Gestalt Psychological Theory on Learning Arabic in The Metaverse Era

Nurul Musyafa’ah¹, Muhammad Afthon Ulin Nuha²*
¹Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri Bojonegoro, Indonesia
²Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung, Indonesia

Abstract: This research is intended to: 1) describe the understanding of gestalt theory; 2) understand the experimental results of gestalt theory; 3) know the application of gestalt theory in learning Arabic. The researcher uses a descriptive qualitative approach by suggesting some understanding of gestalt theory from several experts and its application in learning Arabic. The data collection methods used by researchers are observation, questionnaires, interviews, and documentation studies. In analyzing qualitative data, the researcher analyzed books or articles related to gestalt theory, opinions from experts in the world of Arabic language education and theories in learning, and suggestions and criticisms addressed in the research. The results of this study are: 1) Gestalt is a psychological theory that argues that particular objects or events will be viewed as an organized whole; 2) Gestalt theory is determined based on experiments conducted by the figures of this theory on several objects, the results of which show the same conclusion, namely that insight is an essential factor in the development of a person’s psychological symptoms; 3) Gestalt theory is quite relevant to be applied in the teaching and learning process of Arabic to help students in developing their scientific insight. The formal finding from this research is that the gestalt theory is one of the psychological theories that base knowledge development on insight. In its application, this theory can also be applied in the learning and teaching process of learning Arabic.

Keywords: Theory Gestalt, Learning, Arabic

*Correspondence Address: afthon@uinsatu.ac.id

Introduction

In education, the learning and teaching process is the most critical activity in delivering students to physical and spiritual maturity (Abdiah, 2019; Abdillah, 2022; Abdullah et al., 2019; Abusama et al., 2020). Education experts created various methods to help those involved in education and teaching to carry out their mission effectively and efficiently.

Of the several existing theories, some are appropriate to apply to one situation but not another. Likewise, there are influential theories to be used by certain teachers but not by others (Achoita, 2018; Amalia, 2019; Badi’ah, 2021). This kind of phenomenon seems to indicate that there is no perfect method, just as there is no worst method. Each method has its advantages and disadvantages.

Besides the method or theory of education, the teacher factor is no less critical (Dewi, 2018; Malyana, 2020; Nuha & Musyafa’ah, 2022). The understanding of a teacher
or educator on the notion of learning will affect how the teacher teaches. Sometimes teachers use specific methods in certain situations and conditions; sometimes, teachers use mixed methods. Thus, an effective teaching and learning process can be established.

The child's growth and development process can be caused by genetic factors or individual and environmental influences. Based on the theory of behaviorism, children learn passively because children think independently. At the same time, social learning views children as active processors with external forces such as motivation, expectations, idol figures, etc., in their environment as children's learning materials. However, both of them influence each other's learning patterns (Bengi, 2018; Yusuf & Khasanah, 2019).

Many experts have created various learning theories in the world of education. Learning theory explains how learning occurs or how students process information. These theories support children's education according to their developmental stages. It also aims to shape children according to the needs of the environment. Gestalt theory is one of them. Gestalt theory describes the process of perception by arranging elements that have relationships, patterns, or similarities into a single unit (Agustin, 2019; Ahmad, 2021; Alhasan & Omar, 2019; Aulya & Purwaningrum, 2021; Harahap, 2021). Gestalt theory is not in line with the idea of structuralism. Gestalt theory tends to try to reduce the division of sensation into smaller parts.

Whereas in the realm of Arabic as a communication tool, language will be able to convey thoughts and feelings (Ahmala et al., 2021; Akla, 2020; Nuha & Faedurrohman, 2022). Signs can express the submission of thoughts and feelings through sound or writing. It is also learned in the process of learning Arabic with four maharats, namely listening (al-istima'), speaking (al-kalam), reading (al-qira'ah), and writing (al-kitabah), and fourthly. This maharat must synergize simultaneously.

As for the connection with the Gestalt theory, which emphasizes the learning activities of a participant, which is not only mechanistic, but learning also involves elements of mentality (Ahmad, 2021; Fauzi & Karneli, 2022; Indrawati, 2019). So knowledge is not only seen as partial information but as information covered by the brain, which can simultaneously be constructed by actors who carry out learning activities. So that participants who learn can understand the value and meaning of what they know, especially in learning Arabic, which requires extra mental involvement because many themes in Arabic require more brain sensor involvement (Afifah, 2020; Akmalia et al., 2021; Nuha, 2019).

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach, which describes and describes learning Arabic with the application of gestalt psychology theory (Abdussamad, 2022; Anggito & Setiawan, 2018; Darmalaksana, 2020). The way to express and decipher the data is through several expert opinions. So by using a qualitative approach, this research is...
expected to provide comprehensive facts about the results of learning Arabic using gestalt psychology theory.

