



THE INTEGRATION OF EDUCATIONAL GAMES IN ARABIC LANGUAGE LEARNING FOR GEN Z: A LITERATURE REVIEW

M Pradipta Arief Niama*¹, Sufyani Fadlan Alaena², Khoirunnisa³,
Faliqul Isbah⁴

^{1,2,3,4}UIN K. H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, Pekalongan, Indonesia

e-mail: m.pradipta.arief.niama@mhs.uingusdur.ac.id*¹,
sufyani.fadlan.alaena@mhs.uingusdur.ac.id*²,
khoirunnisa23053@mhs.uingusdur.ac.id*³, faliqul.isbah@uingusdur.ac.id*⁴

Corresponding Author: : m.pradipta.arief.niama@mhs.uingusdur.ac.id

Abstract

The development of digital technology requires innovation in Arabic language teaching for Generation Z, who prefer visual-interactive and multimodal learning methods. This study examines the differences between conventional methods and the characteristics of Gen-Z, as well as the complexity of the Arabic language. This research uses a library research method with a qualitative descriptive approach, where the literature is analyzed using content analysis techniques that include reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results of the discussion show that the application of educational games such as Quizizz, Wordwall, and Educandy is effective in increasing motivation, active participation, and vocabulary mastery. However, challenges arise due to limitations in infrastructure and teachers' digital literacy. In conclusion, the integration of educational games is an integral educational need for Gen-Z in the digital age. This study suggests the Pedagogy-Embedded Game Centric Learning (PEGaCeL) framework and the Contextual Gamification Learning Cycle (SBGK) as comprehensive integrated solutions.

Keywords: Arabic Language Learning, Educational Game, Generation Z, Gamification

INTRODUCTION

Advances in digital technology have brought about significant changes in the world of education, particularly in the selection of strategies and the use of language learning media. Generation Z was born and raised in a digital environment and possesses unique characteristics, such as a high reliance on technology, a preference for visual-interactive learning, and a tendency toward rapid and multimodal learning. These conditions demand educational innovations that are not only focused on content delivery but also capable of enhancing students' active participation and motivation. In Arabic language learning, the challenges faced become increasingly complex because Arabic has distinctive linguistic characteristics, such as a relatively complex morphological and syntactic system, differences between formal (fusha) and informal ('ammiyah) varieties, and the use of non-Latin script. These conditions mean that conventional teaching approaches are often seen as irrelevant and unengaging for Gen-Z learners. One innovative approach that has gained significant traction is the use of educational games or game-based learning as a language learning medium. This approach is believed to provide a fun, meaningful, and learner-centered learning experience, thereby potentially enhancing the effectiveness of Arabic language learning in the digital age (Seemiller, C., & Grace, 2016).

A number of previous studies have examined the use of educational games in language learning, both in the context of foreign language learning in general and Arabic language learning in particular. Findings from various studies indicate that the use of educational games has a positive impact on learning motivation, student engagement, and learning outcomes, particularly in terms of vocabulary acquisition and basic language skills (Hamari, 2014). In the study of Arabic, research conducted by (Rahmawati & Anwar, 2021) A systematic review approach has revealed that digital games are effective in boosting students' interest in learning. Furthermore, other studies confirm that the use of digital media and educational games in Arabic language instruction is an adaptive response to the demands of 21st-century learning, which emphasizes the integration of technology and modern-day skills (Suyatno, 2020). Nevertheless, most of these studies still have limitations, being confined to classroom experiments or focusing solely on a specific type of game without taking into account the specific characteristics of the learner generation. Furthermore, studies that explicitly link the integration of educational games with the characteristics of Generation Z in Arabic language learning remain relatively scarce, particularly those that present a comprehensive and systematic literature review.

The literature review in this study was conducted using a qualitative descriptive approach to thoroughly examine various ideas, findings, and research trends related to the use of educational games in Arabic language learning for Generation Z. This approach allows the researcher to systematically and comprehensively compile and interpret relevant scientific sources, including journal articles and academic books. Through the literature review, the examined

literature is not only presented descriptively but also analyzed qualitatively to uncover conceptual relationships between the characteristics of Gen-Z learners, the principles of educational games, and Arabic language learning strategies. Thus, this approach serves as a theoretical foundation for understanding the evolving patterns of educational game integration in Arabic language learning and forms the basis for formulating conceptual recommendations aligned with learners' needs in the digital age (Snyder, 2019).

