



Intention and Motivation in Online Arabic Courses: Agency for Learning Phenomenon

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ENGLISH ABSTRACT

This study examines the implementation of Arabic learning during the pandemic and explores students' intentions and motivations in learning Arabic online. The type used in this research is a qualitative approach. An exploratory investigative approach is used to investigate students' intentions and motivations in learning Arabic online. Data will be collected by distributing the questionnaire offline and online. The data was then used to analyse the intentions and motivations of second semester students of the Arabic Language and Literature Study Program at UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten to support the long-distance Arabic courses. The study results indicate that the overall average score is still above 4 on a scale of 6. It is interpreted that the students having good intentions and motivation in online Arabic lectures.

Keywords: *Intention, Motivation, Arabic Learning, Online Learning*

INDONESIAN ABSTRACT

Penelitian ini mengkaji pelaksanaan pembelajaran bahasa Arab di masa pandemi serta menggali minat dan motivasi siswa dalam belajar bahasa Arab secara online. Jenis penelitian yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah pendekatan kualitatif. Pendekatan investigasi eksploratif digunakan untuk mengetahui minat dan motivasi siswa dalam belajar bahasa Arab secara daring. Data dikumpulkan dengan menyebarkan kuesioner secara offline dan online. Data tersebut kemudian digunakan untuk menganalisis minat dan motivasi mahasiswa semester 2 Program Studi Bahasa dan Sastra Arab UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten untuk mendukung pembelajaran bahasa Arab jarak jauh. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai rata-rata keseluruhan masih di atas 4 pada skala 6. Hal ini dapat diartikan bahwa mahasiswa memiliki minat dan motivasi yang baik dalam perkuliahan bahasa Arab online.

Kata kunci: *Minat Belajar, Motivasi Belajar, Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab, Belajar Online*

Introduction

The pandemic situation since 2020 has changed learning habits from the teacher-learning centered to the students-learning centered through online platforms that require more facilities and are different from learning in common situations. Of course, these independent learning activities will only be effective if they get strong encouragement from each learner, not only through the teacher's efforts alone (Brophy 1999). In line with Simamora et al (2020), learners during the pandemic must be directed to become 'real' learners who can learn anytime and anywhere, not just as students who can only learn through teacher guidance and direction. Thus, the pandemic period will not reduce the effectiveness of online and independent learning.

The term learner agency is not yet familiar to some Indonesian academics, especially when all learning process are mostly conducted through online platforms. Learner agency is needed so that learners can learn actively by utilizing surrounding resources and personal abilities (McLoughlin and Lee 2010). In addition, fellow learners with the learner agency category can foster independent learning together with the encouragement of teachers and peers who become role models (Akella 2010). Thus, the learner agency is an effective online learning solution for students. Therefore, despite the conditions and circumstances, students still able to learn effectively.

Intention and motivation are the two main things in the learner agency framework (Code, 2020). Learning foreign languages online and independently is one of the activities that need to be supported by the role of intention and motivation to achieve learning objectives. Zimmerman et al (2013) show that intention and motivation play a significant role in the success of independent learning through the positive effects of the 4 (four) pillars of successful learning: self-efficacy, identity, motivation, and learner metacognition. This result in line with research of Dörnyei et al (2019), who recommended that foreign language learning begin to strengthen the role of intention and motivation to achieve learning effectiveness. So that learners will be able to learn and understand the courses they learn.

Interestingly, although there are many studies on intentions and motivations in learning foreign languages, there are still not many studies related to students' intentions and motivations in learning Arabic online. Researches by Al-Osaimi and Wedell (2014), Gardner and Tremblay (1994), Bernaus (2009), Mendoza and Phung

(2019), are some examples of studies of intentions and motivations that tend to discuss learning Arabic as a foreign language. On the other hand, Arabic is also a foreign language used by more than 100 million people as the language of daily communication in several countries, especially Muslim-majority countries (Coupland 2010). Thus, it is crucial to study the intention and motivation in learning Arabic online to learn Arabic better.

Although there are many studies on intentions and motivations in learning foreign languages, not many are emphasized on the students' intentions and motivations in Arabic online learning. Researches like Al-Osaimi and Wedell (2014), Gardner and Tremblay (1994), Bernaus (2009), Mendoza and Phung (2019), are among those who have studied intentions and motivations that tend to discuss learning Arabic as a foreign language. In fact, Arabic is a foreign language used by more than 100 million people as their daily language in several countries, especially Muslim-majority countries (Coupland 2010). Therefore, it is crucial to study the intention and motivation in learning Arabic online to learn Arabic better.

This study examines the implementation of Arabic learning during the pandemic and explores students' intentions and motivations in learning Arabic online.

