

A Qualitative Case Study of Arabic Language Teachers' Pedagogical Competence

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the pedagogical competence of Arabic language teachers at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari by addressing the limited empirical evidence regarding how such competencies are implemented in Indonesian Islamic school settings. Although pedagogical competence is mandated in national standards, there remains a gap between theoretical expectations and classroom practices, particularly in Arabic language learning where specific instructional challenges often arise. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation involving school leaders, teachers, and students. The data were analyzed using the stages of reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings show that teachers have demonstrated essential aspects of pedagogical competence, including designing structured lesson plans, adapting strategies to learners' characteristics, and carrying out assessment for both processes and outcomes. However, the implementation still faces several obstacles such as limited specialized training in Arabic pedagogy, insufficient instructional media that meet students' needs, and a heavy administrative workload that reduces opportunities for professional development. This study underscores the need for ongoing capacity-building programs and the provision of more relevant teaching resources to enhance the quality of Arabic language education.

Keywords: Arabic Language Teachers, Learning Process, Pedagogic Competence

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a complex system, where education is not only about students but also about the learning process, media and educators who will design the learning process so that lessons can be received effectively by students. Therefore, teachers are required to have competencies that support their performance. Every teacher who has competencies will indirectly demonstrate their quality in teaching (Edward Gland, 2024). These competencies will be manifested in the form of mastery of knowledge and professionalism in carrying out their duties as teachers.

These competencies can be acquired through formal education or through previous experiences (Xiong, 2025). In this case, competence is defined as the knowledge, skills, and abilities mastered by an individual that have become part of who they are, enabling them to perform cognitive, affective, and psychomotor behaviours to the best of their ability (Jogezai, 2025). Therefore, teachers must continue to develop their existing competencies. Competency development can be achieved by: a) diligently reading educational books, b) reading and writing scientific papers, c) following current news from the media, d) participating in training (Purwulan, 2024). Pedagogical competence is essentially a teacher's ability to manage student learning and their mastery of theory and its application in learning (Sahlan, 2025). Pedagogical competence is a distinctive competence that distinguishes teachers from other professions and determines the level of success of the learning process and outcomes of their students (Prayetno et al., 2024).

Pedagogical competency is not readily acquired by a teacher. In this case, the quality of teachers must be above average, with achievements through continuous and systematic learning (Laila & Pariati, 2024). With good teaching skills, a teacher can be the key to the success of the teaching and learning process. On the other hand, if teachers are not familiar with these competencies, it is unlikely that successful learning can be achieved (Wahyudi, 2024). Therefore, improving the quality of education lies in the hands of teachers in particular, as they are at the forefront of the learning process in schools (Wandayani, 2022). This pedagogical competency involves fulfilling all sub-competencies and indicators of educational competency, including being able to recognise the character of students, mastering several theories and basic principles of learning, information and communication technology (ICT), constantly developing potential, good and effective communication, caring, polite, carrying out evaluations of the learning process, and using evaluations and evaluation results for the purposes of learning reflection (Armini, 2024).

Observations revealed that when children arrived at school, Arabic language teachers were already present (Supple et al., 2025). They had been disciplined by the school system, since when they were able to discipline themselves according to the predetermined learning schedule, they would receive additional financial support from the Umm Shabri Kendari Islamic boarding school foundation. (Malinić et al., 2025). In addition, the researcher also observed the learning methods used by teachers in the classroom. The Arabic language teachers carried out their main duties and functions well. They taught Arabic systematically in accordance with the lesson plans, and the students were very enthusiastic about listening and learning. This was because the teachers used a variety of strategies and did not use monotonous methods, so the students felt happy and really enjoyed each learning process. The researchers also found that

there was harmonious interaction among Arabic language teachers and with students (Kulal et al., 2024).

The application of pedagogical competence in the learning process is demonstrated by a number of appropriate study findings, including student observation and approach, the development of curricula and learning resources at the start of the school year, the use of group discussion techniques, peer tutoring, environmental approaches to learning, the use of laptops and LCDs, the involvement of students in extracurricular activities at school, and the administration of written, oral, and performance tests.(Adianto et al., 2020). The implementation of several programmes to improve the quality of student learning, both through formal learning during school hours and informal learning outside school hours or in the afternoon, is due to Arabic teachers having pedagogical competence (Zheng, 2025). The ability of teachers to design a learning style is necessary in considering unique learning methods, approaches, models and methods in accordance with the needs of students (Ningrum, 2024). Teachers already have good competence in planning, implementing, and evaluating learning, so that the learning outcomes obtained at this school have also improved (Kamilia et al., 2024). Efforts to improve teachers' pedagogical competence include seminars, workshops, training sessions, and continuing their education at a higher level, namely at the Master's degree level (Khoir et al., 2024). Teaching also utilises various approaches, methods, and teaching techniques in planning effective practical teaching (Sarpong, 2025).