Based on a review of various previous studies, it is evident that the use of educational games in Arabic language learning is generally considered effective in increasing students' interest and participation, particularly in vocabulary acquisition and basic language comprehension. However, these studies still exhibit a number of limitations. Many studies place greater emphasis on the practical outcomes of using game-based media without accompanying in-depth conceptual discussions regarding strategies for their integration into comprehensive Arabic language learning. Additionally, the characteristics of Generation Z are often treated merely as a supporting context and have not been optimally utilized as a foundation for designing game-based learning. Research also tends to focus on specific skills, while discussions regarding the integration of educational games into aspects of grammar and productive skills remain relatively scarce. Furthermore, the pedagogical and cultural contexts of Arabic language learning have not been fully accommodated, resulting in the proposed integration of educational games that is not yet comprehensive or contextual (Al-Qahtani, 2019).

Based on these findings, there appears to be a research gap in the form of a limited number of literature reviews that specifically address the integration of educational games into Arabic language learning with a primary focus on the characteristics of Generation Z. Existing research remains scattered and has not yet produced an integrated conceptual framework that can serve as a reference for education practitioners. Therefore, this study aims to conduct a descriptive and qualitative review of various literature discussing the use of educational games in Arabic language learning. The primary focus of this study is to describe forms of educational game integration relevant to Generation Z, analyze the strengths, weaknesses, and challenges of their implementation, and formulate recommendations for an ideal educational game integration model that aligns with the characteristics of Arabic language learners in the digital age. Thus, this study is expected to provide conceptual and practical contributions to the development of innovative and adaptive Arabic language learning tailored to the needs of the digital generation.

METHOD

This study employs a literature review methodology, which involves a series of activities related to collecting literature, reading, taking notes, and analyzing research materials (Zed, 2014). This type of research was chosen because it aligns with the exploratory and analytical nature of the research question. This approach is consistent with a literature review method, which involves selecting relevant

references from academic sources, such as books and journals, to analyze research patterns and challenges (Fikri, 2020). The research was conducted by collecting both primary and secondary literature sources. Once collected, the literature sources were grouped according to the research questions. After categorization, the researcher collected data from library sources (Darmalaksana, 2020). The study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to explore the phenomenon of integrating educational games into Arabic language instruction for Generation Z, in which literature data is thoroughly reviewed to identify patterns, strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and recommendations regarding such integration models (Ma'arif et al., n.d.). The literature review is combined with qualitative analysis to identify patterns in the literature (Haryanto, Huda, & Nafiuddin, 2025).

The data sources used in this study consist of secondary data obtained from reputable scientific literature. The literature search was conducted using openly accessible academic databases such as Google Scholar (Koten, Jufriansah, & Hikmatiar, 2022), Moraref, Portal Garuda, Scopus, Sinta. The keywords used include combinations of terms such as: "educational games for learning Arabic," "game-based learning of the Arabic language for Generation Z," "educational games for Arabic," "integration of educational games for Gen Z," and "Arabic language learning games." Data collection was conducted using the literature review method. The researcher collected relevant literature and then conducted data reduction by selecting articles that specifically addressed three questions: the type of integration, the advantages and disadvantages, and the ideal model for this study.

The data analysis technique employed the Content Analysis method. According to (Miles & Huberman, 1994), this analysis involves three concurrent lines of activity, namely: (1) data reduction, (2) data presentation, and (3) drawing conclusions or verifying findings to formulate an appropriate integration model. Data validity is examined through theoretical triangulation by comparing results from various different sources of literature. This analysis also takes into account cultural and technological contexts, particularly in Arabic language learning for Gen Z, who tend to be more open to interactive digital methods.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Forms of Educational Game Integration in Arabic Language Learning for Gen Z Based on a Literature Review

Educational game integration involves designing and incorporating game elements (game mechanics)—such as points, levels, feedback, and challenges—into the context of Arabic language learning, so that the games are not merely entertainment but become an integral part of the instructional process focused on language learning objectives. This integration is carried out by taking into account language objectives, curriculum content, and learner characteristics (including Gen Z).

Based on a literature review in the article titled “Educational Games as a Strategy for Overcoming Learning Difficulties in Arabic in Lower Grades,” researched by (Ariyanto, 2017) The integration of educational games into Arabic language learning is achieved by positioning games as a core component of the learning strategy, rather than merely an adjunct. Educational games are directly incorporated into the delivery of instructional content—such as the use of demonstrative nouns and the introduction of vocabulary related to objects in the classroom environment—through various activities that actively engage students, including role-playing, singing, vocabulary guessing, and group work. This aligns with other research showing that the practical use of game-based tools, such as puzzles, has been proven to capture interest and facilitate the smooth learning of Arabic (Hikmah, 2023). This approach is based on the concept of learning through play, which allows students to learn Arabic through hands-on experiences in a fun and contextual setting (Samad & Majid, 2025). This type of learning approach is considered to align with the characteristics of Generation Z, who are more responsive to interactive, varied, and non-one-way learning.

