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**Yuni Lestari, Yusuf Muhtarom, and Maksudin**

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# Implementing the Humanistic Approach in 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Interactive Arabic Language Learning at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah

Yuni Lestari\*, Yusuf Muhtarom, and Maksudin

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## Abstract

The increasing demands of 21st-century education require language instruction models that not only enhance linguistic competence but also foster critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity (4Cs). Arabic language learning in Indonesian madrasahs, however, continues to face challenges such as low student engagement, monotonous teaching practices, and limited integration of digital tools. This study aims to explore the implementation of the humanistic approach as an innovative framework for interactive Arabic language learning at *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*. Employing a library research method, the study systematically reviewed books, peer-reviewed journals, encyclopedias, dictionaries, and electronic documents. The findings reveal that the humanistic approach promotes holistic student development by integrating cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects through supportive, interactive, and technology-mediated activities. It was also found that incorporating educational games and role-playing strategies enhances listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, while simultaneously cultivating students' confidence and motivation. This study contributes to the literature by positioning the humanistic approach as a relevant pedagogical model for addressing contemporary challenges in Arabic education. It highlights the need for teacher training, adaptive methodologies, and context-sensitive media to optimize learning outcomes. Future research should empirically test the long-term effectiveness of this approach across diverse educational settings.

**Keywords:** Humanistic Approach; 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning; Arabic Language Instruction

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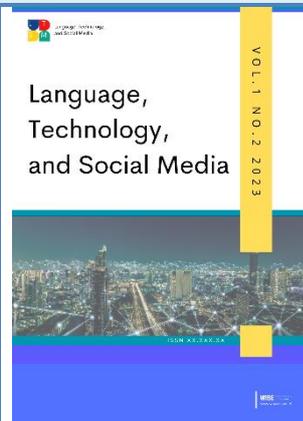
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## INTRODUCTION

This study aims to describe and analyze the implementation of a humanistic approach in interactive Arabic language learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century at *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*. The objective of this research is to identify and evaluate the effectiveness of the humanistic approach in enhancing students' Arabic language skills, considering the advancements in technology and the educational needs in the digital era. The development of information and communication technology has brought significant changes in various aspects of life, including education [1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [6]. The Fourth Industrial Revolution demands an updated educational system that can produce graduates equipped with 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, effective communication, collaboration, and creativity (the 4Cs) [7], [8], [9], [10], [11], [12], [13]. Today's educational system must be capable of integrating technology into the learning process to meet these demands.

However, Arabic language learning in Indonesia still faces numerous challenges. Students often find it difficult to grasp the Arabic language, whether in *Madrasah* or pesantren. Several factors contribute to these difficulties, including unengaging teaching methods, boring learning environments, and low student involvement [14], [15], [16]. This situation highlights a gap between the teaching methods used and the students' needs. The humanistic approach offers a potential solution to address these issues [17], [18], [19], [20]. This approach focuses on human aspects such as individual potential development, enjoyable learning experiences, and emotional engagement of students. In the humanistic approach, teachers act as facilitators who assist students in developing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor abilities. This approach also emphasizes the importance of a supportive and non-threatening learning environment, making students feel more comfortable and motivated to learn.

The novelty of this study lies in the application of the humanistic approach in the context of interactive Arabic language learning in the digital age. This research not only focuses on theory but also on the practical implementation of the humanistic approach in Arabic language learning. Therefore, this study is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of more effective, innovative, and enjoyable teaching methods, which can be adopted by teachers in *Madrasahs* to improve students' Arabic language skills. This study will explore how the humanistic approach can be applied in Arabic language learning by utilizing digital technology, and how this approach can enhance students' 4C skills. Additionally, the research will identify the challenges and obstacles faced in implementing the humanistic approach and provide practical recommendations for educators to optimize Arabic language learning in *Madrasah*. Thus, this study not only provides a deeper understanding of the humanistic approach in Arabic language learning but also offers practical solutions that can be applied to improve the quality of Arabic language education in Indonesia.

## METHODS

This study employs a library research method. Library research involves a series of activities to obtain data through reading, recording, and analyzing available resources in libraries and on the internet, including books, journals, encyclopedias, documents, and magazines.

