



## **The Implementation of Arabic E-Learning through Arabic-Online.net**

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### **ENGLISH ABSTRACT**

*This study aims to describe Arabic-Online.net and to find out how it is used in the implementation of Arabic learning. Applying a qualitative approach, this research was of literature study. The main object is e-learning site i.e. Arabic-Online.net which can be accessed openly to learn Arabic. Further, this study found that Arabic-Online.net is an Arabic learning model provided to non-native speakers, which is offered by the Saudi Electronic University. Its teaching is based on the General European reference framework by using four language skills and the main components in Arabic. There are 16 levels in the stages ranging from beginner, elementary, intermediate, upper intermediate, advanced, to mastery which contain as many as 796 main interactive videos, 12.000 audio files, 6.320 images and 10.076 exercises. Each level consists of 6 modules (units), each of which includes 24 lessons. E-learning implementation using Arabic-Online.net is conducted in the form of blended learning.*

**Keywords:** *Arabic Learning, E-Learning, Arabic-Online.net.*

### **INDONESIAN ABSTRACT**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan *Arabic-Online.net* dan mengetahui bagaimana pemanfaatannya dalam implementasi pembelajaran bahasa Arab. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis studi literatur. Objek utamanya adalah situs *e-learning Arabic-Online.net* yang dapat diakses secara terbuka untuk mempelajari bahasa Arab. Adapun hasil dari penelitian ini yaitu *Arabic-Online.net* merupakan model pembelajaran bahasa Arab yang ditujukan untuk penutur asing yang ditawarkan oleh Saudi Electronic University yang pengajarannya didasarkan pada kerangka kerja acuan Eropa Umum dengan menggunakan empat keterampilan berbahasa dan komponen-komponen utama dalam berbahasa Arab. Ada 16 tingkatan kelas mulai dari tingkat pemula, dasar, menengah, menengah atas, lanjutan sampai mahir yang mempelajari sebanyak 796 video interaktif utama, 12.000 file suara, 6.320 gambar dan 10.076 latihan. Setiap tingkat terdiri dari 6 modul (unit), yang masing-masing mencakup 24 pelajaran. Implementasi *E-learning* dengan menggunakan *Arabic-Online.net* memadukan antara pertemuan tatap muka di kelas secara *offline* dan pertemuan dalam jaringan atau *online*.

**Kata kunci:** *Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab, E-Learning, Arabic-Online.net*

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## Introduction

The development of increasingly sophisticated technology can be used in educational world without space and time constraints. Arif S. Sadirman, in the book written by Sutirman, said that the development of technology and information will affect all social, economic, political and even educational life as well (Sutirman, 2013: 61). The rapid development of technology will also have an impact on the ongoing education system. Gradually, variety of new innovations are emerging to improve the quality of education.

The current era of technology and information demands changes in learning system, especially in the aspects of methods and media (Azzuhri, 2009). Learning demands to utilize technology and information development are conveyed by many education experts because existing learning is considered to be still less adaptive, monotonous, traditional, and not innovative, especially in terms of Arabic learning. It is regarded that Arabic teachers are less creative in using methods and using media that are in accordance with the advancement of information technology. In addition, many people assume that learning Arabic is difficult, complicated, and not adaptive to global era. This may occur when educators use improper strategies and are less able to use media in learning (Ni'mah, 2019: 311).

Muhandis Azzuhri said that internet-based Arabic learning should begin to be used as the most communicative learning media in the era of information technology because it integrates internet and other information channels as a means to be more creative, innovative, and competitive in learning (Azzuhri, 2009). Such creativity, then, stimulates variety of innovations, especially in Arabic learning.

As time goes by, various kinds of learning system started with initial 'e' have emerged. It stands for 'electronic' which derive from digital electronic technology (Dermawan, 2013: 4). E-learning or electronic learning is one form of innovations as the impact of technology development in the realm of education. E-learning –online learning— is a form of teaching where the materials are delivered electronically (Smaldino et al., 2012: 235). It will not work if there is no internet connection.

Used as the means of communication, internet can also be employed to help students accomplish their tasks (Kuswari Hernawati, 2012: 467). Therefore, media are needed to

support or facilitate students in obtaining information to do the tasks given by teacher. One of them is through e-learning.