The data collection technique used in this research is library research, where library research is collecting materials related to research from scientific journals, literature, and authors (Aminah, 2019; Darmalaksana, 2020). This literature study was conducted to obtain theoretical information so that researchers have a solid theoretical basis as a scientific result.

The data in this study are based on relevant books and journals for the author to research. The data analysis technique used in this study is qualitative data analysis. In this study, the opinions expressed by experts regarding gestalt theory and Arabic learning are used as a basis to strengthen the author's argument in analyzing the Gestalt Psychology Theory on Learning Arabic in the Metaverse Era.

Result

Gestalt is a theory that explains the process of perception through organizing sensation components that have relationships, patterns, or similarities into a whole. Gestalt theory is in opposition to Wundt's theory of structuralism (Agustin, 2019; Alfaiz et al., 2019; Alparizi, 2021; Aryanto et al., 2022). Gestalt theory tends to try to reduce the division of sensation into smaller parts.

The word Gestalt itself comes from German and has an equivalent meaning roughly as "form or configuration" (Darsini et al., 2020; Safitri et al., 2021; Setiyawan et al., 2021). The point of the Gestalt view is that a particular object or event will be viewed as an organized whole. The primary organization (organization) involves a figure (form) which is what is the center of observation and is opposite to the background or (ground), which is something that lies behind a form so that the state appears as something meaningful.

The meaning of an object or event lies in its overall form or configuration and not its parts. So, an object or event can be seen as its purpose if observed in terms of the whole and not the sum of its parts. For example, a tree is not a sum of roots, trunk, branches, twigs, and leaves but a meaningful configuration of these elements (Setiyawan et al., n.d.; Yasnitsky, 2021). A new component or part will have meaning if it is about a whole.

According to Gestalt theory, learning concerns the whole individual and arises from his mature interaction with his environment. This interaction forms new forms of perception, imagination, and views (Fauzi & Karneli, 2022; Safitri et al., 2021). Together, they develop an understanding or insight, which works as long as the individual is doing problem-solving. However, experience (wisdom) only works if there is a perception or response to the problem, understanding the difficulties, elements, and objectives.
Gestalt means pattern, arrangement (configuration), or form of understanding or stimulating situation. Stimuli and responses combine into a coherent and coherent pattern. A structure or gestalt loses something if separated into parts because each case or experience is more than the sum of its parts.

Initially, gestalt theory was born in the field of perception, and it is precisely in this field that gestalt theory gained a strong position (Ahmad, 2021; Aryanto et al., 2022). It is then taken to the learning field, as described previously. The two situations (perception and learning) are the same; they have more elements arranged. Therefore, according to the Gestalists, learning situations should be studied as a whole, not as separate things in their parts (small parts), and not be reviewed by region.

The Gestalt theory implies that the phenomenological approach is one of the active approaches in psychology. With this phenomenological approach, the Gestalt figures show that psychological studies can study higher mental processes, which have been avoided because they are abstract but retain their scientific and empirical aspects.

The Gestalt view perfects the flow of behaviorism by contributing ideas to explore cognitive learning processes, focusing on higher mental functions (Alfaiz et al., 2019; Alhasan & Omar, 2019). The existence of a perceptual field can be interpreted as a cognitive field where mental processes such as perception, insight, and problem solving can operate.

Experimental Results of Gestalt Theory

Before offering their theory, proponents of the gestalt theory have conducted several experiments with different objects. Among the things carried out are others. Kohler's experiments with a chimpanzee named Sultan were carried out on the island of Tenerife. The description is as follows (Agustin, 2019; Darsini et al., 2020):

First, a chimpanzee is confined in a cage. Some distance outside lay a banana, which the chimpanzee could not reach. Inside the cell is provided a stick. The chimpanzee initially tried to get the banana in various ways but was always unsuccessful. But at one point, the chimpanzee used the post to go for the banana. This is explained as follows:

In the chimpanzee's shadow field are objects: spokes, sticks, fruit outside a cage, and so on. These things were all meaningful gestalts (zinvol) for him, which he was initially tough to find. He did not manage to overcome this predicament, but suddenly a stick emerged from the complex of objects, and a gestalt occurred: himself, a bar, and a banana. Thus the entire chimpanzee shadow field is transformed into a structure.