Based on the above explanation, this article aims to specifically examine the importance of teachers who have pedagogical competence in teaching students through Arabic language learning that they acquire at school. This article hopes to facilitate Arabic teachers in developing the learning process through teacher pedagogical competence at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari.

METHOD

This study utilized a qualitative method(Sugiyono, 2021) with a case study approach, which was chosen to explore in depth and holistically the phenomenon of Arabic language teachers' pedagogical competence in the specific environment of the Ummu Shabri Kendari Islamic high school. Purposive sampling was used to choose locations and informants. Purposive sampling was used to choose participants, and key informants were chosen based on their direct involvement in and comprehension of the Arabic language acquisition process. The total number of informants was more than 6 people consisting of the Head of the madrasah, Deputy Head of Curriculum, Deputy Head of Student Affairs, two Arabic language teachers, one non-Arabic language teacher, and two students, consisting of elements such as the principal, vice principal for curriculum and student affairs,

two Arabic teachers, non-Arabic teachers, and students. The research was conducted over a period of three months. Data were collected from primary data (results of in-depth interviews and non-participatory observations in the classroom) and secondary data (documents such as lesson plans, teaching materials, and school records). Data collection was carried out using four main techniques: in-depth interviews, observation, documentation, and literature study, where the information obtained was compiled comprehensively to support the field findings (Arsyad & Sauri, 2024).

The collected data were analysed using the interactive data analysis concept of the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (Miles et al., 2014) which involves three continuous activities: data reduction (sorting and focusing on relevant data), data presentation (presenting findings in a systematic narrative and matrix form), and drawing conclusions (gradual verification of conclusions). To ensure the credibility (validity) of the findings, data validity tests were conducted using several techniques, including triangulation (sources and techniques), extended field observations, and member checking with informants. The application of these techniques ensures that the data produced is objective and represents the actual views and context intended by informants in the field (Susanto Dedi, Risnita, 2023).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

The Arabic language learning process at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari

Initial planning involves preparing lesson plans at the beginning of each academic year by following the guidelines from the workshop on how to prepare good and proper lesson plans. Core competencies and basic competencies are adjusted to the 2013 Curriculum, while other components are developed independently by teachers based on their potential and available resources. During the interview with Mr Habibirrahman, it was revealed that several components of the lesson plans had been modified in technical terms to suit the school's needs. These modifications did not remove any components specified in the lesson plan preparation guidelines, but were limited to: a) Learning media using LCD, cards, knowledge trees on paper, etc. b) Learning tools such as: blackboards and the internet; c) Learning resources from Arabic textbooks, workbooks, and other books.

Lesson plans were modified because not all schools have ideal infrastructure and facilities, particularly when Arabic classes have what may be deemed insufficient teaching hours. As a result, the head teacher allowed Arabic instructors to change the lesson plans as long as they stayed true to the 2013

curriculum's objectives. The results of an interview with one of the Arabic teachers revealed that:

"The determination of the learning model depends on the material we are going to discuss. First, we consider the material we are going to discuss, then secondly, the circumstances/conditions of the class. We need to know what the students are like before we can determine the learning model, because not all classes can be taught using the same learning model; it depends on the average potential of the children in the class. Based on that potential, we can then use it as a reference in determining the learning model or method."

From the above discussion, it can be seen that a teacher needs to conduct initial observations to find out the condition of the class and what needs of the students must be prepared by the teacher so that the learning objectives will be achieved in accordance with the learning objectives and the teacher's wishes. In this case, Mr Habibirrahman, as an Arabic teacher, added that Arabic language learning still mostly uses the lecture method. He said:

"The most effective method is the lecture method at the beginning of the lesson for at least 5 (five) minutes to create a conducive atmosphere. He added that the methods in one subject can consist of several methods, so teachers must be smart in adjusting them in the classroom."

