



Why Mudzakah Still Matters: A Classical Learning Practice for Strengthening Arabic Grammar Understanding

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Abstract

Mudzakah is a traditional Islamic learning method still used today. It helps students understand what they learned in class. Although well-known, there are few studies on its use in learning Arabic at Islamic schools. This study looks at how mudzakah is used and its impact on fifth-grade girls learning Arabic at Pondok Pesantren Dar Al-Nahda Thawalib Bangkinang. The study uses a qualitative approach and descriptive method. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and document analysis. The subjects were fifth-grade girls in the diniyah education program. The results show that mudzakah involves structured group discussions, Q&A sessions, and repeating learned material. This method helps reinforce learning and encourages active participation. The study found that mudzakah improves understanding of Arabic grammar rules, especially in reading and understanding texts. It also boosts confidence, motivation, and cooperation among students. Factors that help mudzakah work well include a supportive school environment and motivated students. Challenges include differences in student abilities and limited time. Overall, mudzakah plays a key role in improving understanding of Arabic grammar and supports effective language learning in Islamic schools.

Keywords

Mudzakah, Arabic Language Learning, Grammar Understanding

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A. Introduction

The mastery of Arabic in the context of Islamic education is not limited to oral communication skills but also requires a deep understanding of the language's structure and rules.¹ In the Islamic scholarly tradition, understanding *qawā'id al-lughah*—which encompasses the sciences of *nahwu* and *sharaf*—holds a very important position because it serves as the foundation for comprehending religious texts. The term *qawā'id* is the plural form of *qā'idah*, which refers to general principles or basic rules that form the basis for various branches of knowledge. In the context of Islamic studies, the concept of *qawā'id* is found not only in the field of language but also in other disciplines such as *qawā'id fihiyyah*, *qawā'id nahwiyyah*, and *qawā'id sharafiyyah*. These principles function as a conceptual framework that enables readers to understand classical Islamic texts, especially the *turath* books, which in the *pesantren* tradition are often referred to as *kitab kuning*.²

The Arabic language has a complex linguistic system with highly detailed grammatical structures.^{3,4} Small changes in *i'rab* marks or in the morphological form of a word can result in significant changes in meaning.⁵ Therefore, mastery of Arabic *qawā'id* (grammatical rules) is an important requirement for students to avoid mistakes in understanding and interpreting religious texts. In learning Arabic, mastery of *qawā'id* is also closely related to the development of the four language skills: listening (*istimā'*), speaking (*kalām*), reading (*qirā'ah*), and writing (*kitābah*). A strong understanding of language rules serves as the foundation for achieving comprehensive linguistic competence. Conversely, weak mastery of *qawā'id* can lead to poor overall language ability and decreased effectiveness in communication in Arabic.⁶

To achieve learning objectives optimally, selecting the right learning methods is crucial. Appropriate teaching methods not only help teachers deliver material systematically but also enable students to understand the content more deeply.⁷ In the context of Islamic education, especially within *pesantren* or *ma'had*

¹ Joseph E Aoun, Elabbas Benmamoun, and Lina Choueiri, "The Syntax of Arabic" (Cambridge University, December 3, 2009), <https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511691775>

² Suwendi Suwendi et al., "ROLES AND CHALLENGES OF PESANTREN INTELLECTUAL NETWORKS," *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura* 24, no. 2 (August 3, 2024): 453, <https://doi.org/10.22373/jiif.v24i2.23134>

³ Waleed Nazih et al., "Ibn-Ginni: An Improved Morphological Analyzer for Arabic," *ACM Transactions on Asian and Low-Resource Language Information Processing* 23, no. 2 (February 8, 2024): 1, <https://doi.org/10.1145/3639050>

⁴ Rehab Duwairi and Ftoon Abushaqra, "Syntactic- and Morphology-Based Text Augmentation Framework for Arabic Sentiment Analysis," *PeerJ Computer Science* 7, no. 4 (April 5, 2021): e469, <https://doi.org/10.7717/peerj-cs.469>

⁵ Mohammad Al-Kuran, "Perceptions of Vowels and Consonants in Arabic and English: Implications for Translators and Dictionary Users," *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 13, no. 6 (June 1, 2023): 1573, <https://doi.org/10.17507/tppls.1306.27>

⁶ Mohammad Al-Kuran, "Perceptions of Vowels and Consonants in Arabic and English: Implications for Translators and Dictionary Users," *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 13, no. 6 (June 1, 2023): 1573, <https://doi.org/10.17507/tppls.1306.27>

⁷ Feng-Kuang Chiang and Zhenhua Wu, "Flipping a Classroom with a Three-Stage Collaborative Instructional Model (3-CI) for Graduate Students," *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, April 10, 2021, 64, <https://doi.org/10.14742/ajet.6330>

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environments, there are various traditional teaching methods that have long been used to instruct in Arabic and Islamic sciences. These include sorogan, bandongan, halaqah, talaqqi, and mudzakah.⁸ These methods have developed as part of a classical pedagogical tradition aimed at deepening students' understanding of scholarly material.