In the article (Ihsan, 2024), The integration of educational games into Arabic language learning for Generation Z is achieved by incorporating games directly into the learning process as part of the teaching methodology. Games serve not only as entertainment but are also utilized to help students understand Arabic vocabulary and language skills through interactive and enjoyable activities. Teachers directly link educational games to the Arabic language material being studied, such as vocabulary (mufradat), speaking skills, and language comprehension. Each game is tailored to the learning objectives, so students not only play but also practice using Arabic in meaningful contexts. In this way, games function as practical tools to address students’ difficulties in understanding and using Arabic. This approach encourages student engagement, collaboration, and confidence in using Arabic, making learning more engaging, effective, and aligned with the Gen-Z mindset, which tends to prefer practical and non-monotonous learning.

A literature review of (Najib, 2025a) The integration of educational games into Arabic language learning for Generation Z is generally carried out through a digital-based pedagogical approach and gamification. This approach is designed with the characteristics of Gen Z in mind—as a generation of digital natives who are familiar with technology, interactive visuals, and experience-based learning. This integration is evident in the use of online quiz games such as Quizizz and Wordwall, mobile apps based on vocabulary games, and audio-visual game media that encourage active student participation. Through scoring mechanisms, challenges, and instant feedback, students are not merely recipients of material but are directly engaged in an interactive and enjoyable learning process (Nur Atisyah, 2024).

The integration of educational games into Arabic language learning is not implemented separately from the curriculum but is systematically integrated with

the learning objectives. In practice, games are used as a medium for reinforcing material, a practice tool, a formative assessment tool, and even as icebreakers at the start of lessons. Thus, games do not serve merely as entertainment but become a strategic part of a planned and focused learning process. This approach aligns with the characteristics of Gen-Z, who prefer fast-paced, flexible, visual, and challenging learning, making Arabic language learning feel more relevant and less monotonous.

However, the literature review confirms that the success of integrating educational games depends heavily on systemic support, such as teacher readiness, the availability of digital infrastructure, and game design that aligns with Islamic educational values and context. Without careful pedagogical planning, the use of games risks losing its educational value. Therefore, the literature recommends TPACK-based teacher training, the development of games aligned with core Arabic language competencies, and the implementation of a hybrid learning model that combines conventional and digital methods. With these strategies, educational games not only enhance Gen-Z's motivation to learn but also make a tangible contribution to the comprehensive achievement of language competencies (Arifuddin et al., 2025).

The integration of educational games also serves as an effective pedagogical approach to enhance motivation and learning outcomes in Arabic (Hikmawati et al., 2025). The study's findings indicate that the use of games in instruction can increase student engagement, foster a love of learning, and significantly improve learning outcomes and mastery. Beyond cognitive aspects, game-based learning also develops students' social skills through interaction, collaboration, and confidence in using Arabic. Thus, based on the literature review, the integration of educational games into Arabic language learning for Generation Z focuses not only on mastering language content but also on creating a learning experience that is participatory, collaborative, and meaningful overall.

Advantages, Disadvantages, and Challenges of Implementing Educational Games in Arabic Language Learning for Gen Z

1. The Benefits of Using Educational Games in Arabic Language Instruction for Gen Z

Based on the results of a literature review, the implementation of educational games in Arabic language instruction demonstrates a number of advantages that align with the characteristics of Generation Z as digital learners. Various studies confirm that the use of educational games can enhance motivation and engagement in learning because they present material in an interactive, visual, and challenging manner, making them more appealing than conventional teaching methods. (Hamari, 2014) states that gamification elements such as points, levels, and immediate feedback contribute positively to students' intrinsic motivation and active engagement. In the context of Arabic language learning, educational games have also proven effective in improving vocabulary

mastery and basic language skills through repetitive practice presented in an engaging way. A systematic review conducted (Almelhes, 2024) shows that gamification in Arabic language learning for non-native speakers has a significant impact on vocabulary retention and understanding of language structure.

