

The Effectiveness of the Singing Method in Enhancing Students' Mastery of Arabic Vocabulary: A Systematic Literature Review

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ABSTRAK

This study addresses the growing need for effective strategies to improve students' mastery of Arabic vocabulary (mufradat), particularly amid persistent reliance on conventional memorization practices. The study aimed to examine the nature of the singing method and synthesize empirical evidence regarding its effectiveness in enhancing Arabic vocabulary mastery. A systematic literature review (SLR) was employed to analyze recent studies published primarily between 2021 and 2026. Relevant literature was identified through structured searching, screened using predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria, assessed for methodological quality, and synthesized through descriptive comparison and thematic analysis. The findings revealed a predominantly positive pattern across the reviewed studies. Singing-based instruction improved vocabulary achievement, memorization, recall, pronunciation, motivation, and learner engagement. Quantitative studies reported substantial gains in post-test scores, N-Gain values, and statistically significant differences, while qualitative studies emphasized improved participation and more enjoyable learning experiences. The synthesis further indicated that effectiveness was strongest when singing was integrated with repetition, appropriate vocabulary selection, movement, visual support, and opportunities for recall and application. The study concludes that singing represents a promising, adaptable, and learner-centered strategy for Arabic vocabulary instruction. The findings contribute theoretically by strengthening understanding of multimodal vocabulary learning and practically by informing teachers' instructional design. Future research should use larger samples, standardized measures, longer interventions, and stronger comparative designs.

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INTRODUCTION

Language is a fundamental component of human life because communication, interaction, and the expression of ideas, emotions, and experiences are mediated through language. It functions not only as a means of direct communication through speech but also as an indirect medium through which individuals convey thoughts and meanings across social and cultural contexts (Ningrum & Tazqiyah, 2024). In the contemporary multilingual environment, foreign-language learning has consequently become increasingly important, including the learning of Arabic. Arabic

has a long historical development and a substantial role in religion, literature, scholarship, and intercultural communication. It is also used widely beyond its traditional geographical context and continues to develop through the emergence and adaptation of new terminology in various fields (Masru'ah et al., 2025). In Indonesia, Arabic occupies a particularly important position because of its close relationship with Islamic education and the Qur'an, while it is also taught formally in various Islamic schools and educational institutions. Thus, Arabic learning is expected to develop students' ability to use the language appropriately in both oral and written communication (Khasanah et al., 2022). The importance of Arabic learning in both broader and Indonesian educational contexts highlights the need for effective pedagogical approaches that can facilitate meaningful and sustainable language development.

One of the central challenges in Arabic language learning is the mastery of vocabulary, or *mufrodat*. Vocabulary constitutes a basic linguistic resource because students require sufficient lexical knowledge to understand and produce meaningful language. Limited vocabulary may consequently constrain their development in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Sulfitra et al. (2023) emphasized that vocabulary mastery is closely associated with the development of other Arabic language skills and that inadequate vocabulary may hinder students' overall language performance. This challenge becomes more significant when classroom instruction relies heavily on conventional approaches, textbook-centered activities, and repetitive memorization without sufficient variation. Such conditions may reduce students' motivation and engagement in learning Arabic vocabulary. Existing research also indicates that teachers need to select learning methods that correspond to students' characteristics and learning needs because appropriate methods can increase interest, learning ability, and the overall effectiveness of instruction (Khasanah et al., 2022). Therefore, the problem is not merely whether Arabic vocabulary should be taught, but how it can be taught through instructional practices that make vocabulary acquisition more accessible, memorable, engaging, and meaningful.

In response to this challenge, the singing method has emerged as an alternative pedagogical strategy for vocabulary instruction. Singing combines verbal repetition, rhythm, melody, and emotional engagement, creating an instructional environment that may help learners remember and retrieve new lexical items more easily. Nisa et al. (2020) reported that replacing song lyrics with Arabic vocabulary enabled students to memorize vocabulary through an enjoyable learning activity and improved their mastery of Arabic vocabulary. Although the study was conducted before the five-year review period, its findings provide an important foundation for understanding why singing has continued to receive attention in subsequent Arabic vocabulary research. More recent studies strengthen this argument. Khasanah et al. (2022) found that singing could be implemented effectively in Arabic vocabulary instruction and could increase students' enthusiasm while reducing the psychological burden associated with conventional memorization. Similarly, Lubis et al. (2024) found that singing created an enjoyable learning environment, increased motivation, and facilitated vocabulary acquisition among children aged five to six years, particularly when simple vocabulary was combined with movements and repetition. These findings suggest that the potential effectiveness of singing is not restricted to a particular age group but may operate through several interconnected learning processes.

Recent empirical evidence further demonstrates the potential of singing for improving Arabic vocabulary mastery. Hidayah and Abidin (2023), using a quasi-experimental design, reported an increase in students' mean vocabulary scores from 48.00 before the intervention to 89.57 after the implementation of the singing method, with an N-gain score of 0.8138, categorized as high. Ulya et al. (2023) similarly found that students' average ability to memorize *mufrodat*

increased from 22.86 to 85.24, with an N-gain percentage of 80.2627%. Sutri et al. (2024) extended this evidence by demonstrating that singing was not only associated with faster vocabulary memorization but also with students' ability to apply Arabic vocabulary across listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities. Tamrin (2025) also found a statistically significant effect of the singing method on students' Arabic vocabulary mastery, with a paired-samples t-test value of 4.729 exceeding the critical value of 2.093. Meanwhile, Puspita and Liza (2025) reported an N-gain score of 0.6034 in the experimental class compared with 0.3073 in the control class, indicating a greater improvement associated with singing. Collectively, these findings provide substantial empirical support for the proposition that singing can contribute positively to Arabic vocabulary acquisition.

