

Arabic Competition Role for Self-Maturity Development Among the Students of Arabic Education Department

Latifa Yasmin*, Muh. Naim Madjid

Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Email: latifa.yasmin.fpb22@mail.umy.ac.id*, naimmadjid@umy.ac.id

Abstract

Arabic language competitions are not only platforms for linguistic achievement but also play a strategic role in fostering students' self-maturity. This study aims to examine the role of Arabic competitions in developing self-maturity and Arabic language competence among students of the Arabic Education Department. This research employed a descriptive qualitative method involving 16 students who had participated in Arabic competitions. Data were collected through questionnaires analyzed using the Respondent Achievement Level technique and supported by in-depth interviews. The findings indicate that participation in Arabic competitions positively contributes to the development of self-maturity, particularly in self-confidence, emotional control, discipline, and responsibility. In addition, students' Arabic language competencies—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—also showed improvement, with overall results categorized as good. The study concludes that Arabic competitions function as an effective catalyst for enhancing both self-maturity and Arabic language competence, and thus are relevant to be integrated into academic and extracurricular programs.

Keywords:

Role;

Arabic Competition;

Competence;

Self-Maturity

INTRODUCTION

Language is a very important tool in human life as a means of communication to convey messages or intentions from the speaker to the listener (Mislikhah, 2014). Through language, individuals can convey ideas, thoughts, and feelings, while also building social and cultural interactions. In addition, language plays a role as the main medium in the learning process and the development of science. In the context of Islamic education, Arabic has a very important position because it not only functions as a means of communication, but also as the language of the *Qur'an*, *hadith*, and various classical Islamic literature that form the basis of Islamic civilization and science, as well as being used by Muslims as a medium of spiritual communication with Allah SWT in the performance of worship, especially prayer (Sakdiah & Sihombing, 2023). Therefore, mastery of Arabic is a fundamental requirement for students of the Arabic Language Education Study Program so that they are able to understand, internalize, and teach Islamic values comprehensively and practically.

Learning Arabic is a learning process that emphasizes language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills (Rumania et al., 2023). Student motivation and maturity in Arabic language learning are greatly influenced by teaching methods, learning environments, and meaningful engagement, so that participatory Arabic language activities can

Arabic Competition Role for Self-Maturity Development Among the Students of Arabic Education Department be effective catalysts in the Society 5.0 era (Aminuzal et al., 2024). In a university environment, especially in the Arabic Language Education Study Program, learning success is not only measured by academic achievement in the classroom, but also by students' ability to apply language skills in real situations. One of the means considered effective for developing these skills is Arabic language competition. Various types of competitions, such as speeches (*khitābah*), debates (*munāẓarah*), Arabic singing (*ghinā' 'arabī*), poetry reading (*qirā'at al-shi'ir*), news reading (*qirā'at al-akhbār*), and *tahfīz*, are forms of learning that are applicable, competitive, and creative. Through these activities, students are not only challenged cognitively, but also affectively and psychomotorically, such as in their ability to manage emotions, build self-confidence, and convey ideas effectively in a foreign language. These competitions can have an impact on increasing motivation to learn Arabic (Annas, 2025).

Arabic language competitions can increase enthusiasm for learning and foster a spirit of competition in doing good (*fastabiqūl khairāt*) (Hidayati et al., 2019). Learning activities that involve active participation, such as Arabic language competitions and visual learning, can be catalysts in improving students' Arabic language skills while fostering personal maturity through self-confidence and active involvement (Husein & Madjid, 2024). Ideally, Arabic language competitions can serve as a catalyst for student personality development, particularly in relation to self-maturity and improved language competence. Self-maturity is an individual's ability to adapt to the realities of life, balance various conflicts, and make sense of every experience in daily life (Rizqia, 2015). Self-maturity reflects an individual's ability to understand their potential, control their emotions, and take responsibility for the decisions and actions they take. Students with a good level of self-maturity tend to be more adaptive, open to criticism, and have the courage to try new experiences, including participating in Arabic language competitions. Meanwhile, Arabic language competence includes four main skills, namely listening (*istimā'*), speaking (*kalām*), reading (*qirā'ah*), and writing (*kitābah*) (Nurdianto, 2020). These four skills can be optimally developed through activities that require active involvement and direct practice, such as competitions.