In addition, several studies have reported that game-based learning can reduce anxiety levels associated with learning a foreign language by creating a more relaxed and learner-centered learning environment. Findings by Rahmawati and Anwar (2021) also confirms that digital games can boost students' interest in learning because they align with Gen Z's fast-paced, multimodal, and technology-based learning styles. Thus, the literature generally identifies educational games as a promising medium for enhancing the effectiveness of Arabic language learning in the digital age. In line with these findings, a systematic literature review by Supriyanto and Nur Toifah (2024) emphasizes that AI-based technologies, including educational games, can personalize learning materials to match each student's individual abilities while also boosting motivation through engaging and enjoyable experiences—two aspects that align perfectly with Generation Z's learning style.

2. Challenges in Implementing Educational Games in Arabic Language Instruction for Gen Z

Although it has various advantages, the literature review also reveals a number of weaknesses in the use of educational games in Arabic language learning. One of the most frequently reported weaknesses is the reliance on the availability of digital devices and a stable internet connection. (Wahab, I., 2023) In their systematic review, the authors emphasize that the effectiveness of game-based learning is heavily influenced by the availability of technological infrastructure; consequently, in schools or madrasahs with limited facilities, the implementation of educational games is less than optimal. Furthermore, the potential for distraction is a major concern, particularly when game design prioritizes entertainment over the goal of learning Arabic.

Some studies have found that students tend to focus more on the mechanics of the game than on understanding the language material if the game is not designed with educational objectives in mind. (Massofia et al., 2023) They emphasize that “monotonous and unvaried instruction prevents teaching objectives from being fully achieved”; however, they also stress that the use of interactive media without a proper pedagogical foundation can cause students to focus more on entertainment than on acquiring language proficiency. Another frequently cited weakness is the limited ability of teachers to manage game-based learning. (Najib, 2025) emphasizes that without adequate training, teachers often struggle to select relevant games, integrate them into Arabic language instruction, and systematically assess student learning outcomes. Therefore, the literature emphasizes that the shortcomings in the implementation of educational games do not lie solely in the medium itself, but

rather in the readiness of the support system and the human resources involved.

3. Challenges in Implementing Educational Games in Arabic Language Instruction for Gen Z

In addition to the strengths and weaknesses, the literature review also identified a number of structural and pedagogical challenges in the implementation of educational games in Arabic language learning for Generation Z. The most frequently cited major challenge is the unequal access to technology and digital infrastructure across various educational institutions. Several studies indicate that limited access to the internet and digital devices poses a serious obstacle to the sustainable implementation of educational games. The next challenge relates to digital literacy and the readiness of Arabic teachers to integrate educational technology. (Suyatno, 2020) emphasizes that 21st-century learning requires teachers not only to master the subject matter but also to be able to implement technology-based learning strategies in a pedagogically sound manner. Another equally important challenge is the integration of educational games with the formal curriculum and established learning outcomes.

In addition, the challenges of implementing game-based learning also relate to teachers' ability to select media that align with the objectives of Arabic language instruction. Research conducted by (Fikri, 2020) emphasizes that the success of educational technology integration is greatly influenced by teachers' pedagogical readiness, particularly in linking digital media to the language competencies to be achieved. Without adequate mastery of digital pedagogy, the use of educational games risks becoming merely an entertainment activity without providing an optimal impact on Arabic language proficiency. Educational games are often not fully aligned with core competencies, learning indicators, and the Arabic language assessment system. Therefore, the literature recommends the need to develop a contextual, targeted, and curriculum-based model for integrating educational games so that their use is not only innovative but also makes a tangible contribution to the achievement of Arabic language competencies among Gen-Z learners.

Recommendations for an Ideal Model of Educational Game Integration in Arabic Language Learning for Gen Z

Based on a systematic review of the scientific literature in the article titled "Integration of Augmented Reality Technology in Arabic Language Learning for Gen Z" by (Aini, Harahap, & Marwanda, 2025), This study shows that the integration of educational games into Arabic language instruction for Generation Z is not merely a technological trend, but an important pedagogical necessity. Gen Z, having grown up in a digital environment, exhibits cognitive behavioral patterns and learning preferences that are significantly different from previous generations. They are a generation that thinks non-linearly, absorbs information in short visual and audiovisual formats, and has low tolerance for static, one-way learning methods.

The main findings of this literature review can be summarized into five substantial pillars.

