



The Role of Teachers in Creating an Effective Arabic Language Learning Environment at MTs NW Karang Baru

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ABSTRACT

Arabic language learning in Islamic schools requires not only appropriate instructional strategies but also a supportive learning environment shaped largely by the teacher. This study aimed to describe the role of teachers in creating an effective Arabic language learning environment at MTs NW Karang Baru, focusing on teachers' efforts to establish a conducive atmosphere, the challenges they encountered, and the impact of these efforts on learning effectiveness. The research employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive design. Data were collected through classroom observations, interviews with Arabic teachers and students, and documentation of instructional materials, and were analyzed using data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings revealed that teachers contributed to an effective Arabic learning environment through structured lesson planning, the use of varied instructional methods, the consistent habituation of Arabic use in classroom interactions, and the utilization of learning media. However, teachers faced several constraints, including students' low learning motivation, differences in learner abilities, limited facilities and instructional media, and substantial administrative workloads. Despite these challenges, teachers' efforts positively influenced the learning process and outcomes, as reflected in increased student participation, improved comprehension and Arabic language skills, and the development of more positive attitudes toward Arabic learning. These findings highlight the teacher's central role as a key factor in enhancing the quality of Arabic language learning environments in madrasah contexts.

INTRODUCTION

Arabic holds a distinguished position not only as the language of the Qur'an but also as a language of knowledge, scholarship, and civilization. Mastery of Arabic provides direct access to religious texts, classical and modern Islamic scholarship, historical documents, and intellectual traditions largely preserved in Arabic. In the contemporary era of globalization and cultural

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plurality, Arabic proficiency enables cross-cultural communication and authentic engagement with Islamic intellectual heritage, making it a strategic competence in both religious and academic domains. Within educational contexts, particularly Islamic institutions, Arabic is not merely a communicative tool but a foundational medium for understanding primary sources such as the Qur'an, Hadith, fiqh literature, and other classical and contemporary works (Ahmad et al., 2024). Students' interest in learning Arabic is also closely related to religious orientation, academic aspirations, and professional prospects connected to Arabic-related careers, such as teaching and religious education (Fakhrunnisaa & Rahmawati, 2023).

Despite this importance, the development of Arabic language skills—particularly Mahārah al-Qirā'ah (reading skill)—continues to face substantial challenges in formal education. Reading skill is central because it serves as a gateway to accessing written knowledge and developing other language competencies. However, many learners struggle with vocabulary mastery, grammatical comprehension (*nahwu-sharaf*), and the ability to derive meaning from texts. These difficulties are often exacerbated by limited exposure to authentic Arabic use beyond classroom instruction and by instructional practices that rely heavily on conventional methods with minimal interactive media. Such conditions indicate that the issue is not solely linguistic but also pedagogical and environmental, highlighting the importance of an effective learning environment shaped largely by the teacher.

The learning environment has been widely recognized as a crucial factor in language acquisition. A well-designed language environment—comprising institutional policies, thematic activities, and consistent language use—plays a significant role in improving students' Arabic proficiency (Pikri, 2022). Daily interaction within an Arabic-speaking environment at the junior secondary level helps students become accustomed to the language and enhances their speaking ability (Sofa & Rahmaini, 2024). Similarly, strong linguistic environmental support in Arabic learning centers has been shown to positively influence students' speaking development (Harnika et al., 2024). The integration of both formal and informal language environments in Islamic schools further structures students' speaking practice and habituation (Maulana et al., 2025), while language environments in educational institutions foster positive attitudes and increased learning motivation (Hasan, 2025). In pesantren contexts, the design of a language environment encourages active student engagement in Arabic learning (Yusuf et al., 2025).

