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FROM CLIL PRINCIPLES TO TRACEABLE ACADEMIC ARABIC UNITS: A DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC DESIGN FRAMEWORK

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Arabic for Academic Purposes (AAP) increasingly needs to prepare learners for disciplinary argumentation rather than grammatical recognition alone. Yet integrating disciplinary content with language instruction is not sufficient unless curriculum designers can demonstrate how particular texts, discourse resources, intellectual operations, and assessment evidence fit together. This conceptual study critically synthesizes scholarship on content and language integrated learning (CLIL), academic literacies, disciplinary discourse, and Arabic pedagogy. Through purposive theoretical sampling, concept comparison, and design-oriented synthesis, it develops a traceable unit-design framework organized around the chain from academic participation needs to disciplinary problems, genre and language mapping, scaffolded reasoning tasks, and integrated evidence of learning. The analysis distinguishes this proposal from existing CLIL-based AAP models by specifying alignment tests, boundary conditions, and potential failure modes rather than merely adding a sample teaching unit. Illustrative matrices, task sequences, and an assessment blueprint show how the framework could inform curriculum design for learners encountering modern academic Arabic alongside classical textual traditions. These are conceptual outputs, not measured improvements in proficiency. Future design-based and classroom studies should examine feasibility, disciplinary transfer, learner workload, and the validity of integrated assessment.

Keywords: *Arabic for Academic Purposes, CLIL, academic literacy, Arabic language teaching, discipline specific learning*

INTRODUCTION

The teaching of Arabic to non native speakers has entered a new stage. International student mobility, Arabic medium Islamic higher education, and the growing use of Arabic in academic networks have created needs that exceed ordinary language proficiency. Learners no longer need Arabic only to communicate in daily situations or to recognize grammatical patterns. They need Arabic to read arguments, compare concepts, write literature reviews, understand lectures, participate in seminars, and build disciplinary knowledge. This shift requires a clearer pedagogical orientation because many Arabic programs still place grammatical mastery at the center of instruction while academic literacy receives less systematic attention. Classical grammar, morphology, and syntax remain important, but they cannot stand alone when students must learn through Arabic in universities and institutes (Ryding & K., 2013; Wahba et al., 2014).

Arabic for Academic Purposes, or AAP, offers a way to answer this need. AAP refers to the teaching of Arabic that prepares learners to function in academic settings. Its target is not general fluency alone. It includes academic reading, academic vocabulary, scholarly writing, lecture comprehension, disciplinary discussion, citation practice, and control of the rhetorical patterns used in academic Arabic. This orientation is close to English for Academic Purposes, which has developed a strong research tradition on the relationship between language, discourse, genre, and disciplinary communities (Belcher & D, 2009; Hyland & K, 2016; Wingate & U, 2015). Yet AAP remains less mature as a curriculum field. It has not developed enough practical models that guide teachers in connecting Arabic instruction with the disciplinary content students study in higher education (Fatoni & A, 2019; Mohamad et al., 2022).

Recent research in Arabic education has already shown a movement toward more contextual, digital, comparative, and discipline aware learning. Studies on Arabic learning in Malaysian and Indonesian higher education highlight differences in curriculum structure, technology use, language environment, and productive skill development (Siregar et al., 2025). Research on Arabic curriculum adaptation in pesantren based madrasahs also shows that effective language learning depends on how institutions connect national curriculum demands with local knowledge traditions (Bakiruddin et al., 2025). These studies indicate that Arabic language education cannot be separated from institutional setting, disciplinary expectation, and learner trajectory. The same logic applies to AAP in Arab higher education. Students need a curriculum that treats Arabic as a medium for academic participation, not merely as a system of forms.

Content and Language Integrated Learning offers an important theoretical bridge. CLIL is usually defined as an educational approach that integrates subject matter learning and language learning in one instructional process (Coyle et al., 2010, 2021; Dalton-Puffer & C, 2011). It does not reduce language to vocabulary lists, nor does it treat content as a decorative topic for language practice. CLIL works when students process meaningful content while using the target language to think, discuss, write, and solve problems. This dual focus has encouraged studies on cognition, discourse, genre, multilingual classrooms, technology integration, and assessment (Cenoz et al., 2014; Martínez-Soto et al., 2023; Ruiz Hidalgo & & Ortega-Sánchez, 2023) .

The relevance of CLIL for Arabic education has become clearer in recent studies. Al-Lahham and Y. (2025) proposes that Arabic for academic purposes can be designed through CLIL principles so that learners develop academic Arabic while working with disciplinary knowledge. (Annova et al., 2025) examine CLIL in the MBKM curriculum and show that Arabic learning can be made more relevant when language tasks connect with broader academic and professional goals. Iqbal et al. (2025) report the implementation and

challenges of CLIL in pesantren contexts, where content knowledge and Arabic proficiency often develop together through religious texts and classroom interaction. Khafshoh et al. (2025) add another dimension by showing how translanguaging in CLIL programs can help multilingual learners access content while gradually building target language competence.

Despite these promising studies, the integration between AAP and CLIL still needs a more organized framework. Many discussions present CLIL as an attractive approach, but teachers often need a concrete design tool that explains what content to select, what academic language to teach, what tasks to use, how cognition should be developed, and how learning should be assessed. Without such a framework, CLIL can be reduced to using Arabic texts in class without sufficient language support, or to teaching vocabulary from academic topics without genuine disciplinary thinking. AAP requires a stronger model because learners face complex academic tasks. They must read dense texts, identify arguments, understand conceptual terminology, evaluate evidence, and produce academic responses in Arabic. (Fatoni & A, 2019; Hyland & K, 2016)

The immediate curricular problem is not simply that Arabic learners know too little vocabulary. A learner may identify the grammatical subject and predicate of a research paragraph yet remain unable to distinguish an author's claim from a reported position, identify the warrant linking evidence to a conclusion, or explain why two disciplinary definitions diverge. Those operations are routine in university reading but rarely visible in a syllabus organized by grammatical chapters. Conversely, a syllabus organized only by themes can leave the linguistic mechanisms of scholarly reasoning implicit. The design problem is therefore one of accountable alignment: what exactly should the learner become able to do, which Arabic resources make that performance possible, and what artifact would substantiate it? Genre-informed literacy research makes these questions unavoidable because the conventions of academic knowledge are neither content-free nor identical across fields (Hyland & K, 2016; Mohamad et al., 2022; Wingate & U, 2015)

The closest contribution to the present problem is Al-Lahham (2025), who proposes foundations and criteria for CLIL-oriented AAP materials and demonstrates a unit in political science. That work establishes the plausibility of the integration and narrows the space for claiming novelty. This study therefore does not present CLIL in AAP as a new discovery, and it does not assume that one additional example constitutes a conceptual advance. Instead, it addresses a different level of the design problem: the explanatory and evaluative links among learning needs, disciplinary knowledge, text selection, discourse functions, mediated activity, and assessment evidence. In that sense, the proposed framework is both a design instrument and a critical test of whether a purportedly integrated unit is integrated in substance (Al-Lahham & Y., 2025; Coyle et al., 2021; Lo et al., 2018).

