

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE ARABIC LANGUAGE TO HUMAN INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT: A LITERATURE REVIEW**Ismail¹, Farah Arrofida², Anisatul jannah³, Saiful Mustofa⁴, Ahmad Fadhil Alfajri⁵**Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang¹²³⁴, Universitas Islam Madinah Al Munawwarah Saudi Arabia⁵email: ¹ismailalghali@gmail.com, ²arrofidaf@gmail.com, ³annisajannah3017@gmail.com,
⁴saifulmustofa@pba.uin-malang.ac.id, ⁵ilhamfajrin2004@gmail.com**ABSTRAK**

Bahasa Arab memiliki peran strategis dalam perkembangan intelektual islam karena berfungsi sebagai bahasa Al-Qur'an, bahasa keilmuan, dan media transmisi pengetahuan. Peran tersebut tampak dalam tradisi keilmuan klasik melalui karya para ulama dan tetap relevan dalam pendidikan Islam kontemporer. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kontribusi bahasa Arab dalam pengembangan intelektual manusia dari perspektif keilmuan Islam klasik dan pendidikan modern. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode kajian pustaka. Data diperoleh melalui studi dokumentasi terhadap sumber primer dan sekunder, berupa karya ilmiah klasik Al-Ghazali, Ibn Sina, dan Al-Farabi, serta jurnal akademik, buku referensi, dan laporan penelitian tentang pendidikan bahasa Arab. Analisis data menggunakan teknik *content analysis* melalui tahapan identifikasi, klasifikasi, interpretasi, dan sintesis untuk menemukan pola kontribusi bahasa Arab dalam pengembangan intelektual. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan tiga kontribusi utama. Pertama, bahasa Arab sebagai bahasa Al-Qur'an berperan dalam membentuk pemahaman teologis dan kerangka berpikir keislaman. Kedua, bahasa Arab sebagai bahasa keilmuan menjadi medium produksi dan transmisi pengetahuan dalam berbagai disiplin ilmu, sehingga memperkuat fondasi intelektual Islam. Ketiga, dalam pendidikan modern, bahasa Arab berfungsi sebagai media pembelajaran yang menghubungkan nilai-nilai keislaman dengan pengembangan literasi, kurikulum, dan pemanfaatan teknologi, temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa kontribusi bahasa Arab bersifat multidimensional, mencakup aspek epistemologis, keilmuan, dan pedagogis dari tradisi klasik hingga Pendidikan islam kontemporer.

Kata kunci: Bahasa Arab, Intelektual, Pendidikan Islam, Epistemologi, Literatur.**ABSTRACT**

Arabic play a very important role in shaping the intellectual heritage and civilization of humanity. Arabic plays a strategic role in the development of islamic intellectual thought as it functions as the language of the qur'an, a language of scholarship, and a medium for the transmission of knowledge. This role is evident in the classical scholarly tradition through the works of Muslim scholars and

remains relevant in contemporary Islamic education. This study aims to analyze the contribution of Arabic to human intellectual development from the perspectives of classical Islamic scholarship and modern education. This study employs a qualitative approach using a literature review method. Data were obtained through documentary analysis of primary and secondary sources, including the scholarly works of Al-Ghazali, Ibn Sina, and Al-Farabi, as well as academic journals, reference books, and research reports on Arabic language education. The data were analyzed using content analysis through the stages of identification, classification, interpretation, and synthesis to identify patterns of Arabic's contribution to intellectual development. The findings reveal three main contributions. First, as the language of the Qur'an, Arabic plays a fundamental role in shaping theological understanding and the Islamic intellectual framework. Second, as a language of scholarship, Arabic serves as a medium for the production and transmission of knowledge across various disciplines, thereby strengthening the intellectual foundations of Islam. Third, in modern education, Arabic functions as a learning medium that connects Islamic values with the development of literacy, curriculum, and the use of educational technology. These findings demonstrate that the contribution of Arabic is multidimensional, encompassing epistemological, scholarly, and pedagogical aspects from the classical intellectual tradition to contemporary Islamic education.