Mudzakah is one of the methods widely used in the pesantren education tradition. Etymologically, the term mudzakah derives from the verb *dzākara–yudzākiru*, which means to remind each other, to repeat together, or to revisit and discuss a subject.⁹ In pesantren educational practice, mudzakah refers to a group study activity in which students review lessons that have been studied in class. This activity is usually conducted in the form of group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and re-examination of material explained by the teacher or *kyai*. Through this process, students can exchange their understanding with one another, clarify concepts that are still unclear, and deepen their mastery of the learning material.¹⁰

In practice, mudzakah activities are often carried out regularly in small groups tailored to the students' grade level or abilities. In many pesantren, these activities take place at night after the *Isya* prayer and continue until a specified time. The main purpose of these activities is to strengthen students' understanding of the material that has been studied in class and to improve their readiness for various academic activities, including religious competitions such as *Musabaqah Tilawatil Qur'an (MTQ)* or recitation competitions of classical texts (*kitab turats*).¹¹

Nevertheless, in the practice of teaching Arabic, various challenges are often encountered, especially in mastering *nahwu* and *sharaf* rules, which are known for their considerable complexity. Many students experience difficulties in understanding, memorizing, and accurately applying these rules. In this context, the mudzakah method has the potential to help overcome these difficulties through social interaction and scholarly discussion among students. Through dialogue and collaboration, abstract concepts can be explained in a simpler and more contextual manner. Thus, mudzakah serves not only as a means of reviewing material but also as a collaborative learning process that encourages the development of a deeper understanding.

Although the mudzakah method has long been practiced in Islamic education, empirical studies that specifically examine the effectiveness of this method in improving the understanding of Arabic grammatical principles (*qawā'id*) at certain educational levels are still relatively limited. Most previous research has focused more on general teaching methods in Islamic boarding

⁸ Aselawati Che Ab Adziz and Awan Ismail, "Corak Penggunaan Platform Pengajaran Dan Pembelajaran Di Institusi Pondok Di Kedah," *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication* 39, no. 2 (June 30, 2023): 248, <https://doi.org/10.17576/jkmjc-2023-3902-14>

⁹ Waleed Nazih et al., "Ibn-Ginni: An Improved Morphological Analyzer for Arabic," *ACM Transactions on Asian and Low-Resource Language Information Processing* 23, no. 2 (February 8, 2024): 1, <https://doi.org/10.1145/3639050>

¹⁰ Dewi Sadiyah, "Developing Pesantren Education Quality through Radicalism Prevention Program for Santri," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 8, no. 1 (June 30, 2022): 63, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v8i1.17947>

¹¹ *Ibid.*

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schools (pesantren) without giving special attention to an in-depth analysis of a particular learning method and its impact on specific aspects of linguistic competence. This condition indicates a research gap that needs to be addressed through more focused and contextual studies.

Pondok Pesantren Dar Al-Nahda Thawalib Bangkinang is an Islamic educational institution that consistently applies the mudzakah method as part of the Arabic language learning process. At the fifth-grade level, understanding Arabic grammar (qawā'id) becomes very important because students are at a transitional stage moving toward a higher level of learning. At this stage, students are not only required to memorize grammatical rules but also to be able to analyze and apply them in reading and understanding Islamic texts. Therefore, studying the implementation of mudzakah at this level is crucial to determine the extent to which this method contributes to improving the understanding of Arabic grammar.

Based on the aforementioned explanation, the novelty of this research lies in its attempt to empirically study the implementation of the mudzakah method as a classical pedagogical practice in the context of teaching Arabic grammar at a particular level within Islamic education. This research views mudzakah not only as a mere learning technique but also as a social and cultural practice that shapes the dynamics of learning interactions in the pesantren environment.

Thus, this study aimed to (1) analyze the implementation of the mudzakah program in Arabic language learning at Institut Dar Al-Nahda Thawalib Bangkinang; (2) examine the contribution of mudzakah activities to the understanding of Arabic grammar among fifth-grade female students; and (3) identify the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting the effectiveness of mudzakah implementation in the learning process.

B. Method

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to thoroughly understand the implementation of the mudzakah program and its contribution to students' understanding of Arabic grammar. This approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to describe the learning phenomenon contextually through the collection and analysis of qualitative data obtained directly from the natural environment in which learning activities take place.¹² The study took place at the Dar Al-Nahda Thawalib Bangkinang Islamic Boarding School in Kampar Regency, Riau Province, Indonesia. This school was chosen because it has a strong tradition of teaching Islamic sciences, especially Arabic grammar, and uses mudzakah as part of its learning culture.

Data was collected over about three months, including preparation, field data collection, and initial analysis. The field data collection lasted about one and a half months. It involved observing mudzakah activities, conducting in-depth interviews, and gathering documents related to learning activities. The participants were female fifth-year students in the diniyah education program (PDF Ulya) living in the dormitory of the school. They were chosen because they

¹² Anton Sevilla-Liu, "The Theoretical Basis of a Functional-Descriptive Approach to Qualitative Research in CBS: With a Focus on Narrative Analysis and Practice," *Journal of Contextual Behavioral Science* 30 (October 1, 2023): 210, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcbs.2023.11.001>

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had experience with mudzakah activities and had studied Arabic grammar, especially nahwu and şarf. The participants were selected using purposive sampling, which means choosing people who have relevant experience and knowledge for the research.

The main informants were 10–15 students who actively took part in mudzakah activities. The study also included other informants, like Arabic grammar teachers and dormitory supervisors, to get a fuller view of the program. The number of participants was based on data saturation, which is when the data shows repeating patterns and no new information is found.