A second tension emerges from the specific language ecology of Arabic. A university entrant may already recognize a classical exegetical construction but find modern research abstracts unfamiliar; another entrant may manage contemporary spoken interaction but struggle to extract the argument of an unvowelled scholarly paragraph. These are not simply differences in overall proficiency. They represent different relations among register, genre, disciplinary socialization, and textual tradition. Arabic curriculum debates concerning dialect integration and the transition from foundational language competence to advanced reading suggest that a single linear ladder of grammar is an inadequate organizing principle (Al-Batal & M, 2018; Ryding & K., 2013; Solehudin & M, 2025). The

framework developed here consequently treats genre and scholarly action as design decisions, not as end-of-course enrichment.

Against this background, three questions organize the analysis. First, which design relationships are necessary to translate the four CLIL dimensions into observable Arabic academic participation? Second, how can a teacher detect a mismatch when disciplinary content, language demands, cognitive tasks, and assessment are only nominally integrated? Third, under which learner and institutional conditions does a proposed unit require adaptation rather than direct transfer? The article answers these questions by advancing the claim that effective integration must be traceable in both directions: from a disciplinary purpose to its linguistic and pedagogical supports, and from the submitted learning product back to the knowledge and discourse performances it was intended to demonstrate. (Fatoni & A, 2019; Hyland & K, 2016).

This article therefore aims to reconceptualize Arabic for Academic Purposes through CLIL based discipline specific learning units. The article does not claim to test a classroom intervention. It develops a conceptual framework through synthesis of relevant literature and proposes a design matrix that can guide curriculum developers and instructors. The central argument is that AAP should be treated as integrated academic literacy. It should connect content, language, cognition, culture, authentic tasks, and assessment in one coherent learning unit. This model can support non native Arabic learners who plan to study in Arabic medium universities or who need Arabic to access Islamic studies, education, economics, law, social sciences, and other academic fields. (Fatoni & A, 2019; Hyland & K, 2016).

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative conceptual research design. A conceptual design is suitable when the main objective is to clarify a problem, synthesize theories, and construct a framework that can guide later empirical studies. The object of analysis in this article is not classroom behavior or student test scores. The object is the relationship between Arabic for Academic Purposes, CLIL pedagogy, academic literacy, and discipline specific unit design. The study therefore works through analytic synthesis rather than field measurement (Cenoz et al., 2014; Dalton-Puffer & C, 2011).

The literature base was selected through purposive conceptual sampling. The selection focused on four bodies of literature. The first body concerns CLIL, including its theoretical foundation, the 4Cs framework, discourse orientation, and recent systematic reviews. The second body concerns academic language and academic literacy, especially studies that explain how learners gain access to knowledge through disciplinary discourse. The third body concerns Arabic language pedagogy for non native speakers, including Arabic for academic purposes, Arabic curriculum development, and higher education Arabic learning. The fourth body concerns recent Indonesian and international studies that show how CLIL, project based learning, curriculum adaptation, digital learning, and translanguaging shape language education. (Cenoz et al., 2014; Dalton-Puffer, 2011).

The study prioritized peer reviewed journal articles, academic books, and recent studies with clear bibliographic information. Because the article targets Lughawiyyat, recent articles from Lughawiyyat were also included to connect the framework with the journal's focus on Arabic language, literature, and education. These articles were not used as decoration. They were used to situate the proposed framework within current conversations on Arabic curriculum, syntax mastery, kitab reading, qiraah development, and comparative Arabic learning in higher education (Bakiruddin et al., 2025; Khasanah et al., 2025; Masruroh et al., 2025; Siregar et al., 2025; Solehudin & M, 2025).

The review was deliberately treated as a configurative conceptual synthesis rather than a systematic review claiming exhaustive coverage. Sources were selected because they supplied a theoretically distinct construct, an Arabic-specific contextual constraint, a design example, or a counterargument to uncomplicated CLIL transfer. The corpus includes foundational books alongside recent articles, but neither the number of database records screened nor inter-rater agreement is reported because no reproducible database screening or team-coding procedure was conducted for this manuscript. Accordingly, the analysis can justify a theoretically coherent design proposition, not a quantitative statement about the prevalence or effectiveness of CLIL interventions. This distinction follows the broader demand to separate curriculum design arguments from intervention outcomes (Cenoz et al., 2014; Dalton-Puffer & C, 2011).

Each retained concept was interrogated through four questions: what educational problem does it name; what is its unit of analysis; which design decision follows from it; and what classroom evidence could falsify an overly optimistic use of that concept? For example, a reference to academic genre was retained only if it could be translated into text selection, rhetorical-move noticing, model comparison, or writing criteria. Likewise, translanguaging was not treated as a universal solution but as a possible scaffold whose value depends on whether learners subsequently undertake meaningful Arabic production (García et al., 2014; Khafshoh et al., 2025). This procedure enabled analytic contrast between compatible and competing assumptions.

The synthesis then used a negative-case logic. A unit based on authentic articles could still fail to teach academic literacy if students merely translate terms; a discussion-rich task could still fail to cultivate disciplinary understanding if the problem is not conceptually demanding; and a combined content-language rubric could still conceal weak construct validity if its categories double-count the same behavior. The resulting framework was refined around explicit points at which such failures can be diagnosed. No interviews, learner performance data, or classroom observations were generated, and none are implied by the illustrative Arabic examples or the matrices that follow. (Cenoz et al., 2014; Dalton-Puffer & C, 2011)

The analysis followed thematic synthesis. First, core concepts were identified from the selected literature, including content integration, academic Arabic, genre awareness, cognitive engagement, scaffolding, cultural convention, authentic texts, collaborative tasks, and assessment. Second, these concepts were compared across CLIL, EAP, AAP, and Arabic pedagogy. Third, the concepts were reorganized into a framework that can be used in instructional unit design. Fourth, the framework was translated into practical design elements, including a matrix, a sample unit, and an assessment blueprint. This process allowed the study to move from theory to pedagogical design without making unsupported empirical claims.

