ARABIC LEARNING FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DURING COVID-19 EMERGENCY IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

Arabic language learning in the era of the COVID-19 emergency requires a good learning design. This research aims to ascertain how the Arabic learning process is done online at SDIT Al-Azhar Padang; how the students' responses; and the obstacles faced by teachers when teaching Arabic by online in the COVID-19 emergency. This study used a qualitative approach with a case study research design. The data collection included observation, interviews, and documentation with data analysis techniques by using data triangulation. The results showed that; 1) the Arabic learning model in the era of COVID-19 emergency can be done by integrating media, material, and evaluation based on online 2) the improvement of students' motivation and their interest in learning online can be seen with the indications that students were fast in responding and they got the maximal results in Arabic learning, 3) some of the obstacles faced by teachers when the online learning is done are the limited ability of teachers to design the material, unlimited time allocation, lack of communication to explain the detailed instruction. The findings found that Arabic learning online can encourage creativity, critical thinking skills, good communication, and the ability to process information based on technology.

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A. Introduction

Nowadays, the world is shocked by a case of the virulent and deadly virus which is known as Coronavirus or Covid-19, it has become inevitably endemic in Indonesia. The positive cases of Covid-19 in Indonesia caused some citizens to lose their lives, but it is continued. The impact
of the Coronavirus (Covid-19) is also felt by the world of education.\(^1\) It has been recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), that the coronavirus has affected the Indonesian and global education sector.\(^2\) There are approximately 421 million students are disrupted by their school activities throughout the world and are forced by their educational matters in the future.

Related to the virus that has become a pandemic in the world, which greatly impacts the education system in Indonesia, the virus also caused significant changes in the learning system in Indonesia, so did the process of foreign language learning. The process of learning foreign languages especially Arabic is normally held in the classroom, with a structured system, materials that have been prepared, and some factors that support the success of learning such as adequate facilities and infrastructure.\(^3\)

The language learning curriculum in this globalization era is certainly more complex because it must consider various factors and variables related to the philosophy (nature and function) of language, socio-cultural aspects, the psychology of students, socio-political environment, education, and learning systems, and so on.\(^4\) The most important is students’ responses towards learning the language process by using technology are very positive, this concerns their acceptance of technology that can facilitate the learning process.\(^5\) According to Kern, globalization can develop contextual material and it is not centered on the grammatical system of language.\(^6\)

Since this pandemic virus spreads widely, various obstacles have been a particular concern to every element of education. The teachers start to think about overcoming the problem of Arabic learning that is done outside the classroom or studying at home.\(^7\) Nowadays, all schools implement a learning system at home,\(^8\) it is because


\(^7\) Akiko Nagao, “Can the EFL Classroom Be Considered a Community of Practice?,” IAFOR Journal of Language Learning 4, no. 1 (2019), https://doi.org/10.22492/jll.4.1.06.

the learning process in the classroom has been abolished during the COVID-19 emergency. Students have obstacles in learning and understanding Arabic material itself.⁹ Related to the fact above, foreign language learning in this era requires integration between materials, media, methods, and evaluation following the Arabic learning process to achieve maximum indicators that collaborate on the domain linguistics and non-linguistics.¹⁰ After conducting the learning, it is necessary to evaluate student learning outcomes.¹¹

Some problems that arise in COVID-19 emergency is the learning process changed from a teacher-centered to student-centered, learning media are adopted online, the learning activities are held at their homes, and teacher is lack of ability to manage online applications.¹² To solve these problems, several Arabic learning models can be transformed into their schools, to maximize online learning.

One of the elementary schools in the city of Padang, West Sumatra, SDIT Al-Azhar, applies the Arabic learning process through several learning models and integrated them with several online media. The media used and developed by Arabic teachers with varied learning strategies. Hence, the lack of ability to interact directly, teachers can develop various Arabic learning models that students can do at home. This is to support the learning process problem without neglecting the direction of Arabic learning in Madrasah.