Research data were collected using three main techniques: observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted participatively by directly attending¹³ the mudzakah activities conducted by fifth-grade female students. The observation focused on several aspects, including the mechanism of mudzakah implementation, patterns of interaction among students, the grammar topics discussed, and the dynamics of the learning process during the activity. The researcher also recorded nonverbal aspects, such as students' level of participation, enthusiasm during discussions, and the strategies used by students to understand and explain language rules. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with students and teachers to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences, perceptions, and views¹⁴ regarding mudzakah activities. These interviews aimed to gather information about the benefits of mudzakah, the challenges faced during its implementation, and its contribution to improving the understanding of Arabic grammar. Documentation techniques were used to supplement the observation and interview data by analyzing various documents¹⁵ related to mudzakah activities. The documents analyzed included Arabic grammar textbooks, students' study notes, learning activity schedules, and other documents relevant to the implementation of the mudzakah program.

The main instrument in this research is the researcher (human instrument), who plays a role in collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data.¹⁶ To support the systematic data collection process, the researcher used several supplementary instruments, namely: 1) an observation guide containing indicators related to the implementation of mudzakah activities, such as the duration of the activity, form of discussion, level of student participation, and types of grammatical materials discussed. 2) an interview guide in the form of a semi-structured question list was designed to explore students' learning experiences, their perceptions of the effectiveness of mudzakah, as well as teachers' views regarding the benefits of the activity in teaching Arabic grammar.

¹³ Marissa A Diaz et al., "Qualitative Methodological Approaches Involving Participants with Intellectual Disabilities: Scoping Review of Literature Exploring Death and Dying.," *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities : JARID* 37, no. 2 (June 14, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.1111/jar.13119>

¹⁴ Élisabeth Martin, Dave Bergeron, and Isabelle Gaboury, "The Use of Vignettes to Improve the Validity of Qualitative Interviews for Realist Evaluation.," *Qualitative Health Research*, March 19, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1177/10497323241237411>

¹⁵ Steven Hall and Linda Liebenberg, "Qualitative Description as an Introductory Method to Qualitative Research for Master's-Level Students and Research Trainees.," *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 23 (January 1, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069241242264>

¹⁶ Bogum Yoon and Christine Uliassi, "'Researcher-As-Instrument' in Qualitative Research: The Complexities of the Educational Researcher's Identities," *The Qualitative Report*, January 1, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2022.5074>

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Data analysis was conducted interactively following the model developed by Miles and Huberman,¹⁷ which includes three main stages: 1) Data reduction, in this step, data from observations, interviews, and documents are chosen, sorted, and simplified. This helps focus on information that matters for the research goals, 2) Data display, the simplified data is shown as stories, tables, or themes. This helps to see patterns in the learning process, 3) Conclusion drawing and verification, here, the data is interpreted to find meanings and patterns. This explains how mudzakah helps in understanding Arabic grammar better. The conclusions are checked by comparing different data sources until the findings are consistent and reliable.

C. Findings and Discussion

Implementation of the Mudzakah Program

Findings from classroom observations conducted in six sessions indicate that the *mudzakah* program is implemented regularly in the evening after Isha prayer. This activity functions as a non-formal learning support program designed to reinforce students' understanding of Arabic grammar that has previously been taught in formal classroom settings. Although the starting time of the sessions was not always precisely fixed, the activity consistently took place within the same evening timeframe.

The duration of the sessions varied between approximately one and two hours. In the initial observations, the sessions tended to start later and be relatively shorter because students were preparing learning materials and adjusting after daily boarding school activities. However, subsequent observations revealed a more stable and efficient implementation. Students increasingly used the available time for discussions, clarification of grammatical concepts, and collaborative learning.

The location of the program was also flexible. Mudzakah sessions were conducted in different spaces, including mosques, classrooms, and occasionally the open courtyard of the boarding school. Despite the variations in location, the continuity of the program remained consistent. Over time, the organization of the sessions became more structured and orderly, indicating improvements in the management and implementation of the learning activity.

These findings suggest that mudzakah functions as a complementary pedagogical practice that bridges formal instruction and informal collaborative learning within boarding school environments.

Discussion about Implementation of the Mudzakah Program

The data on the implementation of the mudzakah program highlights its role as an important non-formal learning support initiative within the boarding school environment, aimed specifically at reinforcing Arabic grammar knowledge acquired during formal classroom instruction. Regularly held in the evenings after Isha prayer, the program exhibits flexibility in timing, location, and duration, adapting to boarding school routines while maintaining continuity and structure over time.

¹⁷ Christopher F C Jordens, "Response-The Road Less Travelled: Why Did Miles Little Turn to Qualitative Research and Where Did This Lead?," *Journal of Bioethical Inquiry* 19, no. 1 (March 1, 2022): 25, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11673-021-10142-y>

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This complementary pedagogical practice bridges formal Arabic grammar teaching and informal collaborative learning by providing students with additional opportunities to engage with grammatical concepts through discussion and peer clarification. The observed trend towards increased efficiency and more stable session organization suggests that students progressively become better at utilizing this time for deeper learning and collaboration. This reflects the potential of such non-formal activities to enhance language acquisition beyond the conventional classroom setting, accommodating learners' needs for reinforcement and interactive learning.