From the above interview, it can be concluded that the clear and structured delivery of learning materials by subject teachers and adequate teaching materials that are appropriate for learning are a very accurate combination to make it easier for students to understand the material presented by teachers. This is also in line with what Mr Hamdi Haidar, an Arabic teacher, said when he commented that:

"I usually add learning resources to complement the material being taught. Before teaching, he usually creates or compiles a syllabus in accordance with the curriculum and designs a lesson plan in line with the syllabus to discuss the teaching material so that students can achieve the basic competencies set and follow the sequence of learning material with consideration of the learning objectives to be achieved".

Learning evaluation is carried out following the completion of the learning process. From daily, weekly, and monthly evaluations to midterm and final exams, which also involve an organized and thorough assessment process, the evaluation of learning outcomes adheres to appropriate criteria. When observing the learning outcome assessment process, the researcher noted that: a) Teachers assess students on their attitude, knowledge, and soft skills, b) The assessment process is carried out periodically, starting from daily, weekly, and monthly tests, mid-term and final exams.

The quality of Arabic language learning at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari can be improved. Several evaluations are continuously conducted by the school administration and the Ministry of Religious Affairs through training

meetings between school administrators, teachers, and the Ministry of Religious Affairs, which are held every six months. These meetings formulate that every quality learning process must be supervised both internally and externally.

Table 1. Arabic learning process at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari

The process carried out	Action
Planning	developing lesson plans where core competencies and basic competencies are adjusted to the K13 format, while other components are developed by each teacher
Implementation	One week of three hours of lessons, two face-to-face sessions (90 minutes and 45 minutes) equipped with LCD screens in every classroom and a Wi-Fi network.
Assessment	in terms of attitude, knowledge, and skills with a minimum passing grade of 80. Attitude is assessed through observation in and outside the classroom, while knowledge is assessed through tests and exams, including daily tests, mid-term exams, and final exams. Skills are assessed through practical work.
Supervision	by the Head Teacher through checking teaching documents and classroom visits, while supervision from the Ministry of Religious Affairs is carried out through classroom visits and discussions once every three months.

The pedagogical competence of Arabic teachers in the learning process

When dealing with external obstacles including environmental effects, a lack of parental support, and limited funding, teachers' pedagogical skill is crucial. Teachers must comprehend the variety of student traits and foster learning motivation through innovative techniques, individualized approaches, and ongoing assessment. Despite limited resources, competent teachers are still able to innovate by adjusting methods and media to achieve learning objectives. At Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari, Arabic teachers have demonstrated good pedagogical competence. They are able to understand the background and needs of students, design learning tools, and manage classrooms effectively. In addition, teachers are also skilled at using various approaches, conducting objective evaluations, and providing feedback that supports student development. Teachers' involvement in self-development activities, such as Subject Teacher Meeting or training, further strengthens their pedagogical quality. With the ability to design, implement, manage, and evaluate learning, the pedagogical competence of Arabic teachers at MA Ummu Shabri Kendari can be categorised as good, thus maintaining the relevance and trust of the community in educational institutions. From the discussion above regarding the pedagogical competence possessed by each Arabic teacher at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari, it can be said that it is very good. The results of an interview with the principal, Mr. Agus Sugito, stated:

"Arabic teachers here have good competence and are always improving, perhaps because of their extensive experience in teaching. To improve the quality of Arabic language learning, teachers are required to have pedagogical competence."

In line with the above interview results, he explained that there are pedagogical competencies that a professional teacher must have, such as the ability to understand students. This is in line with what Arabic teachers say when understanding student characteristics, such as:

"In understanding students, I look at their characteristics and intelligence. When dividing students into groups, I make a random selection by mixing students with high intelligence levels with students with average intelligence levels, so that students with high IQs can help other students to easily understand the lesson. For students who have difficulty learning, I approach them and reexplain the material so that they can understand it. In addition, I also hold extra lessons for students with low IQs. The purpose of holding additional lessons is to find out the causes of the students' low IQ and to be able to overcome them. Then, observe the behaviour of students while they are at school. According to him, students' behaviour varies, but even so, educators always try not to discriminate against them in terms of providing learning facilities. If there are students who have poor character, then special attention is given to improving the characteristics of these children."

In addition, the headmaster also explained that:

"In understanding the students, the Arabic teachers at this school pay attention to the students as a whole, both by observing them in the classroom during the teaching and learning process and by observing them in the school environment."

