# ARABIC LEARNING IN THE DIGITAL ERA: APPROACH IN ONLINE SYSTEM

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Abstract: One alternative to learning Arabic in the digital era is through online learning using digital technology. The process of learning Arabic in Indonesia has developed rapidly in recent times. The transition from face-to-face to online classes requires adjustments in the learning approach. This research used literature review method. Sources of data were books, articles, and other relevant sources. Data were analyzed through data collection procedures, data grouping, data display, and drawing conclusion. The validity of the data was tested through source and technical triangulation. The result of the study indicated that there are three appropriate approaches for learning Arabic online in this digital era, namely the contextual approach, constructivism approach, and behaviorism approach. The choice of approach should meet the students' needs and learning conditions. Each approach could be implemented through a variety of methods and techniques. The integration of these three approaches in learning Arabic online provides broad opportunities for students to study independently and develop language skills aspects through various available digital media platforms.

Keywords: Arabic language, digital era, online learning, behaviorism, contextual, constructivism.

Abstrak: Salah satu alternatif pembelajaran bahasa Arab di era digital adalah melalui pembelajaran daring dengan bantuan teknologi digital. Proses pembelajaran bahasa Arab di Indonesia berkembang pesat dalam beberapa waktu terakhir. Peralihan kelas tatap muka menjadi kelas daring mengharuskan adanya penyesuaian dalam pendekatan pembelajaran. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kajian pustaka. Sumber data berupa buku, artikel, dan sumber-sumber relevan lainnya. Data dianalisis melalui prosedur pengumpulan data, pengelompokan data, display data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Uji keabsahan data dilakukan melalui triangulasi sumber dan triangulasi teknik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat tiga pendekatan yang sesuai untuk pembelajaran bahasa Arab secara daring di era digital ini, yaitu pendekatan kontekstual, pendekatan konstruktivisme, dan pendekatan behaviorisme. Pemilihan pendekatan hendaknya memperhatikan kebutuhan siswa dan kondisi pembelajaran. Masing-masing pendekatan dapat diimplementasikan melalui

berbagai macam metode dan teknik. Integrasi ketiga pendekatan tersebut dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab secara daring memberikan kesempatan yang luas kepada siswa untuk belajar secara mandiri dan mengembangkan aspek-aspek keterampilan berbahasa melalui berbagai platform media digital yang tersedia.

Kata kunci: bahasa Arab, era digital, pembelajaran daring, behaviorisme, kontekstual, konstruktivisme.

#### INTRODUCTION

Arabic learning in the last period experienced rapid development (Ainin, 2020). The development of learning is influenced by various factors that dominate. One of the important factors is the existence of technology (Carrier et al., 2017; Raygan & Moradkhani, 2020). As one of the important components in 21st century learning is communication skills (Rahman dkk., 2019). With these demands, communication is one of the important elements as a tool for exchanging ideas between people (Hamat & Hassan, 2019). One form of communication that can be used is through language. Arabic is one of the international languages that influence human interaction.

Due to the development of the learning process, foreign language teachers in particular must have updated learning strategies to accommodate global challenges. Nowadays, the learning process with the online system has developed (Bugawa & Mirzal, 2018; Nassiri et al., 2018). This system adopts modern learning without conventional classroom learning, but the learning process is adjusted to the demands that allow for the integration of the two systems (blended learning). With an online learning system, there is no time and place limitations for learning (Febriani, Widayanti, et al., 2020), student independence must be improved, and creative abilities (Sipayung et al., 2018) and critical students can be well trained (Freeman et al., 2016; Lee, 2017). As demand in online learning is when students are required to solve problems or projects given by the teacher properly.

The design of Arabic learning in the digital era is very important. Teachers should be able to design and provide a concrete picture of learning to be carried out in an online system (Dhawan, 2020). As it is known that online learning is learning that involves a combination of various media such as audio, visual, and text will provide opportunities for students to learn better and more in depth than media that only accommodates one of them (Abdelhadi et al., 2019; Sadiku, 2015). This is supported by previous research that classroom management can be adjusted to students' intelligence, meaning that teachers need to pay attention to variations in student learning well.

The process of selecting media for learning in the digital era is in many cases similar for choosing of media for learning with face-to-face or traditional learning systems. Submission of learning material through online media offers easy access for learners (Dočekal & Tulinská, 2015). The selection of online media begins with looking at the objectives of learning activities, namely whether the objectives of learning activities can be achieved through listening or through media interactions (Davis & Fullerton, 2016). Thus, the purpose of learning activities will determine the media used, either independently or as a combination of various media. The need for a good understanding and concept of learning approaches such as what should be followed, so that learning goals can be achieved optimally.

