

The Effectiveness of Integrating Qur'an Memorization into Arabic Language Learning for Students' Vocabulary Mastery

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Abstract

This study investigates the effectiveness of integrating Qur'an memorization into Arabic language learning to enhance students' vocabulary mastery. Employing a quasi-experimental design, the study involved an experimental group that participated in a Qur'an memorization-based learning program and a control group that received conventional Arabic language instruction. Data were collected through pre-test and post-test vocabulary assessments, questionnaires, and classroom observations. The quantitative findings revealed a statistically significant difference in post-test scores between the two groups, with the experimental group outperforming the control group ($t = 11.74$, $p < .001$). These results indicate that

integrating Qur'an memorization significantly improves students' Arabic vocabulary mastery. Qualitative findings further showed that both teachers and students perceived the approach positively, particularly in enhancing learning motivation, self-confidence, and Arabic reading and speaking skills. Nevertheless, several implementation challenges were identified, including limited instructional time and variations in students' memorization abilities. Overall, the findings suggest that integrating Qur'an memorization into Arabic language instruction represents an effective pedagogical strategy for strengthening vocabulary acquisition while promoting greater student engagement and language development in Islamic educational settings.

Keywords: Qur'an Memorization, Arabic Language Learning, Vocabulary Mastery, Quasi-Experimental Study, Language Pedagogy

Introduction

Arabic plays a significant role as an international language in religious, cultural, and educational contexts. Within Islamic education, Arabic occupies a particularly important position because it serves as the primary language of the Qur'an and Hadith, making it essential for understanding Islamic teachings. Consequently, Arabic language instruction aims not only to develop learners' linguistic competence but also to facilitate deeper engagement with Islamic sources. Among the core components of Arabic language proficiency, vocabulary mastery (*mufradat*) forms the foundation for the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills (Alqahtani, 2015).

Despite its importance, vocabulary acquisition remains a persistent challenge for many learners of Arabic as a foreign language. Students often experience difficulties due to limited exposure to authentic language use, insufficient learning motivation, and instructional approaches that emphasize rote memorization rather than contextual understanding (Nation & Nation, 2001; Albalawi, 2024). In many classrooms, vocabulary is introduced as isolated lexical items without meaningful communicative contexts, making the learning process less engaging and reducing long-term retention.

These challenges are particularly evident in Malaysia, where Arabic is taught primarily as a foreign language in Islamic educational institutions rather than being used as a medium of daily communication. Students' interaction with Arabic is generally limited to classroom instruction, providing few opportunities to practice newly acquired vocabulary in authentic situations. Consequently, many learners struggle to develop adequate vocabulary knowledge and communicative competence. As Al-Jarf (2007) argues, effective Arabic language instruction requires innovative and contextually meaningful approaches that promote sustained vocabulary acquisition.

One promising pedagogical approach is the integration of Qur'an memorization (*tahfiz al-Qur'an*) into Arabic language learning. The Qur'an contains a rich repertoire of Arabic vocabulary, grammatical structures, and authentic linguistic expressions that can serve as valuable learning resources. Through repeated exposure to Qur'anic verses, learners naturally encounter high-frequency vocabulary in meaningful contexts, facilitating vocabulary acquisition and long-term retention. Repetition has long been recognized as a key factor in strengthening memory and supporting durable vocabulary learning (Makinuddin, 2023).

Beyond its cognitive benefits, integrating Qur'an memorization may also enhance students' motivation to learn Arabic. Learners who memorize the Qur'an often develop stronger emotional and spiritual connections with the text, encouraging them to understand the meanings of the words and expressions they memorize. This relationship reflects the principles of Content-Based Instruction (Brinton et al., 2003), which emphasizes that language learning becomes more effective when instructional content is meaningful and relevant to learners' experiences and interests.

