Five Student Problems in Learning Arabic in Senior High School

Fitriani[1], Zainul Arifin[2], Roni Pasaleron[3]

[1]Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Intan Lampung, Indonesia
[2]Universitas Islam Negeri Imam Bonjol Padang, Indonesia
[3]STAI Balaiselasa YPPTI Pesisir Selatan Sumatera Barat, Indonesia

✉ fitriani@radenintan.ac.id *

Abstract

Arabic language subjects must be studied, but in reality, there are still students who do not understand and master Arabic language learning because there are several problems with it. This research aims to determine the problems experienced by students in learning Arabic. This research uses qualitative methods with a case study approach. Data sources were taken from twelve informants, including school principals, teachers, and students through individual and group interviews. To strengthen the interview data, the author also made direct observations of teachers and students. All interview and observation data were analyzed using the Milles & Hubberman Interactive Analysis model. Research findings found that there were five problems students in studying Arabic in high school. The five problems are: i) lack of school facilities and infrastructure, ii) negative behavior in learning, iii) low interest in learning, iv) teachers' teaching methods are not innovative, and v) differences in students' diverse backgrounds. The results of this research can be used as initial data for future researchers in studying this problem in different contexts and issues.

INTRODUCTION

In the process of learning Arabic, all students will experience various difficulties (problems) in learning. Students in high school experience many problems in learning Arabic. Learning a language is learning to use language as a communication tool used by humans both orally and in writing (Pane, 2018). Learning Arabic aims to enable students to interact and communicate using Arabic. But many people think that learning Arabic is difficult (Tur'aeni, 2019). For this reason, strategies must be used so that learning Arabic is successful (Isbah et al., 2022). Arabic is a communication language that is closely related to the Islamic religion. Islam is a teaching in society, a guide to life in the form of the Alquran and Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad using Arabic. This requires Muslims to understand Arabic. Apart from being used to understand the Quran, Hadith, and other Arabic books, Arabic is also used for communication (Nurcholis & Hidayatullah, 2019).

Arabic is a foreign language in Indonesia. Arabic has been introduced from an early age and taught from the Kindergarten level, *Ibtidaiyah, Tsanawiyah, Aliyah*, Islamic boarding schools, to universities (Yakin et al., 2020). In learning a foreign language such as Arabic, learning methods have a very important position in achieving learning objectives. Apart from that, learning methods can be thought of as a service that will be appreciated by students and will leave an impression on their hearts and minds. So good, creative, and fun learning methods will make a greater impression on students. Like the educational game method which can be used as a reference for educators as a fun method for learning Arabic (Uliyah & Isnawati, 2019; Sam, 2016).

Arabic and the Alquran are a unity that cannot be separated from one another (Pane, 2018). In learning the Alquran, Arabic is an absolute requirement that must be mastered, likewise, learning the Alquran means learning Arabic (Muhtadin et al., 2022). Arabic is one of the languages that is widely used in the world, because many people use it, Arabic has become an international language and is recognized by the world (Purwanto, 2018). So it is not an exaggeration that learning Arabic needs to receive emphasis and attention from elementary school level to higher education institutions, both public and private, public and religious, to be taught and developed according to the abilities and development of students. However, it is not an easy matter to understand a foreign language (Arabic), because it is not the language that native speakers usually use. So it cannot be denied that this has the potential to cause problems in learning Arabic (Umudini et al., 2023).

Based on the results of interviews with students in secondary schools, it show that Arabic language teachers experience difficulties in teaching in terms of students' passiveness in responding to Arabic language learning, then the lack of basics in teaching Arabic language learning and less supportive infrastructure at the school. Some students are interested in Arabic and some do not really like Arabic, but they will be enthusiastic if the teaching method used is fun and they will understand what has been explained (Khomsah & Imron, 2020).

Arabic is the language of the holy books and religious guidance of Muslims worldwide, so of course it is the language with the greatest significance for billions of Muslims around the world, both Arab and non-Arab. Arabic also has great urgency, namely realizing the true goal of Islamic education, namely improving the quality of faith and pious deeds to form Muslim individuals who obey Allah's rules (Andriani, 2015).

