

Enhancing the Arabic Writing Competency Utilizing Innovative Web-Based Program

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Abstract—Students learning Arabic as a Foreign Language (AFL) find it difficult to transfer and convert linguistic writing abilities into Arabic, implying that they need to get acquainted with the Arabic language to place words in phrases that suit the communication styles. Additionally, Arabic language teachers always complain that teaching Arabic as a foreign language suffers from an acute shortage of educational materials dealing with Arabic writing and Arabic sentence characteristics. In this case, the non-Arabic speaking learners at the intermediate level need a framework to improve their Arabic language competency. The research aims to develop a web-based program (WBP) designed to help learners produce Arabic writing assignments and essays. With this program, students can incorporate structures into their writing and revise them based on the suggested paragraphs, phrases, and Arabic patterns. To develop the framework of the program, different types of vocabulary errors, semantic and rhetorical difficulties among the lower performance of students in Arabic writing tasks will be examined. Both quantitative and qualitative mixed methods, comprising a survey and interview procedures will be adopted in the study. An experiment involving 150-200 pre-university students will also be conducted to demonstrate the different performances between the pretest and the post-test. A comparison in writing activities between the traditional and web-

based program approaches will be carried out to test the effectiveness of the program. It is expected that the students using web-based writing programs are expected to outperform the regular writing group in most factors, particularly in content, development, and organization. The new innovative writing web-based program is expected to improve students writing skills in the Arabic language and be a valuable teaching tool for teachers. It is also useful for tourism publications, industrial product translation services and contributes to the new digital media dimensions for societal environment and lifestyle.

Keywords—*Arabic Writing, Arabic as a Foreign Language, Web-Based Program, Language Competency*

I. INTRODUCTION

WRITING skill is an important element in the mastery of the Arabic language, especially for students in the intermediate level and higher education. It involves a complex cognitive process and it is the indicator of competence in Arabic. Research on the problem of Arabic writing at secondary and tertiary levels should be given priority so that continuous improvement can be made [1].

Arabic plays a considerable role in Malaysia since it is closely linked with Islam which is the official religion of the country. It is taught as a separate subject particularly in religious schools, though Arabic is not used for communicative purposes and its use is generally restricted to the domains of religion

and diplomatic affairs. However, there is increasing interest in the wider use of Arabic in commerce and emphasis is now being placed on communication and writing skills in these contexts [2].

This research aims to develop a new framework to enhance the Arabic writing competency among pre-university students utilizing an innovative web-based program. The flow chart of these research activities in Fig.1 illustrates the methodology of this study.

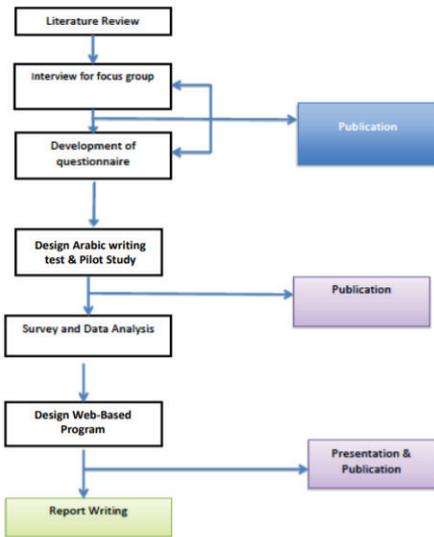


Fig. 1. flow chart of these research activities

The current research's stimulus and context align with Malaysia's Higher Education Blueprint (2015-2025) to introduce ten (10) shifts or transformations, including the talent excellence (shift 2), innovation ecosystem (shift 7), and transformed higher education delivery (shift 10). The 10 shifts in Malaysia Education Blueprint (Higher Education) [3] are displayed in Fig. 2.

Malaysian Government's plan of action to introduce a series of significant educational reforms to develop Malaysia into a regional educational hub is dealt with. This research paper looks further into creative methods of teaching and learning the Arabic language using digital technology. Some practical guidelines are also introduced for the learners to grasp the Arabic language writing competence effectively.



Fig. 2. 10 shifts in Malaysia Education Blueprint [3]

The general examination system in Malaysia emphasizes the aspect of writing as an important component. Therefore, students should be competent and highly skilled in creating the writing techniques, understand the title, knowledgeable about the content, rich in vocabulary, and be able to convey or use good language and not in a monotonous writing style. The degree of students' competence and skills in writing affect the degree of their achievement in the examination. Because of that, when a student learning a language, whether first, second, or foreign language, their competency in that language will not be considered unless they are highly skilled and fully mastered in composing an effective essay [4].

Writing is the most neglected skill in Arabic education. Arabic programs and textbooks, by and large, do not treat writing as a meaningful act of communication but rather as a support skill that serves mainly to reinforce vocabulary and grammar and to test comprehension of reading materials. The relatively low importance of writing in Arabic can also be seen in the attitudes of students.

