



**Eduslamic: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam dan Keagamaan**  
Vol. 2 No. 2 Februari 2025

## **CAUSAL FACTORS AND SOLUTIONS TO LEARNING DIFFICULTIES IN ARABIC IN CLASS XI IPS MADRASAH ALIYAH MUHAMMADIYAH 1 MEDAN-NORTH SUMATERA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research is motivated by the problem of students who have difficulty in learning Arabic. So the researcher raised the title related to "Causal Factors and Solutions to Arabic Learning Difficulties in Class XI IPS MAS Muhammadiyah 1 Medan". The purpose of this research is to find out the factors that cause students to have difficulty in learning Arabic and solutions or strategies in overcoming learning difficulties in Arabic. This research applies descriptive qualitative research methods with collection methods namely interviews, observation and documentation. The results of the research obtained are found various factors, namely internal factors and external factors that cause students to feel difficulties in learning Arabic. Internal factors are divided into 2, namely first, physiological factors such as illness or disability. Second, psychological factors such as intelligence, talent, interest, motivation, mental health factors and special kinds of learners. While external factors include the family environment, school environment and community environment. The solution to overcome students' difficulties in learning Arabic at Madrasah Aliyah Muhammadiyah 1 Medan is by using several learning media that are considered effective such as using audio-visual-based learning media, namely using learning videos or watching Arabic cartoons, applying *ice breaking* before starting learning, and playing games.

**Keywords:** *Factors, Difficulties, Solutions*



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International licence E-ISSN: 2988-6686, DOI: 10.59548/jed.v2i2.315

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## **Introduction**

Education is an awareness that creates an atmosphere and learning process so that students can actively develop the potential for spiritual strength, self-control, character, intelligence, noble character, and skills needed for themselves and society. Education is understood not only as an effort to provide information and develop skills, but also to realize the ideals, needs and abilities of individuals in order to achieve a satisfying personal and social life. Education is a means to prepare not only for future life, but also for the lives of today's children who are developing towards adulthood. Education is a learning process that every person (student) goes through to make himself (student) easier to understand, more mature and make people (students) think more critically. In principle, all students have the right to the opportunity to achieve satisfactory academic achievement. However, if we look at everyday reality, it is clear that there are differences between students in terms of intellectual abilities, physical abilities, family background, habits, learning approaches, and others, and these differences are sometimes quite striking (Harahap et al., 2023).

Learning difficulties are conditions where students encounter certain obstacles in the learning process and achieve the best learning results. A student's learning difficulty indicates a gap or distance between expected academic achievement and actual student academic achievement. Because of the learning difficulties experienced by these students, it makes the learning outcomes obtained by students low. Most people still think that learning Arabic is not easy (Nasution, 2016) . Factors causing obstacles in learning Arabic can be internal factors and external factors. Internal factors can be the state of the Arabic language itself, such as phonetic problems (phonology), word structure (morphology), phonetic grammar (syntax), and semantics (Nasution, 2017) . It can also be caused by nonlinguistic problems, such as sociocultural and historical problems, as well as problems that arise in teachers, students, infrastructure, learning methods, and the environment during Arabic language learning. Learning difficulties refer to various types of difficulties in listening, speaking, reading, writing and calculating. This condition is not caused by the influence of physical or mental abnormalities or environmental factors, but because of the individual's own difficulties in perceiving and processing information about the objects he perceives.