As Muslims, we believe that Arabic is more special than others. Because Arabic is the language of the Alquran, the rules of the Islamic religion. The language used in worship, Islamic sciences, and literature since the sending of the prophet Muhammad and the revelation of divine revelation, and the language of hadith. The relationship between Arabic and the Islamic religion makes it special from other languages in terms of language. And its connection with the Alquran also makes the cause strong and eternal. Many scholars have mobilized their abilities to reveal the secrets of the Alquran. Because the text of the Alquran is the main source of knowledge for all Muslims (Asy'ari, 2016).

Teaching and learning activities are conditions that are deliberately created, the teacher is the one who creates them to teach students (Prasetiyo, 2022). Teachers teach and students learn. In teaching and learning activities, teachers and students are involved in interaction with learning materials as the medium. Teaching and learning activities are a purposeful process. The goal is stated in the formulation of behavior that students are expected to have after completing their learning experience (Reflina, 2020).

Strategy is needed to achieve success. Students who want to achieve optimal learning achievement must use strategies in learning. Likewise in learning activities in

class. A teacher needs a strategy so that learning objectives can be achieved. Before teaching the material, the teacher must design learning activities which include selecting learning strategies and methods. selecting appropriate strategies and methods can increase efficiency and effectiveness in the learning process (Siregar, 2015). If teachers can choose and apply appropriate learning strategies and methods, students will be able to achieve the competencies set by the curriculum. Using appropriate methods is one way to improve students' competency abilities. Forms of participatory learning using active learning and cooperative learning methods are needed in learning (Syaodih & Wulansari, 2019).

Based on previous research that the author found in the Scopus database, using the keywords problems, learning, Arabic, students then the author analyzed it on Sunday 4 August 2024 at 22:20 WIB using VoSviewer. VoSviewer is software for analysis that is commonly used by previous researchers (Rahman et al., 2024; Oktavia et al., 2024; Rahman et al., 2024). The analysis results are shown in figure 1 below:
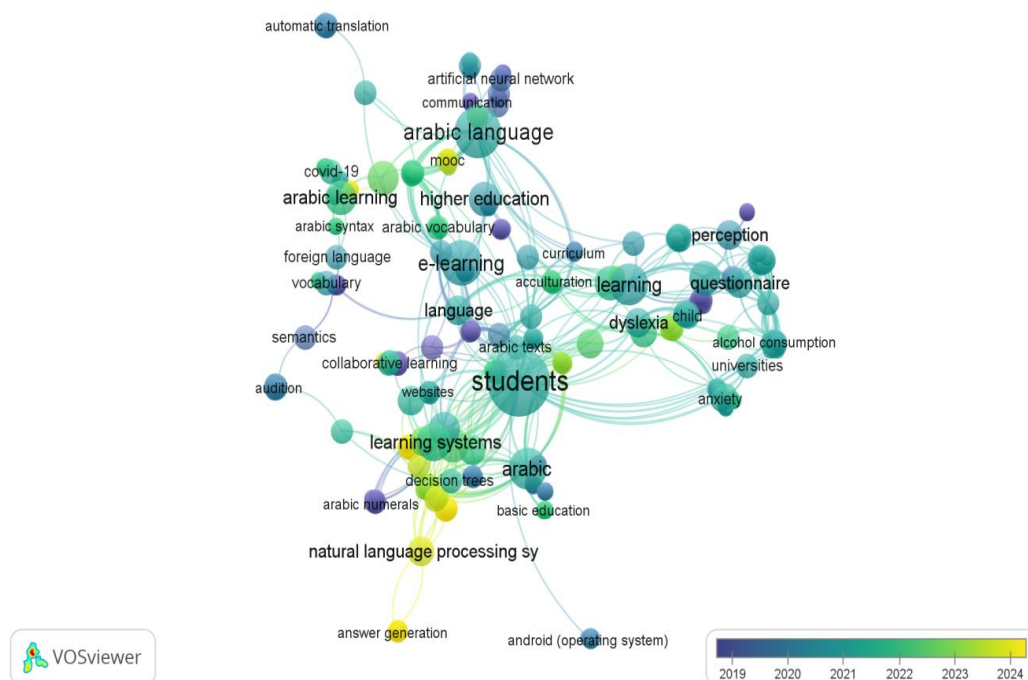