However, empirical conditions show that there is still a gap between theoretical expectations and reality in the field. Some students still feel unconfident, awkward, or reluctant to participate in competitions because they consider their Arabic language skills to be inadequate. There are also many students who view competitions as activities only for individuals with high abilities, resulting in low interest and motivation to participate. On the other hand, institutional support from the campus and supervising lecturers has not been fully optimized, whether in the form of intensive training, continuous mentoring, or the provision of adequate facilities (Stockwell, 2022; Viberg & Gronlund, 2017). As a result, the potential of Arabic competitions as a medium for developing self-maturity and language competence has not been fully utilized.

In line with the demands of globalization, students are required to have strong soft skills and life skills in order to be able to compete in the world of work. In this case, Arabic language competitions have great potential in shaping strong character, discipline, confidence, and critical and reflective thinking skills. Competitions are held to encourage students to excel academically while also possessing creativity, innovation, and good character (Zaenudin & Muhammad, 2025). Thus, Arabic language competitions are not only oriented towards achievement but also serve as a means of character building and personal maturity.

Theoretically, the concept of self-maturity has strong relevance in student self-development. Self-maturity is characterized by emotional stability, the ability to make rational decisions, and the ability to establish healthy social relationships. For PBA students, self-maturity is an important aspect in shaping professional Arabic language educators with good personalities and a high sense of social awareness. Through Arabic language competitions, students are faced with competitive situations that require self-control, composure, and the ability to work together, which indirectly contributes to the formation of self-maturity (Dewaele & Li, 2020; Godwin-Jones, 2018; Li, 2020; Macaro et al., 2018; Plonsky & Oswald, 2017).

Empirically, a number of previous studies have shown that student involvement in competitive activities has a positive impact on improving critical thinking and interpersonal communication skills. In addition, participation in competitions also contributes to increasing students' self-confidence and motivation to achieve (Sari & Hidayat, 2022). However, studies that specifically examine the relationship between Arabic language competitions and the formation of self-maturity and the improvement of students' language competence are still relatively limited, especially in the Arabic Language Education Study Program at Muhammadiyah University Yogyakarta (UMY). This condition indicates an important research gap that needs to be studied more in depth.

Furthermore, this study is relevant to contemporary issues in higher education, namely the integration of academic competency development and character building. Universities are required not only to produce graduates who are intellectually superior, but also emotionally and socially mature. In this context, Arabic language competitions can be an effective medium for character education because they instill the values of perseverance, sportsmanship, competitive ethics, and the ability to manage pressure. This is in line with the national education goal of emphasizing the development of students' potential to become individuals who are faithful, pious, knowledgeable, creative, and responsible.

Based on this description, Arabic language competitions have a strategic role as a catalyst in the formation of self-maturity and the improvement of Arabic language competence among PBA students. However, there is still a gap between the potential of competition activities and their implementation in the field. Therefore, this study is important to examine the extent to which participation in Arabic language competitions contributes to the self-maturity and language competence of PBA UMY students from the 2022–2024 batch, as well as to provide recommendations for more effective student learning and coaching development in the future. It is hoped that this study can contribute new insights into the role of competitive activities in producing prospective Arabic language educators who are not only academically excellent but also personally and emotionally mature.

This study aims to analyze the role of Arabic language competitions in developing students' self-maturity and improving Arabic language competence among students of the Arabic Language Education Study Program at Muhammadiyah University Yogyakarta. In addition, this study seeks to identify how students' participation in various Arabic language competitions contributes to the improvement of Arabic language skills, including listening (*istimāʿ*), speaking (*kalām*), reading (*qirāʾah*), and writing (*kitābah*). Furthermore, this research aims to examine the relationship between students' involvement in Arabic competitions and the development of affective aspects such as self-confidence, emotional

Arabic Competition Role for Self-Maturity Development Among the Students of Arabic Education Department control, discipline, and responsibility as indicators of self-maturity. Therefore, this study is expected to provide empirical insights into the contribution of Arabic language competitions as a learning medium that not only enhances students' linguistic competence but also fosters character development and personal maturity in the context of higher education.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach, which aims to describe in depth the role of participation in Arabic language competitions on students' self-maturity and Arabic language competence (Hanyfah et al., 2022). This approach was chosen because the study focused on the meaning, experiences, perceptions, and impact of competition participation as directly experienced by the research subjects, without intervening in the natural conditions of the participants. The research design was developed so that it could be replicated with clear and systematic procedures and instruments.

