

Arabic Language Learning For Elementary Schools During Pandemic Covid-19

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Abstract

In the COVID-19 outbreak, the implementation of learning which is usually carried out face-to-face has been shifted to virtual form. The performance of education during the pandemic has undergone significant changes so that the problems found in its implementation can be studied to find solutions to these problems. This study was conducted to obtain data on the performance and progress of Arabic language learning in Islamic boarding schools during the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative through library research. The study was conducted to provide a clear, objective, systematic, analytical, and critical description of the implementation of Arabic language learning at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Tanah Datar during the COVID-19 pandemic. This research was conducted in 2021 in one of the Ibtidaiyah Madrasah in Tanah Datar Regency. The research results are sourced from several instruments that have been prepared previously, such as questionnaires or research questionnaires to serve as a supporting tool in conducting direct observations and interviews with the research object. In addition, the data of this study were sourced from the results of interviews with the Ibtidaiyah madrasah. His study results indicate that learning Arabic during the pandemic has advantages and disadvantages. The obstacles found in the implementation of learning can be in the form of the psychological conditions of students affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, less than optimal teacher performance in preparing lessons, internal family problems, and the environmental conditions of the surrounding community.

Keywords: Arabic Language; Pandemic Covid-19; Ibtidaiyah; Elementary School

INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization (WHO) officially announced the novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) as a pandemic on March 11, 2020. This was followed by the implementation of new policies by governments in countries worldwide. One of them is the implementation of spatial distancing, or maintaining a distance in which an individual intentionally maintains a safe distance between himself and others to reduce physical contact made to minimize the spread of the COVID-19 virus (Vally, 2020). In addition, the government also closed educational institutions, recreation areas, places of worship and various other types of entertainment.

In Indonesia, various policies have been issued by the government related to efforts to overcome the spread of the coronavirus, including by making social distancing,

physical distancing, and PSBB (large-scale social restrictions) policies in areas affected by COVID-19 (Herliandry et al., 2020). This policy impacts changing the system in various fields, including in the world of education. The classroom environment must be transferred to a computer screen, as Polydoros & Alasona (2021) convey that learning can be carried out with the help of online learning courses, where students have access to a virtual learning environment to meet the needs of teaching and learning from home using learning tools. As diverse as an educational software that can improve the learning process.

Distance learning, commonly referred to as online learning, is option educators use when carrying out education. Still, the central government provides instructions so that the learning process is carried out by anticipating the spread of the COVID-19 virus (Desrani & Aflah Zamani, 2021). The impact of the Pandemic on the education system brings two challenges: old problems, as Omomo (2019) explains, namely 'educational inequality and insufficient relevance'. According to Siahhan (M. Ritonga et al., 2021), the use of computers and network technology in the learning process will allow students to learn anytime and anywhere.

Meanwhile, learning Arabic itself is often considered the language of religion or Islamic science. Differences in viewpoints in learning Arabic cause differences in methods, strategies, techniques, teaching materials, teaching media and evaluations used in learning (Desrani & Aflah Zamani, 2021). Febriani et al. (2020) Febriani et al. (2020) said, "The process of learning foreign languages especially Arabic is normally held in the classroom, with a structured system, materials that have been prepared, and some factors that support the success of learning such as adequate facilities and infrastructure". Problems in learning Arabic have become an international issue because Arabic has become the seventh international language, and other problems result from the current political and social conditions in Arabia. Al-Khresheh et al. (2020) said that learning Arabic as a subject has long been implemented in schools in Indonesia.

Albantani & Madkur (2019) argues that 'Arabic is well-accepted in Indonesian society and is taught in state and private schools and universities, particularly those affiliated with Islamic educational institutions as recent studies have shown that the younger generation of Indonesia tends to have pretty high motivation in learning foreign languages (Sa'diyah & Abdurahman, 2021). Implementing Arabic learning in Indonesia, especially for beginners at the basic education level, has its challenges and problems. As the COVID-19 Pandemic has been going on since the beginning of 2020, learning has been shifted to online or virtual form. Thus, the implementation of Arabic learning has undergone significant changes.