Teachers play a pivotal role in shaping such environments. Interactive strategies implemented by Arabic teachers contribute significantly to creating language settings that effectively promote students' speaking skills (Fadhlan et al., 2024). The teacher's central role in applying communicative methods, real-life practice, and continuous feedback also supports a conducive learning atmosphere (Wibawa et al., 2025). Educational interaction and effective classroom management are equally essential in fostering a supportive Arabic learning climate and enhancing student engagement (Muammar & Sutarni, 2025). Furthermore, teacher competence is a primary determinant of effective Arabic instruction, including the creation of productive learning environments (Ismail, 2023). Efforts to improve teachers' professional competence through curriculum training have also been shown to enhance instructional quality (Shalihah et al., 2025), while teachers' roles in stimulating students' interest and motivation remain vital components of effective learning settings (Muhilal & Masub Bakhtiar, 2025). Teachers are likewise instrumental in building reading and writing environments that support literacy development in Arabic (Rosyidi et al., 2025).

Previous studies have explored language environments in Islamic boarding schools (Ritonga et al., 2024) and emphasized motivation and instructional techniques (Fakhrunnisaa & Rahmawati, 2023), yet relatively few investigations position teachers as the primary agents in systematically constructing an effective Arabic learning environment, particularly in madrasah tsanawiyah contexts characterized by limited facilities and minimal Arabic use outside the classroom. Most prior research has concentrated on learning outcomes or specific teaching methods rather than examining the learning environment as a comprehensive space for language practice. This gap is particularly relevant to the problematics of Mahārah al-Qirā'ah, where insufficient environmental support and limited teacher-mediated strategies may hinder students' reading development.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on the teacher's multifaceted role—as facilitator, motivator, and learning atmosphere manager—in creating an effective Arabic learning environment and linking this role to the challenges and impacts observed in the development of reading skills. Conducted at MTs NW Karang Baru, where students still face difficulties in vocabulary mastery, grammatical understanding, and limited opportunities for language practice, this research seeks to examine how teachers' strategies, methods, and approaches contribute to shaping an environment that supports Arabic learning.

Accordingly, this study addresses the following research focus: how teachers contribute to establishing an effective Arabic language learning environment that supports Mahārah al-Qirā'ah development at MTs NW Karang Baru. The objectives are to describe the forms of teachers' roles, identify strategies used to build a conducive learning environment, and analyze supporting and inhibiting factors affecting the effectiveness of Arabic learning. The findings are expected to contribute to improving the quality of Arabic instruction in madrasah contexts and to enrich scholarly discussions on the intersection between teacher roles, learning environments, and reading skill development.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research approach with a descriptive design to explore and understand *the role of teachers in creating an effective Arabic language learning environment at MTs NW Karang Baru*. Qualitative descriptive research is appropriate when the researcher seeks to describe phenomena in natural settings and provide a comprehensive summary of real-life events and experiences (Colorafi & Evans, 2016; Sandelowski, 2000). In this approach, the goal was to capture the complexity and depth of teacher roles, classroom interactions, and contextual factors influencing Arabic language learning without manipulating variables or imposing numerical measurement (Sanajaya, 2016; Adiningrat & Albina, 2024). A qualitative descriptive design enables researchers to reveal rich, detailed insights about participants' perspectives and typical practices in educational settings.

1. Research Approach and Design

This study was conducted using a qualitative descriptive design, which is well-suited for studies aimed at depicting and interpreting educational practices, behaviors, and perceptions in real-life contexts. Qualitative descriptive research focuses on presenting a straightforward account of participants' experiences in everyday language, making it particularly useful for investigations of schooling processes and teacher behaviors (Colorafi & Evans, 2016). Unlike other qualitative designs that seek to build theory (such as grounded theory) or explore lived experiences in depth (such as phenomenology), descriptive research emphasizes *description* of phenomena and conditions as they naturally occur.

2. Research Setting and Participants

The research was carried out at MTs NW Karang Baru, a junior secondary school where Arabic language learning is part of the regular curriculum. The participants in this study consisted of *Arabic language teachers* and *students* who are actively involved in Arabic language instruction and learning. Teachers were selected based on their role in teaching Arabic, while students were purposeful informants offering insights into classroom processes and learning experiences. This sampling strategy aligns with qualitative research principles, where *purposeful sampling* is used to identify participants who are knowledgeable and directly involved with the research focus.

