

THE ROLE OF THE TREASURE HUNT APPROACH IN ADVANCING STUDENTS' READING SKILLS IN ARABIC

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Abstract

Students' reading abilities are significantly improved by the Arabic language learning method known as the treasure hunt. Through the use of play and exploration components, this approach encourages students' interest and participation in pleasurable activities. The purpose of this study is to evaluate how well seventh-grade pupils at MTs Al-Jawami can read Arabic by using the treasure hunt approach. The research employs a pretest-posttest design (with a control group) involving students as research subjects. Data collection instruments include Arabic reading ability tests, observations, and student participation questionnaires. Normality testing was conducted using the Lilliefors test, paired t-test, and Wilcoxon test to determine significant differences between pretest and posttest results. Additionally, N-gain calculations were used to measure improvements in students' reading skills. Results indicate that students in both the experimental and control classes demonstrated below-average reading abilities in Arabic, with pretest scores of 59 and 44.75, respectively. This low performance was attributed to ineffective teaching methods that caused boredom and hindered understanding. However, the treasure hunt method in the experimental class proved effective, yielding an average posttest score of 83.25, compared to only 51.25 in the control class. N-gain analysis showed significant improvement in the experimental class, categorized as high to moderate enhancement, while the control class exhibited only low improvement. This study recommends implementing the treasure hunt approach in Arabic language instruction to enhance students' reading skills through interactive, enjoyable activities that encourage collaboration.

Keywords: Arabic Language, Reading Skills, Treasure Hunt

مستخلص البحث

تحسنت قدرات التلاميذ في القراءة بشكل ملحوظ بفضل استخدام طريقة تعليم اللغة العربية المعروفة باسم "البحث عن الكنز". من خلال دمج عناصر اللعب والاستكشاف، تشجع هذه الطريقة اهتمام التلاميذ ومشاركتهم في أنشطة ممتعة. يهدف هذا البحث إلى تقييم مدى فعالية طريقة "البحث عن الكنز" في تحسين مهارات القراءة لدى طلاب الصف السابع في مدرسة المتوسطة الإسلامية الجوامع. يعتمد البحث على تصميم اختبار قبلي وبعدي (مع مجموعة ضابطة) بمشاركة التلاميذ كمواضيع بحثية. أدوات جمع البيانات تشمل اختبارات لقدرات القراءة باللغة العربية، والملاحظات، واستبيانات مشاركة التلاميذ. تم إجراء اختبار للتماثل باستخدام اختبار ليفيفورز، واختبار t المزدوج، واختبار ويلكوكسون لتحديد الفروق الهامة بين نتائج الاختبار القبلي والبعدي. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تم استخدام حسابات N-gain لقياس التحسينات في مهارات القراءة لدى التلاميذ. أظهرت النتائج أن التلاميذ في كل من الفصل التجريبي والفصل الضابط قد أظهروا قدرات قراءة أقل من المتوسط باللغة العربية، حيث كانت درجات الاختبار القبلي ٥٩ و ٤٤,٧٥ على التوالي. تم عزو هذا الأداء الضعيف إلى طرق التدريس غير الفعالة التي تسببت في الملل وأعاقت الفهم. ومع ذلك، أثبتت طريقة "البحث عن الكنز" فعاليتها في الفصل التجريبي، حيث حقق التلاميذ متوسط درجات في الاختبار البعدي بلغ ٨٣,٢٥، مقارنة بـ ٥١,٢٥ فقط في الفصل الضابط. أظهر تحليل N-gain تحسناً كبيراً في الفصل التجريبي، والذي تم تصنيفه على أنه تحسن من عالي إلى متوسط، في حين أظهر الفصل الضابط تحسناً طفيفاً فقط. يوصي هذا البحث بتطبيق طريقة "البحث عن الكنز" في تعليم اللغة العربية لتعزيز مهارات القراءة لدى التلاميذ من خلال أنشطة تفاعلية وممتعة تشجع على التعاون.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تعليم اللغة العربية، طريقة، مهارات القراءة، البحث عن الكنز

Introduction

Arabic language instruction is a crucial area of study for overseas students who are limited by a shortage of professionals and instructors capable of creating and executing diverse lesson plans (Ardiansyah, 2021). Arabic is one of the foreign languages that students in many Indonesian schools are required to master. The curriculum places a strong emphasis on grammar as well as the four language abilities of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. (Abdul Wahab, 2016). Since language acquisition is a means of communication, it is insufficient for children to be proficient in speaking and listening alone because written communication is also possible. (Amer & Al-Rababah, 2020). In this case, reading skills play an important role in foreign language learning in order to achieve communication goals.