Online learning during a pandemic like today encourages educators to carry out their role in evaluating the effectiveness and suitability of learning carried out with needs (Herliandry et al., 2020). In addition, the problems found were not only about the use of appropriate learning strategies, methods and media. However, it is also related to adaptation problems that students must pass. Previous research explained that difficulties in online learning occur when facing uncooperative and untrained students during independent study, and teachers have issues ensuring students can master the use of computers without a computer instructor. trained (Lassoued et al., 2020).

Other research also shows that students feel anxious due to a lack of fun in class (Hasan & Bao, 2020), which results from online learning. (M. Ritonga et al., 2021) also

conveyed the results of previous research, which explained that the weakness of the implementation of online learning is reducing the interaction between teachers and students in the learning process. He further explained that 'which makes it difficult for students to understand the material delivered through online learning, especially in foreign language learning, requires more intense direct interaction between students and lecturers to achieve learning objectives. Other research shows that online learning can make it easier for teachers to provide learning because learning materials can be accessed anytime and anywhere using internet access (A. W. Ritonga et al., 2021). Other research states that learning foreign languages online is more effective and does not spend too much time and money (Umam & Nada, 2021).

The difference in these findings prompted researchers to study further the implementation of Arabic language learning at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah level during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The contrast of this research from other research is that this research not only examines problems in the implementation of learning but also examines problems outside the implementation of learning that affect the quality of student learning. Research results from various sources are analyzed and sought for a solution by utilizing multiple available sources.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach through library research methods that use books and other literature as the primary research object. Qualitative research does not use statistical procedures or measurement methods related to the quantification process (Cresswell, 1998) (Albantani & Madkur, 2019). The study was conducted by analyzing descriptively the literature related to learning Arabic during the Pandemic. The study was conducted to provide clear, objective, systematic, analytical and critical descriptions and descriptions of the implementation of Arabic language learning at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah/ elementary schools in Indonesia during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It is adapting to the research that has been done, namely about learning Arabic. This is not easy because Arabic language education is challenging to modify, especially in this pandemic; This is because learning Arabic requires direct interaction between teachers and students in the learning process. Therefore, it is necessary to innovate and choose the right learning strategy in learning Arabic at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah level so that it is easier for students to digest the learning delivered by the teacher even with virtual-based learning methods like today.

The data that previous researchers have found are analyzed and summarized as follows: research conducted by (M. Ritonga et al., 2021) found that online learning in terms of process and learning outcomes shows meager results. Learning Arabic online is not entirely recommended because students and educators want to learn face-to-face. (Makruf, 2021) Arabic language learning strategy during the COVID-19 pandemic indicate that the learning strategy used is the online method (online); the obstacles were found to consist of two internal factors related to interest and attention, motivation and students' readiness to accept learning. Meanwhile, external factors relate to the family, school and community aspects. (Desrani & Aflah Zamani, 2021) with explained is Learning Arabic during the Pandemic has many problems and obstacles. The curriculum

as the primary foundation in achieving learning objectives must be adapted to online learning situations. (Febriani et al., 2020) learning Arabic online gets a positive response from students; they have an innovative, creative learning experience. However, it is necessary to increase the ability of teachers to design learning materials using online media. (Al-Khresheh et al., 2020) using pictures in learning speaking skills for beginners in Arabic can improve students' learning abilities in class. The use of images can help students get rid of boredom, reduce language anxiety, provide more fun, help students be more confident and increase student's motivation to speak.

