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DIGITAL PEDAGOGY IN ACTION: TIKTOK FOR ARABIC AND ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN KEDAH, MALAYSIA

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Abstract

This study examines the strategic use of TikTok as a digital pedagogical medium for Arabic learning and Islamic education among students in Kedah, Malaysia. A convergent mixed-methods design was employed, combining survey data from 300 students with classroom observations, semi-structured interviews involving 12 Arabic teachers, three curriculum coordinators, and 20 student content creators purposively selected for their experience in producing or participating in Arabic-language TikTok content, as well as an analysis of selected TikTok content from two Islamic educational institutions. The findings indicate that 72% of students frequently used TikTok to learn Arabic vocabulary, 69% followed accounts integrating Arabic and Islamic educational content, 58% had created or participated in Arabic-language videos, and 71% perceived a positive impact on their learning experience. Qualitative findings further indicated that selected content from accounts such as @mmynofficial, @mmyn_lughah.tv, and @baitul.musthofa provided opportunities for contextualized Arabic vocabulary exposure, reflection on Islamic values, speaking practice, and student participation in digital da'wah (online Islamic outreach). However, 28% of respondents reported difficulties maintaining focus because of algorithmically recommended entertainment content. Teachers also raised concerns regarding linguistic errors, theological oversimplification, limited digital literacy, and unequal access to digital infrastructure. The study concludes that TikTok can support Arabic learning and *Tarbiyyah Islamiyyah* when used as a carefully curated, teacher-guided supplement rather than a replacement for structured classroom instruction.

Keywords: Arabic Language Learning; Digital Da'wah; Islamic Education; Symbolic Competence; TikTok Pedagogy.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji penggunaan strategis TikTok sebagai media pedagogis digital untuk pembelajaran bahasa Arab dan pendidikan Islam di kalangan pelajar di Kedah, Malaysia. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain metode campuran konvergen, dengan menggabungkan data survei dari 300 pelajar, observasi kelas, wawancara semi-terstruktur yang melibatkan 12 guru bahasa Arab, tiga koordinator kurikulum, dan 20

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pelajar pembuat konten yang dipilih secara purposif berdasarkan pengalaman mereka dalam memproduksi atau berpartisipasi dalam konten TikTok berbahasa Arab, serta analisis terhadap konten TikTok terpilih dari dua lembaga pendidikan Islam. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa 72% pelajar sering menggunakan TikTok untuk mempelajari kosakata bahasa Arab, 69% mengikuti akun yang mengintegrasikan pembelajaran bahasa Arab dengan konten pendidikan Islam, 58% pernah membuat atau berpartisipasi dalam pembuatan video berbahasa Arab, dan 71% menilai TikTok memberikan dampak positif terhadap pengalaman belajar mereka. Temuan kualitatif lebih lanjut mengindikasikan bahwa konten terpilih dari akun seperti @mmynofficial, @mmyn_lughah.tv, dan @baitul.musthofa memberikan kesempatan untuk mengenal kosakata bahasa Arab dalam konteksnya, merefleksikan nilai-nilai Islam, berlatih berbicara, serta berpartisipasi dalam dakwah digital. Meskipun demikian, 28% responden melaporkan kesulitan mempertahankan fokus akibat munculnya konten hiburan yang direkomendasikan oleh algoritma platform. Para guru juga mengemukakan kekhawatiran mengenai kesalahan kebahasaan, penyederhanaan berlebihan materi keagamaan, keterbatasan literasi digital, serta ketimpangan akses terhadap infrastruktur digital. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa TikTok dapat mendukung pembelajaran bahasa Arab dan Tarbiyyah Islamiyyah apabila digunakan sebagai media pelengkap yang dikurasi secara cermat dan diarahkan oleh guru, bukan sebagai pengganti pembelajaran kelas yang terstruktur.

Kata Kunci: *Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab; Dakwah Digital; Pendidikan Islam; Kompetensi Simbolik; Pedagogi TikTok.*

مستخلص

تبحث هذه الدراسة في الاستخدام الاستراتيجي لتطبيق تيك توك بوصفه وسيطًا تربويًا رقميًا لتعليم اللغة العربية والتربية الإسلامية لدى الطلاب في ولاية كيدا بماليزيا. استخدمت هذه الدراسة تصميماً مختلطاً تقارباياً، من خلال دمج بيانات الاستبانة التي جُمعت من 300 طالب، والملاحظات الصفية، والمقابلات شبه المقننة التي شملت 12 معلماً للغة العربية، وثلاثة منسقي مناهج، و20 طالباً من منشئي المحتوى تم اختيارهم قصديّاً بناءً على خبرتهم في إنتاج محتوى تيك توك باللغة العربية أو المشاركة فيه، إلى جانب تحليل محتوى مختار من تيك توك في مؤسستين تعليميتين إسلاميتين. وأظهرت النتائج أن 72% من الطلاب يستخدمون تيك توك بصورة متكررة لتعلّم المفردات العربية، وأن 69% يتابعون حسابات تدمج تعليم اللغة العربية بالمحتوى التربوي الإسلامي، في حين أفاد 58% بأنهم أنشؤوا أو شاركوا في إنتاج مقاطع فيديو باللغة العربية، ورأى 71% أن المنصة أثّرت إيجابيًا في تجربتهم التعليمية. وأشارت النتائج النوعية كذلك إلى أن المحتوى المختار من حسابات مثل @mmynofficial و@mmyn_lughah.tv و@baitul.musthofa أتاح فرصًا للتعرّف على المفردات العربية في سياقاتها، والتأمل في القيم الإسلامية، وممارسة التحدث باللغة العربية، ومشاركة الطلاب في الدعوة الرقمية. ومع ذلك، أفاد 28% من المشاركين بصعوبة المحافظة على التركيز بسبب المحتوى الترفيهي الذي تقترحه خوارزميات المنصة. كما أبدى المعلمون مخاوف تتعلق بالأخطاء اللغوية، والتبسيط المخل للمضامين الدينية، ومحدودية الثقافة الرقمية، والتفاوت في الوصول إلى البنية التحتية الرقمية. وتخلص الدراسة إلى أن تيك توك يمكن أن يدعم تعليم اللغة

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العربية والتربية الإسلامية عندما يُستخدم بوصفه وسيطًا تكميليًا منتقى بعناية وموجّهًا من المعلم، لا بديلًا عن التعليم الصفي المنظم.

الكلمات الرئيسية: تعلّم اللغة العربية؛ الدعوة الرقمية؛ التربية الإسلامية؛ الكفاءة الرمزية؛ بيداغوجيا تيك توك.

A. Introduction

In an age where short-form videos dominate youth attention, TikTok has evolved from an entertainment-oriented platform initially known for 15-second videos into a more flexible digital medium. Its video duration has gradually expanded to 60 seconds, then to three minutes, and currently up to 10 minutes, enabling educators to design more substantial content for Arabic language acquisition and Islamic education.[1] This digital transformation signals a shift in pedagogical possibilities in regions such as Kedah, Malaysia, where Arabic and Islamic education continue to draw substantially on established classroom-based and structurally oriented instructional practices, while digital technologies are creating opportunities for more contextual and interactive forms of learning.[2] The convergence of entertainment, technology, and spiritual content on TikTok reflects a new mode of engagement that resonates with contemporary learners.[3]

Although Arabic and Islamic studies have traditionally relied on text-based and face-to-face teaching methods,[4] the emergence of digital platforms has created new pedagogical opportunities.[5] In the participating institutions, Islamic education is formally taught through *Tarbiyyah Islamiyyah* (formal Islamic religious education), which provides a curricular context for integrating digitally mediated religious content with Arabic language learning. This integration is particularly relevant in Kedah, Malaysia, where Islamic education remains deeply

[1] Sri Maulida et al., 'Utilization of Tiktok Applications in Islamic Religion Learning', *ICLIQE 2021: Proceeding of The 5th International Conference on Learning Innovation and Quality Education*, 4 September 2021, 1–6, https://doi.org/10.1145/3516875.3516914.

[2] Husairi Husairi and Sodikin Sodikin, 'Optimalisasi Pengembangan Soft Skill Melalui Teknologi Artificial Intellegence Di Pesantren', *Al-Jadwa: Jurnal Studi Islam* 3, no. 1 (2023): 111–38, https://doi.org/10.38073/aljadwa.v3i1.1770.

[3] Ira Mirawati et al., 'Leveraging TikTok as an Educational Platform: Insights from Ministries of the Republic of Indonesia', *Multidisciplinary Science Journal* 6 (July 2024): 2024ss0518, https://doi.org/10.31893/multiscience.2024ss0518.

[4] Zaki Ghufron et al., 'Integration of Arabic Language Learning in the Formation of Social-Religious Identity in Madrasahs: A Systematic Study of Policy, Local Practices, and Digital Transformation', *Al-Jadwa: Jurnal Studi Islam* 5, no. 1 (2025): 133–45, https://doi.org/10.38073/aljadwa.3567.