The success of chimpanzees in finding a stick about this banana which Thorndike calls a coincidence is not just a matter of coincidence but rather a point of a sudden understanding, called: Aha Erlebnis. After this incident, the experience remained with the chimpanzee forever; since then, he has had no difficulty dealing with the same problem.
Second, the experiment was repeated, but the stick was replaced with a branching tree. What happened? The chimpanzee broke a branch to reach the banana outside the cage. Here, at first, the chimpanzee faces two gestalts, namely the gestalt of a tree with its branches and a gestalt between itself and a banana. From the gestalt of the tree, he separates a component to be put into another gestalt. Now there is a new gestalt, namely he, the unit, the banana. Then he tried to separate again; that is, he separated the tree branch from the gestalt, then connected it with a banana.

Third, the experiment was repeated, but now he hung bananas above the cage and provided several crates in the cell. What happened? The chimpanzee pulled the crates (two crates if needed), arranged them, and grabbed the bananas.

Fourth, the experiment was repeated, but now the bananas were placed outside some distance away. In the cage, there are two sticks, one of which can go into the other, while the other sticks cannot be used to reach the banana. What happened? At first, the chimpanzee tried with each stick because it never worked; he looked desperate. Then he played with the stick. Coincidentally one post slipped into the other, he ran to the spokes of the cage, and he grabbed the banana happily.

Fifth, the experiment was repeated but more abstruse; the stick was tied to a ring that went into a hook, and so on. It turned out that with the impossible situation, he did not manage to reach the banana.

As a result, it is concluded that the animal's actions are accompanied by complete understanding and intent, namely that at first, the animal experiences a unanimous situation. Because of his learning attitude, he began to reduce the problem, which had to do with something he wanted to achieve. Then he puts this relationship into an unraveled position.

The results of Kohler's other experiments are in color perception research (Aryanto et al., 2022; Fauzi & Karneli, 2022). In this study, the chickens were given the same amount of grain seeds on two different colored sheets of paper. However, the chickens were only allowed to eat from the dark-colored paper. After being trained, the chickens were again given two sheets of paper of different colors, but the article was one of the dark grays initially used for training, and the other was an older color. Of the 85 trials, the hen responded 59 times to the new dark color. According to Kohler, the chicken did not learn to respond to "relatively bright color or light," which was later called the law of transformation.

After conducting several experiments, the proponents of the gestalt theory then tried to apply the view in the world of education. From this, several figures and their respective opinions were born, which will be presented in the following sub-chapter.
Discussion

Gestalt theory in education is often called field theory or insight complete learning (Safitri et al., 2021; Setiyawan et al., 2021). Looking at the name of this theory and the school of gestalt psychology, it is clear that the opinion of this theory is different from the opinions of other theories.

According to Gestalt psychologists, humans are not just reaction creatures who only act or react if there is a stimulus that affects them (Abirami, 2019; Alfaiz et al., 2019). Humans are individuals who are both physical and spiritual. As individuals, humans react or rather interact with the outside world with their personality and in a unique way. No two people have a similar experience of the same object or reality.

As a person, humans do not react directly to a stimulus, nor are their reactions carried out blindly or by trial and error, as the adherents of conditioning and connectionism say. Human response to the outside world depends on how he receives stimuli and how and what motives there are in him. Humans are creatures who have freedom. He is free to choose how he reacts and which incentives he accepts and rejects.

Thus, according to Gestalt theory, learning is not just a process of association between stimulus-response, which is getting stronger and stronger because of exercises or learning repetitions; according to Gestalt theory occurs when there is insight. After trying to understand a problem, this understanding or insight arises when someone suddenly has clarity; he can see the relationship between the elements, understand the relevance, and understand the meaning. Remember what Kohler called “Aha Erlebnis” in his experiments with chimpanzees. Learning is a process of discovery with the help of existing experiences (Abdiyah & Subiyantoro, 2021; Nuha, 2020).

Briefly, learning according to Gestalt theory can be explained as follows. First, in learning, the factor of understanding or understanding (insight) is an essential factor in learning to understand or understand the relationship between knowledge and experience. Second, the person or organism plays the most central role in learning. Education is not only done in a mere reactive-mechanical manner but is done consciously, motivated and purposeful (Cholid, 2017; Dianti, 2021).

As stated above, insight only works if there is a perception of the problem; His task, which is at the core of insight, is obtaining a solution in connection with Hilgard proposing six kinds of characteristics of learning with insight, which can be briefly stated as follows (Safitri et al., 2021):

1. Insight depends on basic skills. Basic abilities vary from individual to individual.
2. Insight is dependent on relevant experience. However, this does not guarantee a solution to the problem.
3. Insights are subject to experimental settings. New insights may be obtained if the learning situation is arranged so all aspects that need to be observed can be observed.

4. The insight was preceded by a period of trial and error. This effort is needed to obtain a clear picture of the problem so that insight can be obtained and the problem can be solved.