Conceptual trustworthiness here rests on the explicit comparison of foundational and recent accounts and on the disclosure of analytical limits, not on statistical reliability or claims of comprehensive source retrieval. Core references provide definitions and counterpositions, while Arabic pedagogy studies supply contextual constraints. Bibliographic entries and digital identifiers require a final publisher-level check before submission; the presence of a DOI in this manuscript is not, on its own, evidence of a journal's Scopus indexing status (Al-Lahham & Y., 2025; Cenoz et al., 2014; Hyland & K, 2016).

Table 1. Analytical categories used in the conceptual synthesis

Category	Main focus	Role in framework
AAP orientation	Academic reading, writing, lecture comprehension, seminar participation, and disciplinary discourse	Defines the target competence that learners need in higher education
CLIL principles	Content, communication, cognition, and culture	Provides the integration logic for designing learning units
Arabic academic language	Terminology, genre, argument structure, connectors, citation language, and formal register	Transforms grammar and vocabulary into academic language resources
Instructional scaffolding	Text adaptation, guided reading, collaborative tasks, and staged production	Helps learners move from supported comprehension to independent academic output
Assessment	Content accuracy, language control, reasoning, and communicative participation	Measures academic participation rather than isolated language form

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reconceptualizing AAP as integrated academic literacy

The first result of the synthesis is that AAP should be positioned as an integrated academic literacy program. In many language classrooms, academic Arabic is often understood as difficult vocabulary, formal grammar, or reading classical and modern scholarly texts. These components are necessary, but they do not fully describe academic participation. Academic literacy requires students to understand how knowledge is organized, argued, questioned, and communicated within a discipline. A student in Islamic studies must read concepts, legal reasoning, textual evidence, and scholarly disagreement. A student in education must read theory, policy, method, data, and pedagogical implications. A student in economics must read concepts, models, cases, and institutional arguments. These academic tasks cannot be learned through grammar exercises alone. (Coyle et al., 2010; Wingate & U, 2015)

The proposed reconceptualization starts from the view that language is a medium of disciplinary meaning. This view aligns with academic literacy research, which sees writing and reading as social practices embedded in disciplinary communities (Hyland, 2016; Wingate, 2015). It also aligns with CLIL, which treats content and language as mutually supportive rather than competing goals (Coyle et al., 2010; Dalton-Puffer & C, 2011). In the AAP context, the question is not whether teachers should teach language or content. The question is how teachers can select content that gives purpose to language learning and how they can teach language that opens access to content.

This reconceptualization changes the role of the Arabic teacher. The teacher is not only a grammar explainer or text translator. The teacher becomes a designer of academic participation. This role requires sensitivity to disciplinary texts, academic genres, learner proficiency, and institutional expectations. For example, teaching a text on Islamic education should not stop at explaining vocabulary and parsing sentences. It should help students identify the problem, the author's position, the evidence used, the structure of the argument, and the language patterns that make the text academic. When this process works, learners gain both Arabic competence and disciplinary literacy. (Coyle et al., 2021; Wingate & U, 2015).

The synthesis also shows that AAP must address the transition from language courses to academic study. Students who pass general Arabic courses may still struggle when they enter lectures or read research articles. This problem appears in many academic language settings because everyday proficiency does not automatically produce academic discourse competence (Belcher & D, 2009; Hyland & K, 2016). AAP therefore needs bridge units. These units introduce students to disciplinary vocabulary, genres, rhetorical moves, reading strategies, note taking, seminar language, and academic writing before students face full disciplinary courses. CLIL offers the pedagogical mechanism for building this bridge.

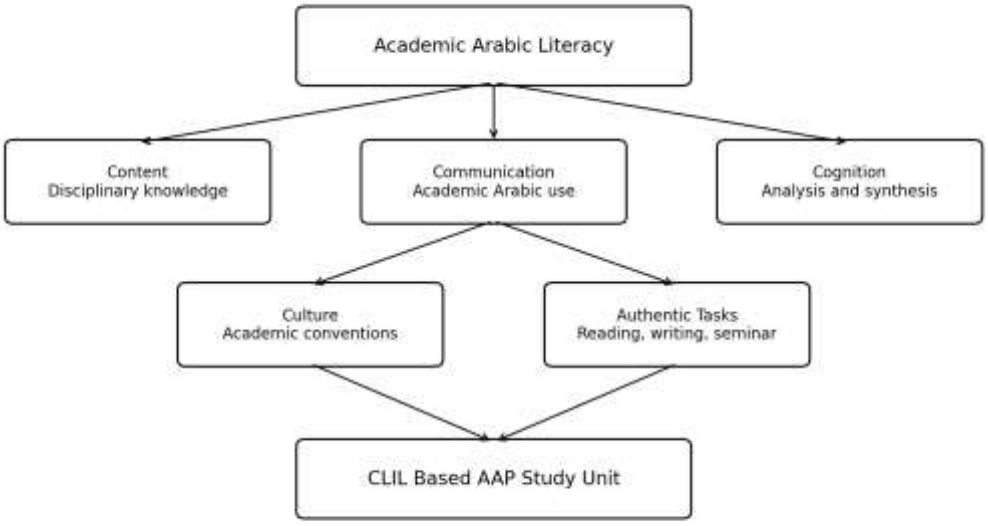


Figure 1. Conceptual framework for CLIL based Arabic for Academic Purposes

This shift also changes what counts as a unit objective. "Understand a scholarly text" is too indeterminate to guide design or assessment. A more defensible objective specifies an operation, a genre, and a disciplinary object: for example, "distinguish definitions of curriculum adaptation across two Arabic research abstracts and justify the distinction using textual evidence." The stated operation entails an observable claim; the genre indicates the likely rhetorical organization; and the disciplinary object determines which distinctions matter. Only then can an instructor identify the vocabulary, connective expressions, grammatical relations, and forms of attribution that need to be taught. The design is traceable because a change in the objective should lead to a defensible change in the texts and activities (Hyland & K, 2016; Mohamad et al., 2022; Wingate & U, 2015).