[5] Abdul Rahman Bin Youssef Shaheen et al., 'Emerging Digital Issues Necessary for the Development of Upper Elementary School Curricula in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia', *Journal of Educational and Social Research* 14, no. 5 (2024): 402, https://doi.org/10.36941/jesr-2024-0147.

embedded in both formal and community-based institutions.[6] However, existing research remains fragmented across technological platforms and learning outcomes. Recent studies in Islamic and Malaysian Arabic education have examined generative AI in relation to ethical literacy and teacher mediation, AI voice assistants for Arabic listening in Kedah, and digital game-based Arabic communication in Kedah religious schools.[7] Other studies have specifically addressed TikTok for Arabic language learning and TikTok-based Islamic religious content.[8] Nevertheless, these strands of research have largely developed separately. Limited empirical attention has been given to how curated TikTok content brings together Arabic-language learning practices,[9] engagement with Islamic values, student content creation, and participation in digital *da'wah* (online Islamic outreach) within a localized faith-based educational setting in Kedah.

This study aims to explore how TikTok is utilized as an educational medium in Islamic schools and *ma'ahad* (Islamic educational institutions) in Kedah, Malaysia, particularly in fostering Arabic language learning and disseminating Islamic teachings. Two central issues emerge in this context: (1) the tension between entertainment and edutainment in Islamic digital content, and (2) the pedagogical strategies required to adapt TikTok for structured Arabic instruction. Moreover, existing studies on technology-enhanced Islamic and Arabic education have tended to examine specific digital modalities separately. Zakiyyah et al.[10] investigated digital technology-based learning management in Islamic religious education, Haddade et al.[11] examined digital transformation within Islamic higher education, and Fadzil and Arisandi[12] explored AI voice assistants for beginner Arabic listening in a Malaysian classroom. These studies demonstrate the growing breadth of digital innovation in Islamic and Arabic education, but they do not directly address TikTok as a culturally situated medium that integrates Arabic

[6] Muhammad Muhith and Nur Aunie Batrisya, '"Lepak" as a Sociolinguistic Arena: Oral Interaction and Arabic L2 Fluency in Northern Malaysia', *Farasyah: Journal of Linguistics and Language Education* 1, no. 1 (2026): 19–29, https://doi.org/10.68299/0rynrm79.

[7] Mustahar Ali Wardana et al., 'Generative AI in Arabic Language Education: Ethical Literacy, Teacher Mediation, and Learner Agency', *Journal of Arabic Language Technology and Education* 1, no. 1 (2026): 1–15, https://doi.org/10.68299/geqb5183.

[8] Mahbub Ghozali et al., 'Al-Qur'an (Re)Presentation in the Short Video App Tiktok: Reading, Teaching, and Interpretive', *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 30, no. 3 (2022): 1263–82, https://doi.org/10.47836/pjssh.30.3.18.

[9] Maulida et al., "Utilization of Tiktok Applications in Islamic Religion Learning."

[10] Intan Zakiyyah et al., 'Learning Management of Islamic Religious Education Based on Digital Technology', *2024 12th International Conference on Cyber and IT Service Management (CITSM)*, 3 October 2024, 1–7, https://doi.org/10.1109/CITSM64103.2024.10775708.

[11] Hasyim Haddade et al., 'Quality Assurance Strategies of Higher Education in Digital Era: An Anthropology of Education Study in Islamic Higher Education Institution', *Quality Assurance in Education* 32, no. 1 (2024): 46–63, https://doi.org/10.1108/QAE-05-2023-0084.

[12] Khadijah binti Fadzil and Yusuf Arisandi, 'Enhancing Beginner Maharah Istimāʿ through AI Voice Assistants: A Malaysian Classroom Study', *Journal of Arabic Language Technology and Education* 1, no. 1 (2026): 16–27, https://doi.org/10.68299/z8867h41.

language learning,[13] Islamic value formation, student-generated content, and digital da'wah in Kedah.

This study presents a novel contribution by examining the pedagogical integration of TikTok in Arabic language learning and Islamic education within the localized context of Kedah, Malaysia, an area previously underrepresented in digital pedagogy research. Unlike previous studies focusing broadly on technology-enhanced learning, this study examines how curated TikTok content is used to support Arabic vocabulary learning and engagement with Islamic educational content, with particular attention to contextual understanding, moral reflection, and the symbolic meanings associated with Arabic. The study bridges digital literacy with faith-based learning by analyzing the dual roles of learners as content consumers and creators, particularly through accounts like @mmynofficial and @baitul.musthofa. Furthermore, it critically engages with ethical and pedagogical implications by offering a contextually grounded interpretation of TikTok-mediated learning through experiential learning and social constructivist perspectives. This integrated approach offers a contextually grounded account of how experiential learning and social constructivist principles can inform TikTok-mediated Arabic and Islamic education in the two participating institutions. The study therefore contributes a locally situated understanding of youth-driven digital da'wah practices that connect language learning, moral engagement, and student content creation.

By filling this research gap, the current study contributes to the growing discourse on digital Islamic education, showing how TikTok, when carefully curated and pedagogically guided, can support linguistic learning and religious engagement among Muslim youth in the participating institutions. This exploration aligns with broader shifts in Islamic education, where digital platforms, particularly social media, are increasingly used to support more participatory and student-centered learning practices. The integration of digital platforms into educational frameworks has also encouraged new pedagogical practices in Islamic education.[14] Similar developments have been documented across different Islamic educational contexts, including Malaysia and Indonesia.[15] In this broader environment, platforms such as TikTok

[13] Menik Mahmudah et al., 'Managing Arabic Language Curricula in Islamic Higher Education: Alignment, Evaluation, and Digital Transformation', *ELBASH : Journal of Social Science and Education* 1, no. 1 (2026): 1–19, https://doi.org/10.68299/nsetef70.

[14] Ayman Mohammed Zohdi et al., 'The Role of Digital Platforms in Studying the Holy Qur'an: A Case Study Based on the Voices of Students from Diverse Cultures at the Prophet's Mosque', *Journal of Ecohumanism* 3, no. 7 (2024): 3050–62, https://doi.org/10.62754/joe.v3i7.4440.

[15] Ali Mas'ud et al., 'Evolution and Orientation of Islamic Education in Indonesia and Malaysia', *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 13, no. 1 (2019): 21, https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2019.13.1.21-49.

provide additional opportunities for Arabic and Islamic education to foster student engagement, interaction, and access to digitally mediated learning.

The integration of digital platforms has encouraged new pedagogical practices in both Islamic education and Arabic language teaching.[16] In Islamic educational contexts, digital infrastructure has been associated with more flexible and interactive learning environments, while in Arabic education, multimodal technologies have expanded opportunities for contextualized vocabulary exposure, listening practice, visual scaffolding, and learner participation.[17] Alirahman et al. further emphasize that digital infrastructure can help address instructional challenges in Islamic learning environments, particularly by supporting more active forms of learning.[18] Similarly, recent Arabic-language studies have shown that interactive videos, multimodal materials, and AI-assisted listening activities can complement classroom instruction and provide learners with additional opportunities to engage with Arabic beyond conventional text-based practices.[19]

Furthermore, Laily et al. and Susanti et al. observe that adopting social media platforms such as Instagram enables educators to deliver Islamic content more interactively, encouraging collaborative and reflective learning.[20] These platforms allow for the dynamic presentation of Arabic and Islamic material through short, relatable content, which resonates particularly with younger learners.[21] TikTok, for instance, offers a unique blend of entertainment and education, enabling the transmission of Arabic vocabulary and Islamic concepts in visually appealing and cognitively engaging formats.

Beyond content delivery, Zakiyyah et al.[22] demonstrate that the use of Learning Management Systems (LMS) in Islamic institutions can streamline curriculum implementation and improve access to educational resources. Complementing this, Suliman et al.[23] discuss how

[16] Kasmaluddin, 'Duolingo-Based Arabic Vocabulary Acquisition in Islamic Educational Contexts', *Al-Muhawaroh: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 2, no. 1 (2026): 1–11, https://doi.org/10.38073/almuhawaroh.v2i1.4358.

[17] Menik Mahmudah et al., 'A Multimodal Instructional Design Model: Integrating Infographics and Interactive Videos in Arabic Language Learning', *International Journal of Arabic Language Teaching* 8, no. 01 (2026): 1–15, https://doi.org/10.32332/ijalt.v8i01.11671.

[18] Agus Dian Alirahman et al., 'The Development of Islamic Religious Education and Character Materials Online Based in Elementary Schools', *Journal of Law and Sustainable Development* 11, no. 6 (2023): e550, https://doi.org/10.55908/sdgs.v11i6.550.