The study was conducted at the Arabic Language Education Study Program (PBA), Muhammadiyah University Yogyakarta (UMY). The research subjects were 16 students from the 2022–2024 batch, selected purposively based on the criteria of students who were currently participating in or had participated in Arabic language competitions, both at the internal campus level and externally. The selection of respondents was based on the relevance of their experiences to the focus of the research.

The main data collection techniques in this study included questionnaires and interviews. Questionnaires were used to obtain data on students' perceptions of the impact of Arabic language competitions on aspects of self-maturity and Arabic language competence. The questionnaire instrument was developed using a Likert scale and analysed using the Respondent Achievement Level (RAL) technique to determine the attainment level trends for each indicator. The RAL formula calculates the percentage of actual scores against ideal scores, following analysis procedures commonly used in educational and social research.

In addition to questionnaires, interviews were conducted to deepen and reinforce the findings from the questionnaires. Interviews in qualitative research are a process of guided conversation with specific objectives, which begins with a series of open-ended questions (Rachmawati, 2007). The interviews focused on the students' experiences during Arabic language competitions, and the changes they felt in terms of self-control, self-confidence, responsibility, and improvement in Arabic language skills. The interview data were analysed using thematic analysis, through a process of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

Data validity was ensured through triangulation techniques, namely by comparing the questionnaire results with the interview data. The triangulated data were expected to provide a complete and credible picture of the role of Arabic language competitions as a catalyst for self-maturity and improvement in the Arabic language competence of PBA UMY students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research data includes questionnaire results, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies of students in the Arabic Language Education Study Program at Muhammadiyah University Yogyakarta who are currently participating in or have participated in Arabic language competitions. All of the data collected was then analysed descriptively to describe

Arabic Competition Role for Self-Maturity Development Among the Students of Arabic Education Department the role of participation in Arabic language competitions on students' self-maturity and Arabic language competence. The main instrument, a questionnaire, was designed using a five-point Likert scale, with a score range of 1–5, where 1 indicates strongly disagree and 5 indicates strongly agree with the given statements. There were 6 questions related to Arabic language competitions, 8 questions related to self-maturity, and 5 questions related to Arabic language competence.

The questionnaire results showed that student participation in Arabic language competitions contributed to the improvement of four language competencies, namely listening (istima'), speaking (kalam), reading (qira'ah), and writing (kitabah), which correlated with the development of students' self-maturity.

My listening and speaking skills improved after taking part in the competition.

9 Answer

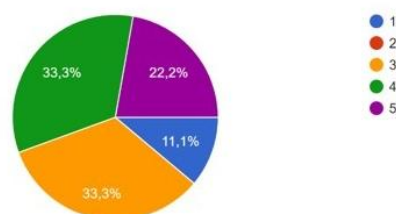


Figure 1. percentage of listening and speaking skills

There are 11.1% of respondents who disagree that their listening and speaking skills improved after participating in the competition. In contrast, 55.5% agree and 22.2% strongly agree that the competition enhanced their listening and speaking abilities. This indicates that most participants experienced positive development in oral skills, as also supported by the observation and interview findings.

The Arabic Language Competition improved my ability to read Arabic texts fluently and correctly.

6 Answer

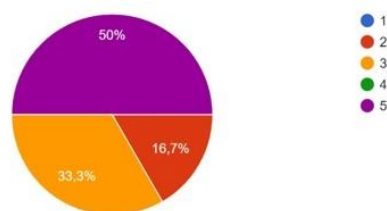


Figure 2. percentage of reading ability

There are 16.7% of respondents who disagree that the Arabic Language Competition improved their reading ability. In contrast, 33.3% agree and 50% strongly agree that their ability to read Arabic texts fluently and correctly improved. This suggests that the competition played an important role in strengthening participants' reading skills.

My kitabah (writing) ability improved after taking part in the competition.

1 Answer

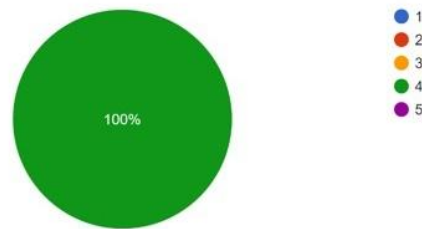


Figure 3. percentage of writing ability

There are no respondents who disagree that their *kitabah* (writing) ability improved after taking part in the competition. In contrast, 100% of respondents agree that their writing skills developed. This indicates that the competition had a very strong impact on improving Arabic writing competence.

After participating in the Arabic language competition, I became more confident and calm in speaking in public.