A persistent hazard is to mistake lexical authenticity for disciplinary authenticity. An extract containing specialized nouns may look academic but offer no accessible intellectual

problem. Conversely, a relatively short passage can be academically demanding if it presents a contestable definition, competing interpretation, or methodological claim. The deciding factor is not the mere density of technical terms but whether students need to use Arabic to produce a justified reading. This criterion matters particularly for learners whose prior instruction emphasizes decoding and translation. It allows teachers to keep morphological and syntactic analysis where these contribute to interpretation while refusing the assumption that exhaustive parsing automatically produces critical academic reading (Masruroh et al., 2025; Ryding & K., 2013).

A further consequence is that academic literacy should be situated without becoming fixed to one elite model of scholarly expression. Research articles, university lectures, seminar exchanges, and heritage texts impose different but intersecting expectations. AAP can prepare students to recognize these differences, not simply imitate the surface vocabulary of journal writing. In settings where inherited textual authority is important, students may need to identify the boundaries between citation of an authoritative text, interpretation of that text, and a contemporary research claim. Teaching these boundaries is a linguistic as well as epistemic undertaking and provides a stronger rationale for linking discourse functions to disciplinary tasks (Al-Batal & M, 2018; Coyle et al., 2021; Wahba et al., 2014).

Table 5. Conceptual gap and proposed contribution (author-developed synthesis)

Existing literature	Unresolved design question	Proposed response
CLIL four-Cs models (Coyle et al., 2010)	How to identify nominal rather than substantive integration	Bidirectional alignment audit
AAP unit proposal (Al-Lahham, 2025)	How to diagnose gaps among goal, texts, tasks, and assessment	Five-link traceability chain
Genre-oriented literacy (Hyland, 2016; Wingate, 2015)	Which scholarly moves warrant explicit instruction in Arabic	Genre-to-language mapping
Arabic contextual scholarship (Ryding, 2013; Solehudin, 2025)	How to address different backgrounds and registers	Boundary conditions and graduated scaffolds

Adapting the 4Cs framework for Arabic academic learning

The second result is the need to adapt the 4Cs framework to the specific demands of Arabic academic learning. The original CLIL framework connects content, communication, cognition, and culture (Coyle et al., 2010). In AAP, these four elements remain useful, but they require a careful interpretation. Content refers to academic knowledge selected from the learners' target field. It cannot be random topics chosen only because they are interesting. It should reflect the texts and concepts learners will meet in higher education, such as curriculum theory, Islamic legal reasoning, Arabic linguistics, educational psychology, economic ethics, or social research methods.

Communication refers to academic Arabic use. It includes terminology, collocation, grammatical resources, genre structures, and interactional expressions. In an AAP unit, communication is not limited to speaking practice. It includes reading research abstracts, summarizing an argument, asking clarification questions, presenting a concept, comparing two scholarly views, writing a short analytical paragraph, and responding to peer comments. These activities make language visible as a tool for academic work. They also protect CLIL from a common

weakness, namely assuming that learners will acquire the target language automatically after exposure to content (Coyle et al., 2021; Wingate & U, 2015)

Cognition refers to the thinking demands of academic learning. Learners must move from comprehension to analysis, evaluation, synthesis, and production. This element is critical because academic Arabic cannot be reduced to decoding text. Students need to classify concepts, identify relationships, evaluate evidence, and connect theory with cases. CLIL research has long emphasized that meaningful content supports deeper cognitive engagement (Dalton-Puffer & C, 2011; Ruiz Hidalgo & & Ortega-Sánchez, 2023). In AAP, cognitive engagement helps learners process Arabic as a language of reasoning, not only as a language of information.

Culture refers to the academic and sociocultural conventions that shape Arabic scholarly communication. This includes how scholars cite authorities, introduce disagreement, use politeness in seminar discussion, define technical concepts, and build knowledge through classical and modern references. In Arabic academic contexts, culture also includes the relation between turath, modern scholarship, and institutional expectations. Research on kitab reading and strategic vocabulary acquisition reminds us that Arabic learning often involves cultural, spiritual, and intellectual dimensions that influence how learners engage with texts (Solehudin, 2025) . AAP should recognize these dimensions without turning the course into a purely traditional reading class.

Adapting the 4Cs in this way makes the framework more relevant for Arabic higher education. A general CLIL model may work in science or history classrooms, but AAP needs attention to Arabic diglossia, script, morphology, classical textual traditions, academic writing norms, and learner background. Some learners may come from pesantren, where they have experience with classical texts but less experience with modern academic writing. Others may come from general schooling, where they have limited Arabic vocabulary but stronger experience with modern research tasks. The framework must allow teachers to design units that respond to these differences. (Coyle et al., 2021; Wingate & U, 2015).

Table 2. CLIL based AAP design matrix

Component	Guiding question	Instructional decision
Content	What disciplinary problem or concept should learners understand?	Select a theme from the target field, such as curriculum adaptation, Islamic ethics, Arabic linguistics, or economic justice
Communication	What academic Arabic resources do learners need to work with the content?	Map key terms, rhetorical moves, connectors, sentence patterns, and seminar expressions
Cognition	What thinking process should learners perform?	Design tasks for classifying, comparing, evaluating, synthesizing, and arguing
Culture	What academic conventions and knowledge traditions shape the text?	Explain citation practice, respectful disagreement, relation between turath and modern scholarship, and discipline specific norms
Task	What product shows both language and content learning?	Use annotated reading, oral explanation, concept map, mini seminar, policy note, or short literature review
Assessment	What evidence shows academic participation?	Use rubrics that combine content understanding, language control, reasoning, and communication

An operational adaptation of the 4Cs begins by treating them as constraints that must jointly be satisfied, not as four boxes completed independently. Suppose a unit asks

students to evaluate competing definitions of educational reform. Content identifies the central dispute and the relevant concepts; communication identifies definition structures, contrastive connectors, attribution verbs, and hedging devices; cognition specifies the reasoning needed to appraise each definition; and culture clarifies which forms of disagreement are legitimate in the scholarly community under study. If assessment then asks only for dictionary equivalents, the unit violates its own cognitive objective. If students debate general opinions without returning to the Arabic texts, the communication and evidentiary dimensions have become detached (Coyle et al., 2010; Lo et al., 2018).