First, from a psychological and motivational perspective, research consistently indicates that intrinsic elements in educational games—such as challenge mechanisms, gradual progression (leveling), and reward systems—successfully foster a constructive cycle of motivation. Games create a safe environment for students to experience failure as part of the learning process, without the negative stigma that often accompanies it in traditional classrooms. A study by (Ismail, Makhtar, Chulan, & Ismail, 2023) notes that the use of gamification in Arabic language learning reduces language anxiety and boosts students' perseverance in completing complex linguistic tasks. Students no longer perceive "learning" as a burdensome activity, but rather feel they are "playing to achieve a goal," through which the learning process takes place indirectly.

Second, in terms of cognitive development and language learning, the analysis shows that the game is effective in improving long-term memory. The repetition mechanisms embedded at various levels of the game—such as identifying similar vocabulary in different contexts or rearranging sentence structures to solve puzzles—help strengthen spatial and contextual memory. (Hafitria & Asyrofi, 2024) In his study on vocabulary learning, it was shown that vocabulary retention in the group that used an interactive game app was better than in the group that used traditional flashcard memorization after two weeks. Games also facilitate the formation of hypotheses. (Schmidt, 1990), where certain linguistic elements (such as sentence structure or verb forms) become more prominent because they are necessary for progress in the game.

Third, from a pedagogical-contextual perspective, educational games have proven to be an effective bridge between language theory in the classroom and its application in simulated, real-life situations. Unlike structured exercises in textbooks, games can create micro-worlds—such as traditional markets, airports, or home environments—where Arabic serves as a means of communication for survival, negotiation, or problem-solving. This approach aligns with the principles of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL), which emphasizes the connection between course material and students' real-life experiences. In a Gen Z environment where communication largely takes place in the digital world, these digital simulations feel particularly appropriate and relevant.

Fourth, regarding the social-collaborative aspect, the literature indicates that a number of modern educational games incorporate multiplayer elements or leaderboards. These features tap into Gen Z's tendency to stay connected. (Febriani, Thohir, & Wida, 2023) It was observed that a blended learning model that integrates elements of competitive games between groups can increase student engagement and motivation. Cooperation during the games encourages the use of Arabic for interaction among players, both in planning strategies and offering assistance, thereby improving their ability to speak spontaneously.

Fifth, the study also identified significant challenges and shortcomings. One of the main challenges is the risk of an imbalance in edutainment, where the “entertainment” aspect outweighs the “educational” objective. Games that are not well-designed from a pedagogical perspective can result in activities that are intense but yield minimal learning outcomes. Additionally, there are issues regarding the digital divide and teacher preparation. Not all educational institutions have adequate facilities, and not all teachers possess the digital literacy skills and pedagogical understanding needed to select and effectively integrate games into Lesson Plans (RPP). Teachers are often confined to the role of technical managers rather than reflective learning facilitators.

The comprehensive findings above point to a necessity: the integration of educational games must shift from a paradigm focused solely on “tools” to one centered on a specifically designed “learning environment.” To meet the learning characteristics and needs of Gen Z and address the identified challenges, a holistic, flexible, and pedagogy-oriented integration model is required.

Recommended Integration Model: Pedagogy-Embedded Game-Centric Learning (PEGaCeL) Framework

The PEGaCeL model is designed as an integration framework that places pedagogical design at its core (embedded pedagogy), with game-based experiences as the primary focus (game-centric) within a comprehensive learning cycle. This model consists of three dynamic, interconnected, and iterative phases, rather than rigid, linear stages.

Phase 1: Pedagogical Grounding & Context Immersion

This phase applies schema activation theory in cognitive psychology and the principle of anticipatory sets to the learning process. This ensures that the game is not viewed as a separate activity, but rather as a simulated extension of an existing context.

Fase 2: Game Based Experiential & Adaptive Learning

This phase is based on the pillars of experiential learning theory (Kolb, 2014) and flow theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). A well-designed game creates a state of flow where challenges match skill levels, fully engaging students (Ismail, Makhtar, Chulan, & Ismail, 2023). Findings regarding increased motivation and participation are most evident at this stage.

Fase 3: Metacognitive Reflection & Creative Production

This stage is the core of the PEGaCeL model, ensuring that learning does not stop at the level of procedural skills in the game but advances to conceptual and creative levels. It applies the principles of metacognition and constructivism (Folk, 1981), where learning is most effective when students actively create artifacts intended to be understood by others. This stage addresses the “edutainment” challenge by transforming the play experience into deeper, transferable knowledge.