(Albantani & Madkur, 2019) an innovative, creative, age-appropriate, fun and competitive Arabic learning process is needed, with professional language teachers, methods, and learning media by global standards. (Wargadinata, 2020) learning Arabic online in an integral and holistic system give students with a sound output of language skills. (Faizah et al., 2020) learning Arabic at MIN 3 Janti online is considered unable to be carried out effectively due to several obstacles experienced by teachers and students that hinder the learning process. (Umam & Nada, 2021) learning Arabic during the Pandemic has several problems faced by educators and students, so it takes the role of parents to monitor the development of children so that the material presented by the teacher can be obtained by students properly. (A. W. Ritonga et al., 2021) learning Arabic using E-Learning would be meaningful for students if the learning materials were designed well and clearly. And the previous research (Nengrum et al., 2021) offline or online learning has advantages and disadvantages. Both from the method, media, and the learning process carried out. So, offline and online learning processes cannot be used as a reference for essential competencies in the curriculum to be achieved optimally. The research results presented in the table above indicate that learning Arabic online during a pandemic has advantages and disadvantages. There are different results in each research conducted, regardless of the focus of the study being studied. However, overall Arabic learning during the Pandemic showed different results, influenced by internal and external factors that occurred during the learning process.

The Impact Of The Pandemic On Students

Education in Indonesia has undergone drastic changes due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, which has become a pandemic since March 2020. This has resulted in significant changes and sudden adaptations by students and educators. Educators play an essential role in learning activities, so they have to follow massive changes that have never happened before, namely the change from the traditional face-to-face education system to education with an online system, also called distance education (Bao, 2020).

Benner & Mistry (2020) stated that "in summary, empirical evidence from sociohistorical events as well as emerging evidence based on the COVID-19 pandemic suggest the possibility of short- and long-term impacts of sociohistorical catastrophes for child development across developmental domains". Saddik et al. (2021) also explained that COVID-19 hurt children's mental health, especially students in lower grades. Furthermore, it was explained that this was due to social isolation, prolonged school closures, challenges in online learning and uncertainty over-assessments and exams, causing students to experience mental stress.

In addition to mental health issues, the COVID-19 Pandemic also brings other problems. Girik (2020) (Lassoued et al., 2020) investigates and finds student perceptions

during online learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic and the implementation of online learning systems. Students stated that they wanted the material and assignments given by the teacher to be preceded by an explanation, and they also recommended the use of special media such as voice notes. In addition, Girik also stated that online learning is suitable for carrying out during the COVID-19 Pandemic. However, there are still problems with internet access (free), financial issues, and other online learning applications.

The consequences of a pandemic can affect every child (Fegert et al., 2020). Distance learning makes students easily bored because they have to deal with laptops and cellphone screens all day long. Even this boredom leads to a decrease in students' motivation in participating in learning, such as answering teacher questions carelessly, doing assignments by copying answers from the internet and reducing teacher access to supervising students during the learning process, making it difficult for teachers to observe whether students are listening to the lessons given or not. In addition, a study shows that children tend to miss the collaborative work style in the classroom, and the expectations of learning from home stress them out (O'Sullivan et al., 2021).

Spending a lot of time at home can also make students vulnerable to indoor pollution, which can affect brain development and result in limited cognitive ability development of students (Thakur et al., 2020). The impact of online learning will be increasingly felt on students with low family incomes; they will find it challenging to buy electronic devices that can be used to support learning, such as cellphones, and difficulties in purchasing internet quota. So accessing education from home is increasingly difficult for them.

The implementation of distance learning at the primary education level requires the sensitivity of educators in identifying the characteristics of learners who tend to enjoy playing using fun learning methods; this will help learners psychologically so that they do not feel burdened by the tasks given by teachers and in accepting learning materials taught to learners feel happy (Rahma et al., 2021).

Barriers In The Implementation Of Arabic Language Learning

In general, barriers in the implementation of learning, as described by Umam & Nada (2021), related to changes in the learning process that were previously centred on teachers now centred on learners, learning media adopted online, learning activities implemented in their homes, and lack of teachers' ability to use online-based applications. Meanwhile, barriers in the implementation of Arabic language learning can be identified into four forms: walls from oneself, school, family, and community environment.

