

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MICROTEACHING IN ARABIC LANGUAGE GRAMMAR AMONG UNIKL MITEC STUDENTS

(Keberkesanan Pengajaran Mikro Terhadap Tatabahasa Arab Dalam Kalangan Pelajar UniKL MITEC)

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Abstract

Arabic language learning among non-Arabic beginners is a real challenge for students and teachers. Expanding vocabulary, improving grammar and pronouncing vowels are the specific techniques that need to be applied to university students who are constrained by the semester system. This study addresses the effectiveness of the microteaching method for Arabic grammar among UniKL MITEC students. The study uses a qualitative approach by conducting an observation of students who used this method from the first week to the final week. 50 students were observed until the data reached the saturation point. The results show that most students can write, speak and listen to Arabic fluently after applying this microteaching method. It is suggested that this technique can be applied via WhatsApp, Facebook, Telegram and other applications and software to make the teaching and learning process among students more virtual, interactive, and mobile. In conclusion, a new teaching method needs to be developed to meet the students' requirements for mastering the Arabic course in the university semester system.

Keywords: Effectiveness, Micro Teaching, Arabic Language, UniKL MITEC.

Abstrak

Mempelajari Bahasa Arab dalam kalangan pelajar permulaan bukan Arab mendatangkan kesan sebenar terhadap para pelajar dan guru. Memperkembangkan perbendaharaan kata, memperbaiki tatabahasa dan bunyi sebutan adalah merupakan Teknik khusus yang perlu diaplikasikan dalam kalangan pelajar university yang terkekang dengan sistem pengajian berdasarkan semester. Kajian ini mengenalpastikan keberkesanan pengajaran mikro sebagai salah satu kaedah pengajaran Bahasa Arab dalam kalangan pelajar UniKL MITEC. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan melaksanakan pemerhatian terhadap pelajar yang menggunakan kaedah ini dari minggu pertama hingga minggu terakhir semester. Pemerhatian dilakukan terhadap 50 orang pelajar sehingga dapatan menemukan ketepuan maklumat. Kajian mendapati kebanyakan pelajar mampu menulis, bercakap, dan mendengar Bahasa Arab dengan baik setelah mengaplikasikan kaedah pengajaran mikro ini. Adalah dicadangkan supaya teknik ini turut diajar menerusi aplikasi Whatsapp, Facebook, Telegram, dan lain-lain aplikasi untuk menjadikan proses pembelajaran dalam kalangan pelajar lebih virtual, interaktif, dan mudah alih. Sebagai kesimpulan, kaedah pengajaran baru perlu dibangunkan supaya memenuhi keperluan para pelajar untuk menguasai kursus Bahasa Arab di university berdasarkan sistem semester.

Kata kunci: Keberkesanan, Pengajaran Mikro, Bahasa Arab, UniKL MITEC.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

To master the Arabic language, you must live in the language itself, using the language in daily communication to memorise vocabulary and expand it. The more you practise communicating in Arabic, the better you will master the language. This wisdom 'practise makes perfect' suits beginners of Arabic very well. Nevertheless, learning Arabic grammar in daily conversation is more challenging than learning any other language. It requires enthusiasm and systematic practise to memorise the verification of grammar. To practise writing and conversation in Arabic, there are many nouns and verbs that need to be clarified. For example, in Malay and English, there are only singular and plural nouns. However, pronouns in Arabic include multiple sets, namely singular (mufrad), two (muthanna) and 3 and more (jama'). These pronouns require more attention from the students in memorising the Arabic pronouns and verb forms than in the other languages.

Memorising and repeating dialogue schemata is also a good approach for beginning learners. As children, we also memorise new words before we can fully communicate with our family members. However, when we reach grammar as one of the crucial points, we also need to repeat and memorise the specific formulas of Arabic grammar. It is important that we practise Arabic grammar systematically with the help of diagrams, boxes or using the given micro-template. In addition to grammar, vocabulary is also the most important thing we need to pay attention to when communicating in a foreign language.

