The Mnemonik Technique in Learning Arabic Hijaiyyah Letters

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Abstrat
This study aims to determine the effectiveness of using the mnemonic technique in improving year 1 pupils' achievement in learning Arabic hijaiyyah letters. Mnemonics is a teaching and learning technique to improve pupils' memory by connecting new knowledge with pupils' existing knowledge. This study adopted the quasi-experimental research design by using a post-test for two groups, namely the control and the control group. The study's respondents consisted of 73 first-year pupils in two primary schools. The treatment group consisted of 35 pupils, while 38 pupils were in the control group. Frequency and percentage were used to examine pupils' achievement level in learning Arabic hijaiyyah letters using the mnemonic and conventional techniques. The t-test was used to determine the differences between pupils' achievement in learning Arabic hijaiyyah letters. Pupils in the treatment group demonstrated an excellent level of achievement, while the achievement of pupils in the control group as a whole was at a satisfactory level. Moreover, the analysis of the paired sample t-test showed a significant difference between the mean score of pupils in the treatment and the control group in the post-test for their achievement in learning the hijaiyyah letter. This finding shows that the mnemonic technique contributes to the improvement of pupils' achievement in learning hijaiyyah letters.

Introduction
The mastery of basic Arabic language skills among primary school pupils, specifically the ability to pronounce hijaiyyah letters, is still an issue that needs to be discussed. Pupils' lack of ability to recognise and pronounce the hijaiyyah letters based on their vowel sound markers still occurs. Although the teacher has introduced the letters at the beginning of the lesson, pupils are not able to remember the pronunciation and sound of the hijaiyyah letter.

Pupils also face confusion in sounding the letters as they say the name of the hijaiyyah letter rather than the sound of the letters based on their vowel sound markers.

Year 1 pupils should be able to recognise, recite and read hijaiyyah letters, either single or combined hijaiyyah letters, because they have learned this skill at the preschool level. However, what happened is the opposite.

Hijaiyyah letters are the foundation that needs to be mastered by all pupils to facilitate the mastery of related language skills, namely reading and writing skills. The ability to recognise, pronounce, and write hijaiyyah letters is one of the indicators to facilitate the learning of the Arabic language.

However, Syafawati & Farhana (2020); Rozaini et al (2019) reported that pupils demonstrate a low achievement in the learning of hijaiyyah letters. Most pupils fail to read Arabic text fluently even though the text is simple, concise and has clear vowel sound markers. In addition, pupils have yet to master reading the hijaiyyah letters and have shown poor articulation of the letters (Mat et al., 2016).

According to Rozaini et al (2019), most primary school pupils showed a weak grasp of basic Arabic language skills, including recognizing and reading single hijaiyyah letters. They also face difficulties in reading letter combinations in the Arabic vocabulary. This is also supported by Razif et al (2019), who found that pupils face difficulties in the aspects of speaking and reading, writing and combining letters, acquisition of Arabic vocabulary and many more. In this regard, wrong pronunciation results in errors in word meanings.

In addition, pupils' low achievement described above is often linked to factors like teachers' teaching techniques. Most teachers use chalk & talk and teach according to the minimal resources they have. Many teachers use this technique in the classrooms as it helps them convey information and knowledge in less time in the midst of the time constraints and the heavy work burden they face.

The literature review also showed that teachers often use whiteboards and textbooks as teaching aids (Razif et al., 2019). Furthermore, teachers tend to use the one-way delivery method without taking into account pupils' engagement and readiness in the learning process

Conventional teaching is a passive learning technique that exposes pupils to feelings and ultimately causes pupils to lack understanding of the teaching. Among the studies that found conventional teaching leads to exhaustion, lack of interest in learning, insensitivity, passiveness, and low motivation among pupils is (Miyatsu & McDaniel, 2019).

Pupils find it difficult to master learning due to teachers' lack of effort to provide engaging teaching activities in class. Ultimately, the selection of inappropriate and less stimulating teaching techniques will decrease pupils' attention and ultimately affect their achievement. Hence, teachers' adoption of inappropriate teaching techniques, if not addressed, will have a concerning impact in the long run.

Hence, the use of diverse language activities should be emphasized in the Arabic language teaching and learning in order to improve the mastery of the Arabic language. In addition, several studies suggested that teachers adopt new techniques to break the learning tradition that is commonly practised.

The situation discussed above highlights the need for studies on teaching techniques to deal with the issues in Arabic language teaching and learning. Thus, this study proposes using the mnemonic technique as an alternative teaching technique. This technique was chosen because its use in language teaching and learning has been widely discussed. Studies claim this technique can strengthen memory and contribute to pupils' achievement. The mnemonic technique is also suitable for dealing with pupils' boredom and lack of interest in learning.

The mnemonic technique uses memory to improve pupils' ability to obtain information and understand concepts. Woolfolk (2019) defined mnemonics as a systematic procedure to improve memory and that mnemonics is a memorizing skill. Moreover, Miyatsu & McDaniel (2019) mentioned that Mnemonics is a teaching technique that works to improve pupils' memory by connecting new knowledge and pupils' existing knowledge. The term comes from the English word mnemonic, which is pronounced ne-MON-ik. According to Qu et al (2024), Michael Pressley and Joel Levin founded the Mnemonic technique.