Furthermore, flexibility in locations, including mosque spaces, classrooms, and open courtyards, demonstrates adaptability in accommodating various boarding school contexts while ensuring program continuity. Such spatial flexibility also aligns with the dynamic nature of informal learning environments, which encourages engagement and accessibility.¹⁸

The gradual improvement in the organization and management of mudzakah sessions points to the effective integration of this non-formal program within the boarding school's broader educational framework. This aligns with the general emphasis in pesantren settings on combining structured religious education with innovative and supportive teaching strategies to foster comprehensive learning.¹⁹ By reinforcing formal Arabic language instruction through collaborative discussion and practice, mudzakah supports learner motivation and understanding, which is crucial given documented challenges in Arabic language learning among non-native speakers, such as disengagement stemming from dissatisfaction with formal grammar-focused teaching.²⁰

In summary, the mudzakah program serves as a significant pedagogical bridge within Islamic boarding schools, leveraging flexible non-formal learning sessions to consolidate Arabic grammar knowledge. Its evolving structure and student-centered collaboration foster a supportive environment that complements and enhances formal language education, embodying a holistic approach to Arabic learning in pesantren settings.

Student Participation and Learning Engagement

Student participation in the mudzakah sessions gradually increased over time. During the initial observation sessions, participation levels were uneven. Some students actively read learning materials, took notes, and paid attention to explanations, whereas others remained passive and limited their role to listening.

Several factors influenced students' early participation in the activity. As the activity was conducted in the evening after a series of daily academic and religious activities, some students experienced fatigue or reduced concentration. Consequently, active discussions were initially limited.

¹⁸ (Sadiah, 2022)

¹⁹ Ruchman Basori et al., "Maintaining Salafi Values through Innovative Management Practices at Pesantren," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 2 (December 28, 2023): 145, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v9i2.25376>

²⁰ Nadia Selim, "Adolescent Non-Arab Muslims Learning Arabic in Australian Islamic Schools: Expectations, Experiences, and Implications," *Religions* 14, no. 1 (January 4, 2023): 71, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14010071>

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However, in later observation sessions, students demonstrated stronger engagement. They increasingly brought their own books and notes independently and showed greater willingness to participate in discussions. Some students began asking questions, offering explanations, and responding to their peers' arguments.

By the final observation sessions, participation became more balanced among the students. Most of them were involved in reading texts, explaining grammatical rules, or commenting on the material being discussed. The level of concentration also improved significantly compared to the initial sessions.

This pattern indicates that the mudzakah program gradually cultivates students' learning engagement and promotes active participation in understanding Arabic grammar.

Discussion about Student Participation and Learning Engagement

Student participation in the mudzakah sessions shows a clear trajectory of increasing engagement, which aligns with broader educational research emphasizing the gradual development of active learning behaviors over time. Initially, participation varied, with some students actively engaging through reading, note-taking, and attentiveness, while others were more passive listeners. This uneven engagement is understandable given the timing of the sessions in the evening, following a full day of academic and religious activities that likely contributed to fatigue and diminished concentration, which are common barriers in evening learning contexts.²¹

As the sessions progressed, the students demonstrated a marked improvement in engagement by independently bringing learning materials and actively participating in discussions through questioning, explanation, and peer interaction. This shift illustrates the program's effectiveness in fostering a collaborative learning environment in which students assume greater responsibility for their learning. Studies have shown that peer discussion and collaborative explanation enhance understanding and communication skills more effectively than traditional, teacher-led instruction alone.²² This evolution likely reflects growing comfort with the material and the learning format, as well as improved self-efficacy among the students.

The final observations reveal that balanced participation and heightened concentration indicate that the mudzakah sessions successfully cultivate sustained engagement. This supports the evidence that repeated, structured collaborative learning experiences promote deeper cognitive involvement and reduce passivity, which is vital for mastering complex subjects, such as Arabic grammar.²³ The active role of students in explaining grammatical rules and

²¹ Suo Yan Mei, Morufudeen Adeniyi Shittu, and Suo Yan Ju, "Effect of Anxiety and Self-Efficacy on Class Performance in Arabic Language Online Class," *World Journal of English Language* 13, no. 5 (April 7, 2023): 269, <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v13n5p269>

²² Vinay Arasappa Vishwanath, Sindhu Raghuramaiah, and Kavita Rasalkar, "Exploring Peer Learning Module vs. Conventional Tutorials: Effects on Engagement and Learning Outcomes among First-Year Medical Students," *BMC Medical Education* 25, no. 1 (January 21, 2025), <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-024-06549-x>

²³ Hamid Sharif-Nia et al., "Psychometrics Evaluation of the University Student Engagement Inventory in Online Learning among Arab Students," *BMC Nursing* 22, no. 1 (May 9, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12912-023-01318-5>

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commenting on texts deepens not only their individual understanding but also benefits their peers through social learning mechanisms.

These findings also align with research advocating for diverse and student-centered approaches to Arabic language education. Innovative strategies that combine formal teaching with interactive, peer-facilitated learning promote engagement, which is often hindered by traditional grammar-heavy curricula that can cause disengagement in non-native learners. The mudzakah program's format effectively mitigates these issues by providing a less formal, discussion-based environment in which students can actively construct knowledge and clarify their understanding collaboratively.

In conclusion, the gradual increase and eventual balance in student participation during mudzakah sessions reflect the program's success in enhancing learning engagement and promoting active involvement in Arabic grammar mastery. By addressing initial challenges such as fatigue and passivity and fostering a supportive peer-learning atmosphere, mudzakah serves as an effective pedagogical complement that facilitates deeper cognitive engagement, aligns with best practices in language education, and enhances overall learning outcomes within the boarding school context.

