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| **Factors Contributing to the Difficulty of Reading Arabic Texts Among Eighth Grade Students** |
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|  | Al Mi’yar: Jurnal Ilmiah Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab dan KebahasaarabanVol 8 No 2 Oktober 2025Page: 454-463https://jurnal.stiq-amuntai.ac.id/index.php/al-miyar/index |

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| **Article Info**Received: June 12, 2025Revised: June 21, 2025Accepted: September 27, 2025Correspondence:Phone: +6282176462098 | **Abstract:** Reading ability is one of the fundamental skills in mastering the Arabic language, and it is essential for fully understanding the content of a text. However, many students face difficulties in grasping the structure, vocabulary, and meaning of the texts they read. This study aims to identify and analyze the factors that cause reading difficulties in Arabic texts among eighth-grade students at Ma’had Muhammadiyah Munawaroh Malang. A qualitative approach was used, employing a case study method. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The results of the study show that reading difficulties are influenced by several factors: internal factors 1) Students' learning experience and language competence; 2) Vocabulary mastery; 3) Students' interest in Arabic; 4) Not used to reading Arabic texts independently; 5) Fear of making mistakes and lack of self-confidence. External Factors:1) The teacher has not yet varied their teaching methods and techniques, and 2) Study Time. These findings are expected to serve as a basis for educators to evaluate and design more effective teaching strategies to improve students’ Arabic reading skills.**Keywords:** *Arabic Language, Difficulty, Reading Skills* |

**INTRODUCTION**

Language is a tool of communication used by people to interact with one another. Language skills are essential for humans because, as social beings, we cannot live without connecting with others. In fact, a person's personality can sometimes be seen from the way they communicate or express their ideas (Mailani, Nuraeni, Syakila, & Lazuardi, 2022).In education, students' language skills (both speaking and writing) are closely connected to the teaching and learning process at school. Their understanding of language elements and ability to use language well are strongly influenced by the quality of education they receive. This includes the teaching methods used, the interaction between teachers and students, and the availability of learning materials that support the process (Zebua, Bawamenewi, Harefa, & Waruwuᴏ, 2024). The Reading Comprehension Process theory (Grabe & Stoller, 2002) explains that reading is a complex process involving word recognition, understanding sentence structure, activating background knowledge, and integrating meaning from the context. If any of these components are disrupted—such as limited vocabulary or unfamiliar grammar—then the process of understanding the text will be hindered. This theory provides a useful framework for analyzing different types of reading difficulties from a linguistic perspective.

Bahasa Arabic is one of the international languages that holds a special position in the world, both in terms of history, culture, and religion. It is the official language in more than 20 countries and is also used as a working language in many international organizations. Arabic serves not only as a means of communication but also as a symbol of identity and civilization. Its importance is even greater because it is the language of the holy book of Islam, the Qur’an, giving it deep religious value and making it an essential part of the religious life of Muslims around the world (Ahmadi & Awaluddin, 2024). Arabic language learning today aims to promote, teach, develop, and improve skills, while also encouraging a positive and productive attitude toward learning Arabic (Sari & Hikmah, 2024).

In an educational institution, Arabic should be taught because it is considered very relevant to the needs of Indonesian society, which is mostly Muslim. This is especially for Islamic educational institutions. Arabic is one of the many languages in the world, and it is known as the language of the Qur'an and Hadith, which are the main sources of Islamic law. Therefore, without understanding Arabic, it will be difficult to understand the contents of the Qur'an and Hadist (Honif, Ulum, & Anwar, 2024). Therefore, one of the government policies under the Ministry of Religious Affairs is that Arabic is a compulsory subject in Islamic educational institutions, from elementary-level madrasahs to Islamic colleges. Muhammadiyah Munawaroh Islamic Boarding School in Malang is one of the schools that includes Arabic as a required subject in its curriculum. All grade levels at Muhammadiyah Munawaroh Islamic Boarding School in Malang study Arabic as part of their education.