The potential effectiveness of this approach can also be explained through Dual Coding Theory (Sadoski & Paivio, 2004), which proposes that learning is enhanced when information is processed through multiple cognitive channels. During Qur'an memorization, students process vocabulary verbally while simultaneously associating words with their textual and semantic contexts. This dual processing strengthens lexical representations, improves recall, and facilitates the transfer of vocabulary into active language use.

Empirical studies have reported positive relationships between Qur'an memorization and Arabic language acquisition. Students who participate in Qur'an memorization programmes generally demonstrate broader vocabulary knowledge, greater familiarity with Arabic grammatical patterns, and improved comprehension of Arabic texts compared with learners who do not engage in memorization (Fatimatuzzahrah et al., 2024; Nidia et al., 2022; Ruslan & Musbaing, 2023). These findings suggest that Qur'an memorization can function not only as a religious practice but also as an effective pedagogical resource for Arabic language instruction.

Nevertheless, important research gaps remain. Most previous studies have primarily examined the relationship between Qur'an memorization and Arabic learning from descriptive or correlational perspectives, with limited empirical evidence derived from controlled experimental designs. Furthermore, relatively few studies have investigated how Qur'an memorization can be systematically integrated into classroom vocabulary instruction while considering practical implementation challenges faced by teachers. Consequently, further research is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of this instructional approach and to provide practical guidance for its classroom application.

Accordingly, this study investigates the effectiveness of integrating Qur'an memorization into Arabic language learning to improve students' vocabulary mastery at Sekolah Menengah Agama Maahad As Syakhsiah Tahfiz Sains (SMA MATSA), Penang. Specifically, the study examines whether this instructional approach significantly enhances vocabulary acquisition compared with conventional teaching methods, while also exploring teachers' and students' perceptions of its implementation. The findings are expected to contribute to the growing body of research on Arabic language pedagogy by providing empirical evidence for integrating religious learning with language instruction in Islamic educational settings.

Method

This study employed a quasi-experimental research design to examine the effectiveness of integrating Qur'an memorization into Arabic language learning in improving students' vocabulary mastery. The study involved two groups: an experimental group that received Arabic language instruction integrated with Qur'an memorization and a control group that

received conventional Arabic language instruction without the integration. This design enabled a comparison of students' vocabulary achievement before and after the intervention (Agustianti et al., 2022).

The study was conducted at SMA MATSA, Penang, Malaysia. The research population comprised students enrolled in the Arabic language programme. The sample was selected using random sampling to ensure adequate representation of the target population, with comparable numbers of students assigned to the experimental and control groups.

Data were collected using both quantitative and qualitative instruments. Quantitative data were obtained through pre-test and post-test vocabulary assessments designed to measure students' Arabic vocabulary mastery before and after the intervention. Qualitative data were gathered through teacher and student questionnaires and classroom observations to explore participants' perceptions of the instructional approach and to document its implementation in the classroom (Hasnunidah, 2017; Roosinda et al., 2021).

The research procedure consisted of four stages. First, the research instruments were developed and validated by experts to ensure their content validity. Second, participants completed the pre-test to determine their initial level of vocabulary mastery. Third, the experimental group participated in Arabic language learning integrated with Qur'an memorization over the designated instructional period, while the control group received conventional Arabic language instruction. Finally, both groups completed the post-test, and questionnaires and classroom observations were conducted to complement the quantitative findings.

The quantitative data were analysed using an independent-samples *t*-test to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference in post-test vocabulary scores between the experimental and control groups. Qualitative data obtained from the questionnaires and classroom observations were analysed using descriptive thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns, perceptions, and implementation challenges. Instrument reliability was examined through a pilot study conducted prior to the main study, while content validity was established through expert review (Agustianti et al., 2022; Darma, 2021; Hasnunidah, 2017; Roosinda et al., 2021).