Various techniques can be used in mnemonics. The mnemonic technique used in this study is the alphabet code technique. Through this technique, pupils are taught to associate the keywords or the hijaiyyah letters with memory cues with visual images or pictures. In this regard, pupils' enjoyment in learning Arabic subjects will be realised in a planned and systematic way.

Several studies have discussed the use of the Mnemonic technique in teaching Arabic, including Rozaini et al. (2019). However, this study is unique as it focuses on the use of the Mnemonic Technique for learning Arabic hijaiyyah letters. Other studies have examined its use in teaching other language subjects, namely Chinese by Ying, Dicky & Yulyani (2016) and English by (Maizan et al., 2017).

Similarly, studies have examined its use in other subjects, namely Islamic Education, Jawi, Science, Tajwid, Biology, History, Design and Technology. Tety (2016) discussed its use in the subject of Islamic Education, while Haszalawati et al (2016) focused on the Jawi subject. Fazirah & Diyana (2016); Jamaliah (2021) conducted a study of Mnemonics use in learning science and Biology, respectively, while Hanisah et al. (2016) examined its use in learning Tajwid. Lastly, Syadiyah & Ramlah (2020) examined its use in learning history and Fairus & Fazlinda (2020) in the learning of Design and Technology.

Therefore, studies on Mnemonic Technique usage in learning Arabic Subjects need to be enriched. In this regard, this quantitative study attempts to examine the use of the mnemonic technique in the learning of hijaiyyah letters in national primary schools. This issue is explained according to the dual memory theory and cognitive theory. This study aims to address aspects like 'To what extent does the implementation of the mnemonic technique effectively contribute to pupil achievement?' and 'Is there a significant difference between the achievement level of pupils learning Arabic using the mnemonic technique and the conventional technique?'

Research Methodology
This study adopted the quasi-experimental research design that involves two variables, the independent and the dependent variables. The independent variables in this study are teaching techniques using mnemonics and conventional teaching techniques, while the dependent variable is pupils' achievement or mastery, which was measured through the post-test

This study's respondents comprised Year 1 pupils taking the Arabic language subject. The respondents consisted of 73 pupils aged 7 from two different schools. The group from the first school, which consisted of 35 pupils, was categorized as the treatment group, while the group from the second school, with 38 pupils, was categorised as the control group.

The study's research instrument was a set of post-test questions. The post-test was conducted to measure the Year 1 pupils' learning outcomes after using mnemonic or conventional learning techniques to learn the topic of Kaf and Nun Hijaiyyah letters. The post-test was divided into five main sections with 25 written and oral questions on the specific Arabic Hijaiyyah letters.

Before the treatment started, Levene's test was first carried out to identify homogeneity (uniformity) of variants for both groups. The details of the Levene's test are shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1
Analysis of Variants Uniformity Based on Levene's Test

Dependent Variable	F value	df1	df2	Sig.
Post-Test Score	1.87	2	71	0.175

Based on Table 1, the analysis obtained the values of F=1.87 and P=0.17. This indicates that the variable analysed has a significant value exceeding p> 0.05. This finding shows that both groups have homogeneous variance (P>0.05). Hence, data from both groups could be tested using an independent sample t-test (Independent Sample t-test). As the two variants are not significantly different, the condition of variance uniformity has been met.

Discussion
The first research question is, 'What is the achievement level of pupils learning hijaiyyah letters using the mnemonic technique?' To answer this question, this study used descriptive analyses involving frequency and percentage to determine pupils' achievement levels in learning hijaiyyah letters using the mnemonic technique. The results of the descriptive analyses are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Pupils' Achievement Level in Learning Using Mnemonic Technique Based on Frequency and Percentage

Group	Score Grade	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Interpretation
Treatment	A	22	62.86	Excellent
	B	4	11.43	Good
	C	6	17.14	Satisfactory
	D	3	8.57	Achieved the minimum level
	E	0	0	Did not achieve the minimum level.
Overall		**35**	**100**	

As shown in Table 2, the highest frequency of pupils obtained grade A, with 22 pupils or 62.86%, 4 pupils or 11.43% obtaining Grade B, indicating a good level of performance, 6 or 17.14% of the pupils obtained Grade C or Satisfactory Level, the lowest frequency of pupils (3, 8.57%) obtained Grade D or the Minimum Achievement Level. No pupil obtained an E grade or failed. This indicates none of the pupils failed to achieve the minimum achievement level. Compared to the results used for the Levene Test, the Mnemonic Technique has a positive impact on pupil achievement in learning.