Other principles that need to be considered when an online-based learning system is the ability of teachers to instruct assignments or teaching materials (Febriani et al., 2020), as well as teacher skills in designing online-based materials and collaborative learning strategies that can encourage optimal learning. The skills of collaborating with media, strategies, and evaluations when learning online greatly influence the success and interest of students in learning foreign languages (Nazari et al., 2019). This can illustrate that the learning approach determined by the teacher can provide encouragement for students to obtain elements of language. Although there are still shortages of learning based on the online system such as student activity is uneven. The advantages and disadvantages of learning Arabic in the digital era can provide a reference and high encouragement to solve the problem of learning a foreign language.

Based on research that has been reviewed, Arabic learning intersects with learning based on digital, such as discussion of technology and four language skills (Zhou & Yadav, 2017), study of instructional media that can be used (Akbari et al., 2016), learning design in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Kessler, 2018), as well as the acquisition of foreign languages with technology (Arndt & Woore, 2018), as well as strategies used by teachers in learning (Richardson et al., 2016) and including online strategies in learning English (Guillén et al., 2020). However, a deeper study is still needed on the approach used by teachers in Arabic learning with an online system. So that later can be applied in online classrooms in the hope of being able to answer the challenges that teachers have to determine what strategies are suitable in online learning systems.

# **RESEARCH METHODS**

This study used a qualitative research design to describe and analyze the approaches that are appropriate for Arabic learning in the digital era. Data obtained based on articles, reading sources related to the topic of discussion. Researchers use text analysis techniques to analyze and process the data obtained accurately. As the data triangulation step can be done by triangulating data sources or in data collection techniques. The procedure in analyzing data can be shown in figure 1 as a research guideline to facilitate researcher in drawing conclusions when the final step is carried out. Following this is the procedure of analyzing data.



Figure 1. Procedure in Analyzing Data

Through the analysis process in the figure 1, the researcher can analyze data systematically and structured through the following steps. *First*, the researcher collected data relating to Arabic learning

in the digital era through articles, reading sources and field sources. *Second*, the researcher classifies the data requirements needed. *Third*, the researcher display data in accordance with Arabic learning in the digital era with a structured system by analyzing the data that has been obtained. *Fourth*, the researcher provides recommendations for Arabic learning with specific objectives.

#### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

# Arabic learning approach

The Arabic learning process should no longer be teacher oriented. Changes in student orientation must be made while encouraging student skills in independent learning and experiential learning. As revealed that when a person learns through the experience gained, the absorption of information obtained will provide a better context and a strong understanding of each individual (Huang, 2018). In the process of learning in the digital age that demands learning by technology interaction, there are three approaches that can be developed to learn Arabic in the digital era. The explanation can be seen as follows.

# Contextual Approach in Arabic Learning

The contextual approach is the development of patterns that embody meaning in the form of a learning approach. student activities are directed in the context of daily and actual activities. Thus, there is an effective relationship between their experience and understanding in the learning process (Anggraini, 2019). The "Content" as something that is learned in the form of almost unlimited knowledge. "Content" must be studied in context (Samiril, 2019).

"Context" is usually equated with the environment, namely the outside world that is communicated through the senses and space used every day. Context means more than just events that occur in a place and time. Context also consists of unconscious assumptions that we absorb as we grow, from the beliefs we hold strongly obtained through osmosis, and from the values that shape our understanding of reality.

Some of the advantages teachers can consider when determining contextual approaches suitable for learning Arabic are learning that is more meaningful, meaning that students can carry out their own activities related to the material so they can understand it themselves. As it was revealed that when students can have experience related to the concepts learned, it will be increasingly easy to apply foreign languages (Papi & Hiver, 2020). Learning is more productive and is able to foster reinforcement of concepts for students, because they find their own concepts not by memorizing them (Shakirova & Valeeva, 2016). Cultivate the courage to express opinions. Foster curiosity and foster collaborative feelings when learning.

In Arabic learning, contextual learning can be applied with the following picture (attachement 1). For writing skills, learners can do serial stories related to experiences and use objects around them. Like writing vocabulary to paragraphs can be developed through teacher guidance. This writing process can provide an experience for learners to pay attention to the writing procedures as well as the sentence structure used well.

In reading and speaking skills, teachers can give students reading and critical thinking by asking students to examine problems in their environment. In this case students can present a presentation

on the description of drawings, diagrams, photos and graphics. One of instruction can be shown in the following figure.



Figure 2. Material of learning

Based on figure 2, the teachers can provide instructions for students to describe the figure. This process will provide students with visualization and imagination to express their ideas related to the example figure. In addition, different images also provide an experience for students (Yuliyanto et al., 2020). Students can convey factual findings from their surroundings in front of their friends with online media.

In listening skills, teachers can provide videos of foreign speakers with themes that are in line with the learning plan. Videos served can be taken from online sources such as YouTube, as the following figure.