16 Answer

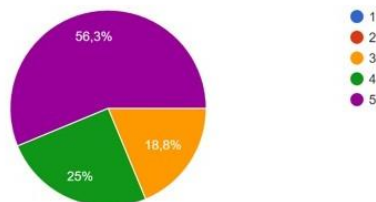


Figure 4. percentage of impact after participating in the competition

There are no respondents who disagree that they became more confident and calm in public speaking after participating in the competition. In contrast, 25% agree and 56.3% strongly agree that the competition helped increase their confidence, while 18.8% show moderate agreement. This indicates that the competition effectively reduced anxiety and strengthened self-confidence.

I remain optimistic even though I am facing more experienced contestants.

16 Answer

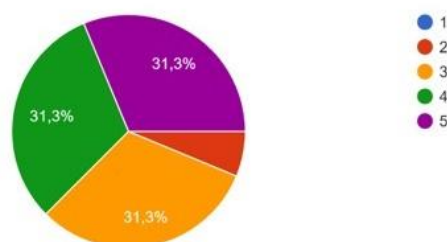


Figure 5. percentage of self-control

Arabic Competition Role for Self-Maturity Development Among the Students of Arabic Education Department

There are only a small number of respondents who disagree that they remain optimistic when facing more experienced contestants. In contrast, 31.3% agree, 31.3% strongly agree, and 31.3% moderately agree. This indicates that most participants maintain a positive attitude and mental resilience despite competitive challenges.

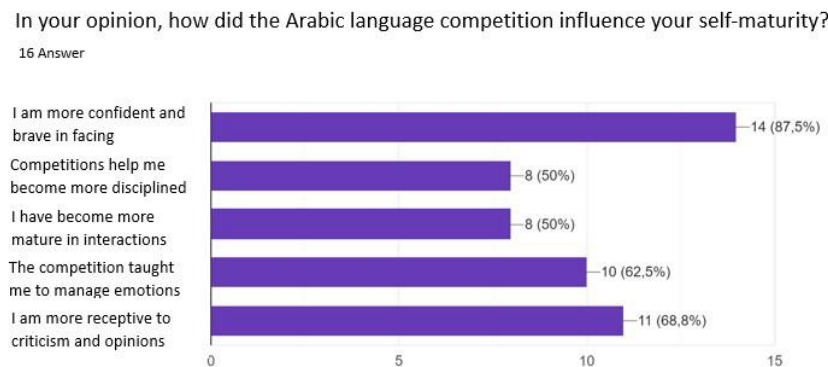


Figure 6. percentage of positive influence of the competition

The chart shows that most respondents believe the Arabic language competition positively influenced their self-maturity. The strongest impact is increased confidence and courage (87.5%). Many participants also reported becoming more receptive to criticism (68.8%) and better at managing emotions (62.5%), while discipline and maturity in social interactions were each reported by half of the respondents.

Table 1. Data results

No.	Aspect	Score	Description
1	Arabic Language Competition	85,6	Good
2	Self-Maturity	81,4	Good
3	Arabic Language Competence	75,75	Fairly Good
Average		80,9	Good

Source: Results of questionnaire data processing from students of the Arabic Language Education Study Program at Muhammadiyah University Yogyakarta (2022–2024 cohort)

The final results of the study show that student participation in Arabic language competitions has a positive impact on the maturity and Arabic language competence of students in the Arabic Language Education Study Program at Muhammadiyah University Yogyakarta. Based on the results of the questionnaire analysis processed using the Respondent Achievement Level, the Arabic language competition aspect scored 85.6 in the good category, the self-maturity aspect scored 81.4 in the good category, while the Arabic language competency aspect scored 75.75 in the fairly good category. The overall average score reached 80.9, which is in the good category. These findings indicate that, in general, Arabic language competitions contribute positively to student development, with a stronger impact on the affective aspect than on the linguistic aspect.

Arabic Competition Role for Self-Maturity Development Among the Students of Arabic Education Department

To reinforce the research results, qualitative data was obtained through in-depth interviews with respondents. The findings of these interviews are presented in tabular form to illustrate the experiences, views, and influence of student participation in Arabic language competitions on self-maturity and language competence.