The theoretical explanation for these findings can be strengthened through a cognitive perspective. Puspita and Liza (2025) explicitly examined singing through Roger W. Sperry's theory and argued that the strategy can simultaneously engage cognitive and emotional dimensions in vocabulary learning. From this perspective, singing is not simply an entertaining classroom activity; rather, it can provide multiple channels of engagement through which verbal information is repeated, structured rhythmically, associated with melody, and reinforced emotionally. Such characteristics may facilitate attention, encoding, retrieval, and retention of lexical information. The findings of Lubis et al. (2024), which associated singing with cognitive, emotional, and motor engagement, further support this interpretation. The theoretical significance of singing, therefore, lies in its potential to connect linguistic input with memorable auditory and affective experiences. This theoretical orientation is particularly relevant to vocabulary learning because the acquisition of new lexical items requires repeated exposure, meaningful association, and successful retrieval rather than exposure alone.

Nevertheless, the existing literature remains fragmented. Most previous studies have examined the singing method within a specific educational setting, age group, or methodological framework. Khasanah et al. (2022) focused on classroom implementation and the supporting and inhibiting factors of the method. Lubis et al. (2024) examined young children, whereas Sutri et al. (2024) investigated vocabulary learning in an elementary school context. Hidayah and Abidin (2023), Ulya et al. (2023), and Tamrin (2025) provided quantitative evidence concerning vocabulary mastery and memorization, while Puspita and Liza (2025) emphasized the cognitive and emotional dimensions of singing. Triana et al. (2025), although focusing specifically on *tashrif* rather than vocabulary mastery, further suggests that singing may support the memorization of Arabic linguistic patterns beyond isolated lexical items. Meanwhile, Sulfitra et al. (2023) demonstrated the relevance of singing to vocabulary learning among junior high school students. These studies collectively indicate a promising trend; however, their different designs, participants, learning outcomes, and implementation characteristics make it difficult to determine the broader pattern of effectiveness.

A further gap is evident in the limited synthesis of empirical findings across educational levels and research designs. Although Masru'ah et al. (2025) conducted a literature-based study on the use of singing for increasing Arabic vocabulary in madrasah ibtidaiyah, a broader systematic examination is still needed to integrate experimental, quasi-experimental, qualitative, and descriptive evidence concerning the effectiveness of singing in Arabic vocabulary learning. The available studies also report different indicators of effectiveness, including memorization, vocabulary test scores, N-gain, motivation, classroom participation, pronunciation, fluency, and application across language skills. Consequently, a systematic review is necessary not only to determine whether singing is effective but also to identify how, for whom, and under what instructional conditions the method produces meaningful vocabulary-learning outcomes. Such

synthesis can help move the discussion from isolated reports of success toward a more comprehensive evidence-based understanding of the method.

Therefore, the present study conducts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) entitled *The Effectiveness of the Singing Method in Enhancing Students' Mastery of Arabic Vocabulary: A Systematic Literature Review*. The study focuses on clarifying the conceptual nature of the singing method and synthesizing recent empirical evidence concerning its effectiveness in enhancing students' mastery of Arabic vocabulary. By integrating findings from recent studies while considering differences in educational level, research design, learning outcomes, and implementation, this review seeks to provide a clearer evidence base for Arabic language educators and researchers. Ultimately, the study aims to determine the extent to which singing can be regarded not merely as an enjoyable classroom technique but as a theoretically grounded and empirically supported strategy for improving Arabic vocabulary mastery.

METHODS

1. Research Approach and Design

This study employed a systematic literature review (SLR) approach to identify, evaluate, compare, and synthesize empirical evidence concerning the effectiveness of the singing method in enhancing students' mastery of Arabic vocabulary. The review was designed as a systematic evidence synthesis rather than a conventional narrative literature review because the study sought to establish transparent procedures for searching, selecting, evaluating, and synthesizing relevant studies. Booth et al. (2021) explained that a systematic review required a clearly defined scope and an explicit methodological process so that relevant evidence could be identified and assessed consistently. Similarly, Cherry et al. (2023) emphasized that a systematic review involved a structured sequence beginning with the formulation of the review question and continuing through literature searching, study selection, data extraction, quality assessment, and synthesis.

The review adopted a descriptive and qualitative synthesis design because the included studies differed in research designs, educational levels, participants, outcome measures, and intervention procedures. Therefore, statistical meta-analysis was not conducted. Instead, the findings were compared and integrated according to recurring themes, reported effect patterns, learning outcomes, and implementation characteristics. Purssell and McCrae (2024) noted that systematic reviews could be used to bring together evidence from different studies through a transparent and structured process, particularly when the available evidence was heterogeneous. The review was reported in accordance with the principles of transparent systematic-review reporting recommended by the PRISMA 2020 framework (Page et al., 2021).

2. Review Questions and Scope of the Review

The review was guided by two closely related questions: (1) What was the nature of the singing method as an instructional approach for Arabic vocabulary learning? and (2) How effective was the singing method in enhancing students' mastery of Arabic vocabulary? These questions were formulated to maintain a direct connection between the conceptual focus of the review and the empirical evidence reported in the literature.

The scope of the review was limited to studies that examined singing as an instructional method, strategy, or learning activity associated with Arabic vocabulary, *mufradat*, vocabulary acquisition, or vocabulary memorization. Studies concerning broader Arabic language skills were considered when vocabulary learning constituted an identifiable component of the intervention or outcome. Defining the scope before the search process was important because a systematic review required clearly established boundaries to prevent the inclusion of evidence that was only indirectly related to the research question. Booth et al. (2021) emphasized the importance of defining the

review scope systematically before searching the literature, while Cherry et al. (2023) indicated that a well-defined review question should guide the inclusion and exclusion criteria throughout the review process.

3. Data Sources and Search Strategy

The literature search was conducted using major academic databases and scholarly search platforms that were considered relevant to educational and language-learning research. The primary sources included Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, and Google Scholar-indexed journal databases, with additional searches conducted through the websites of relevant academic journals when necessary to verify bibliographic information and obtain full-text articles.

The search strategy combined keywords and Boolean operators related to the intervention, learning target, and educational outcome. The main search terms included “singing method,” “singing strategy,” “singing in language learning,” “Arabic vocabulary,” “Arabic vocabulary mastery,” “mufradat,” “Arabic vocabulary acquisition,” and “Arabic vocabulary memorization.” Combinations such as “*singing method*” AND “*Arabic vocabulary*,” “*singing*” AND “*mufradat*,” and “*singing*” AND “*Arabic vocabulary mastery*” were used to broaden and refine the search. Variations in spelling, terminology, and phrase combinations were considered because relevant studies used different expressions to describe the same instructional practice.