Findings and Discussion

Findings

The findings of this study are presented based on quantitative and qualitative data collected through vocabulary tests, teacher and student questionnaires, and classroom observations. The quantitative findings were used to examine the effectiveness of integrating Qur'an memorization into Arabic language learning, while the qualitative findings provide additional insights into participants' perceptions and classroom implementation of the instructional approach.

The vocabulary test results revealed a significant difference between the post-test scores of the experimental and control groups. Students in the experimental group achieved a higher mean post-test score than those in the control group. An independent-samples *t*-test showed that the difference was statistically significant ($t = 11.74, p < .001$), indicating that integrating

Qur'an memorization into Arabic language learning significantly improved students' vocabulary mastery. Furthermore, the experimental group demonstrated more consistent performance than the control group, as reflected by the smaller variation in post-test scores. The comparison of students' post-test scores is presented in Figure 1.

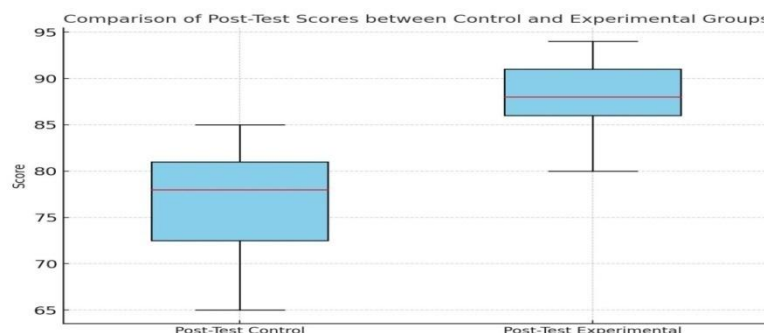


Figure 1. Comparison of Post-Test Scores between the Control and Experimental Groups

The teacher questionnaire also indicated positive perceptions regarding the implementation of the integration approach. Most teachers agreed that Qur'an memorization enhanced students' Arabic vocabulary mastery because learners repeatedly encountered vocabulary embedded in authentic Qur'anic texts. Teachers further observed improvements in students' reading and speaking abilities, as regular exposure to Qur'anic verses increased familiarity with Arabic vocabulary, pronunciation, and sentence structures.

All participating teachers agreed that the integration approach helped students better understand formal and religious Arabic while increasing their motivation to learn the language. Nevertheless, several challenges were identified, including limited instructional time, variations in students' memorization abilities, and the need for additional instructional resources and teacher training. Despite these challenges, teachers recommended the continued implementation of this approach because of its positive contribution to students' language development. The overall responses of teachers are illustrated in Figure 2.

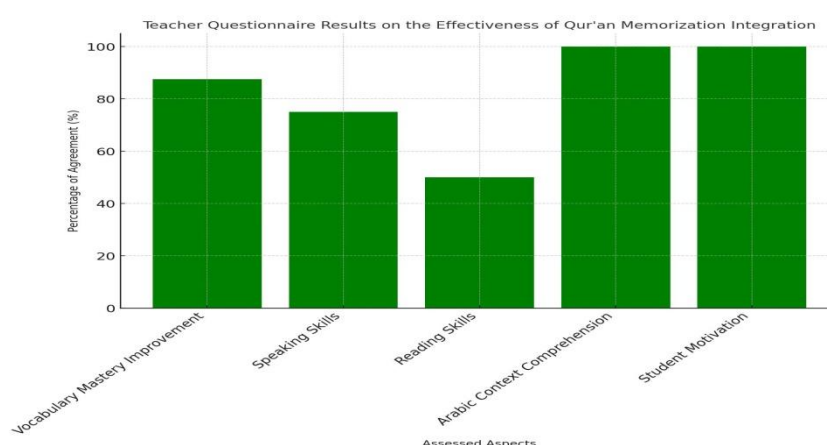


Figure 2. Teachers' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Integrating Qur'an Memorization into Arabic Language Learning

The student questionnaire further supported these findings. Most students reported that Qur'an memorization helped them improve their Arabic vocabulary and facilitated the

retention of newly learned words. Many respondents indicated that they frequently encountered unfamiliar vocabulary during memorization activities, which expanded their lexical knowledge and strengthened their understanding of word meanings. The perceived influence of Qur'an memorization on vocabulary mastery is presented in Figure 3.