[19] Fadzil and Arisandi, 'Enhancing Beginner Maharah Istimāʿ through AI Voice Assistants'.

[20] Irene Mardiatul Laily et al., 'Instagram Sebagai Media Pembelajaran Digital Agama Islam Di Era 4.0', *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 3, no. 2 (2022): 160–74, https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v3i2.250; Septiani Selly et al., 'Innovative Digital Media in Islamic Religious Education Learning', *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 21, no. 1 (2024): 40–59, https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.v21i1.7553.

[21] David Conde-Caballero et al., 'Microlearning through TikTok in Higher Education. An Evaluation of Uses and Potentials', *Education and Information Technologies* 29, no. 2 (2024): 2365–85, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-023-11904-4.

[22] Zakiyyah et al., 'Learning Management of Islamic Religious Education Based on Digital Technology'.

[23] Suliman Suliman et al., 'Policy Patterns and The Application of Digital Literacy in Increasing Students' Religious Motivation', *Munaddhomah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 4, no. 3 (2023): 516–27, https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v4i3.363.

Smart Classroom Learning initiatives further illustrate the pedagogical shift toward integrated IT solutions, contributing to more relevant and engaging Islamic curricula.

However, the success of such integration hinges on teachers' digital competence. Malla et al.[24] note that educators with strong digital literacy are more capable of transforming instructional strategies, particularly in Arabic language teaching. Arif et al.[25] reinforce this by stating that continuous professional development in technological pedagogy is vital to sustain effective digital instruction. Hayazi and Khairi[26] show that digital game-based communicative activities can increase learner participation and provide repeated opportunities for Arabic speaking practice, but their effectiveness depends strongly on teacher mediation, purposeful task design, corrective feedback, and ethical classroom conditions. Through these practices, digital tools function not merely as channels for content delivery but as pedagogical spaces that connect Islamic teachings with students' everyday media experiences.

Regarding curriculum development, Haddade et al.[27] and Achruh et al.[28] argue that integrating traditional Islamic teachings with digital pedagogical approaches can produce more inclusive, flexible, and responsive learning models. Digital platforms offer students diversified access to content while preserving the central values of Islamic education.[29] This integration of traditional Islamic teachings and digital pedagogical approaches also strengthens the connection between Arabic language learning and Islamic ethics, helping learners internalize both linguistic knowledge and spiritual values.

Nevertheless, the digitalization of Islamic education requires careful ethical and pedagogical guidance. Mu'min et al.[30] show that Islamic Religious Education teachers play an important role in shaping students' digital ethics by connecting Islamic values with students' social-media experiences through contextual and reflective learning activities. Recent

[24] Hamlan Andi Baso Malla et al., 'Teachers' Digital Literacy Ability to Improve Islamic Religion Education Learning in Islamic Boarding School', *International Journal of Educational Reform 35*, no 2 (2026): 648-71, https://doi.org/10.1177/10567879231211287.

[25] Muhamad Arif et al., 'A Recent Study on Islamic Religious Education Teachers' Competencies in the Digital Age: A Systematic Literature Review', *Journal of Education and Learning (EduLearn)* 19, no. 2 (2025): 587–96, https://doi.org/10.11591/edulearn.v19i2.21311.

[26] Maryam Fasihah binti Mohamad Hayazi and Nur Aqilah Najwa Binti Ahmad Khairi, 'Digital Game-Based Arabic Communication and Learner Participation: Evidence from Kedah Religious Secondary Schools', *Journal of Arabic Language Technology and Education* 1, no. 1 (2026): 28–39.

[27] Haddade et al., 'Quality Assurance Strategies of Higher Education in Digital Era'.

[28] Achruh Achruh et al., 'Challenges and Opportunities of Artificial Intelligence Adoption in Islamic Education in Indonesian Higher Education Institutions', *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research* 23, no. 11 (2024): 423–43, https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.23.11.22.

[29] Ismail Ismail et al., 'Strengthening the Ideology of Islamic Religious Education in the Era of Technological Disruption', *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Terapan Universitas Jambi* 9, no. 2 (2025): 465–73, https://doi.org/10.22437/jiituj.v9i2.41841.

[30] U. Abdullah Mu'min et al., 'The Role of Islamic Religious Teachers in Shaping Students' Digital Ethics in the Social Media Era', *Atthulab: Islamic Religion Teaching and Learning Journal* 11, no. 1 (2026): 61–74, https://doi.org/10.15575/atthulab.v11i1.54558.

developments in Arabic education likewise suggest that digital transformation is most meaningful when technological innovation remains connected to the values and educational purposes of Islamic institutions. Rasyid et al.,[31] for example, demonstrate how paperless Arabic learning can integrate digital technologies with eco-theological values and a Love-Based Curriculum in a *madrasah* (Islamic school) context. Similarly, Rahimi et al.[32] report that digital literacy in Islamic education can be strengthened through value-based guidance, the habituation of digital ethics, and responsible social-media use, highlighting the importance of teacher mediation when digital resources are incorporated into learning.

In conclusion, the growing use of TikTok and other digital platforms in Arabic and Islamic learning in Kedah reflects a broader educational transformation. As Amro and Iversen suggest, these technologies present opportunities for greater inclusion and engagement, but also require careful curricular alignment, digital literacy training, and ethical oversight.[33] If managed thoughtfully, such integration can foster authentic, values-based learning experiences that resonate with the media habits of today's Muslim youth.

This study employed a convergent mixed-methods design to examine how TikTok was used to support Arabic language learning and Islamic education at Maktab Mahmud Yan (MMYN) and Baitul Musthofa, two Islamic educational institutions in Kedah, Malaysia. Quantitative data were collected through a survey involving 300 students, while qualitative data were generated through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with 12 Arabic teachers, three curriculum coordinators, and 20 student content creators purposively selected based on their experience in producing or participating in Arabic-language TikTok content, as well as selected Arabic-language and Islamic educational TikTok content from @mmynofficial, @mmyn_lughah.tv, and @baitul.musthofa. The quantitative and qualitative datasets were analyzed separately. Survey responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics, whereas observational, interview, and TikTok-content data were analyzed thematically. The quantitative and qualitative findings were subsequently interpreted together to examine students' reported uses of TikTok, their engagement with Arabic and Islamic educational content, their participation in content creation, and the pedagogical challenges identified in the

[31] Ifkar Rasyid et al., 'Paperless Arabic Language Learning: Integrating Ecotheology, Bilingual Education, and the Love-Based Curriculum in Madrasah', *An Nabighoh* 28, no. 1 (2026): 145–70, https://doi.org/10.32332/an-nabighoh.v28i1.145-170.

[32] Rahimi Rahimi et al., 'Implementation of Digital Literacy in Islamic Education: Teachers Strategies for Character Building in the Era of Growing Social Media Use', *Fitrah: Journal of Islamic Education* 6, no. 1 (2025): 177–91, https://doi.org/10.53802/fitrah.v6i1.1129.

[33] Lana Amro and Jonas Yassin Iversen, 'Translanguaging in Transnational Digital Arabic Heritage Language Education', *European Educational Research Journal*, 15 January 2025, 14749041241311958, https://doi.org/10.1177/14749041241311958.

participating institutions. The survey findings are interpreted as descriptive evidence of students' reported practices and perceptions rather than as direct measurements of improvements in Arabic proficiency or religious-value internalization.

The specific contribution of the present study can be distinguished from three relevant strands of earlier research. Maulida et al. provide a qualitative-descriptive account of TikTok's general utilization in Islamic religious learning, without examining specific linguistic learning outcomes.[34] Ghozali et al. analyze Qur'an-related TikTok content from interpretive and religious-mediation perspectives rather than Arabic language pedagogy.[35] Meanwhile, Conde-Caballero et al.[36] investigate TikTok-based microlearning in higher education, but their intervention focuses on nursing education and does not address Arabic or faith-based learning. These comparisons clarify the present study's emphasis on the relationship between Arabic language practice, Islamic educational content, and student participation as both viewers and creators within the two participating institutions in Kedah.

Ethical considerations were observed throughout the study. Participation was voluntary, and all participants were informed about the purpose of the research, confidentiality procedures, and their right to withdraw. Written informed consent was obtained from adult participants. For participants under 18 years of age, informed consent was obtained from their parents or legal guardians, together with assent from the students themselves. Participant identities were anonymized in the reporting of interview data.

B. Discussion

1. TikTok as a Medium for Arabic Vocabulary Acquisition and Islamic Learning

Student interviews and the classroom examples presented in this study indicate that participating students used TikTok to engage with Arabic vocabulary and Islamic educational content. Short-form educational videos, humour-based sketches, voice-over imitations of Arabic dialogues, Qur'anic expressions, hadith-based reminders, and moral narratives provide students with accessible opportunities to engage with linguistic content and Islamic values simultaneously.