In Arabic language learning, four main language skills help students develop their language abilities. These skills are: *istima’* (listening), *syafawi* or *kalam* (speaking), *qira’ah* (reading), and *tahriri* or *kitabah* (writing) (Sudirman, Hayyie Al-Kattanie, & Al-Hamat, 2021). When further categorized, language skills can be divided into two types: receptive skills and productive skills. Receptive skills include *maharah istima’* (listening) and *qiro’ah* (reading), while productive skills include *maharah kalam* (speaking) and *kitabah* (writing). These four skills must complement and support one another. For example, *istima’* (listening), *kalam* (speaking), and *kitabah* (writing) greatly contribute to and are highly valuable for developing *qiro’ah* (reading) skills, and vice versa (Sholehuddin & Wijaya, 2019).

Reading skills is one of the essential skills that students must master when learning Arabic. Without the ability to read, students will struggle to follow lessons, including those in Arabic. Reading skill is not just about looking at or glancing through Arabic texts, but also about how the reader understands the message the writer wants to convey through words or written materials, by interpreting and grasping the meaning of the written content (Rohman, 2016). In addition to gaining knowledge, reading activities help students become more skilled critical readers and thinkers (Siregar & Nadia, 2025). Reading involves more than just looking at words on a page; it also requires understanding and accepting the concepts or ideas presented in the text. Readers actively think about, process, and memorize the material as they read. Therefore, reading is a process that engages both the mind and emotions to fully comprehend and experience what is being read (Resqita Mautiah Anshar, Muhammad Akhir, & Besse Syukroni, 2024). Reading is an essential aspect of life because it offers numerous benefits, including improved brain function, increased knowledge, sharpened memory, and numerous other advantages (Kelas, Pangestika, & Suyoto, 2024).

However, in practice, Arabic language learning—especially the skill of reading (qira'ah)—still faces various challenges. Difficulties in reading Arabic texts are not only related to pronunciation (phonology), but also involve vocabulary (mufradat), sentence structure (nahwu and shorof), and overall comprehension of the text. This situation is worsened by limited instructional time, low student motivation, and the lack of interactive and contextual teaching methods in the learning process (Muballighin & Sriana, 2024).

The challenges in teaching reading skills at the Islamic junior high school level often relate to students’ low interest in reading, limited Arabic vocabulary, and a lack of engaging and interactive learning media and methods. Many students struggle to understand Arabic texts because they do not have a strong foundation in grammar (*nahwu* and *sharaf*), which leads them to read without grasping the meaning. Additionally, some teachers still use traditional approaches that do not actively involve students, making the learning process feel monotonous and lacking real-life context. In the classroom, both teachers and students naturally hope to achieve the best possible learning outcomes. Teachers want their students to succeed, and students hope their teachers will teach effectively so they can achieve excellent results. However, in reality, these expectations are not always met, as many students still face difficulties in learning. These factors remain the main challenges in improving students' reading skills (Khoiriyyah, Arifin, & Mardani, 2023).

Another reality found in the reading skill learning process is the weak application of Arabic grammar rules by students when reading texts individually (Yunisa, 2022). Based on the results of the observation, it was found that the reading texts used as learning materials did not include diacritical marks (syakal). This was not without reason; rather, it was a deliberate strategy by the teacher to test the students’ level of understanding and critical thinking skills regarding the structure of Arabic texts. The teacher hoped that, by omitting the syakal, students would be encouraged to apply their knowledge of *nahwu* (Arabic grammar) and *sharaf* (morphology) to determine the correct vowel markings (harakat) according to the grammatical function (*i’rab*) of each word. However, the reality shows that most students still struggle to determine the correct *harakat* (vowel markings). Even though the text is first read aloud by the teacher, then repeated together in a classical (whole-class) setting, and followed by small group reading, mistakes still occur when students are asked to read independently. Common errors include misidentifying the grammatical forms *manshūb*, *majrūr*, and *marfū’*. For example, a word that should be read in the *manshūb* form is instead read as *marfū’*, or a word that should be *majrūr* is read with a *ḍammah*. These mistakes indicate that students' grammatical understanding is still based on memorization rather than application. Their reliance on fully vowelized texts and the tendency to mimic the teacher’s reading without a deep understanding of sentence structure are the main causes. Therefore, it is important for teachers to balance deductive and inductive methods in teaching reading skill, and to give more focus to *i’rab* (grammatical analysis) practice, so that students can read with comprehension rather than simply memorizing patterns. (Syah & Aziz, 2024). The general purposes of reading include:

1. Enabling readers to discover revealed information, improve what has been done, and modify meaning;
2. Helping readers develop various reading skills, such as reading speed, fluency, the ability to grasp meaning, improving timing in understanding content, proper pronunciation, and more
3. Fostering an interest in reading;
4. Providing a clear understanding of the meaning of the text being read;
5. Expanding the reader’s vocabulary and understanding of sentence structure; and
6. Enhancing the reader’s overall comprehension of the text (Susiawati, Mardani, & Nissa, 2022).