Integrating educational games for Gen Z into Arabic language learning—if focused solely on the technical aspects of the applications—will overlook their transformative potential. The proposed PEGaCeL model provides a philosophical-practical framework that places games at the core of a rich and meaningful learning cycle. This model is specifically designed to address the cognitive characteristics of Gen Z (a desire for interaction, narrative, and immediate feedback) while grounded in strong pedagogical principles (contextual, reflective, and constructive). Thus, educational games do not merely serve as “sugarcoating” for the learning process but also act as a catalyst for delivering an authentic, in-depth Arabic language learning experience that aligns with the rhythm of the digital native generation.

Based on a literature review conducted by (Rezi, Quintana, Dominic, & Darius, 2023), found that the Educandy platform is an empirically valid educational game tool that can be applied in teaching Arabic to Generation Z. An analysis of the study conducted by (Rezi, Quintana, Dominic, & Darius, 2023) and other supporting studies reveal important findings that form the scientific basis for this integration. First, regarding the validation and feasibility of the medium, the study (Rezi, Quintana, Dominic, & Darius, 2023) The study, which applied the ADDIE development model (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation), showed that the Educandy platform significantly meets the standards for a valid and appropriate learning medium. Validation conducted by experts in media, content, and language on Educandy-based learning materials yielded satisfactory scores.

Specifically, of the 40 students who served as respondents, 45.5% indicated Strongly Agree (SS) and 35.7% indicated Agree (S) regarding the linguistic aspects and their interest in this platform (Rezi, Quintana, Dominic, & Darius, 2023, p. hal 59). This confirms that Educandy’s bright, engaging interface—complete with a variety of word games (such as word searches, hangman, anagrams, and crossword puzzles)—naturally aligns with Gen Z’s visual preferences and exploration-based learning style. They tend to connect more quickly with content that not only provides information but also offers a fun learning experience.

Second, regarding the impact on motivation and learning participation, the literature indicates that Educandy serves as a driver of intrinsic motivation. This platform has successfully transformed students’ perception of Arabic language exercises and assessments from something boring and stressful into an activity they look forward to. Game mechanics such as quizzes, matching pairs, and word puzzles—which can be organized into eight different game variations from the same set of questions—create variety and challenges that maintain student engagement (Rezi, Quintana, Dominic, & Darius, 2023, p. 61). In the context of Gen Z, who have shorter attention spans but are skilled at multitasking in the digital world, this variety is highly effective in preventing boredom and maintaining focus during learning.

Third, in terms of educational effectiveness and improved learning outcomes, this study shows that Educandy is not merely a tool for entertainment, but also a pedagogically organized medium for achieving learning objectives. Repetition of

material through various types of games supports the strengthening of long-term memory and deeper understanding. Students not only memorize vocabulary (mufradat) but also practice using it in various game contexts, which ultimately enhances learning outcomes (Nurjannah, Dea, & Anwar, 2022). The flexibility in study schedules offered by Educandy also supports self-paced learning, which is highly valued by Gen Z, who crave control over their learning process.

Fourth, in terms of practicality and accessibility, Educandy stands out for the ease of access it offers. As a responsive web platform, Educandy can be accessed anytime and anywhere using a smartphone, laptop, or computer, as long as there is an internet connection. This universal accessibility addresses the challenges of learning in the digital age, namely the need for materials that can be accessed outside the time and place of traditional classrooms. For teachers, this platform also makes it easy to design, distribute, and monitor student learning activities without requiring complex programming skills. However, the study also identified several key observations and challenges. Although the majority of responses were positive, a number of students (approximately 14.3%–36.6% on specific aspects) expressed disagreement or doubt, particularly regarding the alignment of certain materials provided by the researchers with the Arabic language curriculum (Rezi, Quintana, Dominic, & Darius, 2023, p. 58).

This suggests that the success of integration depends heavily on the design of appropriate pedagogical content, not just on the platform used. Game content must align closely with educational objectives, difficulty levels, and the cultural context of the Arabic language. Another challenge is the reliance on internet access and device ownership, which can be a barrier in regions with limited digital infrastructure.

These findings collectively reinforce the argument that the integration of educational games like Educandy into Arabic language instruction for Gen Z is not merely an alternative but a pedagogical necessity in the digital age. However, to maximize its potential and address the identified challenges, a systematic and comprehensive integration model is required. This model should serve as a guide for teachers in transforming Educandy from merely a “game tool” into a “meaningful learning environment.” Based on a synthesis of research findings and modern learning theories, an integration model named the “Contextual Gamification Learning Cycle (CGLC) for Arabic” is proposed.”