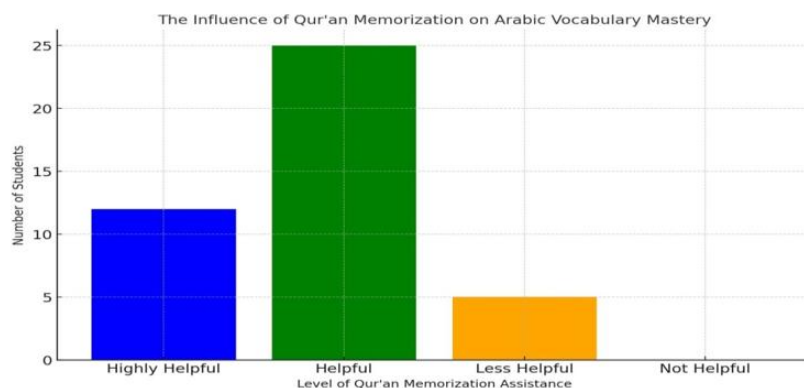


Figure 3. Students' Perceptions of the Influence of Qur'an Memorization on Vocabulary Mastery

Students also reported that frequent exposure to Qur'anic vocabulary enabled them to recognize and remember Arabic words more easily. The majority stated that they often encountered new vocabulary while memorizing the Qur'an and experienced relatively little difficulty recalling these words during Arabic language lessons. These findings suggest that repeated exposure to authentic Arabic texts supports vocabulary retention. The detailed responses are presented in Figure 4.

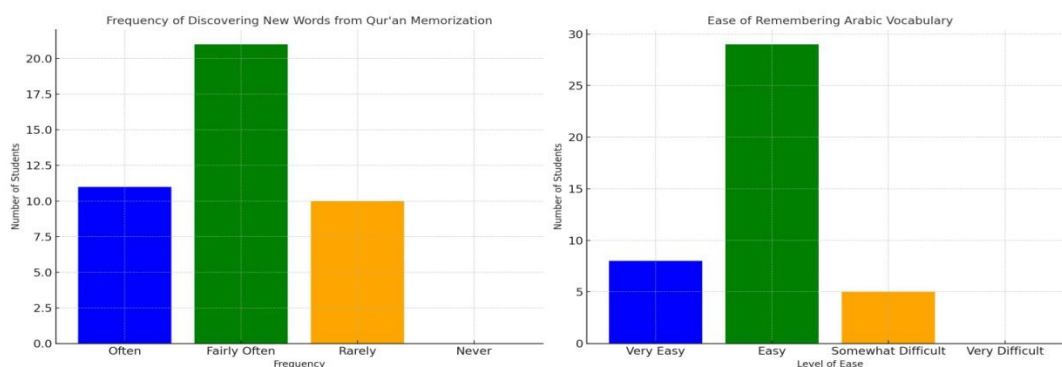


Figure 4. Frequency of Encountering New Vocabulary and Ease of Remembering Arabic Vocabulary

Similarly, students expressed positive perceptions regarding improvements in their confidence when using Arabic, reading comprehension, and understanding of formal Arabic contexts. Most respondents indicated that participation in the Qur'an memorization programme increased their confidence in reading Arabic texts and enhanced their comprehension of vocabulary used in formal and religious contexts. These responses are summarized in Figure 5.