2.0 PROBLEM STATEMENTS

Another flaw in Arabic language learning is the students' weak Arabic vocabulary (Husain, N. S. and Mohamad, N., 2020). This situation leads to students' inability to speak, write, and listen to Arabic sentences convincingly. It becomes even worse when they do not want to participate in group discussions where the Arabic language is used in class. One of the challenges students face in learning Arabic is insufficient time to master and become familiar with it (Arifin, Z. et al. 2021). Students love to learn this language which is new to them (Zakaria, M. F. and Muhammad Nawawi, M. A. A., 2020). But they do not know any practical method that helps them to learn and understand the Arabic language easily and quickly. This situation leads students to drop out of the course if they fail to improve their Arabic language. Meanwhile, the learning experience during Movement Control Order (MCO) also makes learning through social media such as WhatsApp and Facebook applications more relevant and viable, as recommended by Bataineh, R. et al. (2017) and Zainuddin, N. et al. (2020). Indeed, delivering language courses to university students in the 14-week semester system is quite a challenge to overcome. At the same time, teachers need to ensure that their students have mastered vocabulary, grammar, everyday conversation, sentence structure and pronunciation. Student assessment also must be done at the same time.

Learning is not just about the teacher teaching the theory to the students. Rather, it requires interaction between the two, Zainuddin et al. (2020). The lack of use of mobile technologies or applications via smartphones leads to less or minimal interaction between teachers and students. The student learns the theory and is not able to understand and use the language. This leads to students becoming bored in class and withdrawing from the course. Eventually, this leads to frustration for the teachers and the university administration. Instead, Osman, N. and Hamzah, M. I. (2017) emphasise the importance of blended learning between face-to-face classes

and e-learning for students in the normal situation before the Movement Control Order (MCO).

Teachers can also use gamification during lessons to improve students' grammar and vocabulary, as Masrop explains. N. A. M. et al. (2019). However, too much gamification can distract students from the lesson content if students' focus is more on playing than learning the lesson. Gamification also required a lot of preparation from the teacher before entering the class. The lack of preparedness of the teaching material, as noted by Jannah, M. and Nababan, A. A. (2020), also leads teachers to rely on gamification only.

One of the challenges of getting students to master and become fluent in a language is getting students to do practise combined with coaching and mentoring elements, as stated by Yaacob, M. and Bakar, K.A. (2018). Without practise, students will forget the theory they learn in class. Mastering a language also means that we live with it. Without practise in daily life or practical writing and speaking, the burden of learning lessons will not be fruitful and will not make sense. If the exercises and tutoring methods are not planned, this will also lead to a poor result.

The translation of Arabic vocabulary is also a big challenge for us because the terms and the meaning of Arabic words are really related to their culture, as Salam Z. A. A. and Kadir, R. A. (2017) stated. We cannot simply translate word by word from the dictionary. For this reason, many translations of al-Quran always include a translator's disclaimer stating that "no translation of the Quran can be one hundred percent accurate Nevertheless, we need to enrich students with Arabic vocabulary so that they can master the Arabic language, as Yasim, I. M. M. et al. (2016) explains. This method is not applicable for the deaf as they must use a sign language, as Jamil, T. (2020) states.

3.0 MICROTEACHING AS A SOLUTION OF ARABIC GRAMMAR

Learning a language among university students without a systematic approach leads to incongruent understanding. Especially learning Arabic among university students, which is limited to about 14 weeks per semester. Many students can remember everyday conversations such as 'Good morning!' as 'صباح الخير', 'Good evening!' as 'مساء الخير', 'Thank you!' as 'شكرا', and many more. But when writing the sentence, they always have the mistake of using the correct pronouns 'ضمير', the verb and the adverb 'فعل' and 'حال'.

Students always confuse between different tenses in Arabic such as: 'Past Tense' as 'فعل الماضي' 'Present Continuous Tense' as 'فعل المضارع' 'Future Tense' by adding the word and letters of 'س, سوف' in the verb, and the verb in the form of order or direction known as 'فعل الأمر' Unlike English, the Arabic form of the verb must follow its own character of adverb from 'He, She, It, I, You, We' and many others. The students at the university who took Arabic courses came from many different backgrounds. Some of the students attended an Arabic secondary school and have no problem with the synchronisation of verb and adverb.

But students who did not attend an Arabic secondary school find it difficult or impossible to remember the form of the verb in relation to the given adverb. They also confuse the tense and occasionally make mistakes in the test or quiz. When they get poor marks in the test or quiz, it demotivates them to try harder to achieve the overall marks in the Arabic course. It is a big challenge for the Arabic lecturers when the result shows that low students get excellent marks in the course. As a result, university administrators, policy makers and lecturers become concerned when students assume that Arabic is a difficult course and the number of students enrolled in this course decreases.