Of the 300 students surveyed, 72% reported frequently using TikTok as a resource for learning Arabic vocabulary, particularly through content featuring colloquial expressions, Qur'anic phrases, and short animated Islamic stories. A recurring pattern also emerged in

[34] Maulida et al., "Utilization of Tiktok Applications in Islamic Religion Learning."
[35] Ghozali et al., "Al-Qur'an (Re)Presentation in the Short Video App Tiktok."
[36] Conde-Caballero et al., 'Microlearning through TikTok in Higher Education. An Evaluation of Uses and Potentials'.

students' engagement with Arabic-speaking Muslim content creators, both local and international, whose posts included Islamic reminders, Arabic storytelling, and language challenges presented through popular TikTok formats.

These findings can be interpreted through Vygotsky's[37] sociocultural theory, which conceptualizes learning as socially mediated through cultural tools.[38] In the present study, TikTok functioned as a digital and social environment in which students encountered Arabic expressions, observed language use, and participated in peer-mediated learning. This interpretation is also consistent with Al Seghayer's[39] emphasis on the role of digital technologies in extending language exposure beyond conventional classroom settings.

2. Integrating Islamic Education Values through Digital Da'wah

In parallel to linguistic development, TikTok also serves as a platform for disseminating Islamic teachings.[40] Students were not only passive consumers but also content creators. Several respondents produced TikTok videos that integrated Arabic expressions with Islamic values, including *du'a* (supplication), daily *mau'izah* (reminders), and short *hadith*. One student content creator described this experience directly:

> "I made a video about the Arabic word *ikhlas* (sincerity) and *niyyah* (intention) using a hadith and an explanation in Malay. Many friends shared it, making me feel part of the da'wah movement"[41]

The Arabic language teachers and curriculum coordinators interviewed at the two participating institutions perceived the integration of selected TikTok content into *Tarbiyyah Islamiyyah* lessons as encouraging students to reflect on Islamic values and engage with concepts such as *akhlaq* (ethics), '*ubudiyyah* (worship), and *ukhuwah* (brotherhood).

An illustrative example of the integration of Arabic learning and digital da'wah in the participating educational context is @mmynofficial. Its short educational videos were discussed in relation to students' and teachers' use of TikTok for Arabic and Islamic learning in Kedah. Specifically, the analyzed content included a video on *niyyah* used as a classroom discussion prompt, short explanations of Arabic terms such as *ikhlas*, *sabr* (patience), and *taqwa* (God-consciousness) in everyday contexts, and humorous skits that combined Arabic vocabulary with

[37] Lev S. Vygotsky, *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*, ed. Michael Cole et al. (Harvard University Press, 1978).
[38] Latifa Rahman, 'Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development of Teaching and Learning in STEM Education', *International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology* 13, no. 8 (2024), https://www.ijert.org/vygotskys-zone-of-proximal-development-of-teaching-and-learning-in-stem-education.
[39] Khalid Al Seghayer, "Investigating the Adequacy of EFL Learners' L2 Digital Literacy Skills, Consistency of Self-Assessed Competence, and Actual Performance." *International Journal of Computer-Assisted Language Learning and Teaching* 10, no. 2 (2020): 1–22, https://doi.org/10.4018/IJCALLT.2020040101.
[40] Ghozali et al., "Al-Qur'an (Re)Presentation in the Short Video App Tiktok."
[41] Interview with Student B (male, 16 years old).

Qur'anic references, *hadith*, and practical moral lessons. The videos range from humorous yet informative skits to short reminders and Arabic vocabulary explanations interwoven with Islamic messages.

These examples present Arabic vocabulary within familiar Islamic ethical contexts rather than as isolated linguistic material. The use of Malay subtitles and strategic code-switching between Arabic and Malay also facilitates comprehension, especially among learners with limited Arabic proficiency. These features provide linguistic scaffolding by allowing students to connect unfamiliar Arabic expressions with meanings conveyed in a familiar language. This form of scaffolding reflects symbolic competence, as learners engage not only with vocabulary but also with the religious, cultural, and identity-related meanings associated with Arabic.[42]

Data from the student surveys and semi-structured interviews conducted at the two participating institutions revealed a recurring appreciation of the accessibility and relatability of content posted by @mmynofficial. Student E provided the following example:

> "I watched a video from @mmynofficial where they explained the meaning of *husnudzon* with a real-life story. It stayed with me longer than when we discussed it in class"[43]

This account illustrates how narrative-based TikTok content may make Arabic vocabulary and Islamic concepts more memorable by situating them within relatable everyday contexts. TikTok videos, typically ranging from approximately one to ten minutes, favor focused, single-topic micro-lessons. Although a single TikTok clip can introduce and briefly explain a term, phrase, or moral concept, it is generally insufficient on its own to provide the systematic and cumulative treatment of grammar, contextual variation, or theological nuance required in sustained instruction.

However, a carefully curated series of videos, combined with teacher guidance, classroom discussion, practice, and feedback, can contribute meaningfully to a more structured learning process. Instead, the platform offers frequent and accessible exposure that can strengthen recognition and motivation. Classroom instruction must then reinforce this initial exposure through systematic practice, feedback, and contextual application so that students can retain the vocabulary over time and use it accurately in communication.

[42] Kees De Bot, *A History of Applied Linguistics: From 1980 to the Present* (Routledge, 2015), https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315743769.
[43] Interview with Student E (female, 17 years old).

Furthermore, content from @mmynofficial aligns with the concept of experiential learning, in which learners construct knowledge through experience and reflection.[44] When students watch, imitate, or create similar videos, they are not only absorbing passive inputs. They also engage in active cognitive processes, such as conceptualizing meaning, evaluating tone, and understanding the emotional nuances behind Islamic terms in Arabic. These activities may encourage learners to interpret linguistic and religious meanings, reflect on contextual examples, and make connections between digital content and classroom learning.

Another aspect of @mmynofficial's content that supported its pedagogical use was its contextualized presentation of Islamic themes. In the analyzed videos, Arabic expressions were commonly presented alongside brief religious explanations, everyday examples, and references to Islamic teachings. Rather than engaging in extended doctrinal discussion, the selected posts generally focused on accessible moral and educational messages relevant to students' everyday experiences. This combination positioned Arabic not only as a subject of language learning but also as a medium through which religious and cultural meanings were communicated.

Educators interviewed in this study reported using selected TikTok videos from this account as part of media analysis activities. In one Islamic studies class, a teacher used a clip about *niyyah* (intention) from @mmynofficial as a prompt for student discussion in Arabic. Students were asked to reflect on the meaning, identify key vocabulary, and relate it to a hadith they had memorized. An Islamic Education teacher described this pedagogical use as follows:

> "These videos give me a concrete example to start a discussion. Students watch something on a platform they enjoy, and then I bring that into the classroom as a bridge to classical texts".[45]

This practice illustrates how selected TikTok content can function as a pedagogical prompt linking students' everyday digital experiences with classroom-based engagement with classical Islamic texts. It also shares some features with task-based language teaching (TBLT), particularly when students subsequently engage in meaningful classroom tasks that require them to use Arabic for a communicative purpose. This strategy reflects the principles of task-based language teaching (TBLT), in which meaningful tasks provide the primary context for language use.[46] After engaging with Arabic-language TikTok content, students complete

[44] Ngoc Thi-Nhu Bui and Pratchayapong Yarsi, 'GO-DEEP: A Potential Reflection Model for Experiential Learning', *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research* 22, no. 7 (2023): 240–57, https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.22.7.13.

[45] Interview with Teacher F (Islamic Education teacher).

[46] Eulices Cordoba Zúñiga et al., 'Potential Implications of Task-Based Language Teaching on Developing EFL Learners' Oral Fluency', *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research* 22, no. 11 (2023): 130–49, https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.22.11.8.

classroom tasks such as summarizing the message, interpreting key expressions, and discussing its linguistic and religious meanings. Through these activities, students use Arabic to communicate ideas and construct meaning rather than merely memorizing isolated vocabulary and grammatical rules.[47] Arabic therefore becomes a functional means of communication, interpretation, and reflection that is connected to students' social and spiritual experiences.[48]

The institution initially used @mmynofficial as its main outlet for Arabic-language content. In early 2025, however, MMYN removed the material from that account and consolidated its Arabic-language activities into a dedicated channel, @mmyn_lughah.tv, where the integration of Arabic learning and Islamic education became more explicit. Its clips characteristically open with the supplication for studying (*du'a belajar*) before moving into language practices, framing the lesson as an act of worship from the outset. The account features a recurring segment titled تعزيز المحادثة ("strengthening conversation"), which builds Arabic competence through guided dialogues rather than isolated vocabulary practices, thereby pushing the platform a step closer to productive language use. Other videos use Arabic to explain practices that are permitted or prohibited during Ramadan. Short dramatized skits also portray situations familiar to students, such as neglecting their studies, and demonstrate appropriate responses through Arabic dialogue. By combining conversational practice with devotional and ethical themes, the account allows Arabic language learning and Islamic education to take place within the same activity. Arabic is therefore presented not merely as a linguistic subject but also as a means of understanding and expressing Islamic values.