Methods

This research employs a qualitative approach. The investigative exploratory approach (Abdelhadi, Foster, and Whysall 2014) used as an approach to investigate the students' intentions and motivations in learning Arabic online. While a descriptive analysis approach is used to describe the conditions that are seen as they are. Terre Blanche et al (2006) define this descriptive research as a systematic, factual, and accurate. It has nature of descriptive or description (painting) regarding the factors, nature, and relationships between the phenomena studied.

In this study, the data sources are divided into two categories; 1) the primary data source is collected by distributing questionnaires to the students both online and offline. The data is then used to analyze the intentions and motivations of second semester students of the Arabic Language and Literature Study Program at UIN Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten to support learning Arabic in distance learning circumstances; 2) Secondary data sources are supporting data and complementary

research data. This data is crucial for the completeness of. The secondary data sources are books and reference materials related to the intention and motivation of independent learning in higher education.

The research begins with several stages, namely: first, Preparation: this activity, the researcher tries to prepare initial data related to the research problem being studied; second, Research Implementation: research implementation activities by collecting related data based on the research instruments that have been prepared; third, Evaluation or Reporting of Research Results: the last activity carried out by researchers by making reports on research results following the agreed systematics.

The questionnaire was developed from the framework of the learner agency theory covering intentions and motivation (Bandura 2008; Code 2020) to collect primary data, the link was distributed through an online application form to be filled out by students. The questionnaire has a six- point Likert scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = slightly agree, 5 = agree, and 6 = strongly agree. All data from the questionnaire were analyzed by descriptive statistical techniques to simplify, analyze, and describe the main features of the data (Myatt 2007). It starts by tabulating the data in the Microsoft Excel application, adding a percentage score, and presenting the analyzed data in a summary table. In addition to data analysis, open coding (DeCuir-Gunby, Marshall, and McCulloch 2011) used to code and summary data of open items.

Results and Discussion

Respondent Intellectual Profile

Table 1. Respondents Profile

Gender	Quantity	Percentage
Male	37	56.92
Female	28	43.08
Age	Quantity	Percentage
<18	9	13.84
18-20	55	84.62
21-23	1	1.54
School Origin	Quantity	Percentage

Islamic School & <i>Pesantren</i>	35	53.85
Islamic School <i>Non-Pesantren</i>	5	7.69
Regular School & <i>Pesantren</i>	14	21.54
Regular School <i>Non-Pesantren</i>	11	16.92
Economic Status	Quantity	Percentage
Upper Middle	3	4.62
Middle	34	52.30
Lower Middle	28	43.08
Distance Learning Experience	Quantity	Percentage
Elementary School	5	7.69
Junior High School	11	16.92
Senior High School	28	43.08
University	21	32.31
Online Learning Device	Quantity	Percentage
Personal Computer (PC)	1	1.54
Laptop	2	3.08
Mobile Phone	62	95.38

The data above shows the profile of the respondents in this study, including gender, age, school origin, economic status, distance learning experience, and the device used. Regarding gender, most responses are male students 37 people (56.92%), while the female students are 28 people (43.08%).

Regarding age, most responses aged between 18-20 years, 55 people (84.62%), while only 1 person whose age is 22-23 years old. In terms of school origin, most of them are from *Madrasah Aliyah* and Islamic boarding schools (), as many as 35 people (53.85%), while only 5 people are from other schools. Most of the respondents came from *Madrasah Aliyah* and Islamic Boarding School graduates. This condition should make it easier for them to adapt to online Arabic lectures, especially in learning Arabic skills and competences. The assumption comes from the different background knowledge between the MA or *Pondok Pesantren* students and SMA (Senior High School) students. The background knowledge is considered able to boost their self-confidence and also able to follow the class's progress easier.

Regarding economic status, most participants are those from middle class family as many as 34 people (52.30%), while the least came from students with upper middle economic family, as many as 3 people (4.62%). In terms of the experience of distance learning, students experienced distance learning when they were in high school, as many

as 28 people (43.08%), while the least are students who had the of distance learning in elementary school, as many as 5 people (7.69%). Some respondents are high school graduates who have had online learning experiences during the pandemic. Thus, online lectures are not something new for all students.

Regarding devices, smartphones are the most preferred choice used by students in long-distance Arabic lectures as many as 62 people (95.38%). At the same time, computers are the least choice used by students as many as 1 person (1.54%). Smartphones are more widely used because they are a communication tool owned by almost everyone, in this case, students. So other devices such as laptops and desktop computers are the least used in online lectures.

Student Intentions in Online Arab Arabic lectures

Intentions in Arabic language courses include the willingness of students to organize their learning plans effectively and efficiently. Some things studied in this point include willingness to learn, the decision to study, learning objectives, and student learning strategies in Arabic lectures.