Teaching and learning activities will increasingly develop with e-learning (Wilyanto, et al.). According to Numiek Sulisty Hanum in his research finding: there were various aspects of e-learning including planning, design, manufacturing, delivery, learning interaction, evaluation of learning implementation, and application of e-learning (Hanum & Sulisty, 2013) . The readiness of human resources, software, and internet facilities in the school environment would similarly ease learning process with e-learning. However, there were also some teachers who experienced so many obstacles that its utilization could not reach its maximum benefit.

Tugiy Aminoto and Hairul Pathoni in their study concluded that e-learning implementation on high school students at class XI in Jambi could increase their learning activities (Aminoto & Pathoni, 2014). While the implementation of online learning outside of regular classes or at home, the activities do not increase. In addition, a research conducted by Tri Darmayanti, Made Yudhi Setiani and Boedhi Oetojo yielded a finding that learning was no longer dependent on face-to-face meetings in the classrooms; instead, it could be done online. With e-learning, students could interact more easily with their learning resources without space and time constraints (Darmayanti et al., 2017).

Furthermore, Ari Sudibjo and Wasis conveyed that based on their survey on the cognitive aspect, the use of e-learning media could improve learning outcomes (Sudibjo & Wasis, 2013: 189). Meanwhile, Abdul Aziz Khoiri and Ilham Fatkhu Romadhon said that the use of e-learning in Arabic learning is aimed at balancing the four language skills of Arabic by using internet, in the form of e-learning (Khoiri & Romadhon, 2017: 298). In addition, Ashok Gupta revealed that some technical problems and narrowly defined fields of study remain to get the most emphasis from the development of e-learning. Whereas, students and their needs should be the main focus. Instead of technological innovation, pedagogical innovation and value enhancement are more needed because students play more important role in e-learning (Gupta, n.d. 2002: 12).

According to Khaled F. Shaalan and Habib E. Talhami, there are many Arabic computer assisted language learning systems (ICAL) that do not have in-depth error analysis or sophisticated error handling. Students are encouraged to make sentences freely in various contexts and are guided to recognize their own mistakes or improper use

of their language construction. Natural language processing tools, such as morphological and syntax analyzers, are used to analyze errors and to provide feedback to students. Then, correction mechanism will be proposed to students which allows them to correct error sentences independently. As a result, they will understand their mistakes. Examples of error analysis and error handling will also be provided to illustrate how the system works (F. Shaalan & Talhami, 2006: 203-212).

Such previous studies have given better description on the extent of the development of e-learning and how it is applied in the field, especially in Arabic learning. As time goes by, Arabic instructional media has now shifted towards technology, which can be accessed by anyone, anytime, and anywhere as long as internet connection is available. Available sites can also be used as learning resources and media to learn Arabic, one of which is Arabic-Online.net.

Derived from the discussion above, this research focuses on describing e-learning using Arabic-Online.net and its implementation in Arabic learning. Since references for teachers or students are still needed to allow them to pay more attention and be motivated to learn, it is expected that the discussion about e-learning using Arabic Online-net can be taken as one of sources for Arabic language acquisition, especially for non-native speakers.

## **Research Methods**

This research used qualitative approach and literature study was preferred as the method to obtain narrative descriptions of the object studied. Data collection was carried out through various literature such as books, journals, articles, and seminars related to this research.

Meanwhile, primary and secondary data are used as data sources. Primary data, or first-hand data, is obtained directly from research subjects. The primary data source in this research is al-'Arabiyyah 'ala al-Intirnit by Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al Mosa, published by Saudi Electronic University, Saudi Arabia. Secondary data is taken from a book by Fathur Rohman, *Metodologi Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab*, a book by Acep Hermawan entitled *Metodologi Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab*, a book by Rinduan Zain, Zainal Arifin Ahmad, and Nurhadi, *Manajemen Perkuliahan Berbasis Elearning Di Perguruan Tinggi*, a

book by Munir entitled *Pembelajaran Jarak Jauh Berbasis Teknologi Informasi dan Komunikasi*, and other various books and journals that discuss e-learning.