The search was restricted primarily to studies published between 2021 and 2026 so that the review represented recent evidence from the last five years. The search process was conducted systematically and repeatedly across databases to reduce the possibility of omitting relevant publications. Booth et al. (2021) stressed that a systematic search should be sufficiently broad to identify relevant evidence while remaining aligned with the established scope of the review. Purssell and McCrae (2024) likewise described a systematic search as a structured process in which databases, search terms, and selection boundaries were identified in advance to improve transparency and reproducibility.

4. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The studies were selected using predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Studies were included when they met all of the following conditions: they were peer-reviewed journal articles; they were published between 2021 and 2026; they examined the use of singing as a teaching or learning method; they addressed Arabic vocabulary, *mufradat*, vocabulary acquisition, or vocabulary memorization; they involved students or learners in an educational context; and they reported identifiable findings concerning vocabulary learning, vocabulary mastery, memorization, motivation, or related learning outcomes.

Studies were excluded when they were published outside the specified publication period, did not address Arabic vocabulary, did not involve singing as an instructional component, were unrelated to language learning, were duplicate publications, or did not provide sufficient empirical or methodological information for analysis. Non-peer-reviewed materials, conference announcements, opinion pieces, editorials, and sources without adequate bibliographic information were also excluded from the final synthesis.

The inclusion criteria were established before the final selection process to minimize subjective decisions during screening. Cherry et al. (2023) explained that explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria were essential for maintaining consistency when determining which studies should form the evidence base of a systematic review. Booth et al. (2021) similarly emphasized that eligibility criteria should be directly derived from the review question and applied consistently across retrieved records.

5. Study Selection Procedure

The study selection process was conducted in several sequential stages. First, potentially relevant records were identified through database and supplementary searches. Second, duplicate records were removed. Third, titles and abstracts were screened to exclude publications that were clearly unrelated to singing and Arabic vocabulary. Fourth, the remaining articles were assessed through full-text screening according to the established inclusion and exclusion criteria. Finally, only studies that satisfied all eligibility requirements were retained for qualitative synthesis.

The selection process was conducted by comparing each retrieved article against the predefined eligibility criteria rather than selecting studies solely on the basis of their reported results. Particular attention was given to whether singing functioned as an actual instructional intervention or strategy and whether Arabic vocabulary constituted a central or measurable learning outcome. This procedure was adopted to ensure that the final evidence base directly addressed the research questions. According to Cherry et al. (2023), systematic study selection should proceed through clearly defined stages so that decisions about inclusion and exclusion could be traced and justified. Purssell and McCrae (2024) similarly recommended a transparent screening process in which potentially relevant studies were progressively narrowed according to predetermined criteria.

6. Data Extraction Instrument

A structured data extraction matrix was developed to record information consistently from each included study. The extraction instrument contained fields for the author and publication year, study title, country or educational context, participants, educational level, research design, characteristics of the singing intervention, vocabulary-related learning objectives, instruments or assessment procedures, principal findings, reported effect indicators, supporting factors, implementation challenges, and conclusions.

The extraction process focused particularly on evidence that could explain the effectiveness of singing in vocabulary learning. Quantitative information, such as pre-test and post-test scores, N-gain values, statistical significance, and other reported indicators of improvement, was recorded where available. Qualitative evidence concerning motivation, engagement, memorization, classroom participation, pronunciation, and vocabulary use was also extracted. This combination allowed the review to accommodate methodological differences among the included studies without reducing qualitative findings to numerical estimates.

Cherry et al. (2023) highlighted that structured data extraction was necessary to ensure that comparable information was obtained systematically from each selected study. Purssell and McCrae (2024) likewise emphasized that a data extraction framework should be aligned with the research question and should capture the methodological and substantive characteristics needed for evidence synthesis.

7. Quality Assessment of the Included Studies

The methodological quality of the included studies was assessed using a structured appraisal matrix developed for this review. The assessment considered the clarity of the research objectives, appropriateness of the research design, adequacy of participant or setting descriptions, suitability of data collection procedures, transparency of data analysis, consistency between the reported findings and conclusions, and the extent to which the study provided sufficient evidence to support its claims.

Because the reviewed literature included qualitative, experimental, quasi-experimental, and descriptive studies, the assessment emphasized methodological transparency and internal coherence rather than applying a single statistical quality score to all designs. Studies were considered methodologically stronger when their research questions, designs, participant

characteristics, procedures, analyses, and conclusions were clearly connected and adequately reported.

Quality appraisal was treated as an important component of the review because evidence synthesis could be distorted when methodological weaknesses were ignored. Booth et al. (2021) described critical assessment as an essential stage for judging the credibility and usefulness of evidence included in a literature review. Purssell and McCrae (2024) similarly explained that systematic reviewers needed to examine the methodological quality of included studies before interpreting their findings collectively.

8. Data Analysis and Synthesis

The extracted data were analyzed using qualitative thematic synthesis and comparative descriptive analysis. First, the studies were organized according to publication year, educational level, research design, participants, and type of singing implementation. Second, their reported outcomes were compared to identify common patterns and differences in effectiveness. Third, the findings were grouped into major analytical themes, including vocabulary memorization, vocabulary mastery, learning motivation and engagement, cognitive and emotional mechanisms, application of vocabulary in language skills, and factors supporting or constraining implementation.

Quantitative findings were reported descriptively rather than statistically pooled because the studies differed substantially in their designs, measurement instruments, sample characteristics, and reported effect indicators. For example, increases in pre-test and post-test scores, N-gain values, and statistical significance were compared as evidence of improvement, while qualitative findings were synthesized according to recurring descriptions of students' engagement, memorization, understanding, and vocabulary use.

The synthesis subsequently examined whether the evidence consistently supported the effectiveness of the singing method and under what conditions the method appeared to be most beneficial. Particular attention was given to differences across educational levels and instructional contexts so that the review could move beyond the general statement that singing was "effective" and instead identify the mechanisms and implementation conditions associated with positive outcomes. Booth et al. (2021) emphasized that synthesis should involve systematic comparison and interpretation of evidence rather than merely listing the findings of individual studies. Cherry et al. (2023) likewise described synthesis as the stage in which extracted evidence was integrated to answer the review question and identify patterns across the literature.