Table 2. Student Intentions in Lectures

	M	SD
I decided to learn Arabic on my own accord	5.06	0.83
I gather much information in deciding to learn Arabic	4.82	0.90
I feel confident in deciding to learn Arabic	4.78	0.76
I want to master the elements of Arabic (<i>mufradat, qawaid, ashwat</i>)	5.17	0.57
I want to master Arabic language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing)	5.22	0.67
I have a specific goal in learning Arabic	4.89	0.81
I prepared a strategy to achieve the goal of learning Arabic	4.78	0.84

The table above describes the students' intentions in learning Arabic. Overall, it can be seen that students have positive choices to learn Arabic but their ability to gather much information in making decisions to learn Arabic is in the lowest category. The desire to master Arabic skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) has the highest average score of 5.49. On the other hand, the effort to collect much information in

deciding to learn Arabic is 4.74. The data is quite varied, as indicated by the Standard Deviation value for all data above 0.5.

Arabic students are eager to master the elements of Arabic and also master Arabic skills. With students' diverse educational backgrounds, lecturers need to guide and boost their interest in learning Arabic (Bledsoe and Robey, 1986) because it is an essential component in the soul of students that can determine the success of learning. In realizing interest in learning Arabic, synergy is needed between the ability of lecturers to prepare appropriate learning strategies in teaching with high intentions of students (Schachter and Rich, 2011). Thus, students consciously want to process learning Arabic because they strongly desire to master it.

BSA (Arabic Language and Literature) Department students seem to have difficulty gathering much information in deciding to study Arabic. This condition is because students do not understand the importance of learning Arabic, so they do not absorb the material presented by the lecturer and end up experiencing ongoing difficulties (Asmawati, Asy'ari, and Malkan, 2020). In addition, these difficulties occur because the method of delivering material by the lecturer is monotonous using the lecture method and the lack of motivation from the lecturer (Ritonga et al., 2021). Thus, lecturers must also present a solution so students can independently collect information to learn Arabic online.

Lecturers must encourage BSA students in determining goals in learning Arabic, both short-term goals and long-term goals. Lecturers' encouragement can motivate students to study effectively (Asrial et al. 2019). In addition, lecturers also need to provide various choices to learning Arabic so that students can enjoy every learning process (Gardner 1999). Thus, direction from lecturers to students is an important thing to do to obtain effective lecture results.

Student Motivation in Online Arabic Lectures

Motivation in Arabic lectures encourages students to organize their learning plans effectively and efficiently. Things studied at this point include interest in learning, challenges, and maximum effort in learning.

Table 3. Student Intentions in Lectures

	M	SD
I feel that learning Arabic is essential for my future education	5.20	0.71
I feel that learning Arabic will allow me to get to know more people from different countries	5.05	0.65
I am very interested in learning Arabic	5.06	0.68
I am challenged to be able to speak well with native Arabic speakers	4.94	0.77
I am challenged to be able to complete all Arabic course assignments well	5.03	0.73
I am challenged to be able to read Arabic texts well	5.09	0.74
I try to make the results of studying Arabic courses satisfactory	5.31	0.81

The table above describes students' motivation in learning Arabic. Overall, it can be seen that students have positive motivation to learn Arabic. However, they are less challenged to be able to speak with native Arabic speakers well. Student put much efforts so that the results of learning Arabic courses are satisfactory, namely 5.45. On the other hand, students are challenged to speak with native Arabic speakers well, which is 5.05. The data is quite varied, as indicated by the Standard Deviation value for all data above 0.5.

The Arabic language department students try hard to get satisfactory learning outcomes from online Arabic courses. Elkhafaifi (2005) show that students must have the basic facilities to participate in online learning to increase learning independence and obtain optimal learning outcomes. This effort can be done because students intend to learn as an essential component determining learning success (Mahyoob, 2020). Thus, students will be motivated to carry out online Arabic learning well and obtain optimal learning outcomes.

BSA students seem less challenged to be able to speak with native Arabic speakers as an outcome of learning Arabic. However, online lectures are challenging to be implemented, one of which is motivating to be skilled in speaking Arabic with native speakers (Zurqoni et al., 2020). In addition, the lack of interactive activities in online

lectures is a major inhibiting factor in motivating students to be challenged to be able to speak with native Arabic speakers (Asmari, 2015). Thus, teachers need to provide creative direction so that students are motivated to master Arabic language skills receptively and productively.

Lecturers should motivate the students to learning Arabic online effectively. Hamid et al (2020) show that the majority of students do not perceive online lectures as an effective method of lectures. It may be due to minimal facilities and the creation of teachers who make learning Arabic online less feasible and less comfortable. Thus, students and lecturers must synergize so that learning Arabic can give optimal results for both of them.