The notion of "language demand" also requires disaggregation. Language of learning includes the disciplinary terms required to comprehend the text; language for learning comprises the questions, comparison expressions, and repair strategies needed to undertake tasks; and language through learning emerges when students reformulate explanations and notice gaps in their own resources. In Arabic, these dimensions may converge in nominal definition patterns, forms of reported speech, argument connectors such as لأنّ and غير أنّ, and source-attribution formulae. The pedagogical point is not to prescribe a uniform inventory but to map expressions to intellectual operations. Explicit modelling protects learners who cannot be expected to infer disciplinary register from content exposure alone(Coyle et al., 2010; Dalton-Puffer & C, 2011; Gibbons & P, 2015).

The cultural dimension must avoid a different form of simplification. Neither "Arabic culture" nor "Islamic scholarship" is a single stable code for discourse. Conventions vary with discipline, genre, educational institution, and the relation between historical and contemporary scholarship. Teachers should therefore ask how a particular text constructs authority and uncertainty rather than essentialize Arabic as invariably deferential or indirect. For example, identifying a respectful disagreement marker can be paired with a question about whose views are represented and how the writer positions those views. Such comparison makes culture analytically consequential rather than ceremonial.

A critical implication of this reading is that the 4Cs do not resolve workload and sequencing by themselves. Difficult content and unfamiliar Arabic can jointly overwhelm learners, even when each objective is educationally valuable. A teacher may preserve the intellectual task while reducing text length, providing annotated claims, rehearsing key discourse moves, or allowing provisional bilingual notes. These adaptations preserve the target performance if Arabic remains indispensable in the final evidence. They become counterproductive only when scaffolds substitute indefinitely for the academic reading or argumentation they were designed to enable (García et al., 2014; Gibbons & P, 2015; Khafshoh et al., 2025).

Designing discipline specific units

The third result is a unit design model that translates the conceptual framework into classroom practice. A CLIL based AAP unit should begin with a disciplinary problem, not a grammar topic. For example, a unit in education may begin with the problem of curriculum adaptation in Islamic schools. A unit in Islamic studies may begin with how scholars use textual evidence in ethical reasoning. A unit in economics may begin with the concept of justice in Islamic financial practice. The disciplinary problem gives the unit a reason to exist. It also gives learners a reason to read, speak, and write Arabic.

After the problem is selected, the teacher chooses authentic or semi authentic academic texts. Authenticity does not mean that texts must be difficult without support. It means that texts should reflect real academic language and real

disciplinary thinking. For lower proficiency learners, teachers can shorten texts, gloss key terms, or provide guiding questions. For higher proficiency learners, teachers can use full abstracts, textbook excerpts, article introductions, or conference papers. The important point is that the text should contain academic features worth teaching, such as definition, classification, comparison, cause and effect, argument, evidence, or conclusion.

Language mapping comes after text selection. In this stage, the teacher identifies key terms, recurring grammatical patterns, discourse markers, rhetorical moves, and interactional expressions. For instance, a unit on educational curriculum may include terms such as manhaj, takhtit, kifaayah, taqwim, and tathbiq. It may also include language patterns for defining concepts, comparing models, reporting previous studies, and presenting implications. This mapping helps the teacher avoid teaching isolated vocabulary. Learners see how words and structures operate inside academic discourse.

Task design should then guide learners from input to output. A strong unit may begin with prediction and vocabulary activation, continue with guided reading and concept mapping, move to group discussion and problem solving, and end with a written or oral product. This sequence follows the logic of scaffolding. Learners first receive support, then use language collaboratively, and finally produce their own academic response. Gibbons and P, (2015) argues that scaffolding helps learners move toward independent use of academic language. In AAP, scaffolding is essential because learners must manage unfamiliar content and unfamiliar discourse at the same time.

The sample unit in Table 3 illustrates how this design can work in a unit on curriculum adaptation in Arabic education. This topic connects well with recent Lughawiyyat discussions on spiral hybrid Arabic curriculum and the integration of institutional curriculum with pesantren traditions (Bakiruddin et al., 2025). The unit does not ask students to memorize curriculum terms only. It asks them to understand a curricular problem, compare models, identify Arabic academic expressions, discuss possible solutions, and produce a short policy oriented academic paragraph. This is the kind of work that can prepare learners for university participation.

Project based and problem based elements can also strengthen the unit. Research on qiraah skills and Arabic syntax in Lughawiyyat shows that active learning models can support analytical reading and grammar understanding when tasks require learners to apply knowledge (Khasanah et al., 2025; Masruroh et al., 2025). AAP can adopt this insight. The final product of a unit may be a mini seminar, annotated bibliography, concept note, argumentative paragraph, poster presentation, or short literature review. These products make academic Arabic visible as performance, not only as comprehension.

Table 3. Example of a discipline specific CLIL based AAP unit

Unit element	Example design
Disciplinary theme	Curriculum adaptation in Arabic language education
Academic problem	How can Arabic programs balance national curriculum, local institutional tradition, and learner academic needs?
Core text	A journal article excerpt on spiral hybrid Arabic curriculum or comparative Arabic learning in higher education
Language focus	Terms for curriculum, competence, implementation, evaluation, adaptation, and institutional context
Reading task	Students identify the problem, method, findings, and implication in the selected text

Discussion task	Students compare two curriculum models and defend which model fits a given institutional context
Writing task	Students write one analytical paragraph proposing a curriculum adaptation for an Arabic program
Assessment	Rubric combines conceptual accuracy, academic vocabulary, logical organization, Arabic sentence control, and citation use

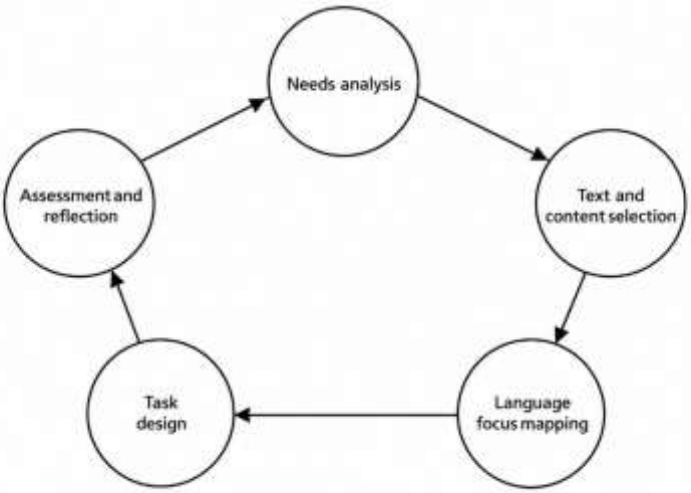


Figure 2. Instructional design cycle for a CLIL-based AAP unit

To make the alignment claim testable, this article proposes a five-link traceability chain. Link one is the anticipated academic participation event, such as discussing a research article in an education seminar. Link two is the disciplinary question that gives the event intellectual substance. Link three is the text and genre analysis specifying the evidence students will encounter. Link four combines planned scaffolding with an authentic task requiring a consequential use of Arabic. Link five is the learning artifact and rubric through which the task's intended outcomes can be inferred. An instructor should be able to move forward and backward across the chain. If a rubric category has no corresponding practice, it is an unjustified demand; if a classroom exercise contributes to no intended performance, its instructional priority requires reconsideration (Coyle et al., 2021; Hyland & K, 2016; Wingate & U, 2015).