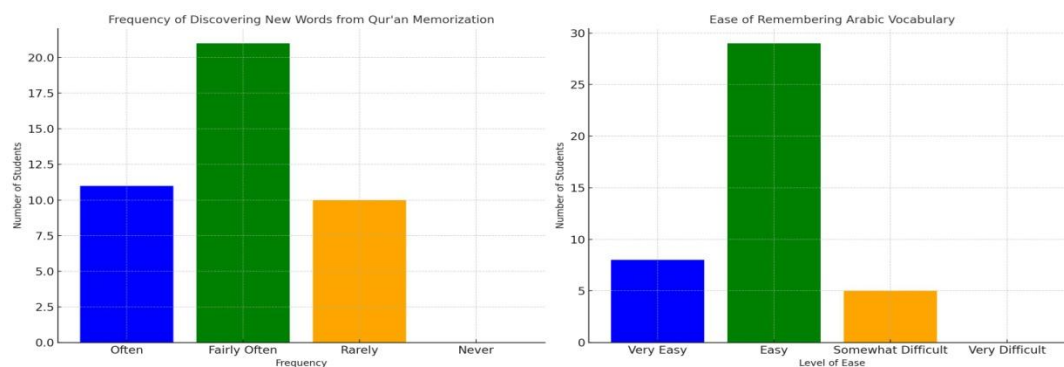


Figure 5. Students' Confidence, Reading Ability, and Understanding of Formal Arabic Contexts In addition, the majority of students reported increased motivation to learn Arabic and expressed satisfaction with the integration approach. Although the use of Qur'anic vocabulary in daily conversation was still relatively limited, most respondents believed that the programme deepened their understanding of Arabic language and culture. These findings are presented in Figure 6.

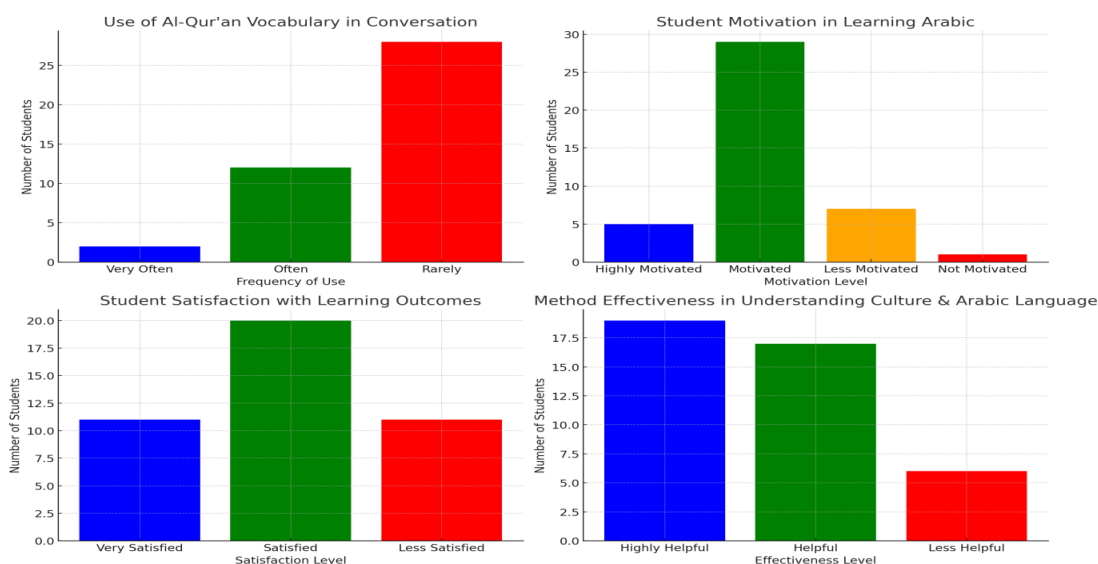


Figure 6. Students' Motivation, Satisfaction, and Perceived Effectiveness of the Integration Approach

Regarding implementation challenges, some students reported difficulties in balancing Qur'an memorization with Arabic language learning. Nevertheless, most respondents considered the challenges manageable, recommended the programme to other students, and expressed their willingness to continue participating in Qur'an memorization activities after the completion of the study. These responses are illustrated in Figure 7.