There are seven directions of Arabic learning curriculum in Madrasah as follows: 1) Developing religious attitudes of students in the context of Arabic learning, 2) Cultivating social attitudes in the form of honesty, mutual respect, courtesy, cooperation, caring, environmentally friendly and other social activities, 3) Cultivating and developing educational attitudes lies in students reflected in the attitudes of discipline, learning enthusiasm, responsive, proactive in the learning process, 4) Elements of Arabic learning should be used as basic knowledge to achieve four language skills, 5) Learning vocabulary should be avoided from direct translation, but using methods or media that show the antonym or synonym, 6) Arabic language teachers develop learning processes for language acquisition, 7) Evaluation systems are emphasized on authentic evaluation systems that explicitly emphasize three domains, namely cognitive, affective and psychomotor.¹³

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Related to the effectiveness of online learnings, some researchers have suggested some interesting findings. Sun's research showed that the process of learning foreign languages online is very effective and does not cost a lot of money and time.\(^\text{14}\) Besides, Lamb revealed that students' motivation and enthusiasm increased when learning was done in various ways such as online learning.\(^\text{15}\) The selection of the relevant media also influences the success of learning.\(^\text{16}\) This is supported by Golonka's statement that technology can improve student interaction, motivation, cognition, and output.\(^\text{17}\) Panagiotidis also agreed that technology is an important communication tool used in foreign language learning,\(^\text{18}\) one of which is as an intermediary for foreign language learning.\(^\text{19}\)

Several kinds of research revealed the success of online language learning used in a learning process during the COVID-19 emergency, one of them is done by Bao revealed about five high impact principles of learning in the COVID-19 emergency, they are high relevance, effective delivery, adequate supports, high-quality participation, and contingency plant.\(^\text{20}\) Teleconferencing and video became one of the effective media in the COVID-19 emergency in English learning,\(^\text{21}\) and also a study of learning opportunities in the COVID-19 emergency from 20 countries.\(^\text{22}\) Based on previous research, this research needs to find out the effective steps in Arabic learning specifically, find out student responses, and the problems faced by Arabic teachers when the online learning process. This research can be used as a reference and practical steps for Arabic learning Arabic in the COVID-19 emergency.

Researchers wanted to reveal how the Arabic learning model implemented at Al-Azhar Elementary School in Padang as a solution in the COVID-19 emergency.
that is now a pandemic and globally, the researcher wants to reveal how the learning steps used by teachers in Arabic learning by online-based, students' responses to learning and the obstacles faced by teachers in online learning.

A. Method

This research used a qualitative approach with a case study research method. Data collected from observations, interviews, and documentation.

The Arabic language teachers of Al-Azhar Padang Elementary School were interviewed to get information about obstacles and students' responses in Arabic learning through interviews with Arabic language teachers. The observation was used to obtain information about the process of Arabic learning online. The documentation was used to get information about the learning process from the lesson plan and academic guidance book.

The data collected was then analyzed by using data analysis techniques used based on Milles and Hubbermans theory, the data were collected and described, then reduced and verified in detail. During the data collection phase, the Arabic learning process that was carried out online was recorded. After collecting data, researchers reduced the data by selecting and sorting data that supports the research. Then, the data are verified at this point that the researcher has determined the primary data as important data, and sorted out the unwanted data.

B. Results

1. The Implementation of Arabic Learning in COVID-19 emergency

Arabic Learning at Al-Azhar Elementary School in Padang is included in the school curriculum. The curriculum used is K-13 (curriculum 2013) and *kurikulum kepribadian muslim* (Muslim personality curriculum). Both curriculums are integrated through activities that have been designed by the teacher of every subject. In Arabic learning specifically, the material emphasized at the elementary school level is still in the stage of acquiring sound and vocabulary. This is because students still need a vocabulary to be used in implementing Arabic language skills. Besides, the material designed by the teacher is very simple and uncomplicated, it can be seen in the design of the vocabulary topic.

The time allocation of the process of Arabic learning in the classroom was two hours per week, but during the COVID-19 emergency, the teacher did not have a time limit for two hours while learning at home. However, students were given 1x24 hours to choose the right time to study. Teachers emphasized the students by giving the project assignments in a day and sent them by online.

The media used by the teachers was online. As suggested that learning innovation will provide a more accurate language learning process. For example,

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by using WhatsApp as a tool to make the teachers easier for instructing the students, Instagram to upload assignments made by students, Link to their partner for doing the quiz. The media are designed by the teachers and adjusted to the material in Arabic books. Every student paid attention to the teacher's command by responding through the instructed activities. Following is a design drawing of the material provided by the teacher during the online learning process.

Fig 1. Design Material sent from WhatsApp

The first picture shows one of the examples of material designs online.