This conversation-based format may also help explain why some students who were reluctant to speak Arabic in the classroom became more expressive when participating in video activities.[49] Speaking anxiety remains an important concern in Arabic language learning, with psychological and individual factors influencing learners' willingness to communicate orally.[50] However, studies of more informal and supportive Arabic-learning environments suggest that reduced interactional pressure can facilitate spontaneous language use and communicative

[47] Achmad Fairuz Husein et al., 'Experiencing Foreign Language Anxiety in Arabic Speaking (*Muhādathah*): Evidence from Non-*Pesantren* University Students', *Farasyah: Journal of Linguistics and Language Education* 1, no. 2 (2026): 100–109, https://doi.org/10.68299/tsbnpw38.

[48] Samsul Huda et al., 'Developing Effective Oral Communication Skills through Speech Training: A Community Service Program', *Community, Innovation, Education, and Empowerment* 1, no. 1 (2026): 27–39.

[49] Ahmad Farhan Rif'an Najib et al., 'Video-Mediated Role Play and Simulation: Enhancing Arabic Communicative Skills in Tahfiz Boarding Schools', *Arabiyat : Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab Dan Kebahasaaraban* 13, no. 1 (2026): 101–16, https://doi.org/10.15408/a.v13i1.51205.

[50] Nana Jumhana et al., 'Exploring Speaking Anxiety Among Indonesian Arabic Language Learners: The Mediating Role of Personality Traits', *Arabiyat : Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab Dan Kebahasaaraban* 12, no. 1 (2025): 18–31, https://doi.org/10.15408/a.v12i1.46086.

participation. Muhith and Batrisya, [51] for example, found that informal peer interaction in Northern Malaysia created a low-anxiety sociolinguistic space that supported spontaneous Arabic use, communicative responsiveness, and oral fluency. Similarly, Mukhasibi and Wahyudi[52] reported improvements in communicative confidence and willingness to speak Arabic within an immersive Arabic-Islamic learning environment. Particularly relevant to the present Kedah context, Hayazi and Khairi[53] found that mobile-based communicative activities increased learner participation, reduced speaking hesitation, and provided opportunities for repeated rehearsal and feedback among students in religious secondary schools. A comparable pattern was reported by Syaheed and Salam[54] in the Maktab Mahmud context, where reduced anxiety and a condition described as "linguistic calmness" were associated with smoother and more sustained Arabic speech.

These online conversation activities also complement established Arabic-speaking habituation practices in Islamic schools. Hadi and Habib,[55] for example, show how a weekly Arabic conversation programme can provide students with regular opportunities for oral practice. This suggests that the digital activities offered through @mmyn_lughah.tv and the institution's face-to-face speaking routines may function as mutually reinforcing components of Arabic language learning.

The content design also draws on dual coding theory by combining verbal elements, such as spoken Arabic, with non-verbal elements, including gestures, facial expressions, and visual cues.[56] The use of humour, sound effects, and emotional cues may aid comprehension and make religious messages more relatable to students. As several participants reported, such multimodal content also made Arabic feel more accessible and personally relevant than the abstract and complex representations they had previously encountered. [57]

However, it is important to consider potential limitations critically. While @mmynofficial provides Islamic and Arabic educational content that was relevant to the

[51] Muhith and Batrisya, '"Lepak" as a Sociolinguistic Arena'.
[52] Abdullah Mukhasibi and Iqmal Wahyudi, 'Immersive Arabic Islamic Environment and Student Engagement: Evaluating the Linguistic Impact of World Arabic Language', *Farasyah: Journal of Linguistics and Language Education* 1, no. 1 (2025): 1–12, https://doi.org/10.68299/3j9nf868.
[53] Hayazi and Khairi, 'Digital Game-Based Arabic Communication and Learner Participation'.
[54] Syarif Muhammad Syaheed and Ahmad Azkia Salam, 'Beyond Anxiety: Linguistic Calmness and the Emergence of Arabic Speech Flow', *Farasyah: Journal of Linguistics and Language Education* 1, no. 1 (2026): 43–53, https://doi.org/10.68299/79946j59.
[55] Syamsul Hadi and Moh Tohiri Habib, 'The Management Analysis of Habituation Program of Weekly Morning Arabic Conversation at SMP Maarif 12 Pamekasan', *Al-Muhawaroh: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 2, no. 1 (2026): 43–53, https://doi.org/10.38073/almuhawaroh.v2i1.4541.
[56] Prabu David, 'Dual Coding Theory', in *The International Encyclopedia of Communication*, 1st edn, ed. Wolfgang Donsbach (Wiley, 2008), https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405186407.wbiecd068.
[57] Menik Mahmudah et al., 'A Multimodal Instructional Design Model'.

learning activities examined in this study, the TikTok platform still poses challenges such as algorithmic distractions, limited scholarly review, and the possibility of oversimplifying complex religious concepts. As such, teachers need to select and contextualize digital content carefully before integrating it into formal instruction.

Despite these concerns, the pedagogical potential is significant. The popularity and educational value of accounts like @mmynofficial suggest that Muslim content creators are redefining the role of Arabic and Islamic pedagogy in digital spaces. They serve as influencers and informal educators, especially in contexts like Kedah, where students actively seek digital supplements to their religious learning.

In summary, integrating carefully curated content from TikTok accounts such as @mmynofficial into Islamic education curricula can help contextualize Arabic and religious learning. The videos present Qur'anic expressions, hadith, Arabic vocabulary, and Islamic moral teachings through short dialogues, visual narratives, humour, and situations familiar to young learners. In this way, knowledge traditionally encountered through textbooks, classical texts, and teacher-led explanation is connected with the digital communication practices that students use in their everyday lives.[58]

As Malaysia continues its digital transformation in education, platforms such as TikTok may be considered as supplementary enrichment tools for Arabic language learning and values-based education. The selected @mmynofficial posts analyzed in this study illustrate how faith, language, and identity can be combined within short-form videos that engage young Muslim audiences with Arabic expressions and Islamic themes. This finding is consistent with the arguments of Sikumbang et al. and Hasanah et al. regarding the expanding role of digital da'wah in youth religious expression.[59] It also relates to Vovou, Brown, and Alford's[60] notion of "symbolic competence," in which language learning involves engagement with the cultural and religious meanings embedded in language use.

[58] Qudratullah Qudratullah and Syahrianti Syam, 'Transformation of Da'wah through Digital Space', in *Advances in Digital Transformation - Rise of Ultra-Smart Fully Automated Cyberspace*, ed. Eduard Babulak (IntechOpen, 2024), https://doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.1004208.

[59] Ahmad Tamrin Sikumbang et al., 'Digital Da'wah Indonesia Ulema in the Discourse of Theology', *Pharos Journal of Theology*, no. 105(1) (December 2023), https://doi.org/10.46222/pharosjot.1051; Umdatul Hasanah et al., 'Modernising Tradition: Reinforcing ASWAJA al-Nahdhiyah Authority among Millennials in Indonesia', *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 80, no. 1 (2024), https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v80i1.9425.

[60] Evelyn Vovou, 'Narrative and Identity in the Foreign Language Classroom: Reflections on Symbolic Competence', *Training Language and Culture* 3, no. 2 (2019): 22–39, https://doi.org/10.29366/2019tlc.3.2.2; Cecilie Waallann Brown and Jennifer Alford, 'Critical Literacy in the Language Classroom: Possibilities for Intercultural Learning through Symbolic Competence', *Intercultural Communication Education* 6, no. 2 (2023): 36–52, https://doi.org/10.29140/ice.v6n2.1020.

3. Pedagogical Shifts: Teacher Adaptation and Student Agency

Teachers involved in the study expressed a mix of enthusiasm and concern. While they acknowledged TikTok's potential to increase motivation, they also noted the challenge of controlling content quality and religious accuracy. Nevertheless, some teachers started integrating TikTok-based tasks into their assignments, such as asking students to explain Arabic terms in short video formats or mimic da'wah messages using Arabic vocabulary. One Arabic teacher described this tension as follows:

> "TikTok is a double-edged sword. However, if we guide students properly, it becomes a platform for creative and moral expression in Arabic. Some students who were silent in class became very expressive in videos"[61]

This account illustrates a move toward a more student-centered,[62] media-assisted approach in which teachers retain a mediating role while students participate more actively in producing and communicating Arabic content.