Jeremy Harmer, in his book *The Practice of English Language Teaching*, as quoted by Furqan, states that six essential skills should be emphasized in reading instruction. These are:

1. Predictive skills,
2. Scanning for specific information,
3. Getting the general idea,
4. Obtaining detailed information,
5. Recognizing discourse functions and patterns, and
6. Deriving meaning from the text (Febrianingsih, 2021).

Several previous studies are considered relevant to this research, including a study conducted by (Al azmi, Awaliyah, & Asbarin, 2023) titled "Analysis of Arabic Language Learning Difficulties among Grade IX Students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 2 Sleman Yogyakarta." The findings of this study indicate that the problems in learning Arabic at Junior High School Sawah, Kampar Village, are caused by linguistic factors (including sounds, writing, vocabulary, and grammar) and non-linguistic factors (including environment, teachers, teaching methods, media/facilities, and motivation). A similar study was conducted by (Abdilah & Farisi, 2023)titled “Systematic Literature Review: Problems of Learning Arabic in Schools” (Systematic Literature Review: Problems in Arabic Language Learning at Schools)” the results showed that the problems in Arabic language learning at schools are mostly non-linguistic, involving both teacher-related and student-related factors. The teacher-related issue is the lack of competence and professionalism among some teachers. Meanwhile, the student-related issue is the low motivation and interest of students in learning Arabic.

Furthermore, a study conducted by (Nurhayati, Suib, & Fatoni, 2022) titled "The Essence and Causes of Difficulties in Learning Arabic and Their Solutions in the Field of Education" found that the problems in managing Arabic language skills are caused by several factors. These include limited vocabulary mastery, lack of practice in speaking Arabic, difficulties in translation, insufficient knowledge of *Nahwu* (Arabic grammar) and *Sharaf* (morphology), as well as environmental factors. The proposed solutions include regularly reading the Qur’an, learning through digital platforms, and developing Arabic literacy through the "one day one post" movement.

Reading Arabic texts is an essential skill in learning the Arabic language, especially in Islamic boarding schools or *ma’had*-based educational institutions. However, in practice, many students struggle to understand the texts, whether due to vocabulary, sentence structure, or pronunciation. This affects their comprehension and interest in learning Arabic. This research is important to specifically identify the types of difficulties experienced by eighth-grade students at Muhammadiyah Munawaroh Islamic Boarding School in Malang.

Considering the many factors that influence the activity of reading Arabic texts, it is necessary to conduct further research to identify the factors that make students struggle in reading Arabic. This is important so that the reading learning process can run smoothly and improve in line with the intended goals, ultimately leading to successful learning outcomes. The purpose of this study is to identify the difficulties faced by eighth-grade students at Muhammadiyah Munawaroh Islamic Boarding School in Malang in reading Arabic texts, to understand how these factors cause the difficulties, and to find solutions to overcome them.

**METHOD**

The research method used in this study is a descriptive qualitative approach, which aims to provide an in-depth description of the difficulties experienced by eighth-grade students in reading Arabic texts at Muhammadiyah Munawaroh Islamic Boarding School in Malang. The subjects of this research are eighth-grade students selected based on their varying levels of reading ability and their active participation in Arabic language learning. Through this approach, the study aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of the types of difficulties they face and the contextual factors that influence them.

Data collection techniques were carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was used to directly observe the process of learning to read Arabic texts in class, including students' responses and any difficulties they faced. Interviews were conducted with students and Arabic language teachers to explore deeper information about the obstacles in reading, both from linguistic and non-linguistic aspects. Documentation was used to complement the data, such as reading assignments, syllabi, and the teacher’s teaching notes. The collected data were analyzed through three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. These stages aim to filter relevant information, organize findings systematically, and draw conclusions that provide a comprehensive overview of the issues being studied (Sugiono, 2020).

