 2024). They not only depict vocabulary through images and sounds but also provide real-life usage contexts. With the aid of an LCD projector, animated films can be displayed in the classroom as interactive and enjoyable teaching aids. Presenting vocabulary within stories or authentic situations enables students to better understand the meaning and usage of words, while also retaining them more effectively over the long term.

The advancement of technology in education presents significant opportunities to revolutionize Arabic language teaching methods, particularly in the instruction of *mufrodāt* (vocabulary). The utilization of animated films as a learning aid not only introduces variety in content delivery but also simultaneously enhances students' cognitive and affective engagement. This aligns with Mayer's (2021) multimedia learning theory, which emphasizes the importance of integrating visual and auditory elements to maximize comprehension and retention of material.

Furthermore, the implementation of animated films in learning requires teachers to adopt a creative and adaptive technology-based instructional approach. The successful use of animation media heavily depends on teachers' readiness in managing digital devices as well as their ability to design teaching strategies responsive to the needs and characteristics of their students. Therefore, improving teachers' competencies in technology mastery and pedagogical methods is a key factor that must be addressed to optimize the sustainable use of animated films in language learning.

Previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of animated media in language learning. Hasanah (2019) found that the use of animated cartoon videos can significantly improve students' vocabulary mastery. Similarly, Zulkarnain (2020) showed that interactive animated

media are effective in enhancing Arabic speaking skills at the junior secondary (*Madrasah Tsanawiyah*) level. These findings provide strong evidence that integrating animated media can address motivational and comprehension challenges in *mufradāt* learning.

Considering the issue of low Arabic vocabulary mastery among students at SMP Islam Ar-Raafi' Makassar and the potential of animated media as a solution, this study was conducted to explore in depth the process of utilizing Arabic animated films, identify supporting and inhibiting factors, and formulate practical solutions to optimize *mufradāt* learning at the junior secondary school level.

METHOD

منهج

This study employed an action research design with an applied research approach. This method emphasizes social practice aimed at improvement through a cyclical process, followed by systematic inquiry, reflective procedures, participatory involvement, and implementation determined by the practitioners (Kamber, 2000).

The research was conducted at SMP Islam Ar-Raafi' Makassar with seven seventh-grade students as the subjects. The selection of participants was carried out purposively, considering their active engagement in the learning process and their willingness to participate in all stages of the research activities.

Given the research design of classroom action research, this study involved a limited number of participants, thereby limiting the generalizability of the findings. However, this limitation is inherent in classroom action research, as it prioritizes contextual depth and instructional improvement rather than broad generalization. Participants were selected purposively based on specific inclusion criteria, namely seventh-grade students who demonstrated interest and active engagement in Arabic language learning but experienced difficulties in memorizing and retaining *mufradāt* through conventional instructional methods. Furthermore, the students exhibited low to moderate vocabulary mastery based on preliminary observations and teacher assessments and were willing to participate consistently across all research cycles.

The research process was conducted in several cycles, each consisting of four main stages. The planning stage began with preparing learning materials, selecting Arabic animated films relevant to the *mufradāt* content, and designing observation instruments to be used. The implementation stage involved screening the animated films in the classroom using an LCD projector, introducing the vocabulary to be learned, and guiding students through interactive exercises. Subsequently, the observation stage was conducted to monitor student responses, engagement levels, and learning outcomes using observation sheets. Finally, in the reflection stage, the researcher analyzed the findings, identified weaknesses in the learning process, and designed improvements to be applied in the subsequent cycle (Rochiati, 2005).

Data collection was carried out using three main techniques: observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was used to record student engagement and the learning process. Interviews were conducted to explore the opinions of teachers and students regarding the effectiveness of using animated films as a medium in Arabic language learning. Documentation was employed to gather vocabulary mastery test results and other relevant supporting materials.

Data analysis utilized a mixed methods approach, combining qualitative data from

observations, interviews, and documentation with descriptive quantitative data from questionnaires. Qualitative data were analyzed through data reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing to identify students' and teachers' responses to *mufrodāt* learning using animated films. Quantitative data from the questionnaires described students' acceptance levels, with data validity ensured through source and technique triangulation.

RESULT | نتائج

Mufrodāt learning through Arabic animated films was conducted in two cycles, each consisting of two meetings.

Cycle I

The theme *at-ta'āruf* (introduction) was implemented on July 14–15, 2025. The first meeting was interactive; however, the teacher was not yet fully proficient in managing the media, and several students still struggled to pronounce vocabulary correctly. The second meeting showed significant improvement: the teacher more skillfully utilized pauses during the screening, students' vocabulary mastery increased, and participation became more evenly distributed through group exercises.

Cycle II

The theme *marāfiq al-madrasah* (school facilities) was conducted on July 21 and 23, 2025. The teacher managed the media smoothly, consistently employing techniques of pausing and repetition. Students demonstrated greater confidence, increased participation, and improved accuracy in vocabulary pronunciation. Pair and small group activities helped strengthen students' memory retention and confidence.

Reflection

Improvements were observed in the teacher's media management skills, active student participation, and vocabulary pronunciation accuracy. Cycle II showed higher effectiveness, with the majority of students able to correctly pronounce the vocabulary. The use of animated films proved to create an enjoyable learning atmosphere and supported enhanced mastery of *mufrodāt*.