3. Data Collection Procedures

Multiple data collection techniques were used to ensure the comprehensiveness and richness of the information gathered. Observations were conducted during regular Arabic classroom sessions to document *instructional* practices, teacher–student interactions, and the overall learning environment. Observation is a core technique in qualitative research that allows researchers to collect contextual and behavioral data as events unfold naturally (Prakash Chand, 2025). In addition to observation, semi-structured interviews were carried out with both teachers and students to obtain deeper insights into personal perspectives regarding classroom activities, teaching strategies, and challenges in Arabic language learning. Interviews are a fundamental method in qualitative inquiry, enabling the researcher to explore participants' subjective experiences and meanings in greater depth.

In addition, documentation was collected to support and triangulate findings. Documents included syllabus outlines, lesson plans (RPP), and photographs of learning activities. Document analysis provides valuable contextual information and enhances the credibility of qualitative findings by corroborating *data* detected through other sources. These combined data collection strategies facilitate *triangulation*, ensuring that the findings reflect multiple sources of evidence and improving the overall validity of the study (Prakash Chand, 2025).

4. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was performed through a systematic process involving data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Initially, the raw data collected through interviews, observations, and documents were organized, condensed, and coded to identify key themes and patterns. This reduction process facilitated the identification of salient features related to teacher roles, instructional strategies, and environmental conditions supporting Arabic language learning. Subsequently, the data were displayed in the form of narrative descriptions to present contextualized findings clearly and coherently. Finally, interpretations and conclusions were formulated based on the relationships and meanings that emerged from the data. This analytical approach enabled the researcher to provide a descriptive and context-rich understanding of the phenomenon under study.

Throughout the study, ethical considerations were maintained by ensuring *voluntary participation*, *informed consent*, and *confidentiality* for all participants. These steps help uphold the integrity of the research process and protect participants' rights while generating findings that are credible and useful for educational practice.

RESULTS

1. Teachers' Efforts in Creating an Effective Arabic Language Learning Environment

The findings indicated that teachers at MTs NW Karang Baru played a crucial role in establishing an effective Arabic language learning environment. Teachers did not merely function as transmitters of *knowledge* but also acted as facilitators and motivators who actively guided and

supported students throughout the learning process. In practice, teachers sought to create a classroom atmosphere that was conducive, comfortable, and supportive of active student participation, ensuring that learning did not proceed in a one-way manner.

Teachers implemented various instructional strategies using diverse methods, such as interactive lecturing, group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and simple conversation exercises (*muhadatsab*). This variation in methods aimed to prevent student boredom and to align instruction with learners' *abilities* and characteristics. Additionally, teachers habituated the use of Arabic during classroom activities, including at the beginning and end of lessons and when giving simple classroom instructions. This practice helped students become more accustomed to hearing and understanding Arabic in authentic contexts.

To support the learning process, teachers also provided simple yet functional instructional media, such as vocabulary cards, Arabic word displays on classroom walls, and example sentences relevant to the lesson material. These media were used to enrich students' vocabulary and facilitate their understanding of Arabic *language* structures. As motivators, teachers offered praise and simple rewards to students who demonstrated the courage to speak or answer questions in Arabic. These efforts were shown to enhance students' self-confidence and encourage them to practice Arabic more actively during classroom learning.

2. Teachers' Challenges in Creating an Effective Arabic Language Learning Environment

The findings also revealed that teachers encountered various challenges in their efforts to create an effective Arabic language learning environment at MTs NW Karang Baru. These challenges stemmed from multiple *aspects*, including teacher-related factors, student characteristics, and school environmental conditions. One major challenge was the limitation of teachers' professional competence in applying modern and innovative instructional methods, which occasionally resulted in learning activities remaining conventional in nature.