Self-obstruction, self-obstruction in learners was obtained as an impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic. (Fegert et al., 2020) explained that the COVID-19 Pandemic brought dangerous implications on children's mental health, caused by the reorganization of family life, significant stress, fear of death of loved ones, economic crisis, limited access to health services and lack of stabilization. And social control of peer groups, teachers in schools, and sports activities. These problems will lead to mental health problems, such as stress, depression, and anxiety in children, which will hinder the learning process.

The implementation of online learning will certainly not be as much as the learning that is implemented face to face. Prolonged quarantine causes fear of viral infections,

boredom, insufficient personal space and conditions where students learn separately from classmates and teachers cause stress in children (O'Sullivan et al., 2021). As a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the learners experienced significant character changes (Suriadi et al., 2021) obtained from the environment around the learners and from the experiences they went through during the Pandemic. If it leads to bad things and is not immediately addressed by the teacher, this change will hinder the learning process. Especially in learning Arabic, which is a foreign language, learners' lack of mental readiness will undoubtedly interfere with learning activities.

Obstacles from schools, as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the government issued a policy to overcome the barriers in implementing the learning process to be appropriately executed by publishing curriculum implementation in education units in special conditions (Desrani & Aflah Zamani, 2021). Learning performance is done concerning the national curriculum, but schools can simplify the curriculum independently. This means that teachers can choose their education curriculum by paying attention to the conditions of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Problematics also arise; not all teachers can develop themselves optimally to present meaningful learning for learners even if it is not implemented directly in the classroom. The limitations of teachers in mastering digital technology, so that learning activities focused on the implementation of learning through Whatsapp groups will undoubtedly make it difficult for learners to follow the learning of Arabic. Learning Arabic requires using methods, strategies and teaching media that teachers have well prepared before the learning process. The development of reading skills is the main thing that teachers must do to develop knowledge of Arabic independently. Therefore, teachers 'mastery of digital technology and creativity in presenting fun and meaningful learning need to be designed not to disrupt learners' learning process.

Barriers from family pandemic conditions require students to study at home. So it requires the cooperation of parents in supervising students during teaching and learning activities. Fegert et al. (2020) said that the pandemic conditions resulted in increased domestic violence and abuse against children due to long periods of isolation in unsafe homes, lack of supervision from child protection agencies, and lack of support from peers or schools. In addition, the occurrence of a financial crisis resulting from massive layoffs during the Pandemic also clouded the atmosphere at home. It was not conducive for students to take part in learning. In (Benner & Mistry, 2020), Yoshikawa also stated that prolonged economic challenges and confinement during the Pandemic resulted in increased violence against spouses and abuse of children. The less conducive atmosphere at home, problems during the Pandemic and poor relationships between parents and children also increase the risk of mental health problems in children, which will interfere with student learning activities.

Barriers from the community environment include working while studying, the absence of friends to learn together, and the unfavourable environment around the students' homes. For example, for students who live in a market environment, frenzied conditions will undoubtedly disrupt the concentration of students in learning.

Learning Arabic During The Pandemic

As the research results described in the previous table, it can be concluded that online learning during a pandemic has its advantages and disadvantages. Learning Arabic

during the Pandemic at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah level focuses on learning patterns that are carried out centred on students (Hadi, 2019), which results in students who are a bit slow in understanding the material being studied being left behind in participating in learning. A study (Al-Khresheh et al., 2020) said that the main problem in learning Arabic is that students easily forget what they have learned.

Learning Arabic online emphasizes self-study, using special techniques when designing learning materials, administering and using unique communication methods by utilizing various media, namely computers, TV, radio, telephone, video and other media that holistically assist the learning process. Independently by students (Desrani & Aflah Zamani, 2021). In practice, most teachers carry out teaching and learning activities by utilizing Whatsapp or even zoom meetings which in the learning process are more about using lecture and assignment methods.

Even though it should be, the selection of learning methods must be adjusted to the material to be delivered (Hadi, 2019). A monotonous learning style will cause a decrease in students' learning motivation, and learning outcomes will also decrease. The difficulty of collaborating during learning at home between teachers and students makes many teachers replace their teaching duties by giving assignments to deepen students' knowledge of the material being studied. As a result, learning Arabic is not carried out properly because language competence cannot be developed optimally.