9. Reporting and Transparency

The review process was documented systematically to ensure transparency and replicability. Information concerning the search strategy, eligibility criteria, screening process, study characteristics, quality assessment, and evidence synthesis was retained as part of the review documentation. The study was reported using the principles of the PRISMA 2020 reporting framework, particularly with regard to documenting the identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion of studies (Page et al., 2021).

The use of transparent reporting was consistent with the methodological principles emphasized by recent systematic-review textbooks. Purssell and McCrae (2024) noted that systematic reviews required a clearly documented process so that readers could understand how evidence had been identified, assessed, and synthesized. Similarly, Booth et al. (2021) emphasized that transparency in review procedures strengthened the credibility of evidence synthesis and enabled other researchers to understand and potentially replicate the review process.

RESULTS

1. Characteristics of the Selected Studies

a. Publication Year and Research Trends

The systematic review identified 14 studies directly addressing the use of singing as a strategy for improving Arabic vocabulary mastery during the 2022–2025 publication period. The distribution indicated a growing research interest in singing-based Arabic vocabulary instruction. Four studies were published in 2022, four in 2023, one in 2024, and five in 2025. This pattern suggests that empirical attention to singing as a vocabulary-learning strategy has increased, particularly in the most recent period. The 2022 studies primarily examined vocabulary improvement and memorization through singing in madrasah, elementary, and pesantren settings (Amin et al., 2022; Faridah & Fajar, 2022; Rachmawati & Husin, 2022). Research published in 2023 increasingly emphasized measurable improvement in vocabulary mastery through classroom interventions (Chasanah, 2023; Hidayah & Abidin, 2023; Sulfitra et al., 2023). More recent studies in 2024 and 2025 further expanded the evidence toward early childhood learning, cognitive dimensions, and experimental measurement of effectiveness (Lubis et al., 2024; Puspita & Liza, 2025; Tamrin, 2025).

The development of the literature also showed a gradual shift from describing singing as an enjoyable instructional technique toward evaluating its effectiveness through measurable learning outcomes. Earlier studies largely emphasized students' ability to memorize vocabulary and their positive responses to singing activities, whereas later studies increasingly reported pre-test and post-test scores, N-Gain values, and statistical significance. For example, Hidayah and Abidin (2023) reported an increase in the mean score from 48.00 to 89.57, while Tamrin (2025) reported a significant paired-sample *t*-test result ($t = 4.729$), providing stronger quantitative evidence of effectiveness. Puspita and Liza (2025) further extended this trend by examining vocabulary acquisition through a cognitive perspective and reporting an N-Gain of 0.6034 in the experimental group compared with 0.3073 in the control group.

b. Educational Contexts and Participants

The selected studies represented diverse educational contexts, although most were conducted in Indonesian educational institutions. The evidence covered early childhood, elementary, secondary, madrasah, and pesantren environments, indicating that singing-based vocabulary instruction was applied across different stages of language development.

At the early childhood level, Lubis et al. (2024) found that singing created an enjoyable learning environment and facilitated children's ability to remember and understand Arabic vocabulary. The use of simple vocabulary, repetition, and movement encouraged active participation and supported cognitive and emotional engagement. Similar findings were reported in studies involving elementary-level learners, where singing was associated with improved vocabulary memorization and greater enthusiasm for learning (Faridah & Fajar, 2022; Rachmawati & Husin, 2022). These findings indicate that the method was particularly compatible with learners who benefit from repetition, rhythm, movement, and enjoyable learning experiences.

At the secondary education level, the evidence was more strongly oriented toward vocabulary mastery and measurable achievement. Studies conducted in MTs and SMP settings reported improvements following singing-based interventions (Amin et al., 2022; Chasanah, 2023; Ginting et al., 2023; Hidayah & Abidin, 2023; Sulfitra et al., 2023). For instance, Chasanah (2023) reported that the average score increased from 64.68 in the pre-cycle to 77.18 in Cycle I and 84.37 in Cycle II, while classical mastery increased to 90.62%. This indicates that the application of

singing was not limited to motivational purposes but was also associated with measurable vocabulary learning outcomes.

The review also included madrasah and pesantren contexts, where vocabulary acquisition is closely connected with religious and Arabic-language education. Faridah and Fajar (2022) examined santri in a pesantren environment, whereas Tamrin (2025) investigated students at a Madrasah Aliyah. These studies suggest that singing can be adapted to institutional environments in which Arabic vocabulary is taught as part of broader religious or formal language education. Overall, the diversity of participants and educational settings indicates that the singing method has been implemented across substantially different learning contexts rather than being restricted to a single educational level.

c. Research Designs and Methodological Characteristics

The selected literature demonstrated methodological heterogeneity, encompassing classroom-based interventions, quantitative experimental approaches, and qualitative or descriptive investigations. This diversity was important because the effectiveness of singing was evaluated through different types of evidence, including achievement scores, vocabulary memorization, classroom participation, motivation, and learner responses.

Experimental and quasi-experimental evidence provided the clearest quantitative indication of learning improvement. Hidayah and Abidin (2023) reported a high N-Gain value of 0.8138, while Puspita and Liza (2025) found a moderate N-Gain of 0.6034 in the experimental group. Tamrin (2025) similarly demonstrated a statistically significant difference following the singing intervention. Such findings indicate that the observed improvement was not limited to students' subjective perceptions but was also reflected in measurable learning outcomes.

At the same time, classroom action research and qualitative-descriptive studies contributed evidence concerning how the method operated in authentic educational settings. Sulfitra et al. (2023), for example, reported an increase in mean learning outcomes from 71% in Cycle I to 88.9% in Cycle II. Qualitative findings further indicated that singing increased students' enthusiasm, facilitated memorization, and created more enjoyable learning experiences (Amin et al., 2022; Ginting et al., 2023). These studies complemented quantitative evidence by explaining the instructional processes associated with vocabulary improvement.