Meanwhile, the second research question is, 'What is the achievement level of pupils learning hijaiyyah letters using the conventional technique?'. Once again, this study used descriptive analyses involving frequency and percentage to determine pupils' achievement levels after learning hijaiyyah letters using conventional techniques. The results of the descriptive analysis are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3

Pupils' Achievement Level in Learning Using Conventional Technique Based on Frequency and Percentage

Group	Grade	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Interpretation
Control	A	5	13.16	Excellent
	B	10	26.32	Good
	C	14	36.84	Satisfactory
	D	3	7.89	Achieved the minimum level
	E	6	15.79	Did not achieve the minimum level.
Overall		**38**	**100**	

Table 3 shows 5 pupils (13.16%) obtained grade A grade or Excellent Performance Level. Grade B recorded a total of 10 pupils or 26.32%, indicating pupils have good performance levels. Grade C, which corresponds to a satisfactory level of performance, recorded the highest frequency and percentage, with 14 pupils or 36.84%. Grade D, or minimum level of performance, recorded the lowest frequency and percentage, with 3 pupils or 7.89%. Lastly, 6 pupils or 15.79%, obtained Grade E, indicating they have not reached the Minimum Performance Level. This means that the 6 failed based on the achievement measures set by the Malaysian Ministry of Education School. Compared to the results used in Levene's Test, this finding shows that the conventional technique, to some extent, also contributes to pupils' improvement in learning the hijaiyyah letter.

The third research question is, 'Is there a significant difference between the achievement level of pupils learning Arabic using the mnemonic technique and the conventional technique? This study used an Independent Sample t-test to identify the difference between the mean score of pupils in the control and treatment group in the post-test on their achievement in learning hijaiyyah letters. The results of the t-test are shown in Table 4.

Table 4
Results of The Independent Sample t-test On the difference between the achievement of pupils in the treatment and control group

Variable	N	M	SD	t	df	Sig.
Treatment	35	82.97	19.31	-5.26	71	.000
Control	38	60.42	17.32			

Table 4 shows t a significant difference between the post-test mean score of pupils in the treatment and control groups, which is $p<0.05$. The study found that pupils in the treatment group had a higher mean score (mean=82.97) than the control group (mean=60.42). Therefore, the Mnemonic Technique contributes significantly to pupils' achievement in learning hijaiyyah than the conventional technique.

To summarize this finding, both the Mnemonic and Conventional Techniques contribute to improving pupils' achievement in learning Hijaiyyah letters. This is because the achievement levels of both groups showed improvement in the post-test. However, pupils from the treatment group who received lessons using the mnemonic technique as a learning intervention recorded a higher level of improvement compared to pupils from the control group who were taught using the conventional learning technique.

Based on the findings, the intervention given to the treatment group helped the pupils obtain higher scores on the Arabic language achievement test, surpassing the score of pupils in the control group on the same test. Therefore, the intervention through the mnemonic technique is effective in increasing the Arabic language achievement test scores of pupils in the treatment group.

Mnemonic Technique was also examined in an experimental study by (Fairus & Fazlinda, 2018). The study reported that pupils showed an encouraging increase in their scores. In this regard, up to 80% of pupils in the treatment group have used the keyword mnemonics compared to the control group who used conventional techniques. An experimental study by

Syafawati & Farhana (2020) examined the effectiveness of the Keyword Mnemonic Technique in learning Hijaiyyah Letters. The study found that pupils in the treatment group scored higher than the control group. Thus, Mnemonic Technique is a learning technique that can help pupils achieve better performance.

The Mnemonic Technique has been proven to improve achievement in other subjects. A study by Parima et al (2018) found a significant difference in English language achievement among pupils who used the mnemonic technique. The use of the Mnemonic technique has also been found to improve pupils' English reading comprehension. Qu et al (2024) found that the Keyword Mnemonic Technique has increased vocabulary mastery among secondary pupils, as evident in the significant difference between the achievement of pupils in the treatment group and those in the control group. Similarly, Jamaliah (2021) examined the use of the Mnemonic Technique in learning Biology and found that it successfully activated pupils' memory and increased the vocabulary mastery of the treatment group compared to the control group.

Based on this finding, it can be concluded that the use of appropriate learning techniques can help a teacher to achieve learning objectives. This study highlighted the use of the Mnemonic technique in education due to its ability to stimulate thinking and memory in addition to being a strong stimulus to attract pupils' attention to engage in the proceeding teaching and learning activities. This study's findings have shown that using the Mnemonic Technique contributes to the improvement of Arabic language achievement among Year 1 pupils in national schools.

Conclusion

This mnemonic technique can help pupils memorize the learning content well. In this regard, pupils exposed to this technique have shown increased achievement. This is because the technique is in line with cognitive learning theory, which asserts that pupils can make connections between New and Existing Knowledge. In this case, existing knowledge stored in pupils' minds is linked to their Existing Knowledge. This allows the new knowledge to be stored through the stimulation of their existing knowledge. At the same time, the Mnemonic Technique makes it easier to develop and expand pupils' knowledge structure stored in their minds. This theory of cognitive learning has been widely applied in second language learning, especially related to vocabulary. Therefore, this Mnemonic Technique can be an alternative for teachers to stimulate Arabic learning among pupils.

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