

Innovative Approaches in Legal Language Learning: The Impact of Music-Based Teaching in Legal Arabic Course

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Abstract

The Legal Arabic Course is one of the key offerings for law students, aimed at enhancing their proficiency in Arabic within the context of legal studies. However, many students perceive Arabic as a challenging language, which often diminishes their interest and engagement with the course. To address this issue, an innovative music based learning approach was implemented, incorporating activities such as singing, role-playing and group presentations. These methods aimed to create a more engaging and enjoyable learning environment. A quantitative research design was employed, involving questionnaires distributed to 174 law students at a Malaysian university. The findings revealed that the music-based teaching approach had a significant positive impact, increasing students' motivation, interest, and comprehension of course content. These results underscore the potential of creative pedagogical strategies, such as music, in transforming the learning experience for Legal Arabic. The study highlights the importance of innovative teaching methods to support better mastery of Arabic in legal studies, encouraging educators to adopt more dynamic and effective approaches.

Keywords: Legal Arabic, Music-Based Learning, Pedagogical Innovation, Student Engagement, Islamic Legal Studies

Introduction

In today's era of globalization, educators are striving to revolutionize Arabic language teaching by embracing innovative and dynamic approaches. These innovations in teaching and learning represent deliberate efforts to develop creative methods that transform the education system and respond to the evolving needs of learners. Educational reforms have introduced contemporary teaching approaches that effectively stimulate student motivation and engagement. Traditional, one-dimensional teaching methods, which often rely on rote learning, are increasingly seen as ineffective. Such approaches may inadvertently marginalize students, particularly those who struggle to comprehend content, thus necessitating a shift toward more interactive and inclusive pedagogy. This need for pedagogical reform highlights

the importance of integrating engaging methods, such as game-based learning, which has demonstrated significant positive impacts on student outcomes (Jasni et al., 2018).

The integration of technology in language learning has also proven beneficial, particularly for foreign students, by enhancing both engagement and comprehension (El Omari, 2015). In this regard, Zaini et al. (2019) suggest that the combination of technology, communication tools, and multimedia can reshape Arabic language education in a meaningful way. Furthermore, interactive teaching strategies, including language games, are highly recommended for improving the mastery of core language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Nurjannah et al., 2024). These strategies not only counter the stigma associated with the perceived difficulty of learning Arabic but also aim to make the process more enjoyable and effective. Adopting diverse methodologies in Arabic education has the potential to enhance learning experiences and positively influence student performance, including improved assessment scores (Zulhemay et al., 2022).

The process of teaching Arabic, especially Legal Arabic, encompasses techniques designed to foster critical thinking and intellectual growth among students. Interactive learning environments, facilitated through innovative methods, can create active and enjoyable atmospheres that motivate students to engage deeply with the subject matter (Jasni et al., 2018). Legal Arabic education focuses on several key domains, including the teaching of specialized legal terminology, comprehension of Islamic law, and curriculum development that promotes inclusivity. This comprehensive approach is crucial for enhancing students' proficiency in Legal Arabic, particularly in formal and documentary contexts. Efforts to modernize curricula increasingly emphasize inclusivity, ensuring that learners from diverse backgrounds can meaningfully engage with legal texts (Thohri, 2024). Contemporary curriculum advancements incorporate modern documentary sources, enabling students to familiarize themselves with formal Arabic as used in legal documents and international treaties. While Legal Arabic is essential for advancing legal literacy, traditional teaching methods often fall short of addressing the needs of modern learners. Consequently, scholars advocate for innovative approaches that integrate technology, practical tools, and diverse perspectives to bridge these gaps.

Learning the Arabic language provides students with essential exposure to the context and application of the language within Islamic law. Besides, Islamic law constitutes an integral part of the Malaysian legal system. Consequently, law students, particularly Muslim students, must possess a foundational understanding of Islamic law as it applies to Malaysia. Many primary sources and authoritative references in Islamic law are written in Arabic, making proficiency in the language indispensable. This knowledge enables students to directly engage with and interpret Arabic legal texts, ensuring a deeper and more accurate understanding of Islamic jurisprudence (Aladdin & Musa, 2014). The Legal Arabic Course was introduced to address the specific needs of students pursuing studies in sharia law. This course provides foundational knowledge in Arabic language, legal resources, and relevant terminology critical for courses such as *Introduction to Islamic Jurisprudence*, *Muamalat*, *Islamic Crime*, *Islamic Banking and Takaful*, *Islamic Family Law*, and *Islamic Evidence Law*. Arabic, as the language of the Quran and Hadith—the two primary sources of Islamic law—is indispensable for understanding and interpreting Islamic teachings.