In managing the class, Arabic teachers are very thorough in teaching learning materials to students, because for them, the success of a professional teacher occurs when learning objectives are achieved and practised by their students. The consistency between what the principal said and what the researcher observed when teachers managed learning in the classroom is as follows: a) The teacher enters the classroom and greets the students. b) The teacher takes attendance. c) The teacher provides an introduction by reviewing the Arabic language lesson before continuing with the next material. d) The teacher acts as a lecturer, but more often acts as a facilitator, grouping the students first. e) The teacher presents the material, which is then discussed by each group. f) Students present their group results; g) The teacher evaluates each group; h) The teacher summarises the results presented by the groups; i) The teacher closes the session by giving a quiz and prizes. An interview with one of the Arabic teachers, Mr Habibirrahman, also revealed that:

"In my lessons, I explain the material in detail and clearly and use relaxed and flexible language so that students understand what is being conveyed. He also uses teaching methods to support the teaching and learning process so that students do not get bored or tired during the lesson. The methods I use most often are lectures,

question and answer sessions, discussions and demonstrations. I also provide direct examples that are relevant to the material and relate to everyday life. I also use learning media by utilising the facilities and infrastructure available in the school environment, and I usually adapt the media to the material being delivered. Before the lesson ends, I usually reinforce the material by asking questions related to the subject matter to ensure that the students have understood what has been taught."

Barriers faced by Arabic teachers in applying pedagogical competencies

For a teacher, carrying out daily learning activities certainly involves obstacles. These obstacles always arise during the teaching and learning process. Teachers of Arabic at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari are no exception; they face the following obstacles: 1) Internal factors, including fatigue in teaching Arabic to students. Then, the supporting infrastructure is not yet suitable for successful PBM (Problem-based Management) in achieving learning outcomes. The allocation of Arabic lesson hours is relatively small compared to other subjects. 2) External factors, namely the lack of maximum support from parents for the success of PBM and the influence of the environment.

sufficient resources are necessary to support Arabic teachers in their efforts to implement or enhance pedagogical skills. The learning process will be hindered if the accompanying facilities are lacking. For instance, the learning process requires the use of instructional tools. Examples include using tiny body frames to educate Arabic about the various parts of the human body. According to the results of interviews with several Arabic teachers at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari, the obstacles faced in applying pedagogical competence are : The lack of supporting facilities provided by schools to ensure successful learning, the influence of the environment, and the suboptimal role of parents in educating children at home.

DISCUSSION

Arabic language learning activities at school are conducted through Arabic language lessons. This learning process is carried out through four stages of activities, namely: planning, implementation, assessment of the learning process and outcomes, and supervision. The learning plan is designed in the form of a syllabus and lesson plan. In preparing the lesson plan, teachers are also given the authority to make modifications without changing the predetermined structure. These modifications are more technical in nature and relate to the learning process, which is adjusted to the conditions of the class, for example, in the learning media section, which includes LCDs, cards, and so on.

The implementation of learning at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari is in accordance with the allocated face-to-face time of 40-45 minutes, between 8-9 classes, and a textbook ratio of 1:1 for each grade level with 30-32 students per class. The implementation of learning is an implementation of the

prepared lesson plan, which includes introductory, core, and closing activities, as outlined in Permendikbud No. 22 of 2019. In implementing learning, there are several things that teachers must pay attention to, namely the selection of appropriate models, methods, media, and learning resources (Budiriyanto et al., 2023). Therefore, Arabic teachers must continuously learn, modify their teaching methods when necessary, and continuously improve their competencies, including pedagogical, professional, personal, social, and leadership competencies (Bagou & Sukung, 2020). The assessment conducted by Arabic teachers at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari has been in accordance with applicable regulations, covering: 1) knowledge aspects through tests, exams, and assignments, 2) skill aspects through practice and observation during discussions, and 3) attitude aspects through observation in and outside the classroom.

The Arabic language learning process at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari includes: a) Understanding students, where a teacher will be considered to have achieved pedagogical excellence if they are able to understand their students, what their students need, be more sensitive to their students' concerns, and so on. Arabic teachers at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari thoroughly understand the needs of their students, enabling them to find various solutions to address any issues their students may face; b) Designing lesson plans, where as a qualified teacher, the teacher will finalise the lesson by first designing a systematic lesson plan, and the Arabic teachers at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari have done this well; c) Developing the curriculum, where Arabic teachers at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari have been able to develop the curriculum because they are proactive in participating in the 2013 curriculum training. With this proactivity, teachers have succeeded in carrying out their duties to educate students in accordance with the targets set by the school, community and government; d) Implementing educational and dialogical learning, where Arabic teachers at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari educate and always engage in open dialogue with their students, so that there are no problems between teachers and students and between students and teachers, who are like fathers and children who need each other; e) Evaluating learning outcomes, which is the duty of professional and qualified teachers at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari, who carry out their duties to the best of their ability, namely by grading students' learning outcomes during their studies and assessing their behaviour at school.