The centrality of grammar in the teaching and learning process is inadequate and was argued since language ability involved much more than grammatical competence. Where grammar is given too much priority, the result is predictable, the students do not learn Arabic but they learn grammar. They will know the rules and they can pass the test, but when it comes to using the language in practice, students will discover that they are lack

vocabulary and fluency. They are unable to use the rules especially in speaking and writing accurately and fluently. This approach has also made students nervous about making mistakes, undermining their confidence, and destroying their motivation [5, 6].

Hence, this study aims:

- i. to study the different linguistic features of Arabic (the target language) in writing development.
- ii. to evaluate the lower performance of the students in Arabic writing tasks and develop a new framework.
- iii. to develop a web-based program supporting the Arabic writing process.

II. PROBLEM STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVE

The research questions of interest to the study are as follows: (i) Why writing proficiency in the Arabic language is such a difficult task?, (ii) How to improve Arabic writing competence among Malaysian learners?, (iii) How can a new framework be developed for learning Arabic writing and improving students' performance in Arabic writing tasks?

The main problem faced by the students in mastering the language is the failure to master the vocabulary of the Arabic language as well as a motivation factor and a negative perception toward learning Arabic. To produce good writing, precise vocabulary selection is vital in the delivery of clear meaning. Moreover, the use of the five affective senses through activities outside the classroom that are relaxed, structured, and fun can have a positive impact on the improvement of language acquisition [7].

The improvements in networking facilities have led to software that supports communication between users, and these could have applications in language learning. E-mail could be advantageous to second language writers especially when they communicate with native writers. E-mail provides students with a real audience for their writings and allows them to get past the mechanical stage of writing as a communicative act. More extensive facilities

like Facebook, Telegram, and WhatsApp also provide interactive writing communication [8].

The current issue regarding Arabic language students in Malaysia and their writing proficiency is their inability to construct good Arabic sentences properly. The weakness of students in writing Arabic essays prompted the researcher in this study.

Wa'el Al Faqara [9] conducted a study to investigate the linguistic challenges that Malaysian learners face in learning Arabic as a foreign language. The findings of the study showed that Malaysian learners faced numerous difficulties and many linguistic challenges in learning Arabic; diglossia, the dissimilarities between the two languages, and the Arabic writing system.

Supporting facilities are needed to assist students in their writing tasks. There is a need for collaborative learning methods so that all the interventions, guidance, and feedback do not rest solely on the teacher. Research has shown how web-based programs are beneficial for language learning.

III. METHODOLOGY

The design of this study is based on a case study to explore the level of students' skills in constructing and composing Arabic essays. Malaysian learners faced numerous linguistic difficulties in learning Arabic; diglossia, the dissimilarities between the two languages, and the Arabic writing system. The study of different linguistic features of Arabic (the target language) in the essay writing development was designed based on the first research question and research objective.

This study relies on mixed methods in terms of quantity and quality. Respondents are chosen from among teachers and students of the Arabic language to express their reactions towards their experience with the traditional methodology in teaching and learning Arabic writing. An experiment will be designed to demonstrate different performances in pretest and post-test, including 150-200 pre-university participants. The mixed-method research design [10] is illustrated in Fig. 3.

their classrooms. A new framework of teaching and learning the Arabic writing modus operandi will be developed to enhance the students' performance.

The findings of this study will be a breakthrough for future researchers on the methodology of acquiring Arabic as a foreign language. The finding of this research will contribute to the development of a theory and extends knowledge to the existing research methodology. The result of this study could lead to the enhancement of the traditional methods of teaching the Arabic language in Malaysian settings. The finding of this research will also help traditional teachers to seriously consider an alternative paradigm of teaching and learning the Arabic language in their classrooms. It also identifies students' perceptions and attitudes in learning the Arabic language. As such, the result of this research provides an opportunity for the instructors to plan their instruction according to the needs of the learners.

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The finding will indicate how the students who use the web-based writing program outperform the regular writing group in most factors, especially in content, development, and organization. This research will support academic progress to improve students' educational attainment and teachers' teaching performance. Educational tourism will thrive on attracting foreign tourists to the country. The study findings will also correspond to government tourism publications and accommodate the deployment of promotional tourism packages. Industrial sectors can also take advantage of their product translation services and printing purposes to reach international market requirements. Arabic writing encourages effective digital media to open new production dimensions and support the societal environment and lifestyle.

V. CONCLUSION

This concept paper formulates specific and potential application of the research findings. The innovative Web-Based Program designed to support the Arabic writing task will enhance the students' competence of intermediate level and others who are producing tasks and assignments in the Arabic language.

Learners develop strategies and skills in Arabic writing to the point that they can perform their self-correction and essentially identify the use of Arabic, i.e., how words are placed into sentences, and how other grammatical and stylistic features are employed in Arabic writing.

The teacher would encourage collaborative discussion in developing writing skills that can be beneficial to students with differing levels of knowledge. The new framework illustrates the innovative SOP of the Arabic writing development in utilization of the WBP.

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