The steps used by the teacher in Arabic learning at Al-Azhar Elementary School in Padang during the Coronavirus emergencies are as follows: a) the teacher designs the learning system according to the theme being taught, the most important thing is the teacher finalizes the media that will be given to students. Learning media are prepared in the form of virtual videos consisted of directions, invitations, materials, and learning steps that will be followed by students. b) The teacher prepares a quiz to see the development of student vocabulary according to the material being studied in the form of cognitive problems. 

c) The teacher shares a link to the students which will be opened, either in the form of video links or quizzes that will be done. The following is the form of instructions given by the teacher.

This is an example of instruction by the teacher during the online learning process.

![Design Material sent from WhatsApp](image)

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![Example of virtual videos for mufradat learning instructions](image)

Figure 2 above shows one form of instruction that students will do in the online Arabic learning process. d) Students open the link provided by the teacher and are not limited in time (only 24 hours), students can choose the time that will be used to learn Arabic online. e) The teacher gives the time for students to learn the material. f) The teacher gives assignments in the form of projects, such as video records when students were translating the vocabulary. g) Students collect videos via e-mail and the time to collect it is 24 hours after the material is taught. h) In addition to video collection via email, students can upload on Instagram, so the teacher can see students' enthusiasm in learning. i) After
completing project assignments, students work on quizzes that contain questions to see students’ development in vocabulary acquisition, quizzes are done online through the Google form that the teacher has designed. The following is a list of vocabularies adopted from student teaching materials,

The picture above shows one example of vocabulary material that students will learn in the Arabic learning process online. Through the material above, students learn vocabulary as they learn the form of words, such as matching them into a noun or verb categories. The teacher can evaluate learning, both cognitive, psychomotor, and affective so that the learning process can be done optimally even in the emergency of COVID-19. Jeffrey stated that using online media films in the learning process is more effective in increasing student vocabulary acquisition.24

The form of teacher assessment is in the form of project assignments, such as vocabulary writing pictures, quizzes done, videos sent by students that contain greetings with the theme of learning being done. Students actively involved in learning, filling quizzes, and responding to the activities given by the teacher, at that time students have been observed for assessment. Through several activities above, the teacher can assess students from the three aspects recommended by the 2013 curriculum called an authentic assessment, in the form of a balanced psychomotor, affective, and cognitive assessment.

After the assessment is done, the teacher gave reinforcement in the form of material that is still a cumulative error through the distribution of the material as a whole. It is intended that students can correct speech, writing, or vocabulary that is still incorrect. So, the students can find out the part of the error that needs to be fixed in the theme.

2. The Student’s Response of Arabic Learning

Various responses were given by the students related to the implementation of the online learning process, this is shown through the rapid responses of students when teachers instructed the learning activities independently. Teachers also claimed that students are very enthusiastic when learning online, essentially they felt that it is a game, even though students have done virtual learning. The students always asked about what tasks they would do.

The online learning process has a positive impact on students' interests, some of them want to learn online. The teachers said learning through videos, games, and quizzes was highly anticipated. So that the expected assessment of psychomotor can do, students' language skills will be achieved according to the desired learning goals. The teacher also concerned with the mistakes, errors in students' speech through online media quickly.25

Hence, online learning can increase student creativity and independence in Arabic learning. One of the students' creativity is the students can create a new thing on the assigned project.26 In this case, students are required to be able to process information well, do assignments and respond to activities independently, follow the teacher's instructions carefully, and think critically to complete the project given at the end of Arabic learning material. Even though it is only sending vocabulary mastery, students can integrate technology media, information to practice their creativity. David argued that competencies such as collaboration, creativity, and technology management are very complex as efforts are needed to participate fully and productively in preparing for an increasingly global.27

Handayani said that the teachers who successfully educate students are the teachers who have good experience in teaching.28

3. Obstacles Faced by the Teachers in Arabic Online Learning

One of the obstacles faced by the teachers when teaching Arabic online is the lack of interaction between students and teachers, these limitations make teachers think more about how to instruct students who are still in elementary school to follow instructions properly. Some complaints felt by the teacher, such as hard to identify students whether they pay attention well or only listen passively. Then, the role of parents is needed at home to guide them. It must be maximized because, in this situation, students are not fully under the control of the teacher in the process of learning Arabic.