Data analysis was conducted by examining primary data source through analytical reading and collecting data. Then, data reduction was carried out by making abstractions. The next step was to arrange them in units that fit the order of thinking patterns.

The first step in data interpretation was categorizing. Then, it was completed by working hypotheses as theory which would be formulated, both descriptively and propositionally. The categories and their relation were labeled with simple statements in the form of proposition to show the connection. This process was continually conducted until an adequate relation was obtained, that is, until the clues about metaphors or general thinking frameworks were tracked.

### **E- Learning of Arabic**

Arabic learning encompasses Arabic instructional process involving a teacher and students. Fathur Rohman said that by observing or comparing student behavior before and after learning process, we can find out the extent of its changes. (Fathur Rohman, 2015: 25). Learning process is a two-way communication between teacher and students that embraces several elements including the existence of communicators (messengers), communicants (message receivers), messages (materials provided) and media (tools used to convey messages) (Hermawan, 2018: 273 ). Because Arabic is categorized as a foreign language, teacher's role is very influential on students, especially at the basic level.

To achieve Arabic learning objectives, appropriate method is a needed support for teachers to interact with and deliver material to students so that the message can be received easily. Therefore, teachers should be able to use proper methods by having learning objectives, materials, and learners profile in mind.

Further, Fathur Rohman asserted that there are several conditions for a successful implementation of an Arabic teaching method, including: first, the strategy used should suit students' profile. Second, the method should be practical as a guide in solving problems encountered. Third, it should be able to accommodate students' personal differences in class (Hermawan, 2018: 34). In addition to methods used to support learning, media are also needed to improve the language skills of *istimā'*, *kalām*, *qirā'ah* or *kitābah*.

Basically, all media have the same purpose i.e. as a tool to deliver messages. Yet, they have different functions. Acep Hermawan (Hermawan, 2018: 275) proposed several media that can be used in supporting Arabic learning: First, audio media (*al-wasá'il al-sam'iyyah*): sound-based media which activate hearing sense. Second, visual media (*al-wasá'il al-bashariyyah*): sources of information in the form of visual representation, such as pictures or realia. Third, audio-visual media (*al-wasá'il al-sam'iyyah al-bashariyyah*): media which involve both hearing and sight senses. In this discussion, e-learning of Arabic using Arabic-Online.net can be categorized into audio-visual media because it provides a variety of images and audios to support learning Arabic.

In learning Arabic, information technology can be used as supporting tools known as e-learning , which relies heavily on internet connection (Munir, 2009: 169). Being widely accessible, it is used to facilitate learning and deliver materials. Therefore, it can be concluded that e-learning is an internet-based application program that contains information and provides convenience in accessing learning online.

E-learning has several characteristics such as the use of information technology, internet connectivity, self-regulated learning, and accessibility (Munir, 2009: 171). In addition, it serves some advantages like bridging communication between students and teachers without time constraint, providing easily accessible materials, encouraging students' activeness in the learning process, and facilitating self-learning (Munir, 2009: 174; Fathurrohman & Sulistyorini, 2012: 303).

Meanwhile, the disadvantages of e-learning are difficulties in assessing students' performance during learning process and in monitoring students' development. Such virtual teaching may also turn students to be more individual as they are less familiar with their surrounding. Besides, students' lack of technical skills in using e-learning similarly contribute to degrade the benefit of this type of learning.