According to Ibn Jinni, language is a sound used by every nation to express their intentions in exchanging ideas (Muid & Maburrosi, 2022). Learning a language is essentially learning how to communicate. Consequently, the goal of language instruction is to help students become more proficient communicators—both in writing and speaking—including when learning Arabic. (Aprianto & Zaini, 2019). Arabic language studies are a very broad study of knowledge because many sources of knowledge use Arabic (Bounhas, 2019). Arabic is studied in Indonesia as a language of communication and knowledge as well as a language of religion. The goal of Arabic language resources is to support, direct, enhance, and promote proficiency in Arabic as well as favorable attitudes toward the language in both productive and receptive domains. (Mustofa et al., 2021) Productive ability is the ability to use language as a means of communication, both orally and in writing (Sukmayasa & Sudiana, 2023). At the same time, receptive ability is the ability to understand other people's speech and understand reading.

Learning Arabic presents a number of difficulties for non-Arabic speakers, particularly in educational institutions with a shortage of qualified instructors and specialists. (Salsabila et al., 2020). In Indonesia, Arabic is taught as a subject in many schools with a focus on mastering the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, which are also accompanied by grammatical competence (Wahyudin & Kosim, 2020). In particular, reading comprehension is crucial to

studying a foreign language since it allows students to comprehend written communication and broaden their knowledge (Ardiansyah & Muhammad, 2020). One of the Arabic language skills that learners must acquire is reading. For students to comprehend the written words and contents, they must become proficient readers. (Sanah et al., 2021). According to Abdul Rahman bin Ibrahim Al-Fawzan, reading is the process of changing the language system from visual symbols (letters) to the meaning they represent. This means that the concept of reading is not just about pronouncing letters correctly (Hermawan, 2018). Most Arabs can recognize the letters in Persian and Urdu, thus, reading those languages will just require them to pronounce them correctly. As a result, the primary method of teaching Arabic to children outside of the classroom is reading, which calls for specialized practice. For beginning students who have never studied Arabic before, reading should be introduced gradually. Instruction should begin with letters, words, and simple sentences, progressing to complicated sentences, paragraph reading, and finally, reading lengthy books (Wahyudin et al., 2020).

But, based on observations and conversations with Arabic teachers at MTs Al-Jawami, a number of issues were discovered to impede the success of learning Arabic, particularly with regard to reading comprehension. Among these issues is The low reading proficiency of students in Arabic is attributed to several factors, including low motivation to learn the language, a diverse student body with some students attending public schools and others attending elementary madrasahs, and the students' incapacity to read the Qur'an, which makes it difficult for them to understand Arabic texts. Learning that is less diversified and monotonous. Restricted amount of time in class for learning Arabic.

One suggestion made is to learn Arabic reading skills through the "Treasure Hunt" method. Students using this method, which involves group learning activities outside, must search for a succession of clues that may eventually lead to the discovery of new material. It is envisaged that by using this approach, students will be more driven and engaged in studying Arabic language content, as it promotes collaboration, self-learning, and the growth of students' knowledge in addition to physical exercise.