The microteaching method is an approach to strengthen students' ability to understand, remember and practise Arabic grammar in a short period of time. This system uses Microsoft Excel software as a practise medium for students to practise making a sentence in Arabic that corresponds to Arabic grammar. Students need an Arabic font to write Arabic words and complete the Excel column in the template provided by the teacher. Students will be able to form a sentence and analyse the difference between the past tense and the present continuous tense in Arabic using this microteaching method.

The microteaching method uses columns in Microsoft Excel to build a sentence ranging from a very simple sentence with noun, verb and subject to a complicated word. Through frequent practise of sentence construction, the student was able to write and speak Arabic fluently using the correct grammar. By incorporating daily conversation and new vocabulary in articles and on YouTube, students were able to introduce themselves, write an article, tell stories, and read Arabic texts fluently. Figure 2.1 below is a template for microteaching Arabic in Microsoft Excel. By automatically entering words that we typed before, Excel is easier and more relaxed to create hundreds of sentences in each time. This is because an Arabic word is simply added, or an extra character is removed from the base word to complete the new sentence.

Students need to be provided with a manual to find Arabic vocabulary in the dictionary before the lesson (Yasin et al., 2016). Teachers can also vary the word search technique so that students master the way they learn new words based on their exact meaning. Different strategies for learning vocabulary can be introduced in class. By practising different learning methods, students could improve their learning strategies to acquire Arabic vocabulary.

4.0 STUDY METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method of data collection and analysis. According to Grey, D. E. (2004) and Flyvbjerg, B. (2011), the qualitative method is the best way to look at a problem from a real-world perspective. In this qualitative case study, the researcher observed the students during and after the Arabic microteaching as this is the most convenient and possible way of collecting data according to Blaxter, L. et al. (2006). The sample has reached the saturation point for the information obtained as the researcher hears the same thing repeatedly as stated by Merriam S. B. (2002). Participant observation is used to observe the effects of microteaching in the Arabic class after class as it is a prerequisite for writing descriptions of social activities according to Merriam S. B. (2002) and Flyvbjerg, B. (2011). In this study, data are collected from the appointed observers as qualitative studies aim to use observations to gain theoretical insights as Rubin, A. and Babbie, E. (2011) explain. In this study, inductive and deductive methods are combined for data analysis.

5.0 SEGMENTS OF ARABIC MICROTEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

5.1 The Ability to Distinguish Between Arabic Grammar of Past Tense (فعل الماضي), Present and Continuous (فعل المضارع), Instruction (فعل الأمر) and Future Tense by Adding (س and سوف)

The study shows that 73% of the students were able to distinguish between *tasrif Fe'el Madhi, Mudhari'* and *Amar* after experiencing this Arabic micro-lesson. Observer 1 commented: 'Most students are able to write and speak the verb and adverb correctly within three weeks. The teacher gives the students an assignment and they have disciplined themselves to complete the sentences required in the Microsoft Excel templates three weeks later.' Observer 2 commented, 'This method prevents students from copying answers from Google because the practical writing of the sentences is done spontaneously in class each week.'

Observer 3 said that 'students were eventually able to transfer the sentences from writing to speaking because the practical completion of the sentences each week in class also made the students think before writing and speak correctly in front of the teacher. This happened when the teacher successfully encouraged the students to write sentences correctly and not just complete them by trial and error.' The students were provided with different templates based on different tenses to suit the different ways the students responded. The pictures below show the pattern of Micro Excel and Tense due to the different form of the sentence. The skills of these beginners are present after practicing micro instruction, but for the Malay students, which is different from the problem raised by Arifin, Z. et al. (2021).

5.2 The Ability to Practise and Remember the New Vocabulary

Observer 2 showed that 74% of the students were able to practise and memorise the new vocabulary they had learnt using this microteaching method. This result solves the problem of vocabulary enrichment mentioned by Husain, N. S. and Mohamad, N. (2020). But the vocabulary microteaching template divides into two forms. The first is the grammar template (نحو), as in the figure above, and the second is the daily conversation template, as in the figure below. In the daily conversation template, there are only 'subject' (مبتداء) and 'predicate' (خير) or (مضاف) and (مضاف إليه). Observers 1 and 3 said that the students can remember vocabulary related to names, food, colours, occupation, number, position, hours, and minutes and more in a short time. Observer 1 said that students can fill in the Excel column with 'subject' and 'predicate' by designing their own sentences. They are also able to clarify the words 'subject' or 'predicate' or (مضاف) and (مضاف إليه) in the given paragraph.