Learning difficulties are not only related to students' lack of academic ability, but also to their low interest in learning. We are faced with a number of diverse characteristics. There are students who can go through their learning activities smoothly and successfully without experiencing difficulties, but on the other hand,

there are not a few students who actually experience difficulties in learning. A student's learning difficulty is indicated by the presence of certain obstacles to the achievement of learning outcomes, and can be psychological, sociological, or physiological, so that in the end the learning outcomes are not as good as they should be (Zakiatunnisa et al., 2020). Some previous studies related to the author's research include: *First*, as a conclusion from the results of research written by Fahrurrozi on the topic "Analysis of Student Learning Difficulties in Arabic Language Learning at Seminary VII Tzanawiya Darussalam Belmi Gelun in 2015/2016 Academic Year", these difficulties were found. Among others: Aspects of language pronunciation (including difficulties in reading comprehension, communication, and sound systems). Writing difficulties also include difficulties in letter formation, connecting letters, sentence construction, and vocabulary; *Second*, Fakhrur Rahman has conducted research on "*Challenges in Arabic Language Learning*". In Langsa City there is a Madrasah Tsanawiyah. Various problems faced by students in Madrasah Tsanawiyah in learning Arabic include low student understanding of the material taught by the teacher, lack of enthusiasm for learning, limited teacher competence in managing classes and students, and lack of application of management functions by members of the madrasah organization; *Third*, research conducted by Veti Nur Fatimah entitled "Analysis of Difficulties". Learning Arabic language for grade IX students of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 2 Sleman Yogyakarta shows that the factors that cause difficulties in learning Arabic include students' lack of intrinsic interest and motivation, difficulty in reading and understanding the meaning of Arabic vocabulary, and parents' attention to their children's awareness and motivation to learn outside the school environment.

Based on these three previous studies, we can conclude that in learning Arabic language problems often arise that need to be solved. The difference with the research that the author does is related to the analysis of the factors of difficulty in learning Arabic, and this study aims to analyze the causes of difficulties in learning Arabic. The focus is on students who have difficulty in learning Arabic about learning Arabic (Umudini et al., 2023). Based on the phenomena described above, this research aims. *First*, to find out the factors causing difficulties in learning Arabic for students of Madrasah Aliyah Muhammadiyah 1 Medan; *Second*, finding solutions to overcome the difficulties of learning Arabic in students of Madrasah Aliyah Muhammadiyah 1 Medan.

## **Research Methods**

This study uses qualitative research which aims to observe and describe in detail the factors causing and solutions to learning difficulties in Arabic language in class XI IPS Madrasah Aliyah Muhammadiyah 1 Medan. The sources of data in this study are educators, students and material books as a means and learning tools in the classroom. Data collection methods in this research are observation, interview and documentation. Data analysis in this study uses qualitative data analysis techniques, where the data will be presented descriptively. Data analysis according to Miles and Huberman is data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Zulfirman Rony, 2022) .

## **Result and Discussion**

### **A. Learning Difficulties in General**

Based on the results of the study, the researcher found that one of the main challenges for students is learning vocabulary and grammar that is very different from Indonesian. Many students have difficulty memorizing new vocabulary, especially in Arabic verbs and nouns that often change form. In addition, the use of Arabic in daily communication is very limited, making it difficult to speak and write Arabic. One student said *"In my opinion, the most challenging thing is having to memorize vocabulary and understand Arabic grammar which is different from Indonesian. Sometimes, we need to memorize a lot of new words in a short period of time, which can feel challenging. Apart from that, we feel a little confused with the Arabic sentence structure, because the order of the words is different from what we are used to"*.

Learning difficulty is known as *learning disability, learning disorder, learning difficulty is a disorder* that causes individuals to have difficulty in undergoing the learning process effectively. Learning difficulties are conditions in which students experience certain obstacles in the learning process and achieve optimal learning outcomes (Fatah et al., 2021). Learning is the process of trying to achieve new changes as a result of experience and self-interaction with the environment. The relationship between learning and behavior change in a particular situation. Learning disability is a condition that can interfere with a person's learning process. This condition is usually related to circumstances (weaknesses he has) and unfavorable circumstances for him. A student's learning difficulties can be determined by his attitude during the learning process.