Overall, the methodological profile showed that the evidence base was mixed but convergent. Quantitative studies generally demonstrated measurable improvement in vocabulary mastery, whereas qualitative and descriptive studies provided evidence concerning motivation, engagement, memorization processes, and classroom implementation. The convergence of these findings indicates that the singing method was associated not only with improved Arabic vocabulary outcomes but also with favorable learning experiences across different educational contexts (Lubis et al., 2024; Puspita & Liza, 2025).

2. Implementation of the Singing Method

a. Forms of Singing Activities

The reviewed studies showed that singing was generally implemented through vocabulary-based songs in which target *mufradat* was incorporated directly into song lyrics. This format allowed learners to encounter vocabulary in repeated and meaningful sequences rather than as isolated lexical items. Amin et al. (2022) reported the use of modified song lyrics containing Arabic vocabulary, enabling students to memorize the target words through repeated singing. Similar practices were identified by Chasanah (2023), Hidayah and Abidin (2023), and Khasanah et al. (2022), where vocabulary items were embedded in songs and practiced repeatedly as part of

classroom instruction. The evidence therefore indicated that the song functioned not merely as an entertainment activity but as a structured medium for delivering and reinforcing lexical input.

A second prominent form was repetition and memorization through melody. Repetition occurred through the recurring lyrics, rhythm, and melodic patterns of the songs, which provided learners with multiple opportunities to hear and reproduce the same vocabulary. Faridah and Fajar (2022) found that singing facilitated the memorization of Arabic *mufradat* among students in a pesantren setting, while Rachmawati and Husin (2022) reported that repeated singing enabled most learners to memorize the vocabulary contained in the song *Li Yadani*. This pattern was also reflected in the quantitative findings of Hidayah and Abidin (2023), which showed substantial improvement in vocabulary achievement after the singing intervention. These results suggest that repetition embedded within melody was one of the most consistently used mechanisms for vocabulary retention.

The third form involved singing combined with movement and visual media. This approach was particularly evident in studies involving young learners. Lubis et al. (2024) reported that songs containing simple, everyday Arabic vocabulary were accompanied by movements that strengthened children's understanding and encouraged active participation. Similar use of movement and supporting learning materials was reported in other early-childhood applications of singing-based Arabic instruction. The combination of auditory, visual, and kinesthetic experiences appeared to make vocabulary learning more engaging and accessible, particularly for younger learners. Puspita and Liza (2025) further characterized singing as an approach capable of engaging cognitive and emotional dimensions simultaneously, supporting the use of multimodal singing activities in vocabulary instruction.

b. Learning Procedures

Across the reviewed studies, the implementation process generally followed a progressive instructional sequence, beginning with the introduction of target vocabulary. At this stage, teachers presented selected Arabic words according to the lesson topic and learner level before integrating them into the song. Vocabulary was generally chosen to be simple, familiar, and relevant to students' daily experiences. Lubis et al. (2024) found that the selection of simple vocabulary appropriate to children's contexts facilitated understanding and participation, while Khasanah et al. (2022) emphasized the importance of appropriate vocabulary and song selection for successful implementation.

The second stage involved singing and repeated practice. Students listened to the model, followed the teacher, and repeatedly sang the lyrics containing the target vocabulary. Repetition was often conducted collectively and could be accompanied by gestures, visual materials, or group activities. Amin et al. (2022) demonstrated how modified lyrics could be repeatedly practiced to facilitate vocabulary memorization, while Faridah and Fajar (2022) and Hidayah and Abidin (2023) reported positive learning outcomes after repeated singing activities. The repeated exposure appeared to provide learners with opportunities to strengthen vocabulary recognition, pronunciation, and recall.

The final stage involved vocabulary recall and application, through which students were expected to reproduce or use the vocabulary independently after the singing activity. Depending on the study, this process included recalling words from memory, responding to teacher prompts, pronouncing the vocabulary, or applying it in subsequent language activities. Sutri et al. (2024) reported that singing-based vocabulary instruction could extend beyond memorization and support the use of vocabulary in listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities. Thus, the reviewed evidence indicated that the implementation of singing generally progressed from vocabulary

introduction, to guided singing and repetition, and finally to recall and application, forming a relatively consistent instructional pattern across different educational contexts.

3. Effectiveness of the Singing Method

a. Improvement in Arabic Vocabulary Mastery

The reviewed studies consistently indicated that the singing method was associated with improved Arabic vocabulary mastery, although the magnitude of improvement varied across educational settings and research designs. Quantitative evidence showed clear gains in students' achievement following singing-based instruction. Hidayah and Abidin (2023) reported an increase in the mean score from 48.00 to 89.57, with an N-Gain of 0.8138 (81.38%), categorized as high. Similarly, Chasanah (2023) found that the mean score increased from 64.68 in the pre-cycle to 77.18 in Cycle I and 84.37 in Cycle II, while classical mastery increased to 90.62%. Sulfitra et al. (2023) also reported an increase in learning outcomes from 71% in Cycle I to 88.9% in Cycle II.

Further experimental evidence supported these findings. Tamrin (2025) reported a paired-samples *t*-test value of 4.729, exceeding the critical value of 2.093, indicating a statistically significant improvement in vocabulary mastery following the intervention. Puspita and Liza (2025) found an N-Gain of 0.6034 in the experimental group compared with 0.3073 in the control group. These findings collectively demonstrate that singing was associated with positive changes in students' lexical achievement and was particularly effective when songs were systematically integrated with vocabulary instruction.

b. Improvement in Vocabulary Memorization and Retention

The findings further indicated that singing was particularly beneficial for vocabulary memorization and recall. Several studies reported that students were able to remember Arabic vocabulary more easily after repeated exposure through songs. Amin et al. (2022) found that students were able to memorize Arabic vocabulary incorporated into modified song lyrics. Faridah and Fajar (2022) similarly reported that singing supported the memorization of *mufradat* among *santri*. Rachmawati and Husin (2022) found that four of five students were able to memorize the vocabulary from the song *Li Yadani* after singing it together three times.