Furthermore, the limited availability of learning resources and instructional media posed obstacles to presenting Arabic language materials in an engaging and interactive manner. These infrastructural constraints affected the optimal implementation of classroom instruction. Another significant challenge was students' low learning motivation, reflected in their limited interest and lack of confidence in using Arabic both inside and outside the classroom.

Teachers also faced *considerable* administrative workloads, such as preparing lesson plans, reports, and other documentation. These responsibilities reduced the time available for thoroughly preparing instructional materials and restricted teachers' creative capacity in classroom management. Such conditions became inhibiting factors in the effort to establish an ideal and sustainable Arabic language learning environment.

3. The Impact of Teachers' Efforts in Creating an Effective Arabic Language Learning Environment

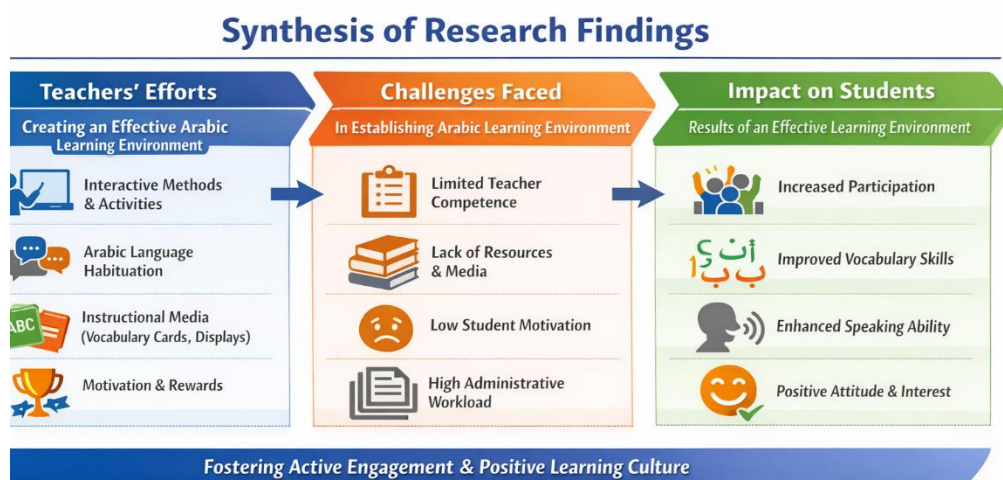
Despite these challenges, the findings demonstrated that teachers' efforts to create an effective Arabic learning *environment* had positive impacts on both the learning process and outcomes. A conducive learning environment made students more active in participating in classroom activities and less prone to boredom. Students became more confident in attempting to use Arabic, even if only at a basic level.

Positive impacts were also observed in students' improved understanding of Arabic vocabulary and sentence structures. Through the use of varied teaching methods and supporting instructional media, students found it easier to comprehend the material presented. Additionally,

students' speaking skills showed gradual development in line with the continued habituation of Arabic use in the classroom.

Beyond academic aspects, teachers' efforts also influenced students' attitudes and interest toward the Arabic subject. Students began to display more positive attitudes and no longer perceived Arabic as a difficult subject. Overall, teachers' initiatives in creating an effective Arabic learning environment contributed to fostering an enjoyable learning atmosphere and nurturing a positive culture of Arabic language learning within the madrasah environment.

The following figure summarizes the core results of the study on teachers' roles in creating an effective Arabic language learning environment at MTs NW Karang Baru. It integrates three interconnected dimensions—teachers' efforts, the challenges they encounter, and the resulting impacts on students—into a single conceptual flow. This synthesis highlights how classroom practices, contextual constraints, and learning outcomes are dynamically related, providing a holistic understanding of how the Arabic learning environment is shaped within the madrasah context.