The following are the characteristics of students who experience learning difficulties, namely: *First, perception* is students experiencing obstacles in recognizing or understanding what they feel, see, and hear. *Second, attention* is that

students find it difficult to concentrate or focus on learning activities. *Third, memory* is that students face challenges in managing information, especially in understanding and storing information that is read. *Fourth, processing speed* is that there are differences in students' ability to process information; some are fast and some are slow, which can be seen from the speed at which they master the material. *Fifth, metacognition* is that students with learning difficulties tend to find it difficult to build new understanding or draw conclusions from the material learned. *Sixth, language* is difficulty in language skills, both oral and written. *Seventh, academic* is characterized by a decline in academic achievement, where student learning outcomes are not consistent with previous achievements. *Eighth, social* is students show a decrease in social skills in learning, which affects interactions with peers and success in learning (Ade Triani, 2023) .

The Arabic language learning process run by Mas Muhammadiyah 1 Medan, is elegant. One of the important components in the Islamic education curriculum is the Arabic language subject that is required for students. However, at Mas Muhammadiyah 1 Medan, Arabic language learning still faces obstacles in mastering its basic aspects. For example, difficulties in reading, writing, understanding, and remembering Arabic vocabulary. Thus, learning Arabic is considered challenging and less interesting, which results in the grade XI students of Mas Muhammadiyah 1 Medan scoring below the minimum graduation standard. The challenges often faced in learning Arabic for non-Arabs are difficulties in reading, writing, understanding, and remembering vocabulary. The same problem is also faced by students in grade XI of Mas Muhammadiyah 1 Medan.

Regarding the internal factors of Arabic learning difficulties, namely the psychological condition of students, many participants have difficulty in reading, memorizing, and writing in Arabic classes. Then there are external factors and internal factors, namely the teacher support factor. Teachers should pay attention to their students and not pay attention to who is active or inactive, but always provide encouragement, advice and motivation so that students want to participate enthusiastically and actively in Arabic language learning. In this case, the teacher's ability is a factor in the success of further learning. Arabic teacher competence plays an important role and is very influential in learning. This is because learning theory describes it as a process consisting of three main components that are closely interrelated. The three elements are learning planning, learning implementation, and learning outcomes assessment (evaluation), and the main actors are teachers who have all the skills they have.

In addition to the role of the teacher, there are other factors that support, such as the atmosphere in the classroom and the surrounding environment. Comfort

when learning Arabic increases the enthusiasm of learners, in addition, learners will get their own personal books to avoid distractions when learning together. The same thing was found in Susiawati and colleagues' research at Madrasah Aliyah related to monitoring and assessing Arabic language learning, especially regarding facilities and infrastructure where student packet books are not held by every student. There are various Arabic learning options that can be chosen, ranging from sharing one book to four, and some even utilize mobile phones to access the soft files of the book. However, it is recommended that the use of learning media is more varied to increase students' interest and motivation in learning Arabic. It is also important for each student to have their own guidebook so that they can study and do assignments outside of class hours. This is because not all students in the Madrasah Aliyah have personal android phones that can store the soft file of the teaching material book that can be opened at any time.

Arabic learning materials in XI Mas Muhammadiyah 1 Medan come from various sources. The sources are adjusted to the subject matter, because there are four main materials studied, namely *istima'*, *muhadasah*, *qira'ah*, and *kitabah*. In the teaching process, especially for teachers, it is important not to rely on only one type of teaching method. Instead, teachers must be good at combining various methods so that learning becomes more effective. This is called the mixed method, which aims to help students understand the subject matter more easily in Arabic language learning.

From the results of research involving observations and interviews in XI Mas Muhammadiyah 1 Medan is examining the challenges faced by students in understanding Arabic lessons in class XI, recognizing that there are a number of factors that can cause difficulties for students. Those causes can come from within as well as from outside. The students in grade XI of Mas Muhammadiyah 1 Medan felt that learning Arabic was difficult because they did not understand the meaning of the Arabic vocabulary and the subject matter being studied. This makes understanding the lesson difficult for them. In addition, the 11th grade students of Mas Muhammadiyah 1 Medan still feel constrained in memorizing Arabic vocabulary so that they have difficulty in reading and understanding the meaning of the vocabulary (Umudini et al., 2023). The purpose of learning Arabic is to help students acquire four language skills (skills/*mahallas*) namely: listening skills (*mahara istima'*), reading skills (*mahara qiraah*), speaking skills (*mahara kalam*), and writing skills (*mahara kitabah*).