The studies highlighted demonstrate the positive impact of the Treasure Hunt learning model on educational outcomes across various contexts. According to the Journal of Raka Swandhita Hutomo, the implementation of this model significantly improved learning activities and outcomes for class X PM 2 students at SMK Negeri 1 Pengasih during the 2015/2016 academic year, with average scores increasing from 52.80% in cycle I to 83.58% in cycle II, and the number of students meeting the minimum competency standard rising from 34.37% to 87.5% (Hutomo, 2016). Similarly, the research by Sholeh Hidayat and Chesary Rusdi Syarif (2016) indicated that while there was a significant difference in learning outcomes between students using the Treasure Hunt method and those working in groups (significance 0.576), no significant difference was found in learning outcomes based on note-taking creativity. However, their analysis suggested that both method and creativity interact to influence learning outcomes (significance 0.976) (Nurjanah et al., 2016). Lastly, Risa Kholifah's thesis showed that the Treasure Hunt method positively affected the interpersonal intelligence of early childhood children at RA Al-Amanah Bandar Lampung, with a significant result (sig value $0.000 < 0.05$) confirming its influence. Overall, these findings underscore the effectiveness of the Treasure Hunt method in enhancing student engagement and learning across different educational levels (Risa, 2022).

This study differs from others in that the authors present more inventive approaches that make a substantial contribution to the comprehension and use of this methodology. This study emphasizes the importance of using extra techniques and boosting motivation to enhance reading abilities. It also highlights the importance of offering rewards to increase reading motivation, such as prizes to players who finish the "Treasure Hunt" game.

This study will concentrate on how the "Treasure Hunt" approach can be used to help MTs Al-Jawami pupils in grade VII improve their Arabic reading abilities. The study's limitations include the following: (1) it was limited to MTs Al-Jawami as its sole study site; (2) it only examined reading abilities, excluding language skills like speaking, listening, and writing; (3) it was conducted during a specific period, making long-term conclusions unlikely; and (4) environmental factors and outdoor learning spaces may have an impact on how well the "Treasure Hunt" method is implemented.

With an understanding of these limitations, the results of the study are expected to contribute to the development of the effectiveness of Arabic language learning, especially in improving students' reading skills.

Methods

Pre-experimental design is the method employed in this investigation. Many people consider this study to be an imaginary experiment. For this reason, it's also sometimes referred to as a "quasi-experiment" (Musthafa & Hermawan, 2018). The author employed a control design along with a pretest and posttest in this investigation. Table 1 displays the research design that is being used.

Table 1 Research Design

<i>Pretest</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Post-test</i>
O_1	X	O_1
O_2		O_2

Note:

O_1 : *experimental class*

X : *Treatment (implementation of using the Treasure Hunt method)*

O_2 : *control class*

There were twenty pupils in class VII of MTs Al-Jawami who served as the study's subjects. The purpose of this study was to see if class VII MTs Al-Jawami students' Arabic reading abilities might be improved by using the "Treasure Hunt" method. This item covers the "Treasure Hunt" method of instruction, improvements in the reading abilities of the pupils, and additional elements associated with their desire and interest in studying Arabic. Additionally, the impact of the approach on students' learning outcomes in Arabic reading skills is observed and assessed in this study. The study was conducted between May 8, 2024, and May 20, 2024.

In this study, observation is the method and instrument used to collect data. Using all five senses to focus attention on an object is a strategy known as observation (Suharsimi & Suhardjono, 2017). Participating in the Arabic language acquisition process firsthand is another way that participants in this study might observe. In order to conduct the observation procedure, the researcher attends the class and uses the Treasure Hunt method to teach Arabic, specifically qiraah learning. In order to gather

information, the second interview is a type of changeable communication (conversation). This technique is used to obtain data on the Arabic language learning activities of Mts Al-Jawami students. This interview is aimed at the Arabic language teacher of Mts Al-Jawami.

Furthermore, the test is a series of questions used to measure the skills, knowledge, intelligence, abilities or talents possessed by individuals/groups (Ardiansyah, 2022). This test is intended for students of Mts Al-Jawami, with the aim of finding out the basic data from the test results that will be taken from the student participant scores through the *pretest* and *post-test results*. The last is a literature study, which is used as a complement to primary data to obtain a treasury of thought frameworks from scholars by citing or concluding from books whose discussions are related to the discussion of this thesis.

Because the outcomes of the treatment may be compared to the pre-treatment or post-treatment conditions, the results can be ascertained with greater accuracy. To make the computation of this data normalcy test easier, the data analysis employs a normality test. Since the author transforms the data into group frequency distribution data, the chi-square test formula is applied. The paired t-test and the normalized N-Gain test, which gauges learning efficacy, are employed after the normality test if the data is regularly distributed.