Producing content encourages active engagement and creativity by asking students to apply learned Arabic vocabulary and expressions in contextualized communication and to create original short-form Arabic videos or da'wah messages. More broadly, Alshammary and Alhalafawy's[63] meta-analysis indicates that well-integrated digital platforms can support improved learning outcomes. In Arabic language education, more focused studies suggest that digitally mediated and socially supportive communicative activities can strengthen learner participation, willingness to speak, and confidence in using Arabic.[64]

4. Challenges: Distraction, Misuse, and Digital Literacy

Despite the positive trends, challenges remain. Some students admitted that TikTok could easily become a distraction, leading them to entertainment content unrelated to their studies. In the student survey, 84 of the 300 respondents (28%) reported difficulty maintaining focus when using TikTok for educational purposes because the platform's recommendation algorithm frequently exposed them to unrelated entertainment content. One student described this difficulty as follows:

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[61] Interview with Teacher C (Arabic language teacher).

[62] Abdurrahman Ahmad Agil and Menik Mahmudah, 'Arabic Proverbs as a Pedagogical Tool to Enhance Arabic Speaking Skills among University Students', *Al-Ta'rib : Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab IAIN Palangka Raya* 13, no. 2 (2025): 495–510, https://doi.org/10.23971/altarib.v13i2.10603.

[63] Farhan Mohammed Alshammary and Waleed Salim Alhalafawy, 'Digital Platforms and the Improvement of Learning Outcomes: Evidence Extracted from Meta-Analysis', *Sustainability* 15, no. 2 (2023): 1305, https://doi.org/10.3390/su15021305.

[64] Mukhasibi and Wahyudi, 'Immersive Arabic Islamic Environment and Student Engagement'.

> "Sometimes I go to find Arabic content, but end up watching dance videos or trends. It is hard to stay focused unless someone sends me a direct link"[65]

This reflects social media's dual nature, as Zhang[66] noted: while platforms can empower learners, they also pose cognitive overload and misdirection. Teachers also raised concerns about mispronunciation, theological inaccuracy, and oversimplification of Islamic messages in user-generated content.[67] The findings suggest an urgent need for digital literacy training for students and educators, as recommended in the framework by Achruh et al.[68] on Artificial Intelligence Adoption in Islamic educational systems.

5. Expanding Digital Islamic Pedagogy: The Case of @baitul.musthofa

In addition to the previously discussed @mmynofficial, another TikTok account, @baitul.musthofa, has emerged as a significant contributor to digital Islamic pedagogy. This account, associated with the Baitul Musthofa Islamic educational institution, offers a variety of content that blends traditional Islamic teachings with contemporary digital media formats. The account features videos of students engaging in Quranic recitations, *sholawat* (devotional recitations invoking blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad), and other religious activities, providing a window into the daily practices of an Islamic educational environment.

A concrete illustration is the account's recurring question-and-answer format, in which a teacher poses a short prompt and a student answer on camera. Many clips drill everyday Arabic: vocabulary for objects such as house, coffee, and sugar, alongside prepositions of location such as فوق / على (above/on), خلف (behind), and أمام (in front), so that learners and viewers gradually grow accustomed to the texture of the language. Some prompts are posed in Arabic itself, for example كيف تقول هذا بالعربية؟ ("what do you say in Arabic for this?"), to which a student replies مسند. Some prompts are delivered in Malay to accommodate the local audience. When asked, "*Apa bahasa Arabnya bercakap-cakap?"* ("What is the Arabic for 'to speak'?"), the student is given a brief pause, accompanied by a ticking-clock sound effect, to retrieve the Arabic word before responding with the verb تكلّم. In a subsequent prompt, "*Apa bahasa Arabnya tandas?"* ("What is the Arabic for 'toilet'?"), the student responds with الحمّام. The word is then used in the fuller expression أريد أن أذهب إلى الحمّام ("I want to go to the toilet"). This

[65] Interview with Student D (female, 18 years old).

[66] Weixing Zhang, 'From Distraction to Dedication: The Paradoxical Effects of Social Media on Student Academic Performance', *Pakistan Journal of Life and Social Sciences (PJLSS)* 22, no. 2 (2024), https://doi.org/10.57239/PJLSS-2024-22.2.00650.

[67] Nur Hanifansyah et al., 'RELIGIOUS DRAMA CONTROVERSY: The Impact of Bidaah on Islamic Pedagogy and Media Literacy', *MIQOT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 49, no. 2 (2025): 314, https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v49i2.1407.

[68] Achruh et al., 'Challenges and Opportunities of Artificial Intelligence Adoption in Islamic Education in Indonesian Higher Education Institutions'.

question-and-answer sequence combines vocabulary retrieval with contextualized sentence construction. Importantly, the teachers point out that items introduced in these clips, such as تقول، على، تكلم، إلى , recur in religious texts, so that the same vocabulary gradually brings learners closer to recognizing Qur'anic and devotional language. Still other videos move directly into faith content, prompting viewers with هل عرفت الحديث إنما الأعمال بالنيات ("do you know the *hadith*, 'actions are but by intentions'?"), so that the account functions simultaneously as Arabic practice and as applied Islamic learning. Viewed through Vygotsky's[69] sociocultural theory, this question-and-answer format provides socially mediated learning in which students observe Arabic language modelled by teachers and more capable peers. Through this interaction, learners can connect Arabic vocabulary and expressions with their religious and cultural meanings. The observational dimension of the videos is also consistent with Bandura's social learning theory, which explains that learners can acquire and subsequently reproduce linguistic forms by observing modelled behavior.[70] Its pedagogical value, however, appears to vary across domains: the clips provide opportunities for vocabulary exposure, recognition of individual words and fixed expressions, and engagement with religious content, while improvements in grammatical or conversational mastery cannot be established from the evidence presented in this study.

The content from @baitul.musthofa serves multiple pedagogical functions. First, it acts as a motivational tool, showcasing students actively participating in religious practices, which can inspire peers to engage more deeply with their studies. Second, it provides authentic examples of Islamic rituals and recitations as supplementary material for students learning about these practices. Lastly, it fosters a sense of community among viewers, connecting students from different regions through shared religious experiences.

Educators have noted the positive impact of such content on students' engagement and understanding. By observing peers in similar educational settings, students can better relate to the material and see practical applications of their studies. This aligns with Vygotsky's Social Development Theory, which emphasizes the importance of social interaction in cognitive development.[71]

However, it is essential to approach the integration of such digital content with a critical eye. Ensuring the accuracy of the religious information presented and maintaining the integrity

[69] Vygotsky, Mind in Society.
[70] Albert Bandura, *Social Learning Theory* (Prentice Hall, 1977), https://search.worldcat.org/title/Social-learning-theory/oclc/2635133.
[71] Mary Gauvain, 'Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory', in *Encyclopedia of Infant and Early Childhood Development* (Elsevier, 2020), https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-809324-5.23569-4.

of traditional teachings are paramount. Educators should guide students in discerning credible sources and encourage discussions that contextualize the digital content within the broader curriculum.

The survey findings, reported above, indicate that TikTok formed part of many students' informal practices for engaging with Arabic and Islamic educational content. Rather than demonstrating pedagogical effectiveness in itself, this pattern suggests that students used the platform as an additional source of exposure to Arabic vocabulary, colloquial expressions, Qur'anic phrases, and short Islamic narratives. The qualitative findings further showed that accounts such as @mmynofficial and @baitul.musthofa provided examples of Arabic use embedded within religious themes, enabling students to encounter vocabulary in culturally and religiously familiar contexts.

Regarding content production, 58% of respondents stated they had created or participated in Arabic-language TikTok videos, often combining Arabic vocabulary with Islamic expressions such as *du'a,* hadith, or Qur'anic verses. This shift from passive consumption to active content creation reflects a student-centered learning model and aligns with the principles of experiential learning.[72] Such engagement was described by participants as helping them connect newly encountered Arabic vocabulary with everyday religious contexts and reflect on its cultural and moral meanings.

Eight of the twelve teachers interviewed reported greater student motivation and confidence in using Arabic when TikTok was incorporated into classroom assignments or activities. They observed that students became more willing to articulate Arabic expressions, particularly when creating short videos or adapting TikTok formats using Islamic content. This pattern was especially noticeable among students who had previously demonstrated limited oral participation in conventional classroom settings.