This pattern was also observed among younger learners. Lubis et al. (2024) reported that children aged five to six years found Arabic vocabulary easier to remember when it was presented through simple songs accompanied by movement. The recurring melody and lyrics appeared to provide a stable memory structure through which vocabulary could be recalled. These findings suggest that the effectiveness of singing was not limited to short-term achievement but was also closely related to repeated lexical exposure, retrieval, and retention.

c. Learning Motivation and Engagement

In addition to cognitive outcomes, the reviewed studies identified improvements in students' motivation, enjoyment, and classroom engagement. Khasanah et al. (2022) found that singing helped students learn vocabulary without experiencing the activity as burdensome memorization and increased their enthusiasm for Arabic learning. Ginting et al. (2023) similarly reported increased student enthusiasm and better understanding of the learning material after the singing method was implemented.

The affective dimension was particularly evident in studies involving young learners. Lubis et al. (2024) found that singing created a pleasant learning environment and encouraged active participation through songs and physical movements. Puspita and Liza (2025) further indicated that singing could engage both cognitive and emotional dimensions, suggesting that the positive learning experience may contribute to vocabulary acquisition. Thus, the evidence showed that the

effectiveness of singing involved not only achievement outcomes but also the creation of a more engaging and motivating learning environment.

4. Factors Influencing Effectiveness

a. Supporting Factors

Several factors were identified as supporting the effectiveness of singing-based vocabulary instruction. The first was appropriate song and vocabulary selection. Songs containing simple, familiar, and contextually relevant vocabulary were more accessible to learners, particularly children (Lubis et al., 2024). The second was repetition, which enabled learners to encounter and reproduce target vocabulary multiple times (Faridah & Fajar, 2022). The third was the integration of movement, visual materials, and collaborative activities, which increased learner participation and reinforced vocabulary meaning (Lubis et al., 2024).

Teacher competence also played an important role. Khasanah et al. (2022) identified teacher competence and supporting instructional media as factors facilitating successful implementation. Effective teachers needed to adapt lyrics to learning objectives, maintain appropriate repetition, and create songs that matched students' developmental characteristics.

b. Hindering Factors

Despite the generally positive findings, several implementation challenges were reported. Khasanah et al. (2022) identified limited instructional time, difficulties in selecting appropriate songs, and teachers' ability to compose or adapt lyrics as potential constraints. These factors suggest that the effectiveness of singing depended not simply on the use of songs but on the quality of their pedagogical integration.

The evidence also showed that positive outcomes were not universal. Some studies reported improvement that was not statistically significant, indicating that singing could produce different effects depending on learners, intervention duration, instructional design, and assessment procedures. Therefore, the method appeared to be most effective when singing was deliberately aligned with vocabulary objectives rather than used as an isolated classroom activity.

5. Overall Findings of the Systematic Review

a. Evidence of Effectiveness

Overall, the reviewed evidence demonstrated a predominantly positive effect of singing on Arabic vocabulary learning. The strongest quantitative evidence was reflected in substantial increases in post-intervention scores, N-Gain values, and statistically significant test results (Chasanah, 2023; Hidayah & Abidin, 2023; Puspita & Liza, 2025; Tamrin, 2025). Qualitative findings complemented these results by showing improvements in vocabulary recall, motivation, classroom participation, and learning enjoyment (Amin et al., 2022; Ginting et al., 2023; Lubis et al., 2024).

b. Main Patterns Identified

Three major patterns emerged from the synthesis. First, singing was consistently associated with improved vocabulary mastery and memorization. Second, repeated melody-based exposure appeared to support vocabulary retention and recall. Third, singing enhanced student engagement and motivation, making vocabulary learning less dependent on conventional memorization. The overall evidence therefore suggests that singing functioned as a multidimensional instructional strategy that combined lexical repetition with auditory, emotional, and, in several studies, kinesthetic engagement.

However, the magnitude of effectiveness varied across studies, indicating that outcomes were influenced by learner characteristics, educational level, song selection, repetition intensity, teacher competence, and instructional context. Consequently, the findings support singing as a

promising strategy for Arabic vocabulary instruction while also indicating that its effectiveness was strongly dependent on how the method was designed and implemented.

DISCUSSION

1. Results Analysis

The findings of this systematic literature review indicate that the singing method functioned not merely as an entertaining classroom activity but as a structured pedagogical strategy for facilitating Arabic vocabulary acquisition. The reviewed studies consistently demonstrated that singing incorporated target *mufradat* into rhythmic, repetitive, and memorable learning sequences, thereby creating a more engaging learning environment. This finding directly addresses the first research objective concerning the nature of the singing method. In the reviewed literature, singing was characterized by the integration of Arabic vocabulary into song lyrics, repeated vocal practice, and, in several contexts, movement and other supporting learning activities. Such implementation enabled students to participate actively rather than merely receive vocabulary through conventional memorization. This interpretation is consistent with Ginting et al. (2023), who emphasized the need for attractive and innovative instructional methods in Arabic learning, and with Amin et al. (2022), who showed that appropriately selected songs could reduce learning boredom and strengthen students' engagement with the instructional material. The conceptual evidence in the reviewed literature therefore suggests that the singing method can be understood as a learner-centered approach that transforms vocabulary practice into an interactive and emotionally engaging learning experience.

The findings also indicate that the effectiveness of singing was strongly associated with repetition and memorization. Rather than presenting vocabulary as isolated words, the method repeatedly exposed learners to lexical items through melody and rhythm. This repetition appeared to facilitate recall and retention, particularly among younger learners and students who experienced difficulty with conventional vocabulary memorization. Rachmawati and Husin (2022) reported that singing could serve as a bridge for remembering learning materials, while Lubis et al. (2024) found that active participation through singing, movement, and interaction supported students' understanding and memory of Arabic vocabulary. Thus, the findings suggest that the principal instructional value of singing lies partly in its ability to make repetition less monotonous. Repeated exposure, when embedded in a meaningful melody and supported by active participation, may increase opportunities for students to process and retrieve new vocabulary.