The Role of Supervisors in Facilitating Learning

The role of the supervisor in the mudzakah program also evolved throughout the observation period. In the early sessions, the supervisor played a dominant role by directly explaining grammatical material and leading discussions. Consequently, the learning interaction tended to be teacher-centered.

However, in later sessions, the supervisor gradually reduced this dominant role and encouraged the students to engage in small-group discussions. Instead of continuously delivering explanations, the supervisor acted primarily as a facilitator who provided guidance, motivation, and corrective feedback when misunderstanding occurred.

On one occasion, when the supervisor was absent, a senior student temporarily led the discussion. Although the session continued effectively, the level of guidance and accuracy in correcting grammatical explanations was lower than in sessions directly supervised by the teacher.

In the final observations, the supervisor's role became increasingly facilitative. The supervisor monitored the discussions, provided reinforcement for correct answers, and summarized the key learning points at the end of the session. This shift indicates a movement toward a more student-centered learning environment that promotes learner autonomy.

Discussion about The Role of Supervisors in Facilitating Learning

The evolving role of supervisors in the mudzakah program—from a dominant, teacher-centered leader to a facilitative guide—reflects a significant pedagogical shift towards student-centered learning. Initially, the supervisor's direct explanations and leadership resulted in a teacher-centered dynamic in which student activity was largely dependent on the teacher's input. This approach, while structured, can sometimes limit student autonomy and reduce opportunities

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for collaborative and active learning, which are crucial for deeper understanding and engagement.²⁴

As the program progressed, the supervisor transitioned to a role focused on facilitating small-group discussions and providing guidance and corrective feedback only when necessary. This aligns with contemporary educational practices that emphasize facilitation over direct instruction, allowing students to construct knowledge through interaction, peer exchange, and problem-solving. Such facilitative supervision supports learner autonomy, motivation, and the development of critical thinking skills, which are key components of effective learning environments.^{25,26}

The instance in which a senior student temporarily led the session in the supervisor's absence highlights both the potential and limitations of peer-led facilitation. Although the session proceeded effectively, the lower level of guidance and accuracy in feedback compared to teacher-led sessions underscores the importance of the supervisor's expertise and active involvement in ensuring quality and correctness of learning outcomes. This reflects research suggesting that although peer facilitation can foster engagement and collaborative skills, expert facilitation remains essential for maintaining accuracy and pedagogical rigor.²⁷

In the final sessions, the supervisor maintained a mostly facilitative presence, monitoring discussions, reinforcing correct responses, and summarizing key points. This practice consolidates learning by validating student contributions and clarifying critical content, fostering a supportive yet autonomous learning environment. Such a shift towards facilitation echoes trends in innovative pedagogies, including challenge-based and problem-based learning, which prioritize the teacher as a guide who enables students' active involvement and self-directed learning.²⁸

Overall, the supervisor's evolving role in the mudzakah program embodies a move from traditional teacher-centered instruction to a facilitative model that empowers students, encourages collaboration, and promotes learner autonomy, which are hallmarks of effective contemporary educational practice.

Learning Materials in the Mudzakah Program

The content discussed during mudzakah sessions primarily focused on Arabic grammatical sciences, particularly *nahw* and *sarf*. The students relied on

²⁴ Marisol Galdames-Calderón, Anni Stavnskær Pedersen, and David Rodriguez-Gomez, "Systematic Review: Revisiting Challenge-Based Learning Teaching Practices in Higher Education," *Education Sciences* 14, no. 9 (September 13, 2024): 1008, <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci14091008>

²⁵ Kylie Lipscombe, Kellie Buckley-Walker, and Sharon Tindall-Ford, "Middle Leaders' Facilitation of Teacher Learning in Collaborative Teams," *School Leadership & Management* 43, no. 3 (May 27, 2023): 301, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2023.2215803>

²⁶ Caroline B Ebby et al., "Facilitating Collaborative Inquiry into Practice around Artifacts of Mathematics Teaching," *Journal of Mathematics Teacher Education*, August 27, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10857-024-09649-z>

²⁷ James M Hall, "Resolving Pedagogical Dilemmas with Preservice and In-service Teachers in Japan," *TESOL Journal* 15, no. 3 (March 13, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.820>

²⁸ Marisol Galdames-Calderón, Anni Stavnskær Pedersen, and David Rodriguez-Gomez, "Systematic Review: Revisiting Challenge-Based Learning Teaching Practices in Higher Education," *Education Sciences* 14, no. 9 (September 13, 2024): 1008, <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci14091008>

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classical Arabic grammar texts commonly used in Islamic boarding schools, including *Sharh Ibn 'Aqil*, *Al-Ajurrumiyyah*, and *Alfiyyah Ibn Malik*, as well as summarized grammar handbooks.

During the initial observation sessions, the learning material mainly comprised reviewing previously studied concepts from classroom instruction. This stage aimed to reinforce students' understanding and ensure that all participants shared a similar conceptual foundation before moving on to more complex topics.

In the middle observation sessions, discussions expanded to include syntactic analysis and morphological structures within Arabic sentences. At this stage, various errors were observed in the students' attempts to apply grammatical rules, particularly in reading and analyzing sentence structures. These errors highlight differences in students' comprehension levels and the need for continuous guidance.