The figure illustrates that teachers' efforts—such as applying varied interactive methods, habituating the use of Arabic in classroom routines, utilizing simple instructional media, and providing motivation—serve as the driving force in building a supportive learning environment. However, these efforts are influenced by several challenges, including limited professional innovation, insufficient learning resources, low student motivation, and heavy administrative workloads. Despite these obstacles, the figure shows clear positive impacts on students, reflected in increased participation, improved vocabulary and structural understanding, gradual development of speaking skills, and more positive attitudes toward Arabic. Overall, the visual model emphasizes that consistent teacher initiatives, even under constraints, significantly contribute to fostering an engaging atmosphere and a positive culture of Arabic language learning.

DISCUSSION

1. Analysis of Results

The findings of this study indicated that the success of Arabic language learning at MTs NW Karang Baru was largely determined by teachers' ability to create a conducive learning environment that fostered active student engagement. Teachers who established a comfortable, interactive, and communicative classroom atmosphere were shown to enhance students' participation and motivation in learning Arabic. This finding aligns with the view that teachers play a crucial role in shaping supportive learning climates that encourage student motivation and

engagement (Zakiah Putri Pratiwi et al., 2025). Furthermore, the use of varied instructional methods in this study proved effective in reducing student boredom and increasing classroom participation. This supports the assertion that adapting teaching methods to students' needs and characteristics contributes to more effective and enjoyable learning processes (Khotimah et al., 2024).

The habitual use of Arabic in classroom activities observed in this research demonstrated that consistently constructed language environments help students become more accustomed to using Arabic in authentic contexts. The findings revealed that the use of Arabic for simple instructions and classroom interactions encouraged students to be more confident in listening to and speaking the language. This result is consistent with the perspective that sustained implementation of a language environment (*bi'ab lughawiyah*) enhances learners' language abilities through continuous exposure and habituation (Yazid & Fauji, 2025). Additionally, the utilization of simple instructional media by teachers contributed to facilitating students' understanding of Arabic vocabulary and grammatical structures. This is in line with the view that instructional media function as supportive tools that help learners comprehend material in a more concrete and systematic manner (Sanjaya, 2016).

On the other hand, the study also showed that teachers' efforts to create an effective Arabic learning environment had not yet reached optimal levels due to several constraints. Limitations in teachers' professional competence, the scarcity of instructional media, students' low learning motivation, and substantial administrative workloads emerged as inhibiting factors in the implementation of instruction. These findings reinforce previous studies indicating that limited resources and insufficient instructional innovation can hinder the effectiveness of Arabic language learning (Asbarin & Amalia, 2023; Vivi Sutinalvi et al., 2024). Moreover, administrative pressures experienced by teachers have been reported to reduce their focus on designing creative and reflective learning experiences (Hermawan, 2022).

Despite these challenges, the findings demonstrated that teachers' efforts still generated positive impacts on students' Arabic language skills and attitudes. A conducive learning environment encouraged students to become more active, confident, and positive in their perceptions of Arabic learning. This aligns with the view that effective learning environments influence not only academic achievement but also the development of students' attitudes and interest in a subject (Hidayatullah, 2025). Therefore, this study affirms that the teacher's role is a key determinant in the success of Arabic language learning and should be supported by school policies, adequate facilities, and continuous professional development to sustain and enhance instructional effectiveness.

2. Comparison with Previous Studies

The findings of this study demonstrated that teachers' roles in creating a conducive, interactive, and motivating Arabic learning environment significantly influenced students' participation, confidence, and language development. These results are consistent with prior research emphasizing that language environments systematically constructed through consistent language use and supportive institutional practices enhance students' Arabic proficiency (Pikri, 2022; Sofa & Rahmaini, 2024). The present findings also align with studies indicating that teachers' interactive strategies and communicative approaches foster more effective language engagement (Fadhlan et al., 2024; Wibawa et al., 2025).