## **B. Factors of Arabic Language Learning Difficulty at Mas Muhammadiyah 1 Medan**

Based on interviews from the first student who said "it is difficult to learn a lot of vocabulary", the second student said "it is difficult to translate from Arabic to Indonesian because of the lack of mufrodat with a public school educational background", and the third student said "it is a little difficult to understand the LKS book because it lacks explanation and is far behind compared to other Arabic LKS and quite good lessons at boarding schools" it can be concluded that students find it difficult to learn Arabic because of their previous educational background, namely public schools where Arabic is less prioritized. Students find it difficult to learn Arabic, especially memorizing and translating Arabic into Indonesian. Students find it difficult with the book/LKS taught by the teacher because it lacks explanation and is far behind compared to other Arabic books. Because the book is less effective, teachers use other books as additional books such as *durusul lughah*. Students also find it difficult due to a lack of focus in learning Arabic where the teacher's teaching method can affect this. Students have difficulty reading Arabic sentences, especially for students who are not fluent in reading the Qur'an. However, some students say it is quite easy to learn and memorize Arabic like memorizing the Qur'an. These factors of difficulty can also be seen from the students' environment both at school and outside of school who do not apply Arabic in their daily lives.

Based on the results of interviews and observations, researchers found factors of difficulties experienced by students of class XI IPS Madrasah Aliyah Muhammadiyah 1 Medan in learning Arabic. These factors are divided into 2 factors, namely internal factors and external factors. Internal factors are factors contained within students that can affect student learning outcomes, these factors include physiological factors and psychological factors (Sitinjak & Kadu, 2016). Physiological factors are factors that result in the emergence of learning difficulties in students, for example, the condition of students who are unhealthy, disabled or so on. Psychological factors are factors that result in the emergence of learning difficulties in students including a fairly low level of intelligence, talent, interest, lack of motivation, and poor mental health (Hanik, 2015).

*First*, intelligence can be understood as a psycho-physical skill to react to stimuli or adapt to the environment in a correct method. Intelligence is not only related to the quality of the brain but also the quality of other organs of the body. However, the brain has a more prominent role than the role of other organs because the brain is the controller of almost all human activities (Hanik, 2015).



*Secondly*, aptitude is the potential skill a person has to achieve success in the future. *Third*, interest is a process that provides enthusiasm, direction, and persistence in behavior. In other words, motivated behavior is behavior that is passionate, focused, and lasts for a long time. In the context of learning, motivation can be interpreted as the overall drive within students that triggers learning activities, ensures the continuity of these activities, and provides clear direction, so that the goals desired by the learning subject can be achieved (Andi, 2019).

*Fourth*, motivation is a situation that moves or encourages someone to behave in order to achieve the goals triggered by the motivation (Siregar, 2020). *Fifth*, mental health is an unhealthy body and can cause fatigue, drowsiness, lack of enthusiasm. This condition results in and responds to decreased learning, so that the brain cannot work optimally in processing, managing, interpreting, and organizing subject matter (Hanik, 2015). While external factors are factors that come from outside the individual who is doing the learning process (Suhendra, 2020). External factors include the family environment, school environment and community environment. *First*, the family environment such as the situation at home, family economic conditions and parental care, how parents relate to children and how parents educate children. *Second*, the school environment includes various aspects, such as the teaching methods/curriculum used by teachers, the relationship between teachers and students, the level of discipline at school, and the facilities and infrastructure available. *Third*, the community environment includes student activities in the community, mass media, the surrounding environment and association with friends (Hanik, 2015).