For example, the participation event might be presenting an interpretation of an Arabic-language article on curriculum integration. The disciplinary question asks which institutional conditions justify a hybrid curriculum. The text set contains two contrasting abstracts or excerpts, with the authors' claims and evidence marked for inspection. The language map targets attribution, comparison, conditional reasoning, and careful recommendation. Learners first construct an evidence chart, compare interpretations in pairs, and then deliver a brief Arabic position statement followed by a written response to a question. The final rubric records whether the argument answers the disciplinary question, represents both texts fairly, and employs Arabic resources appropriate to academic comparison. This task sequence is a design illustration, not a report of observed student achievement (Bakiruddin et al., 2025; Mohamad et al., 2022; Siregar et al., 2025)

An alignment audit can be conducted before classroom use. For each claimed outcome, the teacher asks whether the task elicits that behavior, whether students encounter sufficient models, whether the selected language resources support the task, and whether the rubric makes the behavior visible. Consider an objective to "evaluate the

strength of an author's evidence." Merely identifying vocabulary does not elicit evaluation, whereas comparing the evidentiary basis of two claims does. A content-heavy assignment also fails the audit if students can complete it entirely in their first language and the Arabic language objective is never assessed. Conversely, forcing extended Arabic output before comprehension is supported risks assessing linguistic speed rather than the intended reasoning (Gibbons & P, 2015; Lo et al., 2018).

The framework further distinguishes transfer from replication. A unit in Islamic law may use legal reasoning, citation of authoritative texts, and interpretation of a disputed concept. A unit in education may instead rely on empirical claims, curriculum categories, and policy implications. Both can share the same traceability chain without sharing the same model texts, language functions, or weights in the rubric. This is why "discipline-specific" should describe an instructional decision system, not a bank of topic-based worksheets. Transferability is a proposition to be evaluated through adaptation across disciplines rather than assumed from the generality of CLIL principles (Cenoz et al., 2014; Coyle et al., 2021; Hyland & K, 2016)

Assessment as evidence of academic participation

The fourth result concerns assessment. CLIL based AAP cannot rely only on grammar tests or vocabulary quizzes. These instruments may provide useful information, but they do not show whether learners can participate in academic communication. Assessment should measure how learners understand content, use academic Arabic, reason through a problem, and communicate in appropriate academic forms. This requires a more integrated assessment blueprint.

The blueprint proposed in this article uses four dimensions. The first dimension is content understanding. It asks whether learners can explain concepts, identify relationships, and use disciplinary information accurately. The second dimension is academic language control. It asks whether learners can use terms, connectors, grammatical patterns, and genre features in a way that supports meaning. The third dimension is cognitive performance. It asks whether learners can analyze, compare, evaluate, and synthesize information. The fourth dimension is communicative participation. It asks whether learners can present ideas, respond to questions, collaborate with peers, and revise their work.

This integrated assessment has two benefits. It gives teachers a more accurate view of learner development, and it gives learners clearer targets. Students know that success is not measured only by correct grammar. They also know that language accuracy matters because it supports academic meaning. This balance is important in CLIL. If assessment focuses only on content, language development may disappear. If assessment focuses only on language form, disciplinary thinking may disappear. The challenge is to assess both without overloading learners.

The framework also allows formative assessment. Teachers can assess concept maps, reading annotations, oral explanations, peer discussion, draft paragraphs, and presentation notes before asking learners to produce a final task. Formative feedback is especially important for non native Arabic learners because it helps them revise language and content at the same time. For example, when a student writes a paragraph about curriculum adaptation, feedback should address the clarity of the concept, the accuracy of Arabic terms, the logic of the argument, and the connection between evidence and conclusion.

Digital tools can support this assessment process, but tools should remain pedagogical aids. Research on ICT and CLIL shows that technology can support interaction,

content access, and multimodal learning when it is integrated with clear learning objectives (Martínez-Soto & Prendes-Espinosa, 2023). In Arabic education, digital tools may help students annotate texts, build vocabulary banks, record presentations, and revise drafts. Yet technology cannot replace the teacher's role in selecting appropriate texts, guiding academic language, and mediating disciplinary meaning.

Table 4. Integrated assessment blueprint for CLIL based AAP

Dimension	Observable indicator	Evidence
Content understanding	Learner explains the concept accurately and connects it with disciplinary context	Concept map, oral explanation, reading annotation, written paragraph
Academic Arabic control	Learner uses technical terms, connectors, sentence patterns, and genre moves appropriately	Vocabulary log, draft revision, presentation script, final written task
Cognitive engagement	Learner compares, evaluates, synthesizes, and argues rather than only repeats information	Discussion response, analytical paragraph, seminar presentation
Communicative participation	Learner asks questions, responds to peers, and negotiates meaning in academic Arabic	Peer discussion, seminar participation, reflective note
Reflection	Learner identifies language and content difficulties and revises work based on feedback	Learning journal, revised task, self assessment statement

The proposed rubric should also distinguish evidence of knowledge from evidence of expression. A learner may have a defensible interpretation yet express it with incomplete control of Arabic, while another learner may produce fluent but unsupported statements. Reducing both to one undifferentiated grade conceals the instructional decision a teacher needs to make next. Analytic feedback can indicate whether a student should revisit the source texts, strengthen inferential reasoning, practise attribution, or revise cohesion and grammatical agreement. Teachers should be careful, however, not to pretend that these dimensions are wholly independent: successful academic meaning is co-constructed through disciplinary choices and linguistic representation (Hyland & K, 2016; Wingate & U, 2015).