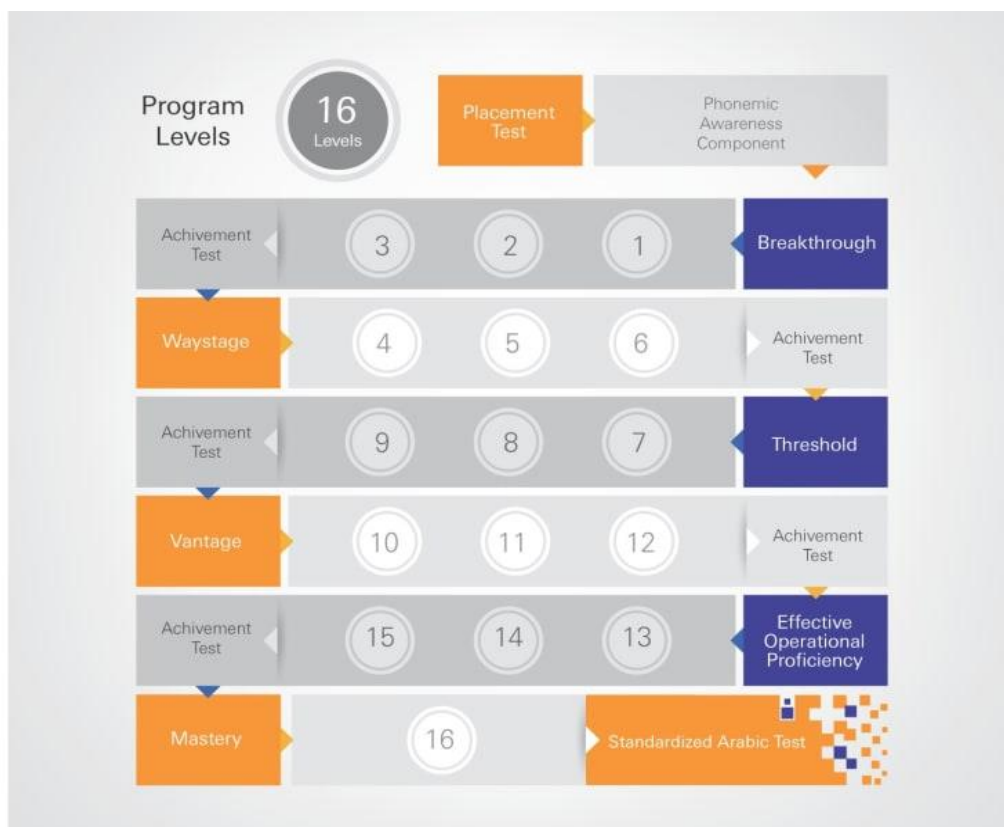
### **E-learning of Arabic Using Arabic-Online.net**

Arabic Online is an Arabic learning model for non-native speakers offered by Saudi Electronic University and can be freely accessed by anyone. Being a pioneering initiative of e-learning of Arabic at both regional and global level, the objective of this program is to disseminate Arabic language and culture throughout the world by providing quality education for non-native speakers of Arabic, meeting the latest international standards

and best practices in learning and teaching language that is realized through an online approach (Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Mosa, Al'arabiyah 'ala al-intirnit (Saudi Arabia: Saudi Electronic University).

Arabic Online.net teaches various language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and the main components of language (sounds, vocabulary, and structures). The teaching levels of this program is composed based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), which is an internationally recognized standard for describing language ability. Using modern standards with functional forms that focus on the use of everyday language, it starts from beginner until mastery level. (Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Mosa, n.d.: 6).

Meanwhile, the lessons are presented based on students' proficiency levels, which are illustrated as follows.



**Picture 1.** Program Levels of *Arabic Online.net*

There are six stages on *Arabic-Online.net*, i.e. beginner/breakthrough, elementary/waystage, intermediate/threshold, upper intermediate/vantage, advanced/effective operation, and mastery. Each stage comprises three levels: beginner

stage consists of level 1, 2, and 3; elementary stage encompasses level 4, 5, and 6; intermediate stage covers level 7, 8, and 9; upper intermediate stage consists of level 10, 11, and 12; advanced stage has level 13, 14, and 15; while mastery stage encompasses level 16. Each stage has achievement test which has to be completed by learners. Those who have completed the whole program requirements are offered an Arabic proficiency certificate certified by Saudi Electronic University.

Regarding the materials presented, each level of the program covers six modules or units, each of which encompasses 24 lessons, including the main video, vocabulary, structures, reading, conversation, writing, and various exercises.



**Picture 2.** Contents of *Arabic-Online.net*

From the picture above, it can be concluded that learners completing the whole program will have learnt 796 main interactive videos, 12.000 audio files, 6.320 images, and 10.076 exercises. Furthermore, *Arabic-online.net* consists of various lesson components which are described in the following picture.