With regard to the second research objective, the synthesis demonstrated that the singing method was generally effective in improving students' Arabic vocabulary mastery. This conclusion was supported by convergent evidence from different methodological approaches. Quantitative studies reported substantial increases in vocabulary achievement, including improvements in pre-test and post-test performance, N-Gain scores, and statistical significance (Chasanah, 2023; Hidayah & Abidin, 2023; Puspita & Liza, 2025; Tamrin, 2025). Qualitative and classroom-based studies likewise reported improved memorization, pronunciation, participation, and enthusiasm (Amin et al., 2022; Ginting et al., 2023; Rachmawati & Husin, 2022). The convergence of these findings is important because it suggests that the effectiveness of singing was not limited to a single type of assessment or educational context. Instead, its contribution appeared across both cognitive outcomes, such as vocabulary recall and mastery, and affective outcomes, such as motivation and engagement.

The findings further suggest that learning effectiveness was influenced by the way singing was implemented rather than by singing alone. Hidayah and Abidin (2023) indicated that structured implementation and consistent evaluation were associated with strong learning gains,

while Chasanah (2023) identified student motivation, active participation, suitable learning materials, systematic lesson planning, and a supportive classroom environment as important conditions for successful implementation. This means that singing should not be interpreted as an automatically effective technique under all circumstances. Its pedagogical value depended on the alignment among vocabulary content, students' characteristics, song selection, teacher facilitation, repetition, and opportunities for recall and application. The findings therefore support a conditional interpretation of effectiveness: singing was most beneficial when it was deliberately designed as part of the instructional sequence.

Another important finding concerns the cognitive and affective dimensions of the singing method. Puspita and Liza (2025) interpreted singing through a framework in which rhythm, melody, emotion, and language processing were simultaneously involved in learning. Within their interpretation, musical and rhythmic elements supported engagement with the learning material, while the linguistic content of the lyrics required students to process the target vocabulary. Although this explanation should be understood as the theoretical interpretation of the reviewed study rather than as a definitive neuroscientific claim, it provides a useful framework for understanding why singing may produce stronger learning engagement than isolated word memorization. The present synthesis supports the broader proposition that vocabulary learning may become more accessible when linguistic input is accompanied by meaningful auditory and emotional cues.

The reviewed findings also indicate that the effects of singing extended beyond simple vocabulary memorization. In several studies, students demonstrated better pronunciation, greater confidence, and increased willingness to participate in language activities (Lubis et al., 2024; Sutri et al., 2024). This finding is pedagogically significant because vocabulary mastery is not adequately represented by the ability to recall isolated words alone. Meaningful mastery also involves accurate pronunciation, recognition, recall, and the ability to use vocabulary in communication. The evidence therefore suggests that singing may function as an initial bridge from vocabulary exposure and memorization toward more active language use.

Nevertheless, the results should be interpreted with caution because the evidence base did not produce uniformly identical effects. Differences in educational level, intervention design, duration, assessment instruments, teacher competence, and vocabulary content may have contributed to variation in outcomes. The synthesis therefore does not support the claim that singing is universally superior to all other instructional methods. Rather, it indicates that singing represents a promising and adaptable pedagogical strategy for Arabic vocabulary instruction, particularly when it is systematically integrated with repetition, active participation, appropriate vocabulary selection, and subsequent opportunities for recall and application.

Overall, the findings answer the two research objectives by establishing that the singing method was generally an interactive, repetitive, and learner-centered approach and that its implementation was predominantly associated with positive improvements in Arabic vocabulary mastery. Its effectiveness appeared to arise from the interaction of lexical repetition, rhythmic and melodic cues, emotional engagement, active participation, and structured pedagogical implementation. Consequently, the evidence synthesized in this review supports the use of singing as a relevant instructional strategy for strengthening Arabic *mufradat* learning, while emphasizing that its success remained dependent on the quality and context of implementation.

2. Comparison with Previous Studies

The findings of this systematic literature review were broadly consistent with previous empirical studies showing that singing could facilitate Arabic vocabulary acquisition, memorization,

and learner engagement. The consistency was particularly evident in studies that reported measurable improvements after singing-based interventions. Hidayah and Abidin (2023) found substantial improvement in students' vocabulary achievement, while Chasanah (2023) reported progressive increases across classroom action research cycles. Similarly, Tamrin (2025) demonstrated a statistically significant effect of singing on *mufradat* mastery. These findings reinforce the present review's conclusion that singing has a positive pedagogical contribution to Arabic vocabulary learning. The consistency across different studies and educational settings strengthens the interpretation that the observed improvement was not an isolated result of a single classroom intervention.

The present findings were also consistent with studies emphasizing memorization and retention as major outcomes of singing-based vocabulary instruction. Amin et al. (2022) demonstrated that Arabic vocabulary could be embedded into modified song lyrics to facilitate memorization, while Faridah and Fajar (2022) reported that singing supported *mufradat* memorization among students in a pesantren context. Rachmawati and Husin (2022) likewise found that repeated singing helped learners recall vocabulary more easily. These findings correspond closely with the present synthesis, which identified repetition through melody and rhythm as a recurring mechanism underlying vocabulary retention. Thus, the current review extends previous findings by showing that memorization was not an incidental outcome but one of the most consistently reported benefits of the method.

The findings concerning learner motivation and engagement were similarly supported by earlier research. Khasanah et al. (2022) found that singing reduced the perceived burden of memorization and increased students' enthusiasm, whereas Ginting et al. (2023) reported stronger student interest and improved understanding following implementation. Lubis et al. (2024) further showed that singing encouraged active participation through movement, interaction, and emotional involvement. These findings reinforce the present interpretation that the effectiveness of singing was partly mediated by its ability to transform vocabulary learning into a more enjoyable and participatory activity.

An important point of convergence also emerged in relation to the role of instructional design. Previous studies did not generally treat singing as an independent technique disconnected from the broader teaching process. Chasanah (2023), for example, highlighted the importance of lesson planning, student participation, assessment, teacher facilitation, and a supportive classroom environment. Hidayah and Abidin (2023) likewise demonstrated the importance of structured implementation and evaluation. These findings are consistent with the present review's conclusion that singing was not automatically effective merely because songs were introduced into the classroom. Rather, effectiveness depended on whether songs were appropriately aligned with vocabulary objectives, learner characteristics, repetition procedures, and opportunities for recall and application.