Table 2 Steps of Quantitative Data Analysis

No	Steps	Formula	Information
1	Data Normality Test	$X_i, Z, F(X), S(X), F(X)-S(X) $ (Liliefors)	To find out whether the data is normally distributed or not.
2	Paired T-Test	$t = \frac{\bar{B}}{S_B \sqrt{n}}$	To compare two groups or compare the average values of two paired groups, assuming the data is normally distributed.
3	N-Gain Test	$G = \frac{Skor_{posttest} - Skor_{pretest}}{Skor_{maksimal} - Skor_{minimal}}$	To measure the increase in student understanding after following a learning process.

After conducting a normality test, it is then continued with a paired T-test if the data is normally distributed, and the N-Gain test can be carried out to measure the effectiveness of learning based on the increase in pretest-posttest scores.

Result and Discussion

The method is an approach to executing a plan that has been designed for actual activities, ensuring that the intended objectives are achieved optimally. A learning method refers to the approach used in delivering, explaining, illustrating, and offering practice on the lesson content to students in order to meet specific goals (Alkhuli, 2006). In this context, the research method serves as a tool that researchers utilize to address the questions outlined in the problem formulation. One method considered effective for teaching Arabic is the Treasure Hunt method.

A method refers to a comprehensive plan for presenting language material in an organized manner, ensuring that each component aligns without conflict. Another perspective defines a method as a systematic plan for teaching subject matter structured according to a chosen approach. Meanwhile, style or technique is the practical application of a method and approach within the classroom (M. Asy'ari, 2020). According to the Indonesian dictionary, a method is a systematic way of doing something to streamline activities in order to achieve predetermined goals. Sudjana defines a teaching method as a strategy used by teachers to engage with students during the learning process. Unlike strategies or techniques, a method involves a set of steps and procedures executed by teachers, whose impact is reflected in student outcomes. Essentially, a method is a sequence of actions undertaken by teachers during the learning process to achieve specific educational objectives. A technique, on the other hand, refers to how teachers apply a method in practice, and this technique is shaped by the teacher's style, distinguishing one teacher's approach from others who may use the same method. Therefore, techniques are closely tied to the teacher's characteristics.

Characteristics are unique traits that are inherently linked to something or someone. In the context of cooperative learning, the "Treasure Hunt" method supports students in achieving predetermined learning objectives through active participation. Several experts have highlighted the key characteristics of this method: (1) Positive

interaction: This occurs when group members understand that they must collaborate to reach their goals. Task division should be based on individual strengths, ensuring that all members contribute effectively. (2) Face-to-face interaction: The "Treasure Hunt" method creates opportunities for group members to meet, share information, and assist each other in learning. (3) Individual responsibility: Each member is accountable for their assigned tasks, and they must contribute their ideas to the group's success. (4) Use of cooperative/social skills: Effective cooperation and social skills are crucial in this method, requiring teacher guidance to help students work together harmoniously. (5) Group management: Groups should regularly assess their working processes to ensure efficiency (Riantika & Wibawa, 2024).

The Treasure Hunt method is an outdoor group-based learning activity where students search for clues, leading to the discovery of new information (Rosyidi et al., 2023). It is a game-based approach in which students simulate tasks or topics through gameplay (Jamaliah et al., 2022). As an active learning strategy, this method encourages students to take an active role in the learning process through interactions with peers or teachers (Al-Thubaiti, 2020). By fostering teamwork and collaboration, the Treasure Hunt method promotes problem-solving within groups (Fadhilah et al., 2019). It emphasizes the importance of collaboration in tackling various challenges, encouraging students' active participation and independent learning while helping them develop their knowledge (Sulastri & Wasidi, 2019).

The Treasure Hunt method has several advantages, such as allowing students to engage in observation and exploration and enabling them to learn through hands-on experiences rather than solely from books. This approach enhances students' understanding and retention of the material, which positively impacts their learning outcomes (Manarwati & Rachmadyanti, 2019). By integrating innovative subjects and active learning methods, students become more motivated to achieve better learning results. In the educational context, the Treasure Hunt method effectively facilitates knowledge transfer and addresses challenges in the learning process, particularly in improving student outcomes (Hutomo, 2016).