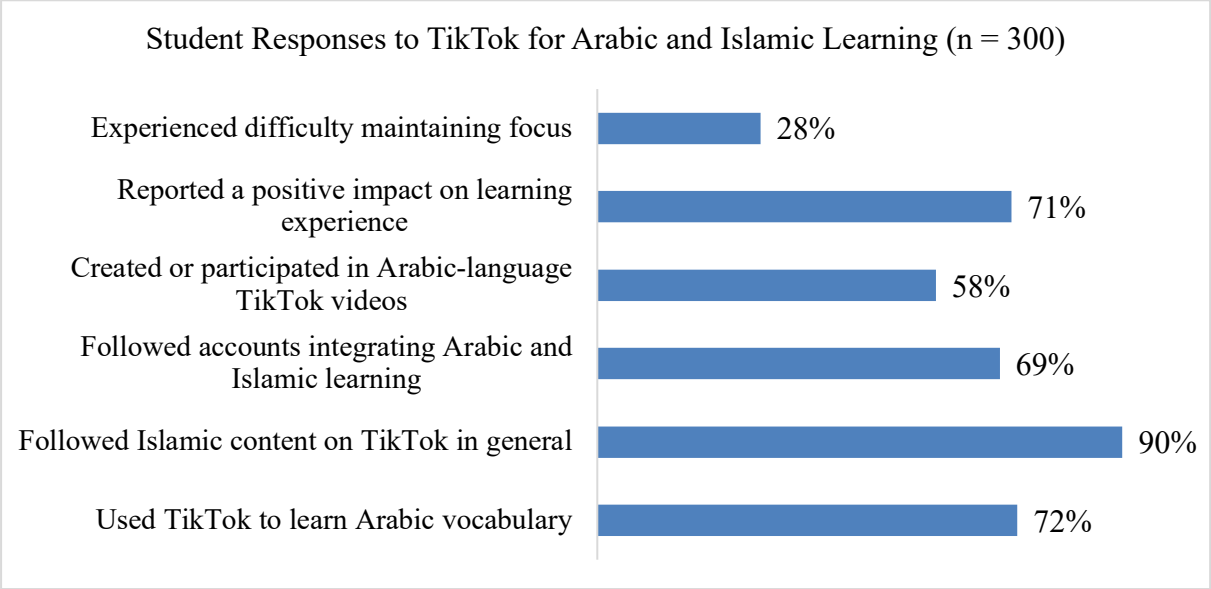
However, the study also identified challenges that qualified these generally positive perceptions. Students described difficulties maintaining focus because algorithmically recommended entertainment content could divert attention from educational use. Teachers likewise raised concerns about the credibility and pedagogical suitability of user-generated material, including possible linguistic and theological inaccuracies. Taken together, these findings suggest that students valued TikTok as an accessible and relatable source of Arabic-

[72] Segaf Baharun et al., 'YouTube Content Production for Arabic Language Learning: Cross-National Study', *Online Learning In Educational Research (OLER)* 6, no. 1 (2026): 13–27, https://doi.org/10.58524/oler.v6i1.982.

language exposure, while its educational use remained dependent on careful content selection, teacher guidance, and adequate digital literacy.

The student survey (n = 300) provides descriptive evidence of respondents' TikTok use and their perceived learning experiences in Arabic language and Islamic education within the participating institutions in Kedah, Malaysia. Notably, 72% of students reported frequently using TikTok to learn Arabic vocabulary, particularly through content incorporating colloquial expressions, Qur'anic phrases, and short animated Islamic stories. Given the strong religious environment in Kedah, a broader pattern also emerged: approximately 90% of respondents reported following Islamic content on TikTok in general. However, a more specific finding showed that 69% of students followed accounts that explicitly integrated Arabic-language learning with Islamic educational content, most prominently @mmynofficial and @baitul.musthofa. These accounts served as models for Arabic language use while embedding religious themes, thereby allowing learners to contextualize vocabulary within spiritually meaningful frameworks.

Figure 1. Student Responses to TikTok for Arabic and Islamic Learning (n = 300)



Source: Student survey data

The findings also revealed several pedagogical benefits and challenges. A large majority, 71% of students, agreed that TikTok had a positive impact on their learning experience by increasing their exposure to Arabic in a more accessible and relatable format. At the same time, 28% reported difficulty maintaining focus while using TikTok for educational purposes, citing distractions from unrelated content generated by the platform's algorithm. These findings suggest that TikTok has potential as a supplementary digital tool for Arabic

vocabulary exposure and engagement with Islamic educational content when its use is guided through content curation, teacher support, and digital literacy training.

6. Institutional Contexts, Implementation Challenges, and Transnational Pedagogical Influences

Despite growing interest in TikTok's educational potential, its implementation in Kedah remains uneven. Students at the participating Islamic educational institutions, particularly those located in semi-rural areas, face several infrastructural challenges, including limited internet connectivity, restricted mobile-data allowances, and smartphones with limited functionality. These constraints reduce students' ability to access and engage consistently with Arabic- and Islamic-themed content on TikTok. In addition, the educational use of social media remains at an early stage, requiring institutions to balance technological adoption with content quality, religious accuracy, teacher preparedness, and student digital literacy.

At MMYN, the development of Arabic-language digital pedagogy was strongly influenced by the involvement of Nur Hanifansyah, one of the researchers and an Arabic educator from *Pondok Pesantren* Darullughah Wadda'wah. During his engagement with the institution, he played a substantial role in introducing and systematizing the pedagogical use of TikTok and YouTube, mentoring teachers and students in digital content production, and supporting the development of MMYN's Arabic-language digital identity. This involvement included the establishment and development of MMYN Lughah TV, the design of its digital branding, and guidance on the production of Arabic-language educational content.

At MMYN, @mmynofficial presented Arabic vocabulary, short Islamic reflections, and motivational content before the institution consolidated its Arabic-language activities into the dedicated @mmyn_lughah.tv channel in early 2025. Students described the videos as making Arabic more accessible through short dialogues, Malay explanations, humour, and Islamic reminders. For example, videos introducing terms such as *ikhlas, sabr, taqwa*, and *niyyah* connected Arabic expressions with familiar moral and religious situations. Through this format, vocabulary that students had previously encountered mainly in textbooks or teacher-led explanations was presented in short-form digital content reflecting their everyday media practices.

In parallel, Baitul Musthofa represents another rising digital presence. For the past year, it has been digitally mentored by a junior educator, a mentee of the senior educator noted above and a current undergraduate at the same Indonesian institution (Universitas Islam Internasional Darullughah Wadda'wah). This transnational mentorship reflects the expanding educational

collaboration between Indonesian and Malaysian Islamic institutions. The content from @baitul.musthofa blends Quranic recitation, *sholawat* recitations, and scenes from daily *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) life, drawing on Indonesian digital da'wah styles that are narrative-driven, emotionally resonant, and visually grounded.

This hybrid Islamic content mixes Indonesian and Malay registers, spiritual traditions, and contemporary media aesthetics, and has fostered a unique cross-cultural pedagogy. Students at Baitul Musthofa are not just passive recipients; they actively create and disseminate content, participating as learners, content creators, and communicators of Islamic teachings through digital media. This resonates with Vygotsky's theory on socially mediated learning and with symbolic competence theory, where language acquisition is embedded in cultural and identity practices.[73]

Interview and observational data from MMYN and Baitul Musthofa indicated that Indonesian educators contributed to the circulation of pedagogical and digital content-production practices across institutional contexts. These cases illustrate how transnational mentoring connected Arabic-language learning, Islamic educational content, and student participation within the two institutions.

However, participants reported several practical and institutional constraints. Students in the participating institutions described limited internet connectivity, restricted mobile-data allowances, and devices with limited functionality, which reduced their ability to access educational TikTok content consistently. Teachers also reported uneven levels of digital literacy and some institutional hesitation toward the formal use of TikTok. For example, the platform was sometimes viewed primarily as an entertainment medium rather than as an instructional resource, leading to caution about incorporating it into classroom activities. These findings suggest that wider implementation depends on improved digital access, teacher preparation, clear content-selection procedures, and institutional guidance.

Strategic investments in teacher training, media literacy, and ethical content development are crucial.[74] Institutions may encourage student-led content creation under the guidance of teachers or designated digital mentors to support responsible, creative, and educationally purposeful participation. Furthermore, this transformation demands a rethinking

[73] Reham Alkhudiry, 'The Contribution of Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory in Mediating L2 Knowledge Co-Construction', *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 12, no. 10 (2022): 2117–23, https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1210.19.

[74] Irma Yusriani Simamora and Ahmad Salman Farid, 'Rethinking the Use of Social Media in Islamic Broadcasting Practices: A Theological Perspective', *Pharos Journal of Theology*, no. 105(5) (September 2024), https://doi.org/10.46222/pharosjot.105.516; Septiani Selly et al., 'Innovative Digital Media in Islamic Religious Education Learning', *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 21, no. 1 (2024): 40–59, https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.v21i1.7553.

of teacher roles and institutional responsibilities. Rather than serving solely as knowledge transmitters, educators in the digital age must become facilitators, curators, and critical interpreters of online content. This requires a dual capacity: technological competence and theological grounding. As Reksiana et al.[75] highlight, the competencies needed of Islamic education teachers in the digital era are increasingly complex, involving the ability to engage students in morally sound, culturally resonant, and pedagogically compelling ways.