The informants in this study consisted of 25 eighth-grade students from Muhammadiyah Munawaroh Islamic Boarding School in Malang and 1 Arabic language teacher. The students were selected using purposive sampling, based on certain considerations such as their level of Arabic reading ability (high, medium, and low) and their active participation in the learning process. This approach aimed to gather a variety of perspectives and experiences that better represent the reading difficulties they face. The Arabic teacher was chosen as a key informant because of their important role in the teaching process and their observations of the students’ reading development.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The results of the study show that there are two factors causing students' difficulties in reading Arabic texts: internal factors and external factors.

**Internal Factors**

1. Students’ Learning Experience and Language Competence

Observations and interviews indicate that most students lack sufficient Arabic learning experience from previous educational levels. This early lack of exposure to Arabic has led to weak foundational language skills, particularly in reading. As a result, their basic competencies are low—for example, they struggle to read texts fluently, understand complex sentence structures, and recognize word meanings within sentence contexts. This lack of preparedness in their learning background becomes a significant obstacle to comprehending texts thoroughly, especially narrative or descriptive texts that require a deeper understanding.

This finding is supported by the results of interviews conducted by the researcher with several students, who stated that they had indeed received Arabic lessons while attending TPQ (Qur'anic Learning Center) and at the elementary school level. However, the material they learned at those stages mostly focused on recognizing the Arabic alphabet (huruf hijaiyah), memorizing short prayers, and mastering Qur’anic recitation, rather than developing the skills to read Arabic texts fully and contextually. As stated by A: *“When I was at TPQ, I learned the Arabic letters and how to read the Qur'an, but I wasn’t taught much vocabulary or Arabic grammar”*. In addition, the varying quality of instruction and learning intensity across their previous educational institutions also affected the students’ level of preparedness. As stated by B: *“I went to a public elementary school that didn’t have Arabic lessons, so I find it difficult to understand Arabic texts”.*

These findings indicate that students’ early learning experiences have not fully supported the development of the qirā’ah (reading) skills needed in eighth grade. The lack of focus on reading non-Qur’anic texts—such as narrative, descriptive, or dialogue texts in Arabic—has resulted in students being unfamiliar with sentence structures, vocabulary usage, and the contextual meaning of the texts they encounter in class.

In addition, differences in the quality of teaching and the intensity of learning at students’ previous educational institutions also significantly affect their level of readiness. These institutions vary in their teaching approaches, duration of instruction, and the qualifications of their educators, resulting in diverse learning experiences among students. Some students have received structured and intensive Arabic language instruction, while others have only had limited exposure to basic introductions. This disparity in educational backgrounds creates a gap in competence within the classroom, where some students are able to follow the reading skill material quite well, while others fall behind and face greater difficulties.

Therefore, even though the students have some background in learning Arabic, their experience is very limited and lacks depth. Differences in curriculum, teaching approaches, and the varying quality of instruction at earlier educational levels have led to uneven levels of student competence. This is one of the main reasons why they struggle with Arabic lessons, especially in reading skills (qirā’ah).

1. Vocabulary Mastery

A lack of vocabulary (mufradat) mastery is one of the most fundamental and significant obstacles in learning to read Arabic texts (qirā’ah). Vocabulary mastery is a key foundation for understanding any language, including in reading activities. The more vocabulary a person knows and understands, the easier it will be for them to comprehend texts and improve their literacy skills (Aziza, 2024).  Without understanding the vocabulary used in a text, students will face difficulties in grasping the overall meaning of sentences. In the context of this study, many eighth-grade students at Muhammadiyah Munawaroh Islamic Boarding School in Malang show limited ability to recognize and understand the meaning of words in the Arabic texts they read. This makes it difficult for them to interpret the meaning contained in each paragraph, even when the text is structurally and contextually simple.

The lack of vocabulary mastery also indicates that students are not in the habit of expanding their word bank independently outside of class hours. They are not yet used to using Arabic-Indonesian dictionaries, taking notes on new vocabulary, or creating word lists based on specific themes. When learning a foreign language like Arabic, vocabulary learning should be continuous and contextual so that the words learned can be used in various communication situations.