However, no learning method is without its strengths and limitations. The advantages of using the Treasure Hunt method in Arabic reading (qira'ah) include creating a learning environment that brings students closer to nature, stimulating

passion and motivation for problem-solving, fostering student enthusiasm, and promoting cooperation within groups. On the downside, this method can be time consuming, requires a broad space for its activities, and may result in students engaging in non-learning-related tasks (Hutomo, 2016).

The learning process itself involves multiple interconnected components, such as the curriculum, teachers, students, materials, methods, media, and evaluation. In Arabic language learning, these elements are essential for developing reading skills (qira'ah). Reading is not merely decoding written texts but a complex process involving critical analysis, understanding, synthesis, and evaluation. It requires activating cognitive and metacognitive skills, making it a highly interactive activity involving physical actions, such as moving the eyes, hands, and lips (Riadhah, 2022).

Arabic reading proficiency is a key skill for students, essential for developing overall language competence. The goal of teaching reading is to train students to comprehend texts fluently and critically. Effective qira'ah instruction goes beyond teaching the mechanics of reading; it involves fostering comprehension and deeper engagement with the material (Wahyudi et al., 2023).

There are various types of reading methods that teachers can use, such as reading aloud, which enhances pronunciation and oral communication skills. Silent reading, on the other hand, focuses on internalizing and understanding the material, promoting cognitive engagement without verbalization. Speed reading techniques aim to improve the pace of reading without compromising comprehension, and reading for pleasure encourages students to develop a love for reading through light and engaging texts, boosting their motivation and language skills (Aslan Berzener & Deneme, 2021).

To ensure students master reading skills, specific indicators must be met, such as the ability to read and understand texts, translate passages, and answer comprehension questions (SK Dirjen Pendis 3211). In the context of using the Treasure Hunt method in Arabic learning, the approach involved a structured series of activities over multiple sessions. For example, at the first session, students were given a pretest to assess their initial reading abilities. During subsequent sessions, students participated in the Treasure Hunt, engaging in group activities at different posts, each with specific reading-related tasks. These activities included reading simple texts,

identifying and correcting errors, and completing missing information. At the final session, a post-test was conducted to measure the improvement in students' reading abilities (Crnković et al., 2022).

Ultimately, the application of the Treasure Hunt method in the experimental class resulted in significant improvements in students' reading abilities compared to the control class, which followed conventional teaching methods. The post-test results showed that students in the experimental class scored an average of 83.25. In contrast, those in the control class scored an average of 51.25, demonstrating the effectiveness of the Treasure Hunt method in enhancing Arabic reading skills.

Table 3 Experimental Class Post-test Results

No	Student Name	Pretest	post-test	N-Gain Criterion
1.	Airlangga Sri Maulana	50	70	Currently
2.	Alif Rizki Nugraha	60	75	Currently
3.	Ali Affan Dinnur	50	75	Currently
4.	Aulia Alifatunnisa	60	85	Currently
5.	Berkah Karunia Ramadhan	45	95	Tall
6.	Hazim Kholis Rizqi	55	85	Currently
7.	Muhammad Dani Assidiq A	45	80	Currently
8.	Neisya Afrilia hliza	55	70	Currently
9.	Riza Rizqiya Akbar	65	80	Currently
10.	Sahrul Suhendar	50	85	Currently
11.	Syakila Siti Nur akibah	75	90	Currently
12.	Sakiya Nurwafa	65	95	Tall
13.	Safa Azzahra Fadilah	65	85	Currently
14.	Silva Anggraeni	60	90	Tall
15.	Tegar Gani Maulana	75	90	Currently
16.	Tiara Siti Sofaroh	65	80	Currently
17.	Zahra Hemaliya Fitri	50	90	Tall
18.	Zahra Siti Marwa A	65	90	Currently
19.	Zapira Putri F	60	75	Currently
20.	Zikri Annajib	65	80	Currently
Amount		1180	1665	

Based on the calculation, the average N-Gain was obtained at 59%/0.59 with medium and high criteria in the experimental class. Thus, it can be concluded that there is an increase in reading ability in Arabic language learning using the Treasure Hunt method in the experimental class.