The course begins with an introduction to basic Arabic methodologies, gradually focusing on terminologies and resources essential to the legal field. This approach is designed to equip students with the skills necessary to comprehend sharia law, familiarize themselves with legal terms, and analyze sources of law. Arabic plays a pivotal role in the Islamic legal system, acting as the foundation for determining rulings on various matters and legal disputes (Abas et al., 2024). Arabic education remains vital for understanding Islamic law, as the precision required to interpret the Quran and Hadith depends heavily on mastery of the language. Proficiency in Arabic empowers scholars to accurately navigate legal frameworks and offer sound interpretations of Islamic principles (Zikriah et al., 2024). However, the perception of law students toward learning the Arabic language varies. Some students view studying Arabic as a burdensome and challenging task. (Aladdin & Musa, 2014). As the demand for experts in Legal Arabic grows, adopting innovative pedagogical strategies will be essential to ensure effective learning outcomes and to prepare students to meet the challenges of a rapidly evolving global environment.

Research Methodology

This study employed a quantitative approach to examine the effectiveness of music based teaching methods in the Arabic for Legal Studies course. A quantitative design was chosen as it allows for the objective and systematic collection of data to analyze students' perceptions of the course. The primary research instrument was a structured questionnaire designed to evaluate various aspects, including the level of difficulty in learning Arabic for Legal Studies, students' interest in the course, and the effectiveness of music based teaching methods. The questionnaire was distributed to 174 law students at a university in Malaysia, who were randomly selected to obtain a representative sample. The study involved students who had experienced music-based teaching methods during lectures, including activities such as singing, role-playing, and group presentations in Arabic. The data were analyzed using SPSS software to generate descriptive statistics, including percentages and correlations between variables (Ishak & Talaat, 2020). The descriptive statistics, such as frequencies and percentages, were used to identify patterns and trends in students' perceptions in this study. These results provide clear insights into the effectiveness of the teaching approach. This methodology ensures that the study findings are scientific and offer a comprehensive view of how music-based teaching methods can enhance students' interest and motivation in the Arabic for Legal Studies course. Furthermore, this approach supports the identification of more creative and effective teaching strategies to help students achieve better mastery of the course.

Results and Discussion

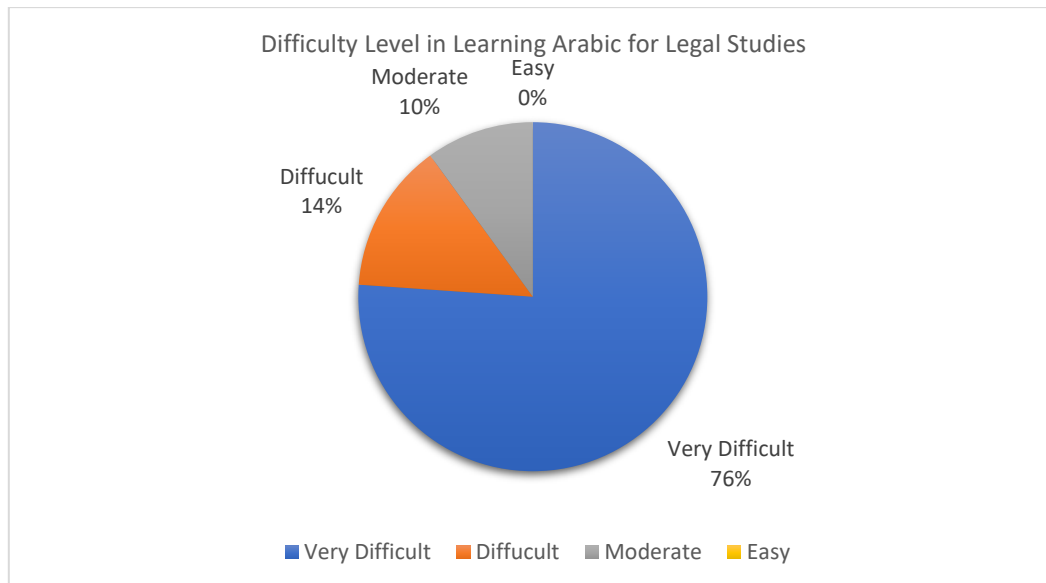


Figure 1: Difficulty Level in Learning Arabic for Legal Studies

The data in Figure 1 highlights that the majority of students face significant challenges in learning Arabic for Legal Studies, with 76% of students considering the course to be very difficult and 14% finding it difficult. This indicates that nearly all students perceive the course as highly challenging, with only 10% rating its difficulty level as moderate, and none finding it easy to learn. These findings suggest several potential issues, including the complexity of Arabic legal terminology, overly technical course content, and possibly ineffective teaching approaches. Consequently, these results underscore the need for a thorough reassessment of teaching methods and course materials to better support students in mastering this subject.