The Strengths and Weaknesses of Arabic Lectures from Student Perspectives

In online Arabic lectures, lecturers use video-based or audio-visual learning media uploaded to the YouTube page. Using these media makes it easy for students to repeat learning during class schedules and at home (Albantani and Madkur, 2017; Yousaf and Nawaz, 2022). In addition to asynchronous learning, lecturers occasionally carry out synchronous learning using google meet media (Simamora, 2020). This is to confirm the extent to which students understand the learning material in the asynchronous media (Lapitan et al. 2021). In addition, synchronous learning is also carried out to enrich and deepen the material so that students understand it better.

Online Arabic lectures make students learn independently from the assignments given by the lecturer so that they are accustomed to understand and study the material provided. For example, occasionally, lecturers give assignments to understand simple Arabic texts by providing previous briefings and subsequent corrections (Habash 2010). In addition, they are trained to complete PowerPoint and video-based tasks using their creations (Bahruddin and Ramadhanti Febriani 2020). In addition, lecturers also provide *mufradat* material and Arabic conversation by providing relevant and exciting examples for students. On the other hand, the materials and methods used by the lecturers do not make students bored with the online learning process. Thus, students can be motivated to study under any conditions.

On the other hand, online Arabic lectures can make students know each other and their friends, train them to listen to their friends' opinions, and exchange information

about Arabic material. According to student assessments, Arabic lecturers are good at delivering lecture materials online (Ashour 2020). The language used in providing the material is simple and easy for students to understand. It's just that there may always be questions in Arabic learning that will be difficult to respond to through asynchronous learning (Leo et al. 2021). Online Arabic lectures are considered to broaden students' knowledge through a quick understanding of the learning process and effective teaching methods for lecturers.

In addition, students consider that online Arabic lectures allow them to save on transportation costs to campus, have more flexible time, and choose a quieter study location. In addition, they can also save time and energy when lectures are held online (Alhasanat 2019). The time spent in face-to-face lectures will be more than in online lectures. It is because changing hours between one course and another sometimes has a long lag time, so they have to spend longer time on campus.

However, online Arabic lectures certainly have weaknesses that must be resolved. For example, the difference in how quickly students understand the material is one of the weaknesses that must be solved (Pintrich 2004). In addition, lecturers need particular strategies to measure the level of understanding of each student, for example, through exercises and tests.

In addition, when lecturers provide Arabic lecture material synchronously or asynchronously, students can listen carefully (Yahya et al. 2021). Most likely, students carry out online learning and other home activities. However, this is a separate obstacle to achieving learning success.

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On the other hand, the pandemic that has been going on for several years has not been able to encourage policymakers to distribute internet networks more evenly throughout the country, especially in remote areas. It is the main obstacle in implementing online lectures, with the internet as the primary aspect of implementing these activities (Garbe et al. 2020). Moreover, some students still complain about the high cost of internet packages, especially in implementing synchronous learning. It, of

course, needs to be completed so that learning in this country can be directed toward a more developed learning environment.

The gadget device needed in online lectures is still an obstacle for students. Some of them still do not have a device with standard quality to be used in online courses (Fathoni and Retnawati 2021). Therefore, they sometimes find it challenging to take Arabic classes online. Thus, there needs to be a separate solution provided by the campus for this problem.

Online lectures certainly have limitations in providing discussion opportunities for students (Baum and McPherson 2019). Moreover, learning should be done with asynchronous media. In that case, discussion activities can only be carried out through text media, so they cannot represent anxiety in learning conveyed in the discussion.

Conclusion

This study explores the intentions and motivations of Arabic Language and Literature Study Program students in online Arabic lectures. The results showed that the overall average score was still above the number 4 in a scale of 6. It can be interpreted that the students have good intentions and motivation in online Arabic lectures. For instance, they try to make the learning outcomes of Arabic courses satisfactory, get the highest average score of 5.31 out of a scale of 6. Meanwhile, the students show positive response towards the item stating about being confident in making decision to learn Arabic online and being prepared with strategies in order to achieve the learning goals.

This study provides several implications for better online Arabic lectures. First, lecturers have an essential role so that students consciously feel the need to learn Arabic. For example, lecturers motivate students to improve Arabic mastery and skills by themselves. In addition, lecturers must also provide continuous motivation so that students are interested in participating in online Arabic lectures. For example, lecturers must have strategies so that each student has questions to ask in each lecture. On the other hand, students should also be encouraged to reflect on their learning experiences and take advantage of teaching strategies that have been proven effective in achieving better Arabic learning outcomes.

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