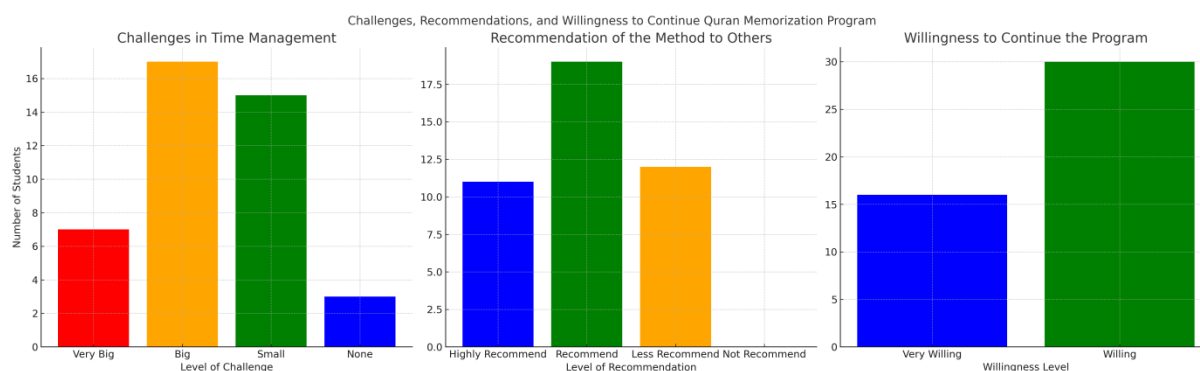


Figure 7. Students' Perceptions of Implementation Challenges and Their Willingness to Continue the Programme

Finally, classroom observations supported both the quantitative and questionnaire findings. Students in the experimental group participated more actively in classroom discussions, demonstrated greater confidence in using newly acquired vocabulary, and showed higher levels of engagement than students in the control group. Teachers effectively linked Qur'anic verses with Arabic vocabulary through contextual learning activities, creating a more interactive learning environment. However, observations also revealed practical challenges, particularly limited instructional time and differences in students' memorization abilities. Overall, the observations confirm that integrating Qur'an memorization into Arabic language learning positively contributes to vocabulary mastery while enhancing students' motivation, participation, and confidence.

Discussion

The findings provide empirical evidence that integrating Qur'an memorization into Arabic language learning significantly improves students' vocabulary mastery. The superior performance of the experimental group suggests that repeated exposure to authentic Qur'anic vocabulary facilitates lexical acquisition and long-term retention. This finding is consistent with vocabulary learning theories, which emphasize that repeated encounters with words in meaningful contexts strengthen learners' lexical knowledge and improve retention (Adolphs & Schmitt, 2008; González-Fernández & Schmitt, 2017; Schmitt, 2008).

The results can also be interpreted through Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982), which argues that language acquisition occurs when learners receive meaningful and comprehensible input. Qur'anic verses provide authentic linguistic input containing naturally occurring vocabulary, grammatical structures, and semantic relationships. Through continuous memorization and repetition, students are repeatedly exposed to these linguistic features, enabling vocabulary to be acquired more naturally than through isolated word memorization. Furthermore, the findings support Content-Based Instruction (CBI), which proposes that language learning becomes more effective when instructional content is meaningful and relevant to learners (Brinton et al., 2003). Since Qur'an memorization is already an integral component of learning in many Islamic schools, integrating it into Arabic language instruction creates meaningful connections between religious learning and language development. Consequently, students perceive vocabulary learning as purposeful rather than as an isolated academic task, thereby increasing both engagement and motivation.

The positive effects on vocabulary retention are also consistent with Dual Coding Theory (Sadoski & Paivio, 2004). Students process Qur'anic vocabulary through multiple cognitive channels by simultaneously memorizing the text, understanding its meaning, and relating vocabulary to broader textual contexts. Such multimodal processing strengthens memory and facilitates vocabulary retrieval during language use.