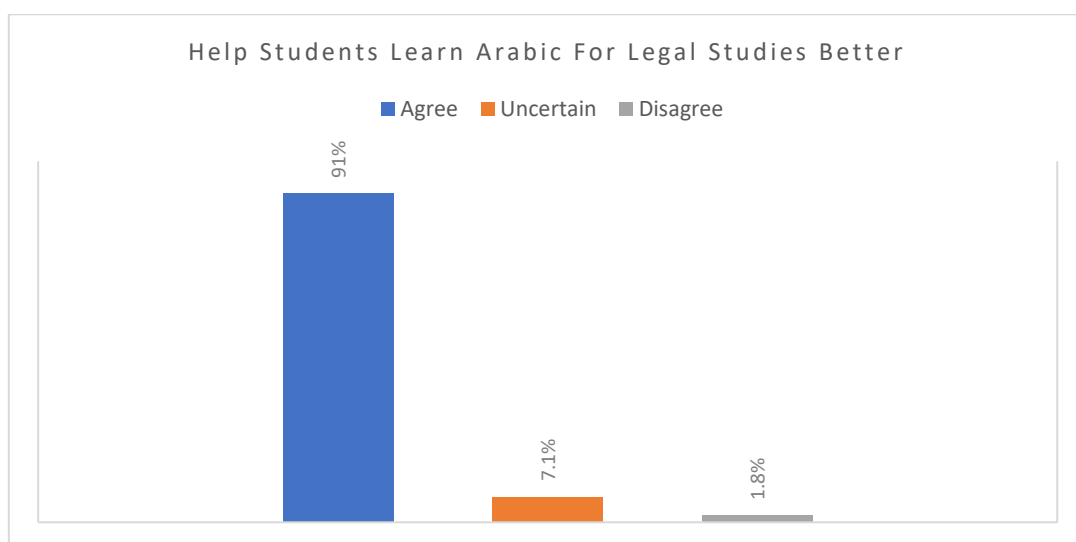


Figure 2: Teaching Methods That Help Students Learn Arabic for Legal Studies Better

The data in Figure 2 reveals that the Music-Based Teaching approach has significant potential to enhance students' learning experience in Arabic for Legal Studies. A total of 91% of students agreed that teaching methods involving music made learning easier, while 7.1%

were uncertain, and only 1.8% disagreed. These findings highlight the effectiveness of music as a learning aid, capable of improving memory retention, motivation, and overall learning experience, particularly in challenging subjects like Arabic for Legal Studies. This approach also demonstrates considerable potential for integration into the curriculum as a strategy to address the learning challenges faced by students.

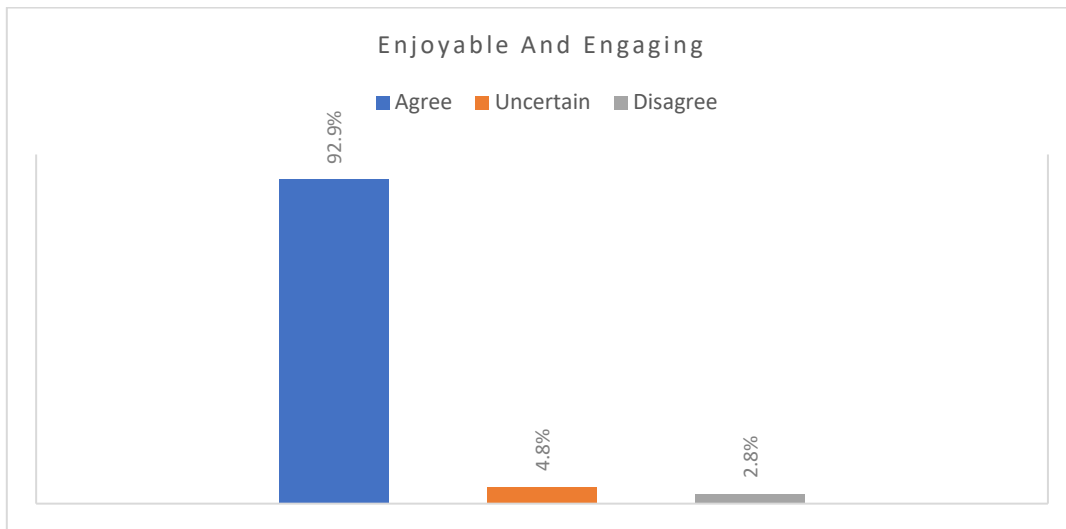


Figure 3: Teaching Methods That Make Learning Arabic for Legal Studies Enjoyable and Engaging