The lack of vocabulary understanding hinders students from reading actively and meaningfully. They tend to guess the meaning of words or simply read mechanically without truly understanding the content (Syihabuddin & Gumiandari, 2024). This condition not only hinders students' understanding of texts but also lowers their confidence when dealing with more complex reading materials. In the long run, weak vocabulary skills can affect students' critical thinking abilities, as they lack the linguistic foundation needed to connect ideas within a text (Feniliya, 2019). Therefore, improving vocabulary mastery should be a primary focus in reading skill learning strategies, whether through direct approaches such as memorizing vocabulary or through contextual use in relevant and engaging texts.

The research conducted by (Isnaini & Huda, 2020) shows that learning Arabic vocabulary using engaging and enjoyable media can motivate students to participate actively and serve as a helpful tool in mastering Arabic vocabulary. This is supported by the findings of (Adib & Fauji, 2024) which indicate that using "pedia posters" can improve vocabulary comprehension of fifth-grade students at Muhammadiyah 1 Sedati Elementary School.

1. Students' Interest in Arabic Language

Learning interest is one of the psychological factors that greatly influences students' success in the learning process, including in learning the Arabic language. A strong interest will motivate students to be more diligent and focused in their studies, which in turn can improve their learning outcomes (Ricardo & Meilani, 2017). Based on findings in the field, students' interest in learning Arabic—especially in reading (qirā’ah) skills—is relatively low. This is evident from their passive attitude during the learning process and their lack of initiative to practice reading Arabic texts outside of class hours. Most students perceive reading skill lessons as difficult, boring, and irrelevant to their daily lives. Their negative perception is reinforced by difficulties in understanding Arabic sentence structures, limited vocabulary mastery, and the formal and rigid nature of the texts.

The low interest in learning has a significant impact on students' engagement in the learning process. Students become less motivated to actively participate in class activities, such as discussions, reading exercises, and independent assignments at home. In addition, this lack of interest weakens their persistence in facing learning challenges, making them more likely to give up when difficulties arise. In the long term, this condition can hinder the development of Arabic reading skills, which should be one of the fundamental competencies in Arabic language education. Therefore, increasing students' interest in learning is a crucial aspect that needs attention in efforts to improve the effectiveness of reading skill instruction among learners.

It is important to create a supportive learning environment to help increase students' interest in learning. This can be done by paying attention to each student's individual preferences and needs, providing varied learning experiences, and connecting the learning material to the students' real-life context (Ariadi, Iman, Saputro, & Laksana, 2021). Students who have a high interest in learning tend to be more active and enthusiastic in participating in lessons. They are more likely to ask questions and take part in class discussions, which helps them gain a better understanding of the material. An interest in learning also contributes to academic success. Students who are interested in learning usually find it easier to succeed compared to those with low interest. This is because they can understand the material more easily and remember it better (Aulia, Prihatin, & Siswati, 2023).

The results of the study conducted by (Pramesti, Ritonga, Azkia, & Nasution, 2025) show that an approach that creates a dynamic and relevant learning environment encourages students to use Arabic more actively in their daily lives and increases their motivation and engagement.

1. Not Used to Reading Arabic Texts Independently

The habit of reading Arabic texts independently outside of class hours is an important aspect in developing effective reading skills. However, based on observations at the Muhammadiyah Munawaroh Islamic Boarding School in Malang, this habit is rarely found among most eighth-grade students. The lack of such a habit significantly affects their ability to recognize sentence patterns, understand language style, and expand their vocabulary in context. As a result, their reading process does not develop naturally, and their understanding of the text content becomes slow and limited.

Although students generally show a desire to be able to read and understand Arabic texts, their interest is relatively low and not accompanied by consistent effort. This can be seen from the lack of initiative shown by students to practice their reading skills independently outside the classroom. Observations made by the researcher indicate that during their free time, such as between lessons or during breaks, students tend to prefer resting, chatting, or even sleeping in class rather than using that time to read or discuss Arabic material with their peers. Learning independence is a student's ability to manage themselves in planning, monitoring, and evaluating their own learning independently (Rudiawan, Nurani, Hamsina, & Bahri, 2023).