Key words: *Arabic Language, Intellectuality Development, Islamic Education, Epistimology, Literature.*

الملخص

تؤدي اللغة العربية دورا استراتيجيا في تطور الفكر الإسلامي، إذ تُعدّ لغة القرآن الكريم، ولغة العلم، ووسيلة لنقل المعرفة. ويتجلى هذا الدور في التراث العلمي الكلاسيكي من خلال مؤلفات العلماء المسلمين، كما لا تزال اللغة العربية تحتفظ بأهميتها في التعليم الإسلامي المعاصر. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل إسهام اللغة العربية في تنمية الفكر الإنساني من منظور التراث العلمي الإسلامي الكلاسيكي والتعليم الحديث. واعتمدت الدراسة المنهج النوعي باستخدام أسلوب الدراسة المكتبية. وجمعت البيانات من خلال دراسة الوثائق والمصادر الأولية والثانوية، بما في ذلك المؤلفات العلمية الكلاسيكية للغزالي وابن سينا والفارابي، إلى جانب المجالات العلمية والكتب المرجعية وتقارير البحوث المتعلقة بتعليم اللغة العربية. وحُلّلت البيانات باستخدام أسلوب تحليل المحتوى (*Content Analysis*) من خلال مراحل التحديد والتصنيف والتفسير والتركيب؛ بهدف الكشف عن أنماط إسهام اللغة العربية في تنمية الفكر الإنساني. وأظهرت نتائج الدراسة ثلاثة إسهامات رئيسية. أولاً، تؤدي اللغة العربية، بوصفها لغة القرآن الكريم، دوراً أساسياً في تشكيل الفهم العقدي والإطار الفكري الإسلامي. ثانياً، بوصفها لغة للعلم، تُعدّ اللغة العربية وسيلةً لإنتاج المعرفة ونقلها في

مختلف المجالات العلمية، مما يسهم في تعزيز الأسس الفكرية للحضارة الإسلامية. ثالثاً، تؤدي اللغة العربية في التعليم الحديث دوراً بوصفها وسيلة تعليمية تربط القيم الإسلامية بتنمية مهارات القراءة والكتابة، وتطوير المناهج، وتوظيف التكنولوجيا التعليمية. وتُظهر هذه النتائج أن إسهام اللغة العربية ذو طبيعة متعددة الأبعاد، إذ يشمل الجوانب المعرفية والإبستمولوجية والعلمية والتربوية، بدءاً من التراث الفكري الكلاسيكي وصولاً إلى التعليم الإسلامي المعاصر.

الكلمات المفتاحية: اللغة العربية، التنمية الفكرية، التربية الإسلامية، الإبستمولوجيا، الأدبيات

INTRODUCTION

Language plays a significant role in human life. In addition to serving as a means of communication, language functions as a medium for understanding, conveying, and preserving cultural values, traditions, and religious teachings. Within the Islamic context, Arabic plays a central role (Hasan et al., 2024). Arabic is inseparable from the lives of Muslims. It is the language of revelation chosen by Allah SWT as the means of communication with His servants through the Holy Qur'an, which was revealed to Muhammad ﷺ as the final revelation of the Islamic religious message. Arabic is therefore essential for enhancing one's understanding of Islamic teachings. Arabic should be regarded as the language of religion rather than as the language of a particular ethnicity, community, or country, because it is the language of the Qur'an and Sunnah, which serve as the primary sources of Islamic religious law (Fitri et al., 2025). Therefore, learning Arabic constitutes an individual obligation for every Muslim.

Arabic also encompasses a broad semantic dimension because, as the language of revelation, it serves as the primary medium for understanding the Qur'an and Sunnah (KHAIR, 2022). Arabic is a fundamental element of Islamic studies, particularly for understanding the literature that underpins various Islamic disciplines, including Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsir*), Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), theology (*aqidah*), and Islamic mysticism (*tasawuf*) (Firdaus et al., 2025). Since the Qur'an was revealed in Arabic, the language has occupied a highly strategic position in the development of the intellectual and scientific civilization of Islam. A profound mastery of Arabic constitutes a gateway to understanding the Qur'an (M. Ridwan, 2023). Within the Islamic scholarly tradition, Arabic is a fundamental prerequisite for understanding classical texts and authoritative Islamic sources.