Recommendations for the Contextual Gamified Learning Cycle (SBGK) Model

The SBGK model is designed as a recurring cycle with four interconnected phases: Contextualization, Gamification, Reflection, and Transfer. This model places educational games (in this case, Educandy) at the center of the Gamification phase, but begins and ends with pedagogical activities that ensure learning remains contextual, reflective, and practical.

Phase One: Contextualization

This phase is crucial for activating students' prior knowledge schemas and providing clear guidance. This aligns with the principles of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL), which emphasizes the importance of connecting content to students' real-life experiences. Without this context, the games on Educandy risk becoming mechanical activities, where students merely match words without understanding their functions and nuances of usage—a weakness identified in the research (Rezi, Quintana, Dominic, & Darius, 2023).

Phase Two: Gamification (with Educandy)

This phase leverages the potential of game-based learning and gamification. According to (Subhash & Cudney, 2018) Gamification elements such as scores, levels, and immediate feedback can significantly boost participation and motivation. With its engaging design and gameplay, Educandy perfectly creates a sense of “flow.” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) in which students are fully engaged in the learning process. The results of the study (Rezi, Quintana, Dominic, & Darius, 2023) which empirically demonstrates an increase in student interest and enthusiasm, thereby supporting the success of this phase.

Phase Three: Reflection

This phase serves as the primary defense against the accusation that educational games are superficial. Metacognitive reflection is a crucial process in adult learning (andragogy) and constructivism, enabling learners to deepen their understanding, identify knowledge gaps, and design their own learning strategies (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1985). Without this phase, learning from the game may not be effectively transferred to long-term memory or to new situations.

Phase 4: Transfer and Production

This phase ensures that learning achieves the ultimate goal of language proficiency: genuine communication. It aligns with the Communicative Language Teaching approach in language instruction, which emphasizes the ability to use language to function effectively in social contexts (Richard & Rodgers, 2014). Through the creation of tangible products, Gen Z students—as a generation of content creators—feel that learning Arabic aligns with their digital identity.

The Educandy platform has been empirically proven to be an effective and suitable educational game medium for boosting Gen Z's motivation and engagement in learning Arabic. However, its full potential can only be realized if it is integrated into a more comprehensive pedagogical framework. The proposed Contextual Gamified Learning Cycle (SBGK) model offers a solution to the ad-hoc and fragmented paradigm of game utilization. By positioning Educandy at the core of a cycle that begins with contextualization, is enriched by reflection, and concludes with creative production, Arabic language learning for Generation Z can become a process that is not only enjoyable and engaging but also deep, meaningful, and focused on authentic communication skills.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that the integration of educational games into Arabic language learning for Generation Z is a pedagogical necessity that is inseparable from the characteristics of learners in the digital age. Generation Z prefers learning that is visual, interactive, fast-paced, and experience-based; consequently, conventional learning approaches tend to be less effective in addressing the linguistic complexities of the Arabic language. The results of the literature review indicate that educational games contribute positively to increased motivation, active engagement, and mastery of vocabulary and basic language skills. However, previous studies have generally focused on the technical aspects of media use or short-term practical outcomes, without developing a deep conceptual understanding of game integration strategies that align with the characteristics of Generation Z and the comprehensive objectives of Arabic language learning.

The uniqueness and contribution of this research lie in its effort to synthesize various findings from the literature into a more systematic and pedagogical integration framework, positioning educational games as a core component of the learning environment rather than merely a supplementary tool. Through the formulation of integration models such as Pedagogy-Embedded Game Centric Learning (PEGaCeL) and the Contextual Gamification Learning Cycle (SBGK), this study offers an approach that connects context, gameplay experience, metacognitive reflection, and the transfer of language skills. Practically, these findings provide conceptual guidance for teachers and Arabic language learning developers to design meaningful, contextual, and curriculum-aligned game-based learning. Theoretically, this study enriches research on Arabic language learning by placing the characteristics of Generation Z at the center of analysis, making it relevant and worthy of note in the development of Arabic language learning in the digital age.

REFERENCES

- Al-Qahtani, A. Y. (2019). The effectiveness of using games in teaching Arabic language to non-native speakers. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation*, 2(3), 1–8.
- Almelhes, S. A. (2024). Gamification for teaching the Arabic language to non-native speakers: a systematic literature review. In *Frontiers in Education*. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2024.1371955>
- Arifuddin, N., Wiranegara, D. A., Ma'arif, A. S., Junaidi, M. R., & Bakhiet, B. M. (2025). Integrating Life Skills in Arabic Language Education: Enhancing Bilingual University Graduates' Employability and Competencies. *Jurnal Al Bayan: Jurnal Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab*, 17(1), 276–293.
- Ariyanto, A. (2017). *Game Edukatif Sebagai Upaya Mengatasi Kesulitan Belajar Bahasa Arab Kelas Rendah*. 01(02), 78–90.
- Fikri, S. (2020). إشكا ليات تحديد معاني الكلمات المترادفات في غمالية الترجمة. *Lugawiyyat*, 1–20.