The data in Figure 3 indicates that music-based teaching methods effectively make the learning process for Arabic for Legal Studies more enjoyable and reduce boredom among students. A total of 92.9% of students agreed that this approach increased their enjoyment of learning, while 4.8% were uncertain, and only 2.4% disagreed. These findings demonstrate that creative teaching methods, such as incorporating music, have a positive impact on students' motivation and learning experience, particularly in challenging subjects. This approach holds significant potential for broader implementation to enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning in Arabic for Legal Studies.

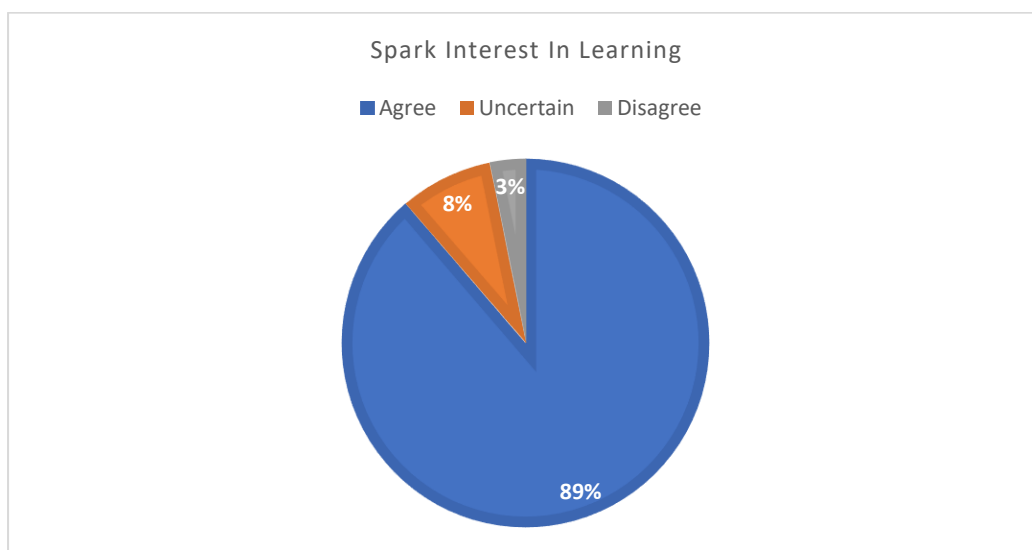


Figure 4: Teaching Methods That Spark Interest in Learning Arabic for Legal Studies

The data in Figure 4 highlights that teaching methods incorporating music effectively capture students' interest in learning Arabic for Legal Studies. A total of 89.3% of students agreed that this approach enhanced their interest in the subject, while 7.7% were uncertain, and only 3% disagreed. These findings underscore the potential of creative and interactive teaching methods, such as music, in motivating students and fostering enthusiasm for learning a subject often perceived as difficult. This demonstrates the effectiveness of music-based approaches as a valuable tool for improving the teaching and learning process in Arabic for Legal Studies.

Based on the study findings, several key patterns have been identified:

a. Critical Challenges in Learning Arabic for Legal Studies

The majority of students face significant challenges in learning Arabic for Legal Studies, primarily due to the technical nature of the course content and the ineffectiveness of traditional teaching methods. These findings emphasize the need for innovative teaching approaches to better support students in mastering this subject.

b. Effectiveness of Music in Facilitating Learning

Music-based teaching approaches have been proven to aid students in understanding and retaining course content more effectively. Music serves as an impactful pedagogical tool, especially in subjects considered difficult, such as Arabic for Legal Studies.

c. Positive Impact on the Learning Experience

Teaching methods involving music enhance students' enjoyment of the learning process, reduce boredom, and contribute to higher motivation levels. This approach also fosters a more engaging and conducive learning environment, thereby increasing students' overall participation and interest in the subject.

d. Increased Interest and Engagement Among Students

The use of music-based teaching strategies has significantly boosted students' interest in learning Arabic for Legal Studies. This method not only addresses issues of boredom but also makes the learning process more interactive and engaging, actively involving students in their education. These outcomes highlight the potential of music-based approaches to improve student engagement and motivation in challenging subjects.