Understanding Islamic teachings cannot be separated from knowledge of Arabic, as the primary sources of Islamic knowledge are written in Arabic (Cahya Edi Setyawan & Khairul Anwar, 2020). Accordingly, Arabic should be regarded as an indispensable necessity for deepening one's understanding of religious knowledge. At least three principal reasons underlie the importance of learning Arabic. First, Arabic serves as an important means of communication for interaction with its speakers. Second, Arabic is the language of religion and is essential for the proper fulfillment of religious practices, given that the Holy Qur'an is written in this language. Third, Arabic is a language of

knowledge, as numerous scholarly works have been composed in Arabic (E. H. Ridwan, 2023). Historically, Arabic served as a lingua franca and medium of intellectual exchange throughout the Islamic world, facilitating the transmission of knowledge from diverse regions through a shared scholarly language. Arabic became a language of knowledge capable of accommodating and transmitting intellectual discourse and classical scholarly works, such as *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* by Imam al-Ghazali and *Al-Qanun fi al-Tibb* by Ibn Sina, both of which were written in Arabic and continue to serve as references to this day. This demonstrates the resilience and enduring relevance of Arabic in intellectual discourse across different historical periods and further confirms that Arabic is not merely a language of worship but also an intellectual medium (Nurjana, 2022).

In the era of digitalization and globalization, Arabic continues to maintain its role in education and the development of knowledge through various digital platforms. Digitalization is necessary not only to facilitate the development of Arabic but also to preserve its continued existence and significance as an important language (Faedurrohman & Hakim, 2023). The King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies (2020) states that “the transformation of libraries into digital formats strengthens the dissemination of Arabic knowledge across geographical and generational boundaries.” This demonstrates the adaptability of Arabic to the changing demands of the times.

At the literature analysis stage, researchers reviewed previous studies to identify research trends and determine existing research gaps. The findings indicate that previous research on Arabic has predominantly focused on its function as a religious language, a medium of learning, and a means of disseminating knowledge within Islamic civilization. However, studies specifically examining the role of Arabic as a tool for enhancing human intellectual abilities through the integration of Islamic normative sources, classical scholarly traditions, and modern educational contexts remain relatively limited. Consequently, the research gap lies in the absence of comprehensive studies examining how Arabic contributes to the development of critical, analytical, and reflective thinking skills while simultaneously fostering a sustainable intellectual tradition. Based on this gap, the novelty of the present study lies in its integrative approach. This approach examines Arabic not only as a religious language and a means of communication but also as an instrument for human intellectual development. By integrating educational, normative, historical, and contemporary perspectives within the context of the digital era, this study offers a novel perspective on the role of Arabic.

Therefore, this study discusses three main aspects: (1) the Qur'an in the Arabic language, (2) scholarly works written in Arabic, and (3) Arabic in modern education. These three aspects serve as important indicators for examining the contribution and role of Arabic as a key to understanding the sources of Islamic knowledge. Although the role of Arabic in other aspects has been widely discussed in previous studies, the present study seeks to explore its intellectual dimension more comprehensively in order to provide broader insights and benefits for readers.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach that emphasizes an in-depth understanding of the contribution of the Arabic language in the context of

intellectual development, utilizing library research. The objective is to explore the contribution of the Arabic language to human intellectual development through various analyses of relevant literary sources. Data were obtained from the Holy Qur'an, Tafsir Jalalain, the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), the seminal work titled *The Skyline of Islamic Civilization* by Nircholish Madjid, as well as contemporary sources such as journals, articles, documents, and other materials related to the theme *The Arabic Language in Human Intellectual Development: A Literature Review*.

Data collection was conducted using documentation techniques, which included verses from the Qur'an, contemporary scholarly works, classical Arabic scholarly works, scholarly libraries, modern Islamic education, students at Al-Azhar University (Egypt), and digital media technology. The primary instrument used in data collection was a content analysis sheet, which served to record key points from each source based on categories such as: the functions of the Arabic language, Islamic education, intellectualism, and contemporary relevance.

Data analysis was conducted using content analysis. The collected data was organized thematically to identify patterns, relationships, and a deeper understanding of the contribution of the Arabic language to intellectual development. The analysis process consisted