Figure 3. The Video in online system

Based on the figure 3, students are asked to listen to videos and recordings carefully with the help of online media. After that, the teacher can provide opportunities for students to express their opinions and ideas related to video and responses about learning topics. This can train students to speak up expressing opinions. As revealed that technology is able to provide a feed of creativity and critical thinking to solve problems, high motivation, paying attention to critical thinking skills (Chuang et al., 2018; Kamarudin et al., 2016; Panagiotidis, 2018).

# Constructivism approach in Arabic learning

Constructivism is Piaget's theory that adopts cognitive learning theory which asserts that knowledge is constructed through children's minds with assimilation and accommodation techniques. various absorptions of information and knowledge in thinking, then constructing the structure of their minds so that they become complete knowledge. This idea indicates that knowledge is not acquired passively but is formed according to existing knowledge. As this approach makes students as subjects

Implementation of constructivistic learning theory in learning Arabic can use several learning methods, such as explanation or lecture, question and answer, discussion, assignment and role playing. For the example in the following figure.



Figure 4. Role Play in the learning

Based on figure 4, one of the techniques in online learning using role-playing techniques. This shows each group's creativity. Role play also increases the critical power of students in carrying out projects provided by teachers (Krebt, 2017). However, the teacher gives directions on the subject.

In the explanation or lecture technique, the teacher explains about a subject matter to students so that students know what they are going to learn. In the question and answer technique, before the core activities in a learning take place, the teacher and students can do questions and answers related to the material to be taught.

This is useful to know the extent of students' understanding of the material by utilizing the initial knowledge (basic) they have. In the discussion technique, students discuss with other students and teachers about the subject matter one of the selection of assignment techniques because it can see the development of student learning. This is done through checking their understanding of the instructions for independent learning method or collaborative.

# Behaviorism approach in Arabic learning

Behavioristic learning theory is a change in student behavior due to communication from experience. This theory was adopted by Berliner and Gage, who became very popular among philosophers of educators (Febriani et.al, 2020). Furthermore, behavioristic theory is a form of behavior change in students in terms of habits and new thought patterns as a result of responses and stimuli. If it is concluded the purpose of this theory is, students can be assumed to have learned if they have shown changes in their behavior.

This is an implementation of behavioristic learning theory; First, the teacher determines the parameters of learning. Second, students' initial knowledge in the learning environment will be

identified and analyzed. Third, deciding the type of material to be delivered, explaining the material into categories in small forms such as topics, discussion points and sub-points, presentations or learning explanations. Fourth, releasing (stimulus) to students, as well as paying attention and exploring students in reacting to the stimulus provided. Fifth, the teacher conveys positive and negative explanations both to students. Sixth, release back stimulation and pay attention and explore students in response to stimulus. Seventh, submit an explanation again both negative and positive. Eighth, ending with the conclusion and evaluation of learning outcomes.

Behavioristic theory is able to carry the burden of the learner to be able to achieve learning goals. This theory accommodates learners to be consistently motivated in achieving the intended competencies. As motivation becomes an important element in encouraging students' language skills (Swathi et al., 2018).

The learning process based on behavior theory online is to form a language environment. for example, in Whatsapp group media, teachers give directions using Arabic, then students respond using Arabic writing or Arabic voice notes. This online-based language environment can encourage students to create a language environment even in virtual form (Li, 2017; Swallow & Olofson, 2017). Other alternatives can be implemented through online classes using Zoom media or Google meet. The important point is using of Arabic language in the language learning process can create a language environment and motivate students to acquire a language (Bahruddin & Febriani, 2020; Wekke, 2015).

From the three approaches presented, the researcher can draw a picture of differences to make it easier for the teacher to determine learning in accordance with the topics discussed in (Attachement 1).

Differences in approaches used can accelerate the success of learning objectives by paying attention to the needs of students. Approach determination process can be integrated under one condition. For example, using behaviorism approach in forming an online language environment, then the process of working on contextual learning-based exercises and working on constructivebased projects.

The integration of this approach can give a variety of learning strategies used by teachers. Thus, the variety of methods does not make students saturated in language learning (AlGhamdi, 2018). It is also supported by a varied online media system as a learning resource.

The implementation of digital-based learning by integrating these approaches is able to provide opportunities for students to learn independently. As they train creativity and critical thought processes to develop language skills through various digital media platforms. This shows that students can use a variety of approaches to implement digital-based learning.

#### **CONCLUSSION**

Arabic learning in the digital era requires balanced integration of material, media, approaches and evaluations to answer challenges. The teacher can ensure that the learning approach used is in accordance with the learning objectives achieved. The 2019 curriculum also emphasizes that learning is not material-oriented but rather interactive activities to foster creativity and critical thinking in the

face of challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Teachers can design learning through the integration of technology for fulfilling the Arabic learning process. This study recommends other studies to develop research with different methods and then can examine each of the approaches described previously in order to know the effectiveness of each approach in accordance with the digital era.

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