5.3 The Ability to Apply the Function of the Components in The Arabic Sentence for Pronunciation and Fluent Reading

The observers agreed that 68% of the students were able to pronounce and read a paragraph correctly after experiencing this microteaching method. Most of them knew the function of the Arabic component in the sentence, from which the different vowel signs for fluent reading were derived. After writing the words themselves, the students were able to read the article with the correct symbol and vowel of the Arabic characters. They know the role and function of (اسم), (فعل), (حرف), (مفعول به), (مبتداء), (خير), (مضاف إليه), (مضاف) and many others leading to the correct pronunciation of the character symbols. As Bataineh, R. et al. (2017) note, good results are shown after students have practised reading under the guidance of teachers.

6.0 MICROTEACHING PRACTISE IN THE REALITY OF THE UNIVERSITY

6.1 Practise Sentence Structure Every Week of The Semester According to The Learning Theory

Lecturers need to get their students to practise forming sentences every week of the semester after learning theory. Before the class starts in week 1, lecturers must ask their students to fully install the laptop or smartphone with Microsoft Excel in Arabic font. Students could practise forming sentences in front of the lecturers after listening to the lectures. Never postpone practicing until the next week, because then students forget what they learned today. It must start with self-introduction, all the way to writing a statement and analysing a sentence. Apart from enriching vocabulary, this step also serves to familiarise oneself with the form of verb, adverb, and tense, whether it is past, present, future or command as indicated by Yasim, I. M. M. et al. (2016) Husain, N. S. and Mohamad, N. (2020). The lecture of the theory needs to be aligned with the

students' activities as stated by Bataineh, R. et al. (2017) to make the learning process comprehensive.

6.2 Learning Nouns, Verbs, Prepositions, and Verses Done Simply Simultaneously to Start Practice Building the Sentence in the First Week

Sentence construction cannot be practised in the first week if the teacher focuses only on nouns. Some teachers practise this way to make their students comprehensively familiar with nouns. But learning and assessment in the semester system requires students to be able to practise the language quickly. Even if one learns too much without practising, students forget what they have learnt in class. Microteaching gives students the opportunity to practise the simple sentences and verses at the same time to build them into their long-term memory as a sentence. Less theory followed by practise is better than learning more theory without practise in one lesson. This practise also leads students to independent activity, as Bataineh, R. et al. (2017) states.

6.3 Coaching All Students in Class

Teachers need to coach each student in the class to ensure that no one is left behind in the microteaching practise. This situation requires an optimal limit on the number of students per class. This is good for making students active learners. Engaging students in practise will increase their understanding and confidence in the Arabic course and prevent them from being bored when they take the course, as noted by Arifin, Z. et al. (2021). Coaching is an important element in language learning as noted by Yaacob, M. and Bakar, K.A. (2018).

6.4 Readiness of the Teaching Material

Teachers need to be well prepared for the teaching material as it is the tool of this method. A good teaching method without content also leads the students nowhere. Content can be in the form of digital words, posters, articles, cartoons, audio and video files, YouTube channels, websites and much more. Digital documents make teaching and learning more mobile and can be attached via WhatsApp apps, and Facebook, as Zainuddin, N. et al. (2020) notes. Movement Control Order (MCO) due to the Covid 19 pandemic also requires teaching and learning to be more mobile and online. The material must consist of a variety of content covered in the course as argued by Bataineh, R. et al. (2017), Jannah, M. and Nababan, A. A. (2020). Jamil, T. (2020) also studied sign language learning for the deaf and hearing impaired. The similarity here is that the learning process is still done with digital material.

6.5 Combining Microteaching with The Technique of Word Highlighting

The Arabic language has two ways of writing and speaking. The first is a sentence with each word as (هو يستخدم السيارة). The second style is combining words completely as 1 sentence like (يستخدمها). The first style can be used in the Microteaching Arabic template. The second style must be used in the highlighting technique because we were not able to chunk the combination of noun, adverb, verb, and object from one word. Teachers could apply this work in the form of games to make learning more fun as described by Yasim, I. M. M. et al. (2016) and Masrop, N. A. M. et al. (2019).