**Picture 3.** Lesson Components of *Arabic-Online.net*

The main listening videos on *Arabic-Online.net* contain theme-based conversations. Each theme has a video that lasts three to five minutes and provides 9-15 vocabularies which are accompanied by their synonyms. Examples of each vocabulary use that fit the theme are also available.

Existing exercises in *Arabic-Online.net*, which contain quizzes that must be done by learners, can be used as learning evaluation. Each exercise presents various forms of quizzes, including fill-in-the-blank questions, matching pictures or sentences, and true-false quiz. In addition, learners are also required to guess the picture shown by mentioning its Arabic word or to tell the focus on the conversation in the given theme.

The lesson components of this program also includes aspects of reading, conversation, writing, and structures. Learners must complete all the lesson at the current level to be able to continue to the next level under a condition, i.e. unless the grade reaches more than 70%, learners should remain in their current level and re-learn the theme.

### **E-learning of Arabic Using *Arabic-Online.net***

To use *Arabic-online.net* in Arabic classes, a range of preparations are required. It should be preceded by face-to-face meetings to disseminate information about learning objectives and mechanism including how materials are presented; to provide a training for clearing technical issues; and to reinforce students' understanding through group

works that enable them to actively participate. In short, discussions should also be available in the form of both online and offline meetings. (Rusman, 2012: 337).

The steps required to join the program by *Arabic-Online.net* (<https://www.arabic-online.net/>) are: *First*, learners should visit *arabic-online.net* and click 'join'. After registration requirement is completed, a confirmation email will be sent to user's email address. Once confirmed, learners should login using the chosen username and password. *Second*, learners are, then, directed to work on questions in the pre-test that serves as placement test. It aims at placing them in the right level based on their current language ability. Learners can start exploring the level determined by the system once the results of pre-test are provided. In the determined level, learners should select one of the themes available, each of which contains several sub-themes. *Third*, to be able to go to the next level, learners must complete all the lessons at that level. If the grade is less than 70%, learners should remain in their current level and re-learn the theme, vice versa.

The lessons to be learned consist of several sections, which is preceded by introduction. In listening section, listening videos are provided that contain daily-life conversation. To enrich vocabulary or *mufradât*, learners can listen and imitate how the words pronounced by native speakers. In structure and usage practice section, learners can work on the exercises available, either by making examples or correcting error sentences. In the reading aloud menu, passages are provided to enable learners to practice reading aloud. In the extended writing section, learners are required to write what have been learnt based on the theme.

Each section provides information on the extent of learning process completed, which is presented in the form of percentage. As learning is progressing, the color will move until reaching its full-end.

Arabic-Online.net serves some advantages. Being able to access lessons created by native speakers, learners can be more familiar with Arabic culture and custom, and know how vocabularies are used in their real contexts. Proficiency certificate issued by Saudi Electronic University is also provided for those who have completed all 16 levels available. Despite those benefits, Arabic-Online.net has several shortcomings. It requires a strong and stable connection. In addition, the files cannot be stored offline and the whole lessons cannot be accessed from different learning levels. Learners should also look up their own dictionary while learning as vocabulary translation is not provided. Further, in the reading

aloud section, it is difficult to record and detect learners' voice so that they should repeat the action.

In its implementation, learning Arabic using Arabic-Online.net is not to replace face-to-face learning, but to support learning. Even though the course is over, students can continue learning anytime and anywhere without any constraints. Meanwhile, in selecting instructional media, there is nothing so-called good or bad media. Instead, appropriate media should be selected by considering what needed to support Arabic learning.

## Conclusion

Arabic-Online.net is an Arabic learning model for non-native speakers offered by Saudi Electronic University. Designed based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, it can be accessed by anyone without any restrictions. Its teaching consists of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and the main components in Arabic (sounds, vocabulary and structures). There are 16 levels of stages ranging from beginner, elementary, intermediate, upper intermediate, advanced, and mastery, with as many as 796 main interactive videos, 12.000 audio files, 6.320 images and 10.076 exercises. Each level comprises 6 modules (units), each of which includes 24 lessons. Further, blended learning is implemented in the e-learning of Arabic using Arabic-Online.net by combining face-to-face activities at beginning of the meetings and online meetings.

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