Regular supervision of teacher performance is necessary to maintain and continuously improve teacher performance, particularly when dealing with changes in the educational system generated by curriculum, governmental regulations, and societal shifts. (Muradi & Taufiqurahman, 2021). Understanding students is one of the pedagogical competencies that a teacher must possess. A

good teacher is one who truly understands their students, because students have diverse abilities (Nikma & Rozak, 2023). According to Salimah, she revealed that the learning process would improve if teachers worked on and actualized the Arabic language learning implementation plan properly, with reference to the components contained in the lesson plan (Salimah et al., 2023).

Learning must originate from a dialogue between educators and students, thereby fostering critical thinking and communication (Mulyasa, 2022). Learning is essentially a process of interaction between learners and their environment, resulting in behavioural changes for the better (Fauzi et al., 2025). The learning process includes initial tests, core processes or activities, and final tests (Imam et al., 2025). Evaluations conducted by Arabic teachers by asking questions during the teaching and learning process, giving assignments, and conducting daily tests (Mariani et al., 2024). The obstacles to the learning process experienced by Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari are common because these obstacles have existed since long ago and occur in most schools. In fact, these obstacles are in line with Qudsi's theory (Qudsi & Wiasti, 2024)

The series of obstacles in the Arabic language learning process occur due to internal and external factors. There are several obstacles, and these pose challenges for Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari in its efforts to improve the professional competence of its teachers by continuously improving human resource management and development (Tamphu et al., 2024). This is because human resource development is an important dimension in the national development process, which is interrelated with development in the education sector, where the requirements for ideal teachers are constantly changing, so that their professional growth must be continuously stimulated. The enormous influence of the environment has an impact on students, and finally, there is a lack of parental support for the teaching and learning process carried out by Arabic language teachers (Nurhikmah et al., 2024) With these obstacles in this era of increasingly massive and extensive globalisation, without improvements in facilities and infrastructure and quality human resources, an institution will fall behind and have a weak position in the eyes of the community.

CONCLUSION

The pedagogical competence of Arabic teachers in the learning process at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari is as follows: a) Able to plan structured and systematic learning to teach Islamic religious knowledge to students. Arabic teachers at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari have their own unique characteristics, namely designing lesson plans in accordance with government regulations and then modifying them to suit the situation and conditions of the students. As reinforcement, the modifications are made to the source books,

learning tools and media. because teaching at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari requires innovation, as students at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari are psychologically accustomed to religion, so the learning model taught by teachers must be adapted to the needs of students.

Arabic teachers at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari start their lessons with introductory, core, and closing exercises. They use media and learning methodologies to help students grasp the topic they are teaching. After conducting a thorough assessment, the teacher instantly adopts a more persuasive strategy if students exhibit deficiencies in their cognitive, affective, and psychomotor abilities. Arabic teachers at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari have done their utmost to maintain, supervise and evaluate students, The school has achieved many accomplishments and received appreciation from the community.

The following barriers prevent Arabic language teachers at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari from implementing pedagogical competences: a deficiency of specialized training or workshops pertaining to Arabic language learning, resulting in suboptimal development of teachers' pedagogical competencies; limited media and teaching materials that are appropriate to the needs of students, so that teachers often find it difficult to present interesting and contextual learning to ensure successful learning; and finally, the high administrative burden often takes up teachers' time, so that their focus on developing pedagogical competencies is less than optimal. Based on these conclusions, this article recommends that future researchers examine and compare these findings with the reality in other educational institutions.

Arabic teachers at Senior High School Ummu Shabri Kendari show good pedagogical competence through structured planning, varied teaching methods, and continuous evaluation, although limited training, media, and heavy administrative tasks remain obstacles. Theoretical Contribution: This study broadens the understanding of how contextual factors influence the application of pedagogical competence in Arabic language teaching. Practical Implication: It encourages schools to strengthen teacher development through training and adequate teaching facilities. Future Direction: Further research can compare other institutions or use mixed methods to measure the impact of pedagogical competence on student outcomes.

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