### *Materials and Instruments*

Data were obtained from various literatures, including academic books, scholarly journal articles, encyclopedias, dictionaries, and electronic documents from relevant websites. The main instruments in this research are computer devices and internet access for searching and downloading relevant literature. Additionally, reference management software such as Mendeley or Zotero was used to facilitate the organization and citation of sources.

### *Research Procedure*

The first stage involved identifying the research topic and formulating research questions, focusing on the implementation of a humanistic approach in interactive Arabic language learning at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. The second stage consisted of a comprehensive literature search, employing specific keywords across databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, and university digital libraries. The third stage was literature selection, where sources were filtered for quality, relevance, and credibility, with priority given to peer-reviewed journals and authoritative academic publications. The fourth stage involved systematic reading and data recording, in which quotations, main arguments, and key findings relevant to the research questions were extracted and organized. The fifth stage was data analysis, employing a descriptive–analytical approach to identify patterns and thematic connections across the literature. Finally, the sixth stage involved report writing, where the analyzed findings were structured into a comprehensive research paper, consisting of introduction, methods, results, discussion, and conclusion.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study are categorized into four main Arabic language skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing. A summary of the findings is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Summary of Results on the Implementation of the Humanistic Approach in Arabic Learning

<b>Language Skill</b>	<b>Learning Activity/Game</b>	<b>Main Outcomes</b>
Listening (Istima')	Telephone Snake / Chain Message	Improved comprehension and accuracy in reproducing oral information.
Speaking (Kalam)	Introduction Pen, Guess Your Partner	Increased confidence, fluency, and ability to construct complex sentences.
Reading (Qira'ah)	Picture Game	Enhanced comprehension, ability to extract key information, and critical engagement with texts.
Writing (Kitabah)	Complete the Picture and Write its Name, Paper Strips (Strip Story)	Improved vocabulary use, sentence construction, and coherence in paragraph writing.

### *Listening Skills (Istima')*

Students engaged in the *Telephone Snake* activity showed marked improvements in their ability to interpret and reproduce oral messages accurately. The sequential transmission of information from one student to another required careful attention, active concentration, and immediate recall, which directly strengthened short-term auditory memory. Regular participation in this activity enhanced comprehension and retention of spoken Arabic, as learners not only focused on linguistic input but

also developed awareness of phonological patterns and intonation. This result indicates that interactive listening tasks promote deeper auditory processing and increase learners' confidence in handling authentic oral communication, aligning with previous findings that cooperative listening activities significantly reduce listening anxiety and improve accuracy.

### ***Speaking Skills (Kalam)***

The *Introduction Pen* and *Guess Your Partner* games provided meaningful and authentic contexts for oral interaction. By encouraging students to introduce themselves and exchange personal information, these activities shifted speaking practice from mechanical drills to purposeful communication. The results demonstrated notable improvements in fluency, self-confidence, and syntactic complexity, suggesting that learners were able to move beyond formulaic expressions toward constructing more elaborate sentences. The interactive nature of the games created a low-stakes environment that encouraged risk-taking, spontaneity, and peer support. Such gains are consistent with communicative language teaching principles, where meaningful use of the target language in social contexts enhances both linguistic competence and affective engagement.

### ***Reading Skills (Qira'ah)***

The *Picture Game* proved to be highly effective in strengthening reading comprehension by linking textual input with visual representation. Students were required to extract key information from descriptive texts, interpret meaning, and explain content collaboratively. This dual-channel processing combining textual and visual stimuli stimulated higher-order thinking skills such as inference-making and analysis, while also enhancing vocabulary acquisition through contextual exposure. Furthermore, group-based interpretation fostered collaborative learning, where students negotiated meaning and shared perspectives, thereby reinforcing comprehension at both individual and collective levels. This outcome demonstrates that multimodal reading activities not only expand lexical knowledge but also cultivate critical literacy skills essential in 21st-century learning.

### ***Writing Skills (Kitabah)***

Activities such as *Complete the Picture and Write its Name* and *Strip Story* significantly contributed to the development of coherent writing ability. By engaging in tasks that required descriptive writing and sequential sentence arrangement, students practiced structuring ideas logically, employing appropriate connectors, and organizing paragraphs cohesively. These activities also expanded their active vocabulary repertoire and encouraged creative expression. Importantly, the collaborative nature of *Strip Story* encouraged peer feedback and negotiation of meaning, which strengthened students' metalinguistic awareness and self-monitoring skills. The findings suggest that task-based writing activities rooted in humanistic pedagogy not only enhance mechanical accuracy but also support learners' ability to produce meaningful, contextually rich written texts.