Moreover, the habitual use of Arabic in classroom instructions and daily interaction observed in this study supports the concept of *bi'ab lughawiyah* as a crucial factor in language

acquisition, as also reported in pesantren and Islamic school contexts (Yusuf et al., 2025; Maulana et al., 2025). The role of teacher competence and classroom management identified in this study further confirms previous literature asserting that professional competence and effective pedagogical interaction are central to successful Arabic instruction (Ismail, 2023; Muammar & Sutarni, 2025). However, while many previous studies emphasized speaking skill development, this study extends the discussion by linking the learning environment and teacher roles specifically to the broader development of language competence, including reading skills (Mahārah al-Qirā'ah), thus addressing a gap noted in earlier research (Ritonga et al., 2024).

3. Implications of Findings

The findings contribute to the theoretical understanding that effective Arabic language learning is not solely dependent on linguistic input but is strongly shaped by pedagogical and environmental factors. The study reinforces sociocultural perspectives on language learning, which highlight the importance of interaction, context, and meaningful exposure in language development. Teachers function not only as knowledge transmitters but also as environmental architects who design learning spaces that promote engagement, motivation, and habitual language use.

Practically, the results imply that improving Arabic learning outcomes requires institutional support for teachers in the form of professional development, adequate learning media, and reduced administrative burdens. Schools should also implement policies encouraging Arabic use beyond classroom hours to strengthen environmental immersion. These implications are particularly relevant for madrasah contexts where exposure to Arabic outside formal instruction remains limited.

4. Limitations of the Study

This study had several limitations. First, it was conducted in a single institution, MTs NW Karang Baru, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other educational settings with different characteristics. Second, the qualitative descriptive design relied on observations, interviews, and documentation, which may be subject to researcher interpretation and participant bias. Third, the study focused primarily on environmental and pedagogical aspects without quantitatively measuring students' language achievement, making it difficult to determine the extent of learning gains in measurable terms.

In summary, the discussion indicated that teachers' multifaceted roles—as facilitators, motivators, and classroom managers—were central to establishing an effective Arabic learning environment that positively influenced students' engagement, confidence, and language skills. While consistent with existing literature on language environments and teacher competence, the study also highlighted contextual challenges that may limit optimal implementation. These partial conclusions underscore the necessity of strengthening teacher support systems and institutional commitment, paving the way for the final conclusion that emphasizes the strategic importance of teacher roles in enhancing Arabic language learning quality.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to describe how teachers contribute to establishing an effective Arabic language learning environment at MTs NW Karang Baru. The findings clearly indicate that teachers functioned as central agents in shaping a conducive learning atmosphere through systematic lesson planning, the application of varied instructional strategies, the integration of learning media, and the consistent habituation of Arabic use during classroom activities. These practices collectively fostered an active, supportive, and engaging environment that facilitated

students' participation and language development. At the same time, the study revealed persistent challenges, including students' low motivation, heterogeneous ability levels, limited educational facilities, and minimal institutional support for Arabic use beyond classroom hours.

The study carries both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, it reinforces the view that effective Arabic language learning is strongly influenced by the interaction between pedagogical practices and environmental factors, positioning teachers not only as instructors but also as architects of learning environments. Practically, the findings highlight the need for institutional policies that support Arabic language exposure outside formal lessons, provide adequate instructional resources, and strengthen teacher professional development in order to sustain an effective language environment in madrasah settings.

Future research is recommended to expand the scope beyond a single institution and to incorporate mixed-method or quantitative approaches to measure the direct relationship between environmental strategies and students' measurable language achievement, particularly in reading proficiency (Mahārah al-Qirā'ah). Comparative studies across different types of Islamic schools may also provide a broader understanding of how contextual factors influence the effectiveness of teacher-driven language environments.

In conclusion, this research underscores the strategic importance of teachers' roles in cultivating an effective Arabic learning environment. By linking teacher practices, environmental support, and student engagement, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of how Arabic instruction quality can be improved within madrasah contexts and offers a foundation for future efforts to strengthen language education in similar settings.

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