Construct validity becomes especially important for an integrated task. If the intended competence is the ability to compare research positions in Arabic, an oral presentation score should not be dominated by accent or memorized fluency. Nor should disciplinary understanding be inferred from the number of technical terms correctly repeated. A more defensible assessment includes evidence of interpretation, comparison, source attribution, and a coherent claim, with language criteria describing how comprehensible and academically appropriate the performance is. Repeated formative tasks can reveal movement from heavily supported to less-supported performance, but the framework offers no empirical reliability coefficients and does not claim that its proposed rubric is already validated (Gibbons & P, 2015; Lo et al., 2018). A recent assessment review likewise identifies CLIL assessment as an underdeveloped research area (*A Scoping Review of the Literature on Content and Language Integrated Learning Assessment*, 2024) (Liang & Wu, 2024).

Rubric calibration is therefore a research question, not a detail that can be settled by conceptual decree. Prospective studies should ask two teachers to score the same anonymized samples, compare explanations for disagreements, and revise descriptors before making high-stakes claims. They should also seek students' interpretations of

criteria: terms such as “critical analysis” and “academic register” can appear transparent to academics while remaining opaque to novices. The design should include illustrative performance samples at different levels and permit learners to revise after feedback. Such procedures would make the framework more accountable and test whether integrated assessment supports learning instead of merely combining several grading categories (Cenoz et al., 2014; Wingate, 2015). Recent rubric-validation work on source-based writing offers a useful methodological comparison, though it does not validate the Arabic rubric proposed here (Arias-Hermoso et al., 2025).

Pedagogical implications for Arabic higher education

The fifth result is a set of implications for Arabic higher education. The first implication concerns curriculum orientation. Arabic programs that serve international students should build a pathway from general Arabic to academic Arabic. The pathway can begin with communicative and structural foundations, but it should gradually introduce academic tasks. Students should not encounter academic Arabic only after entering their major courses. AAP should begin before that transition, ideally through bridge modules that use CLIL principles.

The second implication concerns collaboration between language teachers and content specialists. A CLIL based AAP unit requires disciplinary relevance. Language teachers may understand Arabic pedagogy but need support in selecting content from Islamic studies, education, law, economics, or other fields. Content specialists may understand disciplinary knowledge but need support in scaffolding language. Collaboration can prevent superficial integration. It can also improve the quality of texts, tasks, and assessment. This issue has also appeared in international CLIL discussions, where teacher collaboration often determines whether content language integration works in practice (Cenoz et al., 2014; Lo et al., 2018).

The third implication concerns teacher preparation. Teachers need training in academic discourse analysis, genre based instruction, CLIL task design, and integrated assessment. They also need practical competence in adapting authentic texts without removing academic value. For example, simplifying a text should not eliminate its argument structure. Glossing terms should not replace analytical reading. Translating every sentence should not replace academic interpretation. Teacher training should therefore focus on design decisions, not only on general CLIL theory.

The fourth implication concerns learner diversity. Non native Arabic learners differ in linguistic background, academic experience, and familiarity with Arabic textual traditions. Some learners may use Arabic for religious purposes, some for academic degrees, and some for professional goals. Translanguaging can help learners access difficult content, especially in early stages, but it should be planned so that it leads students back to academic Arabic production (Khafshoh et al., 2025). The goal is not to forbid the use of other languages. The goal is to use learners’ full resources as a bridge toward stronger academic Arabic competence (Arifuddin et al., 2025).

The fifth implication concerns the position of Arabic in global academic life. Arabic is not only a heritage language or a religious language. It is also a medium for producing, debating, and transmitting knowledge. When AAP is designed through CLIL, learners experience Arabic as a language of inquiry. This matters for universities that wish to internationalize Arabic medium programs. A strong AAP curriculum can help institutions attract international students while protecting

academic quality. It also supports the development of multilingual scholarship in which Arabic remains an active language of knowledge production.

At the same time, implementation must be realistic. CLIL based AAP requires materials, teacher preparation, institutional support, and time. It may be difficult in programs with large classes, limited contact hours, or students with very different proficiency levels. This is why the framework should not be applied as a rigid model. It should guide local adaptation. In some contexts, one unit may focus on reading and vocabulary. In another context, a unit may focus on seminar discussion and academic writing. The principle remains the same, namely the integration of meaningful content, academic language, cognition, culture, authentic tasks, and assessment (Arifuddin et al., 2022).

Three boundary conditions deserve particular attention. First, the framework assumes that target academic practices can be identified in collaboration with disciplinary colleagues. Where teachers lack access to authentic texts or subject expertise, a narrowly defined introductory unit may be more defensible than a nominally interdisciplinary course. Second, learners require enough foundational Arabic to engage with a supported question; extensive bilingual scaffolding may be appropriate at entry level, but it must be planned rather than hidden. Third, the institution must permit assessment that values reasoning and genre, not solely discrete-item grammatical accuracy. Ignoring any of these conditions can transform integration into extra work without corresponding educational benefit (Cenoz et al., 2014; Marhamah, 2024; Gibbons, 2015).

A practical development sequence could begin with a small pilot involving one content specialist and one Arabic instructor. They would identify a recurring reading or seminar task in the department, examine authentic student-facing texts, map a manageable set of linguistic functions, and develop two or three learning sequences. Evidence would include annotated drafts, recordings of short explanations, teacher design logs, and rubric-scored products. A subsequent cycle would compare the intended and actual language demands and examine students who made progress in one dimension but not another. This is a proposal for future inquiry; it should not be confused with an intervention already conducted in the present study (Coyle & Meyer, 2021; Lo & Jeong, 2018; Martínez-Soto & Prendes-Espinosa, 2023).

Equity is another practical test. A curriculum that equates “authentic” with the most difficult available research article may favor students who already possess extensive disciplinary or religious-textual capital. Differentiated entry points can retain the same argumentation objective while varying glossing, text length, rehearsal time, or mode of initial response. The critical issue is whether scaffolds expand access to academic Arabic without lowering the intellectual value of participation. This point helps reconcile inclusive academic literacy with Arabic programs serving graduates of pesantren and general schools whose competencies are not readily ordered along one proficiency scale (García et al., 2014; Nuraini et al., 2025; Wingate & U, 2015).