Fig 1. Analysis of students' problems in learning Arabic (Scopus database)

There are still very few problems for students in learning Arabic, which has been developed in various countries, especially for high school students. This research is proven by the results of the author's analysis of Scopus research data in various countries. We haven't found anything that discusses how high school students have problems with learning Arabic. Previous research on Scopus data on learning Arabic, in general, did not explain what problems students had when learning Arabic. So this research is suitable to be carried out as evaluation material for teachers who teach Arabic in schools and to become the main reference for future researchers.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach. Data sources were taken from twelve informants through in-depth interviews selected using the Milles & Hubberman Interactive Analysis Model. According to Miles and Huberman, activities in qualitative data analysis are carried out interactively and continuously until completion, which is described in four steps. The four steps include data collecting, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. The selected informants have fulfilled four criteria, namely; understand

well the problems being researched, are still active in the field being researched, have time to provide information to researchers, and provide information according to facts that occur in the field (Mahmudi & Fernandes, 2021).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of interviews conducted with twelve informants consisting of school principals, teachers, and students at the school. The results of the analysis found five problems for students studying Arabic in high school. These five problems can be seen in figure 2 below.
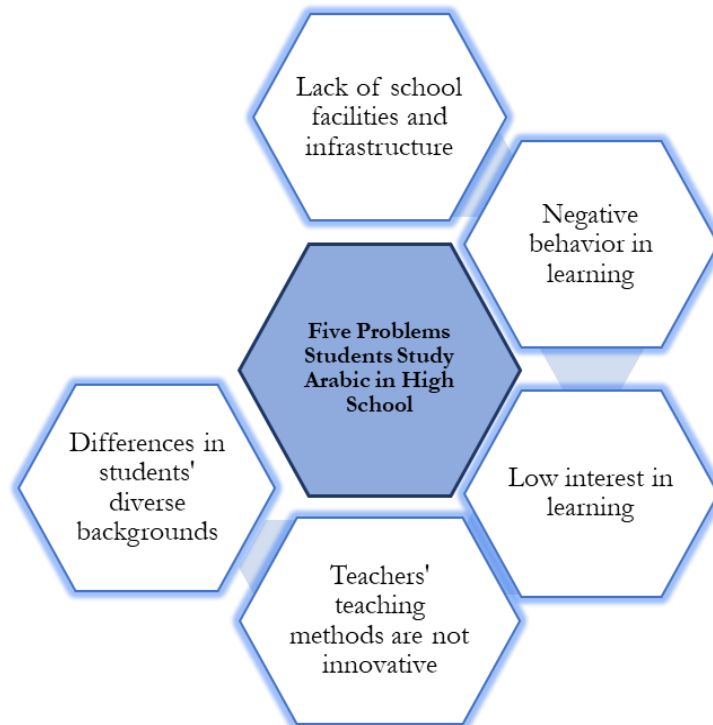

Fig 2. **Problems of students studying Arabic in high school**

Based on the picture above, the author can explain that after holding in-depth interviews with informants, there are five problems students in studying Arabic in high school. These problems are i) lack of school facilities and infrastructure, ii) negative behavior in learning, iii) low interest in learning, iv) teachers' teaching methods are not innovative, and v) differences in students' diverse backgrounds. To make it more interesting, below the author will describe quotes from interviews with informants based on the five problems as explained above. The description of the interview that the author will display is a quote from a short statement from the informant when the interview was conducted.

First theme. Minimal school facilities and infrastructure. According to the informant, this is one of the causes of less-than-optimal Arabic language learning in secondary schools. This theme was conveyed by the informant, namely the school principal. The interview excerpts are as follows:

The facilities available include Arabic dictionaries, infocus, and laptops, the rest is returned to the teacher to create the items needed for classroom learning. Of course, all these facilities are not complete, as there is no language laboratory at this school. "What we know is that language laboratories have an important role because they can be used as a place of practice for students, so it's not just theory, but they can also practice directly (I-1).