Table 4 Post-test Results of Control Class

No	Student Name	Pretest	Post-Test	N-Gain Criterion
1.	Abqori Tristan Septa	40	45	Low
2.	Adila dziqwa A.H	50	55	Low
3.	Aliya Rahmawati Azzahra	30	40	Low
4.	Faisal Akbar	30	40	Low
5.	Fauzan Nugroho	40	50	Low
6.	Hasna Mumtaz Latif	35	50	Low
7.	Kalisa Afrilia	40	45	Low
8.	Kurnia Mega	55	60	Low
9.	Lutfi Akbar	30	40	Low
10.	Muhammad Ibnu Yusuf	60	65	Low
11.	M. Miqdad Amar	60	65	Low
12.	Nabila Sintawati	55	60	Low
13.	Nazril Maulana N. F	40	50	Low
14.	Naufal Ali Maulana	50	55	Low
15.	Nurlia Rahmawati	40	45	Low
16.	Qintani Aqila Nazila	50	55	Low
17.	Syafarani Putri Surahman	35	40	Low
18.	Syifa Nurmala Azzahra	50	55	Low
19.	Tina Nur Alia	55	60	Low
20.	Muhammad Ahsan Fillah Taufiq	50	50	Low
	Amount	895	1085	

Based on the analysis, the average N-Gain score was 12% (0.12), with a low criterion in the experimental class. This suggests a measurable improvement in reading abilities within the control class, where conventional teaching methods were used. However, the study's findings reveal a significant difference between the reading abilities of students in the control class and those in the experimental class. The experimental group, which employed the Treasure Hunt method, outperformed the control class. The superior performance in the experimental class can be attributed to the heightened motivation and enthusiasm fostered by the interactive and engaging nature of the Treasure Hunt method. This demonstrates that innovative, student-centered approaches to Arabic language learning, such as the Treasure Hunt method, can greatly enhance students' reading skills and overall learning outcomes.

These results highlight the positive impact of adopting creative strategies in language education, suggesting that students respond better when learning methods encourage active participation and collaboration.

Conclusion

According to this study, students learning Arabic in both the experimental and control classrooms had reading abilities below average, with average pretest scores of 44.75 and 59, respectively. The primary causes of the low reading proficiency were inadequate teaching strategies and a shortage of creative learning opportunities, which made students bored and made it harder for them to comprehend the subject matter. On the other hand, the experimental class's average post-test score was 83.25. In contrast, the control class's score was just 51.25, indicating that the Treasure Hunt method was successful in enhancing reading skills. This proves that incorporating new ideas into instruction is essential to improving pupils' reading comprehension when studying Arabic and for advancing studies in the

The experimental class significantly improved when the Treasure Hunt approach was implemented, according to the N-Gain test findings, with improvements categorized as high and medium. This shows that students were effectively motivated, and their knowledge of the subject was assisted by the interactive and engaging character of the Treasure Hunt approach, which resulted in significant improvements in their reading skills. On the other hand, the control group, which simply used traditional teaching techniques, showed a slight improvement in performance and was placed at the low criterion level. This striking contrast draws attention to the shortcomings of conventional approaches in terms of encouraging student engagement and comprehension, highlighting the necessity of creative teaching techniques to improve learning outcomes. Overall, the results point to the importance of integrating interactive techniques like Treasure Hunt in enhancing the efficacy of education, especially when it comes to language learning environments. Researchers' recommendations include the expectation that this study will serve as a guide for future research projects and the creation of instructional strategies.

Acknowledgement

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to the academic community of MTs Al-Jawami for their unwavering support and cooperation throughout this research. Our sincere thanks also go to PP-PBA for organizing and facilitating this scholarly activity, as well as for publishing our research manuscript. Lastly, we extend our heartfelt appreciation to all the contributing authors whose hard work and

dedication made this publication possible. Your collective efforts have greatly enriched this study.

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