Beyond vocabulary acquisition, the present study demonstrates that the integration approach contributes to improvements in students' reading and speaking skills. Increased exposure to authentic Arabic expressions appears to enhance learners' familiarity with sentence patterns, pronunciation, and contextual language use. These findings correspond with Ellis (2005), who argues that language proficiency develops more effectively when learners encounter language in meaningful communicative contexts rather than through isolated grammar instruction.

The qualitative findings also reveal increased learner motivation and confidence. Teachers consistently observed greater student participation, while students themselves reported feeling more confident in reading and speaking Arabic. These findings support Gardner's (2007) motivational theory, which identifies intrinsic motivation as a major determinant of successful second-language learning. In the present study, the close relationship between Qur'an memorization and Arabic learning appears to strengthen learners' personal engagement with the language, thereby encouraging more active participation in classroom activities.

Nevertheless, several implementation challenges should be acknowledged. Limited instructional time constrained opportunities for integrating memorization activities into regular Arabic lessons. Moreover, differences in students' memorization abilities resulted in varying learning outcomes across participants. These findings suggest that successful implementation requires careful instructional planning, differentiated teaching strategies (Tomlinson, 2014), and professional development programmes that equip teachers with effective techniques for integrating Qur'an memorization into language instruction.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that integrating Qur'an memorization represents an effective pedagogical strategy for enhancing Arabic vocabulary acquisition while simultaneously improving learner motivation, confidence, and classroom engagement. The study therefore contributes empirical evidence supporting the integration of religious learning and language instruction within Islamic educational contexts and offers practical implications for Arabic language educators seeking innovative approaches to vocabulary development.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

This study investigated the effectiveness of integrating Qur'an memorization into Arabic language learning to improve students' vocabulary mastery at SMA MATSA, Penang. The findings demonstrate that students who participated in the integrated learning programme achieved significantly better vocabulary outcomes than those who received conventional Arabic language instruction. The quantitative results, supported by questionnaire responses and classroom observations, indicate that the integration of Qur'an memorization not only

enhances vocabulary acquisition but also promotes students' motivation, confidence, and Arabic reading and speaking skills.

These findings suggest that Qur'an memorization can serve as an effective pedagogical resource for Arabic language instruction by providing learners with repeated exposure to authentic vocabulary within meaningful linguistic and religious contexts. The integration of religious learning with language instruction therefore offers a practical and innovative approach to strengthening Arabic language proficiency in Islamic educational settings.

Despite these positive outcomes, the study identified several implementation challenges, particularly limited instructional time and differences in students' memorization abilities. These factors should be considered when designing and implementing similar instructional programmes. Overall, the study contributes empirical evidence supporting the integration of Qur'an memorization into Arabic language teaching and highlights its potential to enrich vocabulary learning while fostering greater student engagement.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, several recommendations are proposed for educational practice and future research.

First, Arabic language teachers are encouraged to integrate Qur'an memorization systematically into vocabulary instruction by selecting Qur'anic verses that correspond to students' learning objectives and language proficiency levels. Such integration should be accompanied by contextual explanations and communicative learning activities to maximize vocabulary acquisition.

Second, schools and educational administrators should provide appropriate instructional resources and professional development programmes to equip teachers with effective strategies for implementing Qur'an memorization-based language instruction. Adequate scheduling and curriculum planning are also necessary to balance memorization activities with other learning objectives.

Finally, future research should involve larger and more diverse samples across different educational institutions to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Further studies may also investigate the long-term effects of Qur'an memorization on other dimensions of Arabic language proficiency, including grammar, listening comprehension, writing skills, and communicative competence. Employing longitudinal or mixed-methods research designs could provide a deeper understanding of how this instructional approach influences language development over time.

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