5. Learning with insight can be repeated. If a problem is solved with insight, the same issue will be solved directly by the person concerned.

6. The insight obtained once can be used to deal with new situations.

7. This gestalt learning theory provides several valuable learning principles, including:
   a. Humans react to the environment directly.
   b. Learning is an adjustment to the environment.
   c. Humans develop as a whole fetus or baby in the womb to adulthood.
   d. Learning is a development toward more comprehensive differentiation.
   e. Learning is only successful when it reaches maturity to gain insight.
   f. Learning is not possible without a will to learn.
   g. Learning will be successful if there are goals that have meaning for the individual.
   h. In the learning process, the child is always an active organism, not a vessel to be filled or an automaton driven by someone else.

Having stated several things related to the distinctive nature of learning with insight, the following will present the theory of gestalt learning, and its application in the teaching and learning process in Arabic:

1. Knowledge is based on the whole

   In contrast to behavioristic learning theories, which consider the parts more important than the whole, gestalt theory assumes that the whole has more meaning than the parts. The details are only meaningful when they are in the total. A word in Arabic will be significant when it is in a sentence that has meaning. Likewise, corrections will have a sense if they are in a series of compositions of words.

2. Children who learn are a whole

   This principle implies that teaching children develop intellectually and the child's personalities. Therefore, teaching is not piling up a child's memory with loose facts. However, creating the full potential that exists in children.
3. Learn thanks to the insight

   It has been explained that insight is an understanding of the relationship between parts in a problem situation. Thus, learning will occur when faced with a problem that must be solved. As in learning Arabic, where each maharat in Arabic has its difficulty level, then each learner must be able to solve the problems in understanding the four maharats in learning Arabic.

4. Learning based on experience

   An experience is an event that can give meaning and meaning to the life of each behavior. Learning is reorganizing past experiences that are continuously refined. Likewise, with learning Arabic, once we understand the importance or meaning of Arabic, we will forever remember it in the future.

   Finally, we know the principle of application of the Gestalt theory. Here are some applications of gestalt theory in the process of learning and teaching Arabic, including those relating to:

   1. Experience Insights

      Kohler stated that insight plays a vital role in behavior based on his experiments. In the learning process, students should have insight skills, namely the ability to recognize the interrelationships of elements in an object or event.

   2. Meaningful Learning

      The significance of the elements involved in an object or event will support the formation of insight in the learning process. The clearer the meaning of the relationship between a component, the closer it will be practical to something learned. Therefore, the rules that underlie the elements in an object or event should be understood and used as the basis for developing insight and understanding of the overall thing or event.

   3. Purposive Behavior

      This principle was developed by Edward Tolman, who believes that behavior is essentially directed towards a goal. Behavior is not just a relationship between stimulus and response (response); a close relationship exists with the purpose or something to be obtained. Based on this principle, the learning process will be more effective if students recognize the goals to be achieved and direct their learning behavior towards them.

   4. Principles of Living Space (Life Space)

      Kurt Lewin developed this concept in field theory which states that individual behavior is related to the environment or field in which he is located. Individuals are in a psychological field environment that influences their behavior patterns. This principle implies an equivalent link between the learning process and the
demands and needs of the domain. The material taught by the teacher should be equivalent and related to the situation and environmental conditions.

5. Transfer in Learning

Transfer in learning is the transfer of behavioral patterns from a particular learning situation to another. According to this theory, the transfer will occur when students or students have captured the main principles of a problem or problem and found generalizations to be used in solving a problem in another situation. About learning and teaching in the classroom, teachers should help students to master the basic principles of the materials they teach.

From some of the descriptions above, it can be understood that the gestalt theory is one of the psychological theories that base knowledge development on insight. In its application, this theory can also be applied to learning and teaching Arabic. The application of gestalt learning theory in Arabic can also be said to be successful from the role of the teacher, namely in terms of the competence of a teacher who can understand Arabic learning material well, the teacher masters methodical didactics in learning Arabic, the teacher can design teaching materials and learning strategies based on insightful learning and able to carry out learning evaluation activities according to the designed plan (Nuha & Faedurrohman, 2022).

➡️ **Conclusion**

Gestalt is a psychological theory that argues that particular objects or events will be viewed as an organized whole. Gestalt theory is determined based on experiments conducted by the figures of this theory on several objects, the results of which show the same conclusion, namely that insight is an essential factor in developing a person's psychological symptoms.

Gestalt theory is also quite relevant to be applied in the teaching and learning process to help students develop their scientific insights, especially those involved in Arabic learning, because students can search for and understand the meaning in Arabic in depth..

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