In later sessions, the discussion of grammatical material became more integrated. Students not only revisited theoretical explanations but also applied grammatical rules to analyze sentences and short Arabic texts. This shift toward practical application suggests that mudzakah supports a deeper comprehension of grammatical concepts.

Discussion about Learning Materials in the Mudzakah Program

The learning materials employed in the mudzakah program center on classical Arabic grammatical sciences, notably *nahw* (syntax) and *sarf* (morphology), which are foundational for mastering Arabic grammar²⁹ in Islamic boarding school settings. The reliance on classical texts, such as *Sharh Ibn 'Aqil*, *Al-Ajurrumiyyah*, and *Alfiyyah Ibn Malik*, reflects a traditional approach to Arabic grammar education consistent with the pedagogical norms of pesantren environments. These texts are authoritative, rich in detail, and have historically shaped Arabic grammar instruction in many Islamic institutions, offering students a robust theoretical framework (Hanani, Ahid, and Sufirmansyah 2024).

The initial use of these materials to review previously taught concepts underscores an important pedagogical strategy for consolidating foundational knowledge before promoting higher-order cognitive tasks. This phase aligns well with scaffolding principles in language education, ensuring that learners share a common understanding and are adequately prepared to progress to more complex linguistic structures.³⁰

Subsequently, the focus on syntactic analysis and morphological structures in the middle sessions expands the depth of grammatical engagement and reveals the natural challenges inherent in applying complex rules to sentence analysis. The observed errors in reading and analysis reflect the uneven levels of student comprehension, highlighting the need for continuous instructional support and formative feedback. Such challenges are well documented in Arabic language

²⁹ Sari, Devi, Arsandi Arsandi, Abdul Wahhab, and Danial Hilmi. 2022. "Learning Maharah Qira'ah and Kitabah in Syarqi Markaz Arabiyah Pare Kediri Class". *Borneo Journal of Language and Education* 2 (2), 138-52. <https://doi.org/10.21093/benjole.v2i2.5955>.

³⁰ Sultan Almelhes, "Enhancing Arabic Language Acquisition: Effective Strategies for Addressing Non-Native Learners' Challenges," *Education Sciences* 14, no. 10 (October 14, 2024): 1116, <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci14101116>

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learning literature, where the intricate morphology and syntax can be particularly demanding for learners, especially non-native speakers.³¹

The program's evolution toward more integrated discussions, in which students actively apply grammatical rules to analyze Arabic texts, signifies a pedagogical shift from rote memorization to functional and contextual understanding. This application enhances deeper cognitive processing and language proficiency by connecting theoretical rules with practical language use. This movement echoes contemporary trends in Arabic language education that advocate for instructional approaches that combine theory and practice to improve language acquisition outcomes.

Overall, the learning materials and their progressive utilization in the mudzakah program exemplify a balanced integration of classical Arabic grammar³² instruction with increasing opportunities for active application and critical analysis. This structure supports learners' gradual development from foundational knowledge to applied competence, addressing both the theoretical and practical dimensions of Arabic grammar mastery in the unique context of Islamic boarding schools.

Learning Interaction and Collaborative Atmosphere

The observation results also revealed gradual improvements in the interaction dynamics among the students. In the early sessions, interaction was limited, and discussions were relatively passive. Many students were not accustomed to exchanging ideas or debating grammatical interpretations with their peers.

However, as the sessions progressed, interactions became more active. Students began to help one another understand difficult concepts and collaboratively discuss grammatical issues. Although participation was still dominated by certain students, the overall level of engagement improved.

In the final session, the discussion environment became significantly more dynamic. Students interacted more freely and confidently, and collaborative learning became a central feature of this activity. Even when sessions were conducted in open spaces, which sometimes created distractions, students generally maintained a productive learning atmosphere.

These findings indicate that mudzakah contributes to the development of a cooperative learning culture within boarding school settings.

Discussion about Learning Interaction and Collaborative Atmosphere

The gradual improvement in interaction dynamics observed during the mudzakah sessions exemplifies the developmental trajectory typical of CL environments. Initially, student interactions were limited and passive, reflecting unfamiliarity with peer discourse on complex grammatical interpretations. This early stage of low interaction is common in CL settings in which students may lack

³¹ Sultan Almelhes, "Enhancing Arabic Language Acquisition: Effective Strategies for Addressing Non-Native Learners' Challenges," *Education Sciences* 14, no. 10 (October 14, 2024): 1116, <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci14101116>

³² Daynesty, Helendya, Prayoga Saputra, and Ifkar Rasyid. 2024. "Qawaid Learning Through Prezi Media and The Effectiveness of Maharah Qira'ah in Distance Learning". *Borneo Journal of Language and Education* 4 (2), 232-47. <https://doi.org/10.21093/benjole.v4i2.8183>.