These findings underscore the importance of incorporating creative teaching methods, such as music, as a complementary tool to traditional approaches. Such innovations can play a critical role in transforming the learning experience and helping students achieve greater mastery of Arabic for Legal Studies.

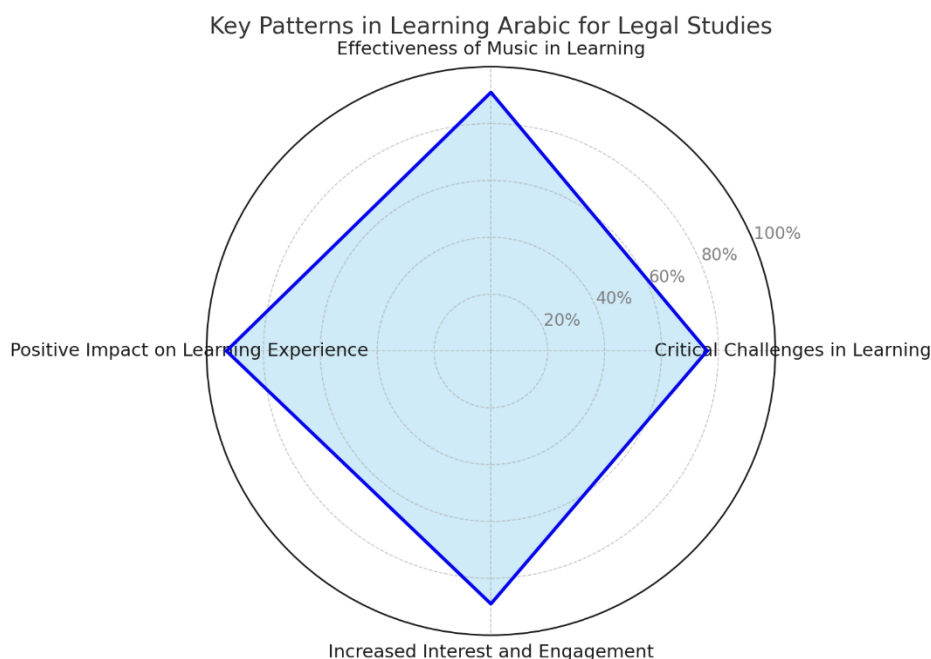


Figure 5: Research Findings on Key Patterns in Learning

Figure 5 illustrates four key dimensions in learning Legal Arabic through a music-based approach: Critical Challenges in Learning (76%), Effectiveness of Music in Learning (91%), Positive Impact on Learning Experience (93%), and Increased Interest and Engagement (89%). The high scores across these dimensions highlight the significant effectiveness of the music-based method in enhancing understanding, memory retention, and motivation. However, the lower score in "Critical Challenges in Learning" indicates that students still face considerable difficulties, possibly due to the technical nature of the content, suggesting room for improvement in simplifying the curriculum or offering additional support. Overall, Figure 5 underscores the transformative potential of creative teaching methods in making complex subjects more engaging and accessible.

Conclusion

This study underscores the transformative potential of music-based teaching approaches in enhancing the learning experience for Arabic in Legal Studies. The findings reveal that incorporating music significantly increases students' interest, motivation, and comprehension of challenging course content, effectively addressing limitations of traditional teaching methods. The approach fosters a more interactive and engaging learning environment, making lessons more enjoyable while improving students' retention and understanding of complex legal Arabic terminology. The researchers recommend further integration of music-based teaching strategies into the curriculum. To maximize their effectiveness, these methods should be complemented with other innovative approaches, such as digital tools, collaborative learning activities, and tailored support mechanisms. These combined strategies not only create a more dynamic and inclusive learning experience but also address the specific challenges of mastering Legal Arabic, particularly its technical terminology and specialized content. Adopting creative pedagogical innovations can help educators better prepare students to meet the demands of legal studies in a rapidly evolving educational landscape. Continuous refinement and adaptation of these methods are essential to ensure their relevance and effectiveness. Ultimately, this approach has the potential to enhance student

engagement, comprehension, and overall learning outcomes, contributing to the development of more effective teaching methodologies for future applications.

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