Conceptual contribution and relation to previous studies

This article contributes to the field by connecting AAP and CLIL more explicitly. Previous studies have discussed AAP, CLIL, Arabic curriculum, and academic literacy as related but often separate concerns. Al-Lahham (2025) provides an important foundation by proposing CLIL for Arabic academic purposes. This article extends that conversation by offering a broader design framework that includes unit structure, text selection, academic language mapping, task sequencing,

and assessment. The contribution is not a new slogan. It is a practical conceptual model that teachers can translate into curriculum documents and classroom activities (Suroiyah et al., 2024).

The article also connects international CLIL research with Arabic language pedagogy. International CLIL literature has developed strong concepts, but it often focuses on European languages, school education, and bilingual policy contexts (Coyle et al., 2021; Dalton-Puffer & C, 2011; Ruiz Hidalgo & & Ortega-Sánchez, 2023). Arabic has its own textual ecology. It involves Modern Standard Arabic, classical texts, academic registers, religious knowledge traditions, and different learner profiles. AAP therefore needs a contextualized adaptation rather than simple borrowing. This article offers that adaptation by grounding CLIL in Arabic academic literacy (Faizin et al., 2025).

Recent Lughawiyyat studies strengthen this contextualization. Curriculum adaptation, kitab reading, syntax mastery, qiraah skills, and comparative Arabic learning show that Arabic pedagogy works best when it respects context and uses active learning strategies (Bakiruddin et al., 2025) (Khasanah & Insania, 2025) (Masruroh & Basith, 2025) (Siregar et al., 2025) (Solehudin, 2025) . These studies support the view that Arabic learning should not be reduced to one method or one text tradition. The proposed framework takes the same position. It treats AAP as a flexible design space where tradition, academic need, learner support, and disciplinary relevance can meet.

The framework also relates to research on Arabic language teaching trends. (Zikriah et al., 2024) show that Arabic language teaching research has expanded across themes and methods, yet the field still needs stronger links between research trends and curriculum innovation. The present study responds to that need by turning conceptual insights into a design model. It also responds to research on Arabic academic language functions, which shows that learners need control over the functional language used in research articles and academic texts (Mohamad et al., 2022). AAP must teach these functions directly through reading, discussion, and writing tasks.

The relationship with Al-Lahham (2025) requires particular precision. Both contributions see disciplinary learning as a legitimate organizing basis for AAP and both use CLIL to bring content and Arabic language demands together. The present article therefore does not claim priority for CLIL-based unit design, nor does it re-label an existing sample as innovation. Its narrower addition is a traceability and quality-assurance logic: the proposed unit can be interrogated for missing links, conflicting demands, unsupported assessment criteria, and conditions under which the design should be modified or withheld. That proposed value is theoretical and procedural. Whether instructors find these checks usable, and whether they improve learning, remains an empirical question (Al-Lahham, 2025; Cenoz et al., 2014). Recent Arabic higher-education work on genre-based writing underscores the pedagogical relevance of explicit genre instruction while remaining distinct from this conceptual study (Setiyadi et al., 2025).

The second point of divergence concerns claims about effectiveness. Reports of positive CLIL experiences in other languages or educational stages cannot establish that Arabic university learners will show corresponding gains in argumentation or writing. Medium of instruction, script processing, genre familiarity, teaching resources, and prior schooling create possible moderators. Similarly, the existence of an Arabic immersion program does not itself demonstrate academic writing proficiency. These distinctions matter because an attractive conceptual model can tempt authors to present expected benefits as findings. The finding of this study is a theoretically reasoned architecture with explicit design criteria; its possible contribution to student attainment remains a

hypothesis (Beaudin & C, 2022; Nuraini et al., 2025; Ruiz Hidalgo & & Ortega-Sánchez, 2023).

Third, the model provides an agenda for research capable of rejecting it. It would be challenged if teachers cannot reliably map tasks to language demands, if paired content-language criteria cannot be scored meaningfully, or if the unit systematically disadvantages learners with some Arabic backgrounds. It would also require modification if a genuinely disciplinary task proves too linguistically demanding for the available contact hours. Identifying such negative outcomes is not a weakness of the argument; it prevents the framework from becoming unfalsifiable educational rhetoric. Future studies should report both successful adaptations and discarded design decisions, enabling comparison across institutions and disciplinary genres (Dalton-Puffer, 2011; Cenoz et al., 2014; Coyle & Meyer, 2021).

The proposed framework should be seen as a starting point for empirical research. Future studies can test whether CLIL based AAP units improve learners' academic reading, vocabulary retention, oral participation, writing quality, and disciplinary comprehension. Researchers can compare different unit designs, examine teacher collaboration, analyze learner perceptions, or develop digital materials. Quasi experimental studies can measure learning outcomes, while classroom based qualitative studies can explore how learners negotiate meaning in Arabic. This empirical agenda is necessary because conceptual clarity must eventually meet classroom evidence.

CONCLUSION

This article has argued that the next step in CLIL-based Arabic for Academic Purposes is not another claim that content and language belong together, but a traceable means of deciding when they are genuinely integrated. Building on existing AAP and CLIL scholarship, particularly Al-Lahham (2025), the conceptual synthesis specifies links among disciplinary participation, authentic genre demands, explicit Arabic language resources, scaffolded reasoning tasks, and assessment evidence. Integration is consequently defined as a property of defensible design decisions, rather than the coexistence of specialized vocabulary and academic subject matter.

The conceptual synthesis produced a CLIL based AAP framework that consists of disciplinary content, academic Arabic development, cognitive engagement, cultural and academic conventions, authentic tasks, scaffolding, and integrated assessment. The framework was translated into a design matrix, an instructional cycle, a sample discipline specific unit, and an assessment blueprint. These tools can help curriculum developers and instructors design units that are academically relevant, linguistically focused, and pedagogically coherent.

The article contributes to Arabic language pedagogy by linking international CLIL theory with the specific needs of Arabic academic literacy. It also strengthens current discussions in Lughawiyyat by showing how curriculum adaptation, reading development, syntax learning, and active pedagogy can be integrated into a broader AAP framework. The model is especially relevant for Arab universities and institutes that serve international students who need Arabic as a medium of academic study.

This study remains conceptual. It does not measure classroom outcomes, learner proficiency, or institutional implementation. For that reason, the proposed

framework should be tested through classroom based studies, design based research, quasi experimental research, and longitudinal observation. Future research can examine how different learner groups respond to CLIL based AAP units, how teachers collaborate with content specialists, and how assessment rubrics can capture both academic language growth and disciplinary understanding. These studies will determine how far the framework can support effective Arabic academic learning in real higher education settings.

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