Table 2. Interview data

<i>Aspect</i>	<i>Statement</i>	<i>Answer</i>
Arabic Language Competition	1. What factor most motivated you to participate in the Arabic Language Competition?	My own desire to hone my Arabic language skills
	2. What personal goals did you hope to achieve through the Arabic Language Competition?	To train my mind and become more confident
Arabic Language Competence	1. Which aspect of Arabic language skills improved the most after you participated in the competition (maharah kalam, qirā'ah, kitābah, istimā')?	Maharah Kalam
	2. Have you noticed any improvement in your vocabulary or grammar after participating in the competition?	Yes, because I read and hear Arabic a lot, so I look up the meanings to make it easier to memorize.
Self-Maturity	1. How did participating in the competition help you learn to manage your time between your class schedule and practice sessions?	I still prioritize my classes, then practice in my spare time.
	2. Did the competition improve your ability to work with or communicate with others?	Yes, I made many new friends and expanded my network both within and outside the campus.
General Impact	1. In your opinion, how does the Arabic competition affect your academic future or career?	It has an impact because, in addition to networking, I gained a lot of new experiences that can be a plus when I apply for a job.
	2. In your opinion, what strategies can the Arabic Language Program implement to increase students' interest, motivation, and skills in participating in competitions?	Create extracurricular activities guided by experienced mentors. They can be from within the program or external sources.

Source: Results of in-depth interviews with students of the Arabic Language Education Study Program at Muhammadiyah University Yogyakarta who have participated in Arabic language competitions

Qualitatively, the interview findings show that the main motivation for students to participate in Arabic language competitions is driven by a desire to improve their Arabic language skills and develop self-confidence. Competitions are perceived as a means of mental training, broadening horizons, and evaluating one's abilities in a competitive context. This positive perception explains the high achievement in Arabic language competitions, because

Arabic Competition Role for Self-Maturity Development Among the Students of Arabic Education Department students view the competition not as an academic requirement, but as a meaningful and challenging learning experience. From an educational psychology perspective, this condition reflects strong intrinsic motivation, which contributes to increased student involvement and seriousness in the learning process.

Scientifically, the increase in student maturity can be explained through the direct experiences presented in Arabic language competitions. The process of preparing for the competition, intensive training, and the demands of performing in public create situations that require students to manage psychological pressure, manage their time, and take responsibility for the process they are undergoing. These conditions encourage the development of self-control and emotional maturity in students. This upward trend has emerged because competitions serve as informal learning spaces that place students in real-life situations that cannot be fully obtained through classroom learning. This phenomenon is in line with developmental psychology, which states that self-maturity develops optimally through challenging experiences that require adaptation.

In addition, the results of the study also show an increase in students' Arabic language competence, particularly in terms of speaking skills, vocabulary mastery, and communication confidence. This trend occurs because Arabic language competitions provide an authentic and meaningful context for language use. Students not only learn the language as a system, but also actively use it for real communication purposes. From the perspective of language learning theory, the use of language in an authentic context accelerates the internalization of language structures and improves fluency. These findings are in line with previous research results which state that performance-based competitive activities can significantly improve foreign language competence compared to conventional learning.

Furthermore, this study found a correlation between increased self-maturity and Arabic language competence. Students who showed increased self-confidence and emotional control tended to be more courageous in actively using Arabic. This phenomenon can be explained through affective theory in language learning, which emphasizes that psychological factors such as motivation and self-confidence play an important role in successful language learning. Arabic competitions contribute to reducing students' affective barriers, making them more open and confident in communicating in Arabic.

Thus, the results of this study answer the research objectives and assumptions that participation in Arabic language competitions acts as a catalyst that integrates the development of self-maturity and improvement of students' Arabic language competence. Arabic language competitions can be positioned as a strategy to support holistic Arabic language learning, as they are able to simultaneously connect linguistic and affective aspects. These findings reinforce previous research results while also contributing new insights to the study of Arabic language education in higher education, particularly in the context of students in Arabic Language Education Study Programs.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings that have been analyzed, the conclusions of this study are as follows: (1) student participation in Arabic language competitions plays a strategic role in shaping the personal maturity of students in the Arabic Language Education Study Program at Muhammadiyah University Yogyakarta, as reflected in their increased ability to manage

Arabic Competition Role for Self-Maturity Development Among the Students of Arabic Education Department emotions, self-confidence, and sense of responsibility during and after participating in competitions; (2) involvement in Arabic language competitions significantly contributes to improving students' Arabic language competence, especially in terms of fluency, vocabulary mastery, and readiness to communicate in formal and competitive situations; (3) Arabic language competitions provide a learning space that integrates affective development and linguistic ability, so that students who demonstrate a higher level of personal maturity tend to exhibit better linguistic performance. These conclusions show that Arabic language competitions serve not only as academic support activities but also as a means of character building for Arabic Language Education students. In the future, the results of this study open up opportunities for the development of more contextual and experience-based Arabic language learning programs. Educational institutions can incorporate Arabic language competitions into structured academic planning, both in intra- and extracurricular activities. Further research is recommended to explore the differences in the impact of various types of Arabic language competitions on aspects of self-maturity and language competence, as well as to examine the long-term effectiveness of competition participation for the professional readiness of Arabic Language Education graduates.