### **C. Solutions To Overcome Students' Difficulties in Learning Arabic**

Based on the results of interviews from the first student who said "it is difficult to learn a lot of vocabulary", the second student said "it is difficult to translate from Arabic to Indonesian because of the lack of mufrodath with a public school educational background", and the third student said "it is a little difficult to understand the LKS book because it lacks explanation and is far behind compared to other Arabic LKS and quite good lessons at the boarding school it can be concluded that the difficulty factors experienced by students in learning Arabic include students having difficulty in memorizing vocabulary so that they are minimal to understand it, and students are also lacking in pronouncing the correct letter sounds because mispronouncing just one Arabic letter will cause the wrong meaning. Graduates of pesantren are also a factor of lack of confidence for students who are only high school graduates, teachers need to instill confidence that



students who do not have a basic pesantren graduate can also learn Arabic with serious intentions.

Teachers are one of the important elements in the teaching and learning process that plays a role in efforts to develop quality human resources in the field of education. In addition, teachers are required to master the knowledge to be taught, which includes the specialization of science or the field of study that is their responsibility along with the deepening material. Therefore, teachers are expected not only to convey the material listed in the curriculum, but also to develop and enrich the material with the latest scientific developments (Al Ghozali & Mathoriyah, 2020) .

Learning difficulties are one of the challenges students face in the learning process, which has a major impact on their experience of learning. This is due to students' lack of understanding of the importance of learning and the Arabic language materials studied with the teacher in class. Most students still face learning difficulties, which are also caused by ineffective and inconsistent ways of learning. In addition, in receiving learning materials, not all students can absorb the material well. There are students who easily and quickly understand the material, but there are still many who have difficulty in receiving and understanding the lessons taught by the teacher (Al Ghozali & Mathoriyah, 2020) .

The solution to overcome students' difficulties in learning Arabic at M Muhammadiyah 1 Medan is by using several learning media that are considered effective such as using audio-visual-based learning media, namely using learning videos. Videos that present learning materials with interesting visuals can help students more easily understand Arabic concepts. For example, videos that show daily conversations in Arabic or explain grammar visually. The learning difficulties faced by students are very diverse, each student has an appropriate learning model to make it easier to understand Arabic. One of the learning media that is considered effective can use audio presentation for pronunciation. Audio media that provides examples of pronunciation of words or sentences in Arabic can help students recognize sounds and correct pronunciation. Tools such as apps or audio recordings can be used to strengthen students' hearing ability. Teachers can also facilitate media such as watching movies or cartoons in Arabic with subtitles can introduce students to the context of daily language use. It also provides an opportunity to hear natural pronunciation and enrich their vocabulary.

## Conclusion

As an educator, especially a teacher, it is very important to have a variety of sufficient knowledge, in accordance with the times and advances in science and technology (thisriada, 2023). One of the knowledge that must be mastered by teachers is ways to overcome difficulties in the teaching and learning process. In the process of learning Arabic, mufrodat is very important to help in maharah kalam. The teacher can give ten mufrodat during Arabic lessons. If calculated in two semesters, students will get hundreds of mufrodat that will help them to implement the Arabic language. Teaching mufrodat with clear and relevant contexts is very helpful for students. For example, rather than just memorizing words, students can be invited to learn mufrodat through real sentences or situations that they often encounter. This makes the vocabulary easier to remember and understand.

To increase students' interest in learning Arabic, teachers must also make the classroom atmosphere comfortable and conducive. Before entering the class, the teacher needs to provide ice breaking so that students do not feel bored and train students' concentration. Teachers can also make an Arabic game to train students in understanding the material, such as games composing hijaiyyah letters into a mufrodat isim and fi'il the material is embedded in the minds of students and games also play a role to relax the limbs including the mind.

The provision of relevant Arabic language games will produce intellectually good students and provide comfort for students. Teachers should be more innovative and creative in presenting Arabic games for teaching materials. According to the author's observation, the existing facilities at MAS Muhammadiyah 1 Medan such as library, laptop, projector, LKS. These facilities are sufficient to improve good learning (Farid et al., 2022).

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