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the social and cognitive skills necessary for collaborative knowledge construction.³³

As the sessions progressed, the increased active engagement—characterized by students assisting one another and collaboratively addressing grammatical challenges—indicated the development of positive interdependence and promotive interaction, which are crucial elements identified by Johnson and Johnson as essential for effective CL.³⁴ Although participation remained somewhat uneven, with certain students dominating discussions, the overall rise in engagement reflected growing comfort and competence in peer-to-peer learning dynamics, consistent with research showing gradual social and cognitive acclimatization during CL tasks.³⁵

By the final sessions, the creation of a dynamic and confident discussion environment suggests the successful establishment of CL as a central practice. This development mirrors findings in educational studies, where sustained CL leads to enhanced communication skills, shared responsibility, and group cohesion, even in variable settings, such as open spaces that may introduce distractions.³⁶ The students' ability to maintain a productive atmosphere under less controlled conditions further illustrates their maturation as a CL community.

Overall, these findings support the understanding that the mudzakah program fosters a cooperative learning culture that develops incrementally through sustained practice. This culture not only enhances academic engagement and comprehension but also cultivates essential social skills such as communication, collaboration, and mutual support, enriching the educational experience within the boarding school context.

The Impact of Mudzakah on Students' Understanding of Arabic Grammar

The observation findings demonstrate that the mudzakah program has a noticeable impact on students' understanding of Arabic grammar. At the beginning of the observation period, many students appeared hesitant and lacked confidence when explaining grammatical concepts. Errors were frequently observed in both answering questions and analyzing sentence structures.

Over time, however, students demonstrated increasing confidence and competence. During the middle observation sessions, students became more willing to attempt explanations and participate in discussions, even though errors still occurred. Importantly, these mistakes became part of the collaborative learning process as students corrected and discussed them together.

³³ Daiva Jakavonytė-Staškuvienė, Aušra Žemgulienė, and Emilija Sakadolskis, "Cooperative Learning Issues in Elementary Education: A Lithuanian Case Study," *Journal of Education Culture and Society* 12, no. 1 (June 17, 2021): 445, <https://doi.org/10.15503/jecs2021.1.445.468>

³⁴ Daiva Jakavonytė-Staškuvienė, Aušra Žemgulienė, and Emilija Sakadolskis, "Cooperative Learning Issues in Elementary Education: A Lithuanian Case Study," *Journal of Education Culture and Society* 12, no. 1 (June 17, 2021): 445, <https://doi.org/10.15503/jecs2021.1.445.468>

³⁵ Lea Nemeth et al., "An Exploratory Analysis of Transactive Interaction Patterns in Cooperative Learning Using Sequential Analysis," *Education Sciences* 13, no. 8 (August 3, 2023): 790, <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13080790>

³⁶ Ashok Kumar Jeppu, Kavitha Ashok Kumar, and Ahsan Sethi, "We Work Together as a Group: Implications of Jigsaw Cooperative Learning," *BMC Medical Education* 23, no. 1 (October 6, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-023-04734-y>

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In the final sessions, students showed greater confidence and a clearer understanding of grammatical concepts. The frequency of errors decreased, and students were able to explain the rules more accurately and apply them more effectively when analyzing Arabic texts.

Although some challenges remained, particularly fatigue during evening sessions, the overall findings indicate that mudzakah positively improves students' understanding of Arabic grammar.

Discussion about The Impact of Mudzakah on Students' Understanding of Arabic Grammar

The observation findings clearly demonstrate that the mudzakah program positively impacts students' understanding and confidence in Arabic grammar. Initially, many students showed hesitation and lacked confidence when explaining grammatical concepts, which is common in second-language learning contexts, where language anxiety and insufficient self-efficacy can hinder participation and learning performance.³⁷ The frequent errors in answering questions and analyzing sentence structures reflect the early stages of grappling with complex linguistic structures.

Over time, the progression observed in students' willingness to participate and explain grammatical rules—despite continuing to make mistakes—indicates a supportive collaborative learning environment in which errors become constructive learning opportunities. This aligns with educational theories suggesting that peer correction and shared problem-solving in group settings enhance comprehension and higher-order thinking.³⁸ Such engagement fosters deeper cognitive processing and gradual mastery through social interaction.

In the final stages, the marked increase in students' confidence and accuracy in applying grammatical rules suggests that sustained participatory learning and scaffolding within the mudzakah program effectively build competence. This reflects the findings that iterative practice combined with feedback in a non-threatening environment boosts learners' abilities and reduces anxiety, further promoting language acquisition.³⁹

Although some challenges, such as fatigue during evening sessions, persist, the overall evidence underscores the program's role in advancing Arabic grammar⁴⁰ understanding and learner confidence. This supports the notion that complementary non-formal learning initiatives, such as mudzakah, can mitigate typical second-language acquisition barriers by offering structured yet flexible pedagogical spaces that enrich formal instruction and enhance learning outcomes in Islamic boarding school settings.

³⁷ Suo Yan Mei, Morufudeen Adeniyi Shittu, and Suo Yan Ju, "Effect of Anxiety and Self-Efficacy on Class Performance in Arabic Language Online Class," *World Journal of English Language* 13, no. 5 (April 7, 2023): 269, <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v13n5p269>

³⁸ (Almelhes, 2024)

³⁹ Mohammad Taufiq Abdul Ghani and Wan Ab Aziz Wan Daud, "The Impact of Digital Game-Based Learning Towards Arabic Language Communication," *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication* 39, no. 1 (March 31, 2023): 407, <https://doi.org/10.17576/jkmjc-2023-3901-23>

⁴⁰ Sholeh Millah & Lutfia Latifi, "Implementation Thariqah Musykilah in Learning Qawaid in Syarqi Class Tsani Markaz Arabiyah Pare," *Borneo Journal of Language and Education*, 3(2,2023), 135-147. <https://doi.org/10.21093/benjole.v3i2.6434>

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Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of Mudzakah

The effectiveness of the mudzakah program is influenced by several supporting and inhibiting factors.