The findings also corresponded with the cognitive interpretation proposed by Puspita and Liza (2025). Their study conceptualized singing as an approach combining music, rhythm, emotion, and language processing, suggesting that these elements could create a more supportive environment for vocabulary learning. The present synthesis supports this interpretation at the pedagogical level because the reviewed studies repeatedly associated melody, repetition, emotional engagement, and active participation with improved vocabulary learning. However, the current review also suggests that such theoretical explanations should be interpreted cautiously. The available empirical literature more directly demonstrates educational outcomes than neurological mechanisms. Therefore, the cognitive explanation should be viewed as a plausible interpretive

framework rather than definitive evidence that singing activates particular brain hemispheres in a specific manner.

At the same time, the present review revealed several differences among previous studies. The magnitude of improvement was not uniform. Some studies reported high or statistically significant gains, whereas other evidence indicated more limited improvement. Differences were also apparent in participant age, educational setting, intervention duration, research design, learning objectives, and measurement procedures. Early-childhood studies tended to emphasize engagement, participation, and vocabulary recognition, whereas studies involving secondary or madrasah students more frequently measured vocabulary mastery through test scores and achievement indicators. This variation suggests that the effectiveness of singing should not be interpreted as a fixed effect that occurs independently of context.

The comparison also indicates that the present systematic review contributes something beyond individual previous studies by integrating heterogeneous evidence into a broader explanatory pattern. Individual studies have generally focused on a particular school, age group, or intervention, whereas the current review considers evidence across multiple educational settings and methodological approaches. This broader synthesis shows that three elements repeatedly intersected across the literature: repetition of lexical input, active and emotional engagement, and structured pedagogical implementation. The convergence of these elements provides a more comprehensive explanation of why singing has repeatedly been associated with positive vocabulary outcomes.

Overall, the comparison with previous research demonstrates substantial agreement between the present findings and the existing literature, particularly regarding vocabulary mastery, memorization, motivation, and learner engagement. At the same time, the review identifies important contextual differences that explain why the strength of the effect varied between studies. The contribution of the present study therefore lies not simply in confirming that singing can improve Arabic vocabulary learning, but in demonstrating that its effectiveness is most plausibly understood as the result of an interaction among repetition, rhythm and melody, learner engagement, instructional design, and contextual suitability.

3. Implications of the Findings

The findings have both theoretical and practical implications for Arabic language education. Theoretically, this review strengthens the understanding of singing as a multimodal vocabulary-learning strategy that integrates repetition, rhythm, melody, emotional engagement, and active participation. The convergence of findings across different educational contexts suggests that vocabulary learning can be enhanced when lexical input is presented through memorable and engaging forms rather than relying exclusively on conventional memorization. The findings also support the cognitive perspective proposed by Puspita and Liza (2025), while indicating that its strongest empirical support lies in observable learning outcomes rather than direct evidence of neurological processes.

Practically, the findings suggest that Arabic teachers can integrate singing into vocabulary instruction, particularly when target *mufradat* are selected according to learners' age, proficiency, and learning objectives. Songs can be combined with repetition, gestures, visual materials, group activities, and subsequent vocabulary recall or communication tasks. Teachers should therefore regard singing as part of a structured instructional sequence, rather than as an isolated recreational activity. The findings further imply that teacher competence, appropriate song selection, sufficient practice time, and supportive classroom conditions are important for maximizing the benefits of the method (Chasanah, 2023; Khasanah et al., 2022). Overall, singing represents a practical,

adaptable, and relatively accessible strategy for supporting vocabulary mastery and learner engagement.

4. Research Limitations

This systematic literature review had several limitations. First, the evidence base was methodologically heterogeneous, comprising experimental, quasi-experimental, classroom action, qualitative, and descriptive studies. This variation limited direct comparison of effect sizes and prevented a meaningful statistical meta-analysis. Second, most identified studies were conducted in Indonesian educational contexts, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other countries, languages, and educational systems. Third, several studies relied on relatively small and context-specific samples, making their findings potentially sensitive to local classroom conditions, teacher characteristics, and learner profiles.

In addition, differences in intervention duration, vocabulary content, assessment instruments, and definitions of “mastery” introduced potential sources of methodological bias. Some studies emphasized memorization and achievement scores, whereas others focused more strongly on motivation, participation, or qualitative classroom experiences. The review also depended on the methodological quality and reporting completeness of the original studies. Therefore, the overall positive pattern should be interpreted with appropriate caution. Future research should employ larger samples, standardized vocabulary measures, longer intervention periods, and stronger comparative designs to establish more robust evidence regarding the effectiveness of singing for Arabic vocabulary learning.

CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review concluded that the singing method was a promising and generally effective strategy for enhancing students’ mastery of Arabic vocabulary (*mufradat*). In response to the first research objective, the review showed that singing functioned as a structured, interactive, and learner-centered approach that integrated vocabulary with melody, rhythm, repetition, and, in several studies, movement and visual support. In response to the second objective, the reviewed evidence consistently indicated positive outcomes in vocabulary mastery, memorization, recall, pronunciation, motivation, and classroom engagement. Quantitative studies reported substantial improvements in vocabulary achievement, including increased post-test scores, high N-Gain values, and statistically significant results, while qualitative studies confirmed improved participation and more enjoyable learning experiences. The central insight from the synthesis is that singing was most effective when it was deliberately integrated with appropriate vocabulary selection, repeated practice, active participation, and opportunities for vocabulary recall and application.

Despite these positive findings, the conclusions should be interpreted within the limitations of the available evidence. The reviewed studies differed in research design, participants, intervention duration, vocabulary measures, and educational contexts, with most evidence originating from Indonesian institutions. Such heterogeneity limited direct comparison across studies and prevented a reliable statistical meta-analysis. Future research should therefore employ larger and more diverse samples, standardized vocabulary assessment instruments, longer intervention periods, and stronger experimental or comparative designs. Further studies should also examine the durability of vocabulary retention, differences across learner ages and proficiency levels, and the specific contribution of musical, rhythmic, visual, and kinesthetic components. These directions would strengthen the empirical basis for determining when, how, and for whom singing is most effective in Arabic vocabulary learning.

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