Online learning is not an alternative method for face-to-face learning through online applications (Fikri et al., 2020). However, online learning that is carried out should encourage students to be more creative independently, access as many sources of knowledge as possible, produce work, hone insight and make students human being who has mindset skills and is proficient in life. Learning Arabic online often makes students passive during learning (Akzam et al., 2021). Not even a few students are afraid of being wrong or ashamed to use the Arabic they have learned.

There are seven directions in the implementation of Arabic language learning in Madrasahs, namely as follows: (1) developing religious attitudes in students in learning Arabic; (2) fostering social attitudes in the form of honesty, mutual respect, courtesy, cooperation, concern, environmental friendliness and other social activities; (3) the cultivation and development of educational attitudes as seen from the attitude of discipline, enthusiasm for learning, responsive, and proactive in the learning process; (4) the elements of learning Arabic must be used as basic knowledge to achieve language skills; (5) vocabulary learning should avoid direct translation, but use methods and media that show antonyms and synonyms; (6) Arabic teachers must be able to develop the learning process to acquire the language; (7) the evaluation system emphasizes an authentic evaluation system that emphasizes three aspects, namely cognitive, affective and psychomotor (Febriani et al., 2020).

In learning Arabic, four skills must be mastered by students, namely listening (istima'), speaking (kalam), reading (qira'ah), and writing (kitabah) (Hadi, 2019). Reading skills are the primary skills in learning Arabic, which must be mastered by students, namely the ability to read Arabic letters. Speaking skills, Urrutia and Vega (Al-Khresheh et al., 2020) explain that skills can be learned if students learn more vocabulary. Practice is the leading solution in improving students' speaking skills. Writing skills can be enhanced in early Arabic learners by building knowledge in Arabic writing (Sa'diyah & Abdurahman, 2021). Finally, listening skills can be developed if speaking skills are also

applied in the learning process. Students' success in listening can be seen when students can understand and then convey the information obtained orally or in writing (Mahmudah, 2018).

The implementation of Arabic learning during the Pandemic is done online and offline. However, based on research conducted by (Nengrum et al., 2021), it was stated that offline learning was ineffective during a pandemic because not all students could follow it. After all, offline education was limited. The implementation of Arabic learning in the classroom still uses the old style. There has not been an increase in the mindset written in the 2013 curriculum concept, especially during a pandemic like today. Despite changes in the implementation of the learning system, not all educators can optimize their abilities in designing learning that can encourage students to be active implement effective and innovative understanding so that learning objectives can be adequately achieved.

Solution Of Learning Arabic During The Pandemic

Judging from the conditions in the field and the results of the studies described previously, it appears that the solution to these problems does not only rely on the efforts of one party. Both teachers, schools, students, and even parents need to work together in overcoming these problems together. However, as a facilitator in the implementation of learning, teachers must be creative in delivering learning materials through online learning media (Fikri et al., 2020). The use of a type of technology does not refer to technological sophistication alone but refers to conformity to the conditions of students and parents and being practical and able to support learning goals (Desrani & Aflah Zamani, 2021). Teachers need training to expand their knowledge and practical techniques in online teaching (Polydoros & Alasona, 2021). One way to increase learning effectiveness is to provide elemental stimulation to motivate students (Fiani, Ahsanuddin, 2021). One of them is developing an innovative and creative evaluation system and utilizing information technology to stimulate students' critical thinking.

The teaching and learning process needs to be carefully prepared in a curriculum designed to be internet-based (A. W. Ritonga et al., 2021). Learning online is organizing online learning materials and prioritizing active student involvement in the learning process. However, this does not mean that the learning process is only focused on students. Students at the elementary school level have different characteristics from adolescent students. Learning must also be designed according to age, which still likes to play and requires concrete media to understand abstract understanding. Therefore, giving assignments during the Pandemic to deepen students' knowledge will not help because it will only make students bored in learning.