- Hamari, J., Koivisto, J., & Sarsa, H. (2014). Does gamification work? A literature review of empirical studies. *Proceedings of the 47th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*.
- Hikmah, N. (2023). Peran Language Immersion Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab. In *Lugawiyat* (Vol. 5, Issue 1, pp. 1–12). <https://doi.org/10.18860/lg.v5i1.18060>
- Hikmawati, S. A., Fatim, A. N., Hamid, M. A., Ma'arif, A. S., & Bakhet, B. M. (2025). Kahoot Gamification: Fostering Critical Thinking in Arabic Listening Comprehension. *Alsina: Journal of Arabic Studies*, 7(1), 29–62.
- Ihsan, A. N. (2024). PENERAPAN MEDIA PEMBELAJARAN GAME EDUKATIF BERBASIS WORDWALL TERHADAP HASIL BELAJAR BAHASA INDONESIA KELAS VII G MTs NEGERI 1 BONE. 4(1).
- Ma'arif, A. S., Walenta, A. S., Rustiyana, B., Ningsih, Y. R., Rachmawati, D., & Hakim, H. (n.d.). *Metodologi Penelitian Kuantitatif dan Kualitatif*. Agam: PT Srikandi Book Press.
- Massofia, F. D., Khoirunnisa, D. A., Dinanti, S. D., Huda, M., & Rahmawati, R. (2023). Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Menggunakan Smart Apps Creator Untuk Kelas VII Madrasah Tsanawiyah. *Lugawiyat*, 5(2), 123–133. <https://doi.org/10.18860/lg.v5i2.23501>
- Najib, A. F. R. (2025a). Integrasi Game Edukatif dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab : *Jurnal Teknologi Pendidikan*, 24(2), 774–787.
- Najib, A. F. R. (2025b). INTEGRASI GAME EDUKATIF DALAM PEMBELAJARAN BAHASA ARAB: ANALISIS EFEKTIVITAS, TANTANGAN, DAN STRATEGI IMPLEMENTASI. *EDUTECH*. <https://doi.org/10.17509/e.v24i2.80544>
- Nur Atisyah, A. M. I. (2024). Pendampingan Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Melalui Game Edukatif Quizizz Di Sekolah MTsN 1 Kota Palangka Raya. *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Bangsa*, 2 (10), 4435–4440.
- Rahmawati, R., & Anwar, K. (2021). Pemanfaatan game edukasi digital dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab: Tinjauan sistematis. *Arabiyat: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab Dan Kebahasaaraban*, 8(2), 215–230.
- Rahmawati, R., & Anwar, M. (2021). Digital game-based learning in Arabic language learning: A systematic review. *Journal of Arabic Education*.
- Samad, S., & Majid, A. (2025). Efektivitas Permainan Edukatif Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Effectiveness Of Educational Games In Arabic Language Learning kedudukan istimewa , terutama dalam ranah pendidikan agama . Bahasa ini menjadi bahasa. 8(11), 7019–7025. <https://doi.org/10.56338/jks.v8i11.9213>
- Seemiller, C., & Grace, M. (2016). *Generation Z goes to college*. Jossey-Bass.
- Snyder, H. (2019). Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines. *Journal of Business Research*, 333–33.

- Supriyanto, S., & Toifah, N. (2024). Efektifitas Penggunaan Artificial Intelligence (Ai) Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Di Era Society 5.0: Systematic Literature Review. *Lugawiyat*, 6(2), 42–54.
<https://doi.org/10.18860/lg.v6i2.29713>
- Suyatno, S., Wibowo, A., & Nurhadi, N. (2020). Pembelajaran bahasa Arab abad ke-21: Integrasi teknologi dan penguatan literasi digital. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab*, 7(1), 45–60.
- Suyatno, et al. (2020). Digital learning transformation in 21st-century education. *International Journal of Instruction*.
- Wahab, I., et al. (2023). Using digital learning methods to expand students' vocabulary: A systematic review. *Research and Innovation in Language Learning*.