Someone who has an independent attitude will try to find and develop things in their own way to achieve their goals and desired outcomes. Independence means learning through one's own initiative. This habit can be developed when students consistently train themselves and get used to learning in their own way (Alafair Purtian Ramadani, Sumantri, & Linda Zakiah, 2023). A person with an independent attitude is used to not relying on others. This is different from children who are not independent, as they tend to always depend on other people.

Students must be aware of the importance of learning and be able to determine the steps they need to take in their learning process. In this regard, certain indicators are needed to measure learning independence, including:

1. Having the initiative to plan learning strategies,
2. Managing and directing themselves in learning,
3. Not relying on others, and
4. Taking responsibility for their own learning (Yandra & Haerudin, 2023).
5. Fear of Making Mistakes and Lack of Self-Confidence

The fear of making mistakes in learning is a common experience for many people, especially children and teenagers. This fear can be caused by various factors, such as fear of being judged negatively, embarrassment in front of peers, or even fear of failure.

One of the most significant psychological barriers in learning reading skills is students’ fear of reading Arabic texts in front of the class. This fear usually arises from concerns about making mistakes in pronouncing the letters, misreading the harakat (vowel marks), or misunderstanding the meaning of the text. This lack of confidence in their own abilities stems from insufficient systematic reading practice and a lack of positive experiences in previous reading activities. As a result, many students choose to stay silent and avoid active participation in the learning process. This lack of self-confidence causes them to become passive, unwilling to try, and hesitant to ask questions when they face difficulties. In the long term, this condition can significantly hinder the development of their reading skills, because reading—like other language skills—requires repeated practice, courage, and active engagement in the learning process. Therefore, a pedagogical approach that builds students’ confidence is needed, such as cooperative learning, paired reading, or formative and constructive assessment. These methods can help students feel safe to learn from their mistakes and become more motivated to keep trying.

 A lack of self-confidence in students often arises from fear, anxiety, worry, and a sense of doubt about their own abilities, which may be accompanied by a racing heartbeat and trembling body. These are psychological issues triggered by external stimuli. In addition, low self-confidence can also be caused by feelings of unease and anxiety, as well as other negative emotions such as laziness, impatience, difficulty concentrating, or feelings of inferiority. On the other hand, students with high self-confidence are able to recognize their strengths and weaknesses. They also have the courage and ability to improve their academic performance, such as being brave enough to come to the front of the class to complete a task or tell a story.

In addition, the implementation of a learning process that does not develop children's potential can trigger low self-confidence. Teachers often focus too much on academics, neglecting other important aspects such as self-confidence. As a result, the lack of support in developing children's self-confidence can gradually diminish the confidence they already have.

**External Factors**

1. The teacher has not yet varied their teaching methods and techniques.

Teachers are an essential component of education, especially during the learning process. A teacher’s role in the classroom includes being a corrector, evaluator, inspirator, supervisor, informant, mediator, organizer, classroom manager, motivator, demonstrator, initiator, guide, and facilitator. These roles are very important in the field of education (Esti Elizya M, Azmi Al-Bahij, Iswan, Lailatul Mufidah, & Anita Damayanti, 2024). According to Hasibuan, the role of a teacher in learning is to be creative, competent, and engaging. A teacher should position themselves as: a caring parent who loves the students, a friend who can listen and help express students’ feelings, and a facilitator who provides support and serves students according to their interests, talents, and abilities. According to Sindhunata, the role of the teacher as a facilitator includes being fair and not showing favoritism among students, being patient, respectful, and humble, always willing to learn, behaving in a way that makes them relatable to students, acting friendly and blending in like an actor or actress, avoiding lecturing or preaching, maintaining authority, being open-minded, and thinking positively (Fauzi & Shobabiya, 2024).

Based on interviews with teachers and several students, it was found that the reading skills learning process in Grade VIII at Muhammadiyah Munawaroh Islamic Boarding School in Malang is still largely dominated by traditional methods. Typically, the teacher reads the text first, followed by the students repeating it together, and then translating it sentence by sentence into Indonesian. Although this method has advantages in practicing pronunciation and literal comprehension, its repetitive use without variation tends to cause boredom among the students.

The lack of diverse methods and innovative teaching techniques has caused students to become passive during the learning process. They merely follow the teacher's instructions mechanically without being given the opportunity to explore texts independently. This situation leads to low student participation in reading activities and decreases their motivation to learn reading skills.