Overcoming the decrease in motivation caused by boredom can be pursued by determining students' creative and exciting learning strategies. Teachers can deepen their knowledge and insight about systems suitable for learning Arabic at the basic education level by reading a lot of research journals or related scientific articles to be a guide for teachers in their application. In addition, the use of learning methods and being adapted to age characteristics must also be based on the material being studied. Therefore, it is necessary to have optimal preparation for teachers in each learning process.

Learning Arabic requires integration between materials, media, methods, and evaluation in the learning process to achieve maximum indicators (Febriani et al., 2020).

Therefore, learning design does not only refer to students working actively during the learning process. However, the teacher also helps build students' basic understanding through explanations. In a sense, there needs to be an integration between the presentation of the teacher's material and the tasks that the students must do. Then the implementation of learning should also refer to the psychological condition of students. As previously explained, the current pandemic situation is very vulnerable to causing mental health problems for students. The learning presented should also encourage students to participate actively, fun and not cause pressure for students.

Learning Arabic during the Pandemic does not only encourage students to study independently. However, it should provoke students to develop language skills optimally. Learning is designed to guide students to be able to read the material displayed on the media that the teacher presents, able to listen to the explanations delivered adequately, which can be seen from how students put the information back into oral and written form, able to encourage students to actively practice speak using the Arabic language learned, and be able to guide students to develop the acquired knowledge into written form. These skills will be appropriately developed if learning is carried out optimally utilizing available and digital-based learning resources.

Active learning will produce significant changes in the role of students because they must be responsible for their knowledge so that students can develop personal skills and positive attitudes towards learning (Wargadinata, 2020). It should be underlined that active learning is not learning that encourages students to learn and construct knowledge that is found by themselves by giving assignments to contribute to understanding. However, knowledge processing in active learning is carried out with an orientation regarding problem-solving, critical approaches, and knowledge evaluation (Niemi, 2002). In implementing active learning, the teacher plays a role as a mentor and supporter, not just giving assignments and providing assessments. Teachers with poor skills, who cannot master Arabic well, cannot choose the correct textbooks and syllabus and are not able to build learning activities that attract students to learn Arabic will end up with poor learning outcomes (El-Omari & Bataineh, 2018).

Issues related to the lack of free internet access, expensive quota fees, limited tools in accessing learning, and the internet network's difficulty in several regions in Indonesia should receive serious attention from the government. Establishing good communication between teachers and parents will also help organize learning activities. Learning at home using online media expects parents to be role models in assisting children in learning, which can be seen from changes in attitudes (Fikri et al., 2020). In addition, parents play a significant role in directing and supervising students during online learning (Umam & Nada, 2021).

CONCLUSION

Based on the explanation that has been given, it can be seen that the Arabic learning process can be carried out optimally, and children's language skills can develop well even though the learning is carried out virtually. Teachers must prepare education as well as possible, there is serious attention and assistance from the government, and there is good cooperation between teachers and parents. Only then can the problems in online learning be appropriately resolved if each element increases their efforts and abilities in carrying out Arabic learning, especially in developing students' initial language skills.

The implementation of online Arabic learning requires severe attention and preparation from the teacher. The pandemic situation that poses many new challenges and unprecedented adaptation of the learning system requires teachers to actively add insight and knowledge regarding the use of digital-based learning resources to support learning goals. The selection of strategies, methods and media must be adjusted to the age level of the students and should pay attention to the suitability of the material being taught. Therefore, teachers must actively seek to increase knowledge related to the implementation of learning through studies that many researchers have carried out through journals and other scientific articles. In addition, the collaboration between the teacher and parents will be a determinant in the success of the student learning process.

This research cannot contain all the problems during the implementation of Arabic learning during the Pandemic. The study focuses on the performance of Arabic language learning at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah during the Pandemic. The investigation relates to the implementation of Arabic language learning online, the problems found during the execution of Arabic learning and the solutions to these problems.

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