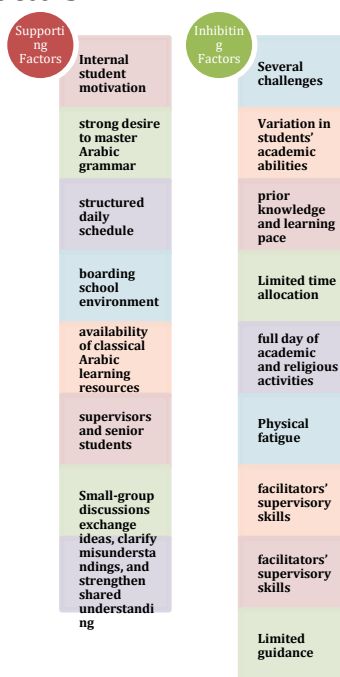


Figure 1. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

1. Supporting Factors

Internal student motivation was a strong supporting factor. Many students demonstrated a strong desire to master Arabic grammar because they recognized its importance for understanding Islamic classical texts. In addition, the boarding school environment provides a supportive learning context. The structured daily schedule, availability of classical Arabic learning resources, and presence of supervisors and senior students all contribute to sustaining the program. Small-group discussions also encourage collaborative learning, enabling students to exchange ideas, clarify misunderstandings, and strengthen their collective comprehension.

2. Inhibiting Factors

Despite these benefits, several challenges were identified. One of the main obstacles is the variation in students' academic abilities. Differences in prior knowledge and learning pace sometimes create imbalances within discussion groups. Another challenge is the limited time available for this activity. Because mudzakah is conducted after a full day of academic and religious activities, some students experience physical fatigue, which may reduce their concentration during discussions. Additionally, the effectiveness of the sessions occasionally depended on the facilitators' supervisory skills. When guidance is limited, the depth of discussion and accuracy of grammatical explanations may decrease.

Discussion about Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of Mudzakah

The implementation of the mudzakah program is shaped by several notable supporting and inhibiting factors that align with broader implementation science

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frameworks, emphasizing individual motivation, contextual support, and organizational capacity.

Among the key supporting factors, internal student motivation is particularly strong. This intrinsic drive, fueled by students' recognition of the importance of mastering Arabic grammar to understand Islamic classical texts, provides foundational engagement that is critical for sustaining the learning process. Motivation has been consistently identified in the implementation literature as a crucial enabler that enhances commitment and persistence in educational programmes.

The boarding school environment significantly contributes by offering a structured and resource-rich context. The regimented daily schedule, availability of classical Arabic learning materials, and the presence of supervisors and senior students as facilitators create an enabling environment conducive to sustained learning engagement. Such supportive organizational and environmental conditions are essential facilitators recognized in research on educational program implementation, where adequate resources and social support reinforce positive outcomes.

Moreover, small-group discussions promote collaborative learning, which encourages interaction, peer support, and shared knowledge construction. This method aligns with cooperative learning principles that emphasize positive interdependence and collective responsibility, leading to improved comprehension and motivation.

Conversely, several inhibiting factors pose challenges to program effectiveness. Variations in students' academic abilities and prior knowledge can create imbalances within discussion groups, potentially hindering equitable participation and group cohesion. This reflects common implementation barriers, in which diverse learner readiness requires differentiated facilitation strategies. The limited time allocated for mudzakah sessions scheduled after full academic and religious activities leads to physical fatigue among students, thereby reducing concentration and engagement. Time constraints and participant fatigue are frequently cited as obstacles in educational interventions, underscoring the need for optimal scheduling and workload management.

Finally, the effectiveness of sessions hinges on the supervisory skills of the facilitators. Insufficient guidance can weaken discussion depth and compromise the accuracy of grammatical explanations. This highlights the critical role of trained facilitative leadership in maintaining program quality, a factor well-documented in implementation research emphasizing the influence of skilled facilitators on successful outcomes. In summary, the success of the mudzakah program depends on leveraging internal motivation and environmental support while addressing learner diversity, time management, and facilitator capacity. Attention to these factors through targeted strategies can enhance program sustainability and impact within the boarding school context.

D. Conclusion

This study shows that mudzākarah is an effective pedagogical mechanism for strengthening the understanding of Arabic grammar rules in the environment of Ma'had Dar al-Nahḍah Ṭhawālib Bangkinang. Through the practice of regular collective study, mudzākarah functions not only as a space for reviewing material

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but also as an arena for dialogical knowledge construction that encourages students to understand, discuss, and reflect on the rules of nahwu and şarf more deeply. The research findings reveal a gradual development in the quality of program implementation, patterns of student participation, and the role of mentors. As the process unfolds, mudzākarah evolves from a simple discussion activity into a more structured and productive collaborative learning environment, in which students become increasingly actively involved in the processes of explanation, argumentation, and clarification of understanding. Thus, mudzākarah can be understood as a complementary learning strategy that bridges formal classroom learning with a more reflective internalization of linguistic knowledge. The existence of this program demonstrates that the tradition of collective learning in the pesantren environment has significant pedagogical potential to strengthen the mastery of Arabic language structures while also building a participatory and sustainable academic culture.

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