In addition, the traditional one-way teaching method is less effective in accommodating the diverse learning styles of students. Not all learners respond well to lecture and drill methods, so a more interactive and contextual approach is needed—such as project-based learning, jigsaw reading in group activities, or the use of digital media as a learning aid. Without innovation in teaching methods, students’ reading skills are unlikely to develop optimally because they are not given opportunities to practice critical thinking, understand context, or build comprehension independently or collaboratively. Therefore, changing the teaching approach is essential so that learning reading skills becomes more than just memorization and translation—it becomes a meaningful, active, and enjoyable process.

In teaching reading, teachers are encouraged to try various teaching methods and then choose the one that best suits the students' needs. This is intended to prevent students from feeling bored or losing interest (Hardiyanti, 2022). In addition, a teacher is required to have a strong understanding of the subject matter so that it can be organized in a systematic and logical way. A teacher must be able to connect the material being taught with the students’ prior knowledge and relate it constructively so that the learning process becomes engaging and not monotonous. Mastery of the material and the delivery of knowledge alone are not enough—a teacher must also be able to equip students with practical skills (Mahmud & Hamzah, 2020).

1. Study Time

One of the major external challenges in learning reading skills at Muhammadiyah Munawaroh Islamic Boarding School in Malang is the limited time allocated for Arabic language lessons. Study time is not only about how long the class lasts, but also about the quality of interaction that can take place during that time. Reading skills classes are usually held only once or twice a week, with relatively short durations. This limitation makes it difficult to fully develop students’ reading abilities. Reading skills—especially in a foreign language like Arabic—require intensive and consistent practice so that students become familiar with sentence patterns, understand the structure of the language, and expand their vocabulary.

In addition to affecting the students, the limited time also directly impacts the teaching strategies that teachers can apply (Susanto, 2021). The teacher does not have enough time to explore more participatory and in-depth methods, such as group reading techniques, text discussions, context-based reading comprehension, or student presentations of reading content. These methods generally require more time than simply reading and translating the text directly. As a result, the learning process becomes less varied and tends to be monotonous, which in turn can reduce teaching effectiveness and lower students’ motivation to learn.

In the long term, this condition may lead to low Arabic literacy skills among students, especially in terms of critical and contextual text comprehension. Therefore, it is important for the madrasah or education administrators to consider adding more reading skill lessons or providing additional programs such as intensive classes or extracurricular activities to continuously support students’ reading abilities.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that the difficulties in reading Arabic texts experienced by eighth-grade students at Muhammadiyah Munawaroh Islamic Boarding School in Malang are caused by several factors, which can be grouped into two main categories: internal factors and external factors. Internal factors come from within the students themselves, including their learning experience and Arabic language skills, lack of vocabulary mastery, and low interest in the Arabic language. In addition, students are not accustomed to reading Arabic texts independently outside the classroom and often feel afraid of making mistakes and lack confidence when reading. These factors contribute to the students' weak understanding and reading ability in Arabic texts.

Meanwhile, external factors include the limited variety of teaching methods and techniques used by the teacher, as well as the relatively short and less intensive study time. These two factors affect the low effectiveness of the reading skill learning process in class, making it less optimal in stimulating student engagement and improving their reading skills.

Therefore, to overcome these various difficulties, strategic efforts are needed from multiple parties. These include developing more creative and participatory teaching methods by teachers, increasing students’ motivation and reading habits, and reconsidering the time allocation for Arabic language lessons in class. These efforts are expected to gradually and sustainably improve students’ ability to read Arabic texts

This study recommends that the school and Arabic language teachers make innovations in reading instruction methods, such as using interactive digital media, project-based learning, or forming small study groups that encourage active student participation. In addition, policies such as adding special time for reading practice or holding a weekly *tahsin qirā’ah* program could be effective strategies to gradually improve students’ Arabic reading skills. It is also suggested that the school provide regular training for teachers on reading instruction strategies that suit the characteristics of students in the pesantren.

This study has not yet explored in depth the role of learning media or family support in developing students' reading habits. Therefore, future research could be conducted with a broader scope, involving several Islamic boarding schools, and focusing on specific interventions—such as evaluating the effectiveness of certain methods in improving students' Arabic reading skills in a measurable way.

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