It should be noted that this study adopted a qualitative classroom action research design. Consequently, quantitative data such as numerical pre-test and post-test scores were not employed. The effectiveness of Arabic animated films was examined through narrative analysis, classroom observations, and reflections on students' participation and improvements in vocabulary (*mufrodāt*) pronunciation across learning cycles.

Based on the results of the study conducted over two cycles, several supporting and inhibiting factors were identified in the utilization of Arabic animated films to improve vocabulary (*mufrodāt*) mastery among seventh-grade students at SMP Islam Ar-Rafi' Makassar. The primary supporting factors included strong visual and auditory appeal, in which colorful images, dynamic animations, and clear Arabic audio pronunciation created an engaging learning environment that facilitated vocabulary retention. Concrete visualization of each word strengthened cognitive associations between word forms and meanings, while the audio provided accurate pronunciation models for students to imitate. Despite the positive outcomes from using Arabic animated films, the study identified several inhibiting factors affecting learning effectiveness.

These included limited technological proficiency of the teacher at the beginning of the first cycle, which hindered optimal film presentation; restricted instructional time that limited intensive individual practice; variability in students' abilities to absorb material, especially in accurately mimicking authentic Arabic pronunciation; and technical obstacles such as unclear speaker sound quality, disruptive classroom lighting affecting projection visibility, and potential power interruptions. Collectively, these issues highlight the need for more comprehensive technical and pedagogical planning to optimize the use of this media.

To enhance the effectiveness of Arabic animated film utilization, it is necessary to improve teachers' technological skills, manage instructional time to allow more intensive individual practice, implement differentiated teaching strategies to accommodate varying student abilities, and conduct meticulous technical planning covering audiovisual equipment quality, classroom lighting, and contingency measures for power disruptions. Such measures will ensure a smooth and effective learning process.

DISCUSSION

مناقشة

The improvement in students' pronunciation skills, active participation, and self-confidence from Cycle I to Cycle II indicates that the use of Arabic animated films is effective in supporting *mufradāt* learning. This success aligns with Mayer's (2021) Multimedia Learning Theory, which asserts that learning is optimized when information is presented through an appropriate combination of text, audio, and visuals. In this study, the use of pausing and repetition techniques (segmenting principle) enabled the presentation of material in small segments, allowing students time to process information gradually, thereby enhancing vocabulary comprehension and retention.

The visual and auditory appeal of the animated films such as colorful displays, dynamic motion, and authentic pronunciation facilitated students' multisensory engagement. The concrete visualization accompanied by audio formed strong associations between word forms and meanings, supporting the contiguity principle, which advocates for the simultaneous presentation of words and relevant images to reduce cognitive load. In addition to positive effects on cognitive achievement, this medium also lowered affective barriers such as shyness or fear of making mistakes by creating a relaxed and enjoyable learning atmosphere. This finding is consistent with recent research emphasizing the crucial role of emotional engagement in enhancing motivation for foreign language learning, especially at beginner levels.

This finding is also consistent with previous studies in Indonesia. Hasanah (2019) reported significant improvements in students' vocabulary mastery through animated cartoon videos, while Zulkarnain (2020) found that interactive animated media enhanced Arabic speaking skills at the junior secondary level. Unlike these studies, this research focuses specifically on *mufradāt* mastery at SMP Islam Ar-Raafi' Makassar, providing localized evidence of the effectiveness of Arabic animated films. These results confirm that animated media not only facilitate comprehension but also increase students' motivation and active engagement in language learning.

Nevertheless, the effectiveness of this media highly depends on technical readiness and pedagogical strategies. Inhibiting factors such as limited teacher proficiency in operating the media, varying student abilities, and technical constraints align with Sociocultural Theory as explained by Lantolf and Poehner (2020), which emphasizes that the success of media-based

learning is strongly influenced by the scaffolding support provided by the teacher. Therefore, enhancing teachers' competencies in technology mastery, time management, and implementing differentiated instructional strategies including the use of varied assessment methods is crucial to optimizing the benefits of animated films in Arabic language learning.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that the application of animated films not only improves cognitive aspects such as vocabulary mastery but also positively impacts students' affective and psychomotor domains. Multisensory engagement, appropriate teacher support, and media design aligned with modern learning theories can serve as an effective instructional model for broader implementation in both formal schooling and non-formal educational settings. With careful technical and pedagogical planning, this medium has the potential to become a sustainable and adaptive strategy for Arabic language teaching in line with advances in educational technology.

CONCLUSION

خاتمة

This study demonstrates that the utilization of Arabic animated films in *mufrodāt* learning for seventh-grade students at SMP Islam Ar-Rafi' Makassar was successfully implemented through the stages of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection following the spiral model of Kemmis and McTaggart. The use of this media was able to enhance students' activeness, interest, and motivation, while also facilitating the understanding and mastery of vocabulary. Learning improvements were observed across both cycles, with the majority of students able to memorize and accurately pronounce *mufrodāt* after instruction assisted by animated films. Thus, Arabic animated films proved effective not only in improving vocabulary skills but also in creating an enjoyable and interactive learning environment.

These findings imply that the use of animation-based learning media can serve as a relevant and innovative alternative strategy in Arabic language instruction, particularly for junior secondary students who benefit from visual-auditory approaches. The success of this media implementation also highlights the importance of teacher readiness in technology mastery, curriculum-aligned material planning, and adequate infrastructural support to optimize its benefits sustainably.

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