DAFTAR PUSTAKA

- Aminuzal, I., Madjid, M. N., & Putra, Y. E. (2024). Advancing Arabic Learning in the Society Era 5.0: Motivation Challenges for Indonesian Students in Jeddah. *Arabi: Journal of Arabic Studies*, 9(2), 175–186.
- Annas, I. K. (2025). Strategi Penguatan Motivasi Belajar Bahasa Arab melalui Kompetisi: Evaluasi Darunnajah Language Competition. *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat (Bisma)*, 3(1), 407–413.
- Dewaele, J.-M., & Li, C. (2020). Emotions in Second Language Acquisition: A Critical Review and Research Agenda. *System*, 93, 102295.
- Godwin-Jones, R. (2018). Using Mobile Technology to Develop Language Skills and Cultural Understanding. *Language Learning & Technology*, 22(3), 1–17.
- Hanyfah, S., Fernandes, G. R., & Budiarmo, I. (2022). Penerapan metode kualitatif deskriptif untuk aplikasi pengolahan data pelanggan pada car wash. *Semnas Ristek (Seminar Nasional Riset Dan Inovasi Teknologi)*, 6(1).
- Hidayati, F., Arifa, Z., Jariyah, A., & Zahriyah, S. (2019). Manajemen Pengorganisasian Program Bahasa Arab di Pondok Pesantren Salaf. *Tarling: Journal of Language Education*, 3(1), 115–133.
- Li, S. (2020). The Effectiveness of Corrective Feedback in Second Language Acquisition. *Language Teaching Research*, 24(2), 209–233.
- Macaro, E., Curle, S., & Pun, J. (2018). A Systematic Review of English Medium Instruction in Higher Education. *Language Teaching*, 51(1), 36–76.
- Mislikhah, S. (2014). Kesantunan Berbahasa. *International Journal of Islamic Studies*, 1(2).
- Nurdianto, T. (2020). *Kompetensi Dasar Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab*. Zahir Publishing.
- Plonsky, L., & Oswald, F. (2017). Multiple Regression as a Flexible Alternative to ANOVA in Second Language Research. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 39(3), 579–592.
- Rachmawati, I. N. (2007). Pengumpulan Data dalam Penelitian Kualitatif: Wawancara. *Jurnal Keperawatan Indonesia*, 11, 35–40.
<https://www.academia.edu/download/87022326/326.pdf>
- Rizqia, H. F. (2015). *Hubungan antara Self Maturity dan Tasamuh pada Mahasiswa Jurusan Tasawuf dan Psikoterapi*. UIN Walisongo Semarang.

- Arabic Competition Role for Self-Maturity Development Among the Students of Arabic Education Department
- Rumania, S., Maulana, A., Irawan, B., & Uthman, Y. O. (2023). Student Management in Improving Arabic Communication Competence and its Implications for Students Self Determination. *Nidhomul Haq: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 8(2), 180–192. <https://doi.org/10.31538/ndh.v8i2.3829>
- Sakdiah, N., & Sihombing, F. (2023). Problematika Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab dan Sastra Arab. *Jurnal Sathar: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab*, 1(1), 35.
- Sari, N., & Hidayat, R. (2022). Pengaruh Lomba Non-Akademik terhadap Kepercayaan Diri Mahasiswa. *Jurnal Pendidikan Karakter*, 10(3), 89–102.
- Stockwell, G. (2022). Mobile Assisted Language Learning: Concepts, Contexts and Challenges. *System*, 105, 102736.
- Viberg, O., & Gronlund, A. (2017). Understanding Students Learning Practices Using Mobile Technology. *Computers & Education*, 115, 100–112.
- Zaenudin, & Muhammad, A. S. (2025). *Upaya Pembentukan Sumber Daya Manusia Unggul Melalui Program Kompetisi Mahasiswa*. <https://kbbi.web.id/kompetisi>