Second theme. Negative behavior in learning activities. According to the informant, the culture of ridicule in class by laughing at friends if they answer questions incorrectly or spell Arabic is problematic in learning Arabic. The interview excerpts are as follows:

As with other foreign languages, it certainly requires a brave attitude and especially eliminating the culture of ridicule in the classroom (I-2)

Third theme. Low interest in learning. According to the informant, students' lazy personality is the main problem in learning Arabic at school. The interview excerpts are as follows:

School background cannot be said to be an obstacle for students in learning Arabic. Sometimes some students come from junior high schools but quickly understand the lessons, on the other hand, some students come from madrasas who don't understand the lessons. All of this can be returned to each student, if there is strong intention and motivation then students will certainly find it easy to understand the learning given (I-3)

Fourth theme. The teacher's way of teaching is not innovative. According to the informant, the reason students lack understanding of learning is because the teacher is less interested in giving lessons. The interview excerpts are as follows:

Sometimes the lessons taught by teachers are not easy to understand because the teacher's way of explaining the lesson is less interesting (I-4)

Fifth theme. The diverse backgrounds of students. According to the informant, this is one of the problems students have in learning Arabic at school. This theme was conveyed by the informant, namely the school principal. The interview excerpts are as follows:

One of the problems with students learning Arabic is that students come from school backgrounds, not madrasas but junior high schools, where at the junior high school level students have never studied Arabic. However, this is not a big problem, but if the students come from a madrasa, it will certainly make it easier for students to understand Arabic lessons (I-5).

Learning facilities and infrastructure can become a problem if they are inadequate and not conducive, the facilities themselves mean tools that function directly (their presence is very determining) such as learning tools, teaching aids, practical tools, and educational media, while educational infrastructure functions indirectly (its presence not very decisive) such as land, yard, fence, plants, school buildings, road network, water, electricity, and furniture (Nisa et al., 2023; Suparyanto and Rosad, 2020).

Classroom learning will run well if it is supported by adequate facilities and infrastructure. These facilities and infrastructure have a very important role, without these facilities and infrastructure, all activities in the school will be difficult to run according to the targeted goals. Moreover, in learning Arabic, with adequate facilities and infrastructure, likely, students will likely quickly understand the Arabic language learning (Sopian, 2019).

The culture of ridicule in the classroom will be the cause of students not being confident in speaking or having Arabic conversations personally or with friends. This culture of ridicule is a habit in the classroom that must be eliminated because of the bad consequences it causes (Yulianti & Bulkani, 2018).

As a student, the main goal that must always be done is learning, learning can open a student's horizons of thinking. However, in studying there is a problem or problem, namely feeling lazy. Feeling lazy in students is a difficulty that often occurs among students, this is usually due to students' lack of motivation and boredom in studying. Feelings of laziness make students study in vain because the mind does not work properly to absorb information (Hamdah, 2022). Furthermore, teachers who interestingly teach students will be able to make students focus on learning, not get bored, not sleepy, and quickly understand learning, especially learning Arabic which requires seriousness in learning it (Jamilah, 2019).

The success of the quality of education cannot be separated from the presence of a teacher. However, not all of this success is borne by the teachers who accompany the students, it also depends on the potential that exists within the students (Wahyudin, 2018). And one of the potential influences is the educational

background of each of them. The diverse educational backgrounds of students greatly influence the level of quality of their understanding of Arabic language lessons. Some of them have studied Arabic and some have never studied Arabic. This causes students who already understand Arabic to feel bored because of the similarities in the material they have studied. While others who have never studied Arabic will find it difficult to attend Arabic lectures (Sehra, 2022).

CONCLUSION

Learning Arabic is a long and complex undertaking, and is not a series of easy steps that can be observed or programmed in a quick guide. There are so many problems that are not simple in learning a language. Because it involves phenomena that can be broken down into thousands of separate or composed parts. This research has succeeded in uncovering five problems students in studying Arabic in high school. A teacher needs to know the problematic aspects of students because this profession has a big responsibility in building civilization and educating the nation's children. After all, teaching is a noble profession. Apart from that, a teacher needs to master the right methods or strategies in learning Arabic, which will support students' understanding of Arabic lessons. Students must be committed to changing their way of learning in a better direction so that several problems can be overcome properly, such as inner laziness, the habit of ridiculing, and other bad habits. At least this research can be used as a basis and reference for future researchers to research this problem in different contexts and issues.

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