The other obstacle is the design of interesting material, colorful, and varied learning. Then, the students have good responses in the Arabic learning process. The teachers must improve their competence to create various designs, not only in cognitive knowledge. Adnan argued that it is not only about cognitive competency in learning but in the use of
integrated media. In addition to media factors, the teachers must also consider extralinguistic factors in foreign language pronunciation.

In addition, the need to design and translate the material to be an interesting form of media requires a long time, teachers complained because of their limited ability to design material to be attractive media. This is due to avoid the boredom experienced by students. In the first week, the learning process used video, it would be nice for the teacher to design the next material in the form of a quiz or game. The limitation of the teacher to design the material is one of the significant obstacles.

In this study, researchers found that students were indeed involved in using technology to actively manage their language learning experience. Suherdi’s statement that technology helps students in active and independent learning. Technology is a positive opportunity to be used to facilitate teachers in delivering material. This is a necessity for students to take responsibility for the learning process. This is suitable for the demands of 21st century learning to integrate all components of learning. 21st-century learning integrates all components, it’s not just one focus, for example, the media.

Arabic learning in this era needs integration between material, media, methods, and evaluation under the Arabic learning process to be achieved in the maximum indicators which collaborate on linguistic and non-linguistic domains. Halversons showed that language learning in this era must integrate 4 components; (communication, collaboration, critical thinking, creativity) and language skills in the classroom. He revealed 4 steps in 21st-century learning; 1) Building background knowledge through debate; 2) giving conclusions; 3) creating the project; 4) presenting the final product).

Some of the steps need to be packaged holistically and integrally through the selection of materials, the use of suitable media, and the application of Arabic learning that is indicated using what designs the methods and evaluations are appropriate.

However, there are fundamental differences, when social media is used as a tool for learning and the use of technology for social purposes. There are differences when the teachers use technology as social media and as a

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32 Lamb and Arisandy, “The Impact of Online Use of English on Motivation to Learn.”
34 Andy Halverson, “21 St Century Skills and the ’4Cs ’ In the English Language Classroom by Andy Halvorsen,” American English Institute, 2018, 0–4.
This research suggested a mismatch between the proficiency levels of most foreign language learners and authentic online material because it needs intense and conscious guidance that students are still in their early stages. When students are given instructions, their thinking process takes much time, because the learning process is done independently without the teacher guiding around them when studying at home. This was also explained by one of the students' perceptions in online language learning carried out in a constructivist manner. Students are able to build knowledge independently. This is also supported by the great interest of students when learning a language online.

Furthermore, the teachers need to at least consciously encourage and support students for using their technology outside the classroom by organizing the best learning instructions in Arabic learning. The teachers must concern about the students' learning styles, sometimes a student is different from the others in the learning style. When students have a visual learning style, the teacher easily uses visual media, as well as audio and audiovisual, then, the design of the learning process must be varied and learning instructions must be clear enough. It is in line with the statement that the learning style determines the students' output in online language learning.

Some steps that the teacher needs to take is by using the form of information about introducing useful technology as a tool that facilitates learning. The teacher's indifference in guiding and adopting practical instructions will impact students' interest in Arabic learning. The more creative a teacher, the better the students' responses. Then, students will have


more motivation to learn the Arabic language. The conscious effort and important part of their language are vital to helping students get the benefits of technology to support their language learning.

Some limitations of teachers require to add new skills in processing Arabic learning material in the online form. Godwin recommended the ability needs to be trained and become one of the important strengths in realizing language learning goals.⁴¹ According to Jia, teachers need to adapt to using new strategies in teaching and using technology on a massive scale.⁴² Thus, several factors that are advantages and disadvantages when online-based learning as an effort to overcome the educational process during the COVID-19 emergency era. Jia reminded that the need for training in the ability to integrate technology, media, models, and evaluation of learning in this century is a must. It integrates student learning styles with online learning systems.⁴³

D. Conclusion

The Arabic language learning at SDIT Al-Azhar Padang is an effort to improve the results of learning Arabic using the online platform during the COVID-19 emergency era. One of the impacts is a good response according to students, they have an innovative and creative learning experience, in addition to the need for improvement for teachers' ability to design learning materials using online media. Implementation of the learning, that the teacher teaches using material designed in online media, can be accessed through YouTube or video created by the teacher. Students work on tasks given by online, submitting tasks online, and more. The student responses were positive, assessing fun learning by using the media. While the challenges faced by teachers are time constraints and the ability to design media. This study contributed or contributed to the knowledge development of the online Arabic language during covid-19 emergency.

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