Parallel to this, Klimanova and Hellmich[76] emphasize that effective digital pedagogical models must also account for local socio-cultural contexts. In Kedah, Malaysia, a region rich in Islamic traditions and Malay-Muslim values, incorporating TikTok content must be sensitive to doctrinal authenticities and cultural expressions. Blending Arabic vocabulary with Malay explanations, as seen in accounts like @mmynofficial, showcases how digital content can maintain cultural relevance while promoting linguistic and religious literacy.

Moreover, institutions must recognize the strategic value of integrating digital content into formal learning management systems. As Al-Hail et al.[77] discuss, aligning social media-based learning with institutional frameworks can elevate informal learning into structured outcomes. When TikTok content is embedded into lesson plans or discussed in classroom settings, it transitions from entertainment to edutainment, providing pedagogical value while retaining learner interest.

Importantly, this study reinforces the need for sustained professional development in digital pedagogy. Marques et al.[78] discuss more broadly the relationship between technological innovation, pedagogy, and teacher training. In Islamic educational contexts, Ghufron et al. further emphasize the importance of teacher competence, digital literacy, contextual curriculum development, and the appropriate use of digital technology in madrasah education.[79] In the present study, such preparation was particularly relevant to the evaluation of linguistic accuracy, religious credibility, and the pedagogical suitability of social-media content. These findings suggest that professional development should combine digital pedagogical competence with critical media literacy and context-sensitive evaluation of online educational materials.

[75] Reksiana et al., "Digital Extension of Digital Literacy Competence for Islamic Religious Education Teachers in the Era of Digital Learning," Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam 21, no. 2 (2024): 402–20, https://doi.org/10.14421/jpai.v21i2.9719.
[76] Liudmila Klimanova and Emily A. Hellmich, 'Putting Local on the MAP: A Model for Engaging Foreign Language Students with Local Cultures', *Foreign Language Annals* 54, no. 1 (2021): 158–84, https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12493.
[77] M. Al-Hail et al., 'Exploring Digital Learning Opportunities and Challenges in Higher Education Institutes: Stakeholder Analysis on the Use of Social Media for Effective Sustainability of Learning–Teaching–Assessment in a University Setting in Qatar', *Sustainability* 16, no. 15 (2024): 6413, https://doi.org/10.3390/su16156413.
[78] Bertil P. Marques et al., 'When Technologies Drive Pedagogy Learning and Teacher Training', *2023 18th Iberian Conference on Information Systems and Technologies (CISTI)*, 20 June 2023, 1–6, https://doi.org/10.23919/CISTI58278.2023.10211581.
[79] Ghufron et al., 'Integration of Arabic Language Learning in the Formation of Social-Religious Identity in Madrasahs'.

Ultimately, the cases examined in Kedah illustrate a locally situated negotiation between established Islamic educational practices and emerging forms of digital pedagogy. Within the participating institutions, educators and students navigated issues of digital literacy, content credibility, institutional acceptance, and the alignment of social-media use with Arabic-language and Islamic educational objectives. Although comparable concerns have been discussed in other Muslim educational contexts, the findings of the present study should be interpreted primarily within the institutional and socio-cultural context of Kedah.

This study builds on recent research examining digitally mediated Arabic learning in Malaysian contexts. Zulkepli et al.[80] show that TikTok can support informal Arabic learning, particularly through vocabulary and pronunciation practice, while providing interactive and autonomous learning opportunities. In Kedah religious secondary schools, Hayazi and Khairi further demonstrate that mobile-based communicative activities can increase learner participation and provide structured opportunities for repeated Arabic practice and feedback.[81] The present study extends these findings by showing how TikTok-mediated Arabic exposure can also be embedded within Islamic educational content and students' everyday digital practices.

This study complements corpus-based work on Qur'anic Arabic, such as Sawalha et al.'s [82] morphologically and syntactically annotated Qur'an dataset, which provides a detailed linguistic resource with potential applications for Arabic grammar teaching. By contrast, the participatory dimension observed in the present study can be interpreted through Kolb's[83] experiential learning theory, as students engaged in creating, reflecting on, and adapting Arabic-Islamic digital content through direct experience. In the Kedah context, the integration of TikTok into Arabic and Islamic education therefore represents a form of digital pedagogy that combines linguistic, religious, and cultural learning. The findings indicate that students perceived relatable short-form content as motivating and helpful for remembering Arabic vocabulary, while youth-oriented da'wah videos provided opportunities for moral and spiritual engagement. Participation as both viewers and content creators further illustrates how Arabic-language practice can intersect with religious reflection and symbolic meaning in digital settings. However, these outcomes depend on careful content selection and teacher guidance to

[80] Muhamad Khairul Anuar Zulkepli et al., 'The Role of TikTok in Promoting Arabic Language Learning among Millennials and Gen Z', *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science* IX, no. III (2025): 4729–38, https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.90300379.
[81] Hayazi and Khairi, 'Digital Game-Based Arabic Communication and Learner Participation'.
[82] Majdi Sawalha et al., 'Morphologically-Analyzed and Syntactically-Annotated Quran Dataset', *Data in Brief* 58 (February 2025): 111211, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dib.2024.111211.
[83] David A. Kolb, *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development* (Prentice-Hall, 1984).

ensure linguistic accuracy, religious credibility, and meaningful integration with formal classroom instruction.

The pedagogical benefits of TikTok depend on institutional guidance, curriculum integration, careful content curation, and educators' ability to evaluate the linguistic and religious accuracy of digital materials. When strategically incorporated as a supplementary medium rather than a replacement for established Islamic pedagogy, TikTok can provide opportunities for Arabic-language exposure, student engagement, creativity, interaction, and participation in Islamic educational activities. Nevertheless, its effectiveness requires critical media literacy, sustained teacher involvement, structured learning activities, and alignment with Islamic educational values. Situated within the Malay-Muslim educational context of Kedah, this study therefore offers a locally grounded yet internationally relevant account of how short-form digital media can support faith-based language learning while maintaining pedagogical quality and religious integrity.

C. Conclusion

This study found that TikTok can function as a supplementary medium for Arabic language learning and Islamic education within the Islamic educational context of Kedah, Malaysia. The student survey (n = 300) showed that 72% of respondents frequently used TikTok to learn Arabic vocabulary, approximately 90% followed Islamic content in general, and 69% specifically followed accounts that integrated Arabic-language learning with Islamic education. In addition, 58% had created or participated in Arabic-language TikTok videos, while 71% perceived the platform as having a positive impact on their learning experience. The qualitative findings further indicated that selected content from @mmynofficial, @mmyn_lughah.tv, and @baitul.musthofa provided opportunities for Arabic vocabulary exposure, contextual understanding, reflection on Islamic values, and engagement with symbolic meanings by connecting Arabic expressions with Qur'anic verses, hadith, Islamic values, and situations familiar to students. Teachers and students reported that guided dialogues and student-generated videos encouraged more active Arabic use, greater speaking confidence, and participation in content creation and digital *da'wah.* However, 28% of students reported difficulty maintaining focus because of unrelated algorithmically recommended content, while teachers expressed concerns regarding linguistic errors, theological oversimplification, and the credibility of user-generated material. Institutional findings additionally revealed that digital mentorship, teacher involvement, Arabic-Malay scaffolding, and culturally relevant content

supported implementation, whereas limited internet access, restricted data allowances, inadequate devices, uneven digital literacy, and institutional skepticism constrained its wider application. Taken together, these findings indicate that TikTok is most educationally valuable when used as a carefully curated and teacher-guided supplement to structured Arabic and *Tarbiyyah Islamiyyah* instruction rather than as a replacement for formal teaching.

This study contributes to the emerging literature on TikTok-mediated Arabic and Islamic education by examining curated short-form content within a localized Malaysian Islamic educational context. Rather than establishing causal pedagogical effects, the findings indicate how students and educators perceived TikTok as supporting Arabic-language exposure, engagement with Islamic educational content, student content creation, and participation in digital da'wah. The study further contributes an analytical perspective by bringing symbolic competence and experiential learning into dialogue with digitally mediated Arabic and Islamic education. Through the cases of @mmynofficial and @baitul.musthofa, the findings illustrate how student-generated content can connect Arabic language practice with religious reflection, cultural meaning, and participatory digital engagement within the participating institutions.

Despite these promising findings, this study acknowledges several limitations. The scope was limited to specific Islamic institutions in Kedah, and the dynamic nature of TikTok's algorithm posed challenges in tracking consistent exposure to educational content. The lack of a standardized framework for evaluating Islamic digital media also requires further exploration. Future research could examine the longitudinal effects of TikTok on language retention and religious behavior, and investigate cross-cultural comparisons between Southeast Asian Islamic educational practices on social media. Nonetheless, this research contributes a timely and locally grounded insight into the evolving role of digital platforms in shaping modern Islamic pedagogy and Arabic language education.

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