### ***Discussion***

The findings of this study confirm that the humanistic approach is effective in improving Arabic language learning at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, as evidenced by students' progress in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These improvements are not only technical in nature but also relate to students' confidence, motivation, and willingness to participate actively in class. This outcome resonates with Alsubaei [2], who emphasized that humanistic pedagogy creates emotionally safe

environments where learners feel valued, which in turn facilitates self-expression and deeper engagement with the learning process. The role of interactive and game-based strategies in this study, such as *Telephone Snake* and *Picture Game*, also reflects prior findings by Ritonga et al. [5] and Sahrim et al. [6], who demonstrated that digital and interactive methods enhance both comprehension and oral proficiency by making learning more contextualized and engaging.

The integration of the humanistic approach with 21st-century competencies further validates the relevance of this framework in contemporary education. Students' ability to think critically, collaborate, and express creativity during learning activities is consistent with Mulyani and Sholeh [7], who argued that embedding the 4Cs is a key requirement for preparing students to meet global educational challenges. Similarly, Caserta et al. [9] confirmed that active learning systems are particularly effective in cultivating higher-order thinking and communication skills. The observed enhancement in reading and writing proficiency in this study also supports earlier work by Khaira [3] and Hijriyah et al. [8], who reported that puzzle-based and multimodal strategies effectively develop literacy by encouraging learners to engage critically with texts and visuals.

Nevertheless, challenges remain in implementing this approach across diverse student groups. The heterogeneous abilities of learners often create difficulties in vocabulary acquisition and comprehension, as noted by Huda [14]. This study encountered similar issues, indicating that methodological flexibility and differentiated instruction are necessary to address the varied needs of students. Teacher training emerges as a crucial factor in ensuring that educators are equipped to design adaptive strategies, while the integration of digital media, as highlighted by Alsubaie [2], offers additional opportunities to tailor instruction and provide inclusive learning resources.

Taken together, the results of this study not only corroborate existing literature but also extend the discourse on humanistic pedagogy by illustrating its practical application in Arabic language education at the elementary level. By linking humanistic principles with interactive, technology-enhanced methods, this research demonstrates a viable pathway for improving linguistic competence while simultaneously fostering 21st-century skills. At the same time, it highlights the need for continuous innovation in teacher training and curriculum design to ensure sustainability and scalability of this approach in the digital era.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the humanistic approach in interactive Arabic language learning in the 21st century has a positive impact on the development of students' language skills in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. This approach emphasizes the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects of students, aiding them in comprehending and mastering Arabic more effectively. In the context of the 21st century, the 4C skills (Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, and Creativity) are highly relevant and can be integrated with the humanistic approach to enhance student competencies. The operational stages of this approach include continuous guidance and explanations, role-playing activities, and active participation of educators in setting examples for students. The implementation of this strategy in Indonesia still requires further development, particularly in the utilization of appropriate methods and learning media tailored to the varying intelligence levels across different educational stages. Overall, the humanistic approach grants students the freedom to express themselves, increases their enthusiasm for learning, and creates a more enjoyable and interactive learning environment. However, challenges in implementing this approach must be

addressed through methodological adjustments and ongoing development to ensure the success of Arabic language learning in this digital era.

## AUTHOR INFORMATION

### *Corresponding Author*

**Yuni Lestari** – Department of Arabic Education, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta (Indonesia);

[orcid.org/0000-0003-1405-0319](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1405-0319)

Email: [yunilestari2110@gmail.com](mailto:yunilestari2110@gmail.com)

### *Authors*

**Yuni Lestari** – Department of Arabic Education, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta (Indonesia);

[orcid.org/0000-0003-1405-0319](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1405-0319)

**Yusuf Muhtarom** – Department of Arabic Education, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta (Indonesia);

[orcid.org/0000-0001-8131-4711](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8131-4711)

**Maksudin** – Department of Arabic Education, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta (Indonesia);

[orcid.org/0000-0002-0616-5311](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0616-5311)

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

"The authors declare no conflict of interest."

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