6.6 Combining Writing, Speaking, Reading and Listening in a Microteaching Practise

As described by Bataineh, R. et al. (2017), daily practise in writing, speaking, reading, and listening must be combined with monitoring in this microteaching practise. This is important to ensure that students become familiar with the theory and practical language before they face the examinations, which usually take place in week 5 or

later. Delayed practise means that students will have acquired fewer skills before the assessment. The given Microsoft Excel template is suitable for practising all the skills at once.

6.7 Variety of Microteaching Form Based on The Conditions of the Sentence

There are two types of sentences that students need to learn. The first is a formal sentence and the second is a sentence for daily conversation. There are also subtopics in the Arabic course that can be taught in microteaching. Teachers can design several types of sentence templates so that students can practise the sentence after they have heard the theory. In addition to the formal sentence and the daily conversation sentence, there are other subtopics that can have multiple sentences in the microteaching template. The pictures below show examples of this statement.

1	مفرد مجرور بالكسرة	جر	مفرد منصوب بالفتحة	تصريف فعل الماضي	جملة الأسمية
2	مفعول معه	حرف	مفعول به	فعل	اسم
3	مفعول لأجله	في	الباب	فتح	محمد
4	مفعول معه	في	الباب	فتحا	محمدان
5	مفعول معه	في	الباب	فتحوا	محمدون
6	مفعول معه	في	الباب	فتحة	عائشة
7	مفعول معه	في	الباب	فتحتا	عائشان
8	مفعول معه	في	الباب	فتحن	عائشات
9	مفعول معه	في	الباب	فتحت	أنت
10	مفعول معه	في	الباب	فتحتما	أنتما
11	مفعول معه	في	الباب	فتحتم	أنتم
12	مفعول معه	في	الباب	فتحت	أنت
13	مفعول معه	في	الباب	فتحتما	أنتما
14	مفعول معه	في	الباب	فتحتن	أنتن
15	مفعول معه	في	الباب	فتحت	أنا
16	مفعول معه	في	الباب	فتحتنا	نحن

Diagram 6.1: Verbs in Microteaching Template

1	Objek	Subjek	Objek	Subjek
2	خير	المبتدأ (اسم إشارة)	الخبر	المبتدأ (معرّب)
3	من فضلي ربّي	هذا	الجميلة	المدرسة
4	كتابان	هذان	بالعدل	القاضيان
5	كتب	هؤلاء	المقروءات	من
6	سيارة	هذه	برفعنا	الله
7	سيارتان	هاتان	إحترام	نكسب
8	سيارات	هؤلاء	معدن	الذهب
9			متنافسون	اللاعبون
10	طفل	ذاك	متفقون	الشركاء
11	طفلان	ذانك	رحيمات	الممرضات
12	أطفال	أولئك		
13	مدرسة	تلك		
14	مدرستان	تانك	الخبر	المبتدأ (اسم مبني ضمير)
15	مدارس	أولئك	مهندس	هو
			مهندسان	هنا

Diagram 6.2: Phrases and Verses in Microteaching Template

6.8 Continuous Practise for Lifelong Learning

Even during and after the end of the semester, teachers must ask students to practise building Arabic sentences continuously. Normal people can master a language after practising it for two years. Not just within 14 or 17 weeks. Getting a good grade in Arabic course only by doing assignments will not help students to have a fruitful learning process. Students need to memorise the microteaching template for Arabic and use it to practise making sentences or analysing sentences in articles, otherwise they will forget Arabic after the semester is over.

7.0 RECOMMENDATION

For future studies, it would be good to find an application that supports the Microteaching Arabic method via WhatsApp, Microsoft Teams, Facebook, and many others to help students practise sentences. Nowadays, the microteaching method can be practised in Microsoft Excel software. It is easy when students can practise directly in WhatsApp, Facebook, or Microsoft Teams without opening another software through the application.

8.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this microteaching method can improve students' learning skills in Arabic class if teachers and students follow the steps with full discipline. This method is one of the solutions to ensure that students really master the Arabic course without having to cut and paste verses and phrases. Students will be able to understand and analyse the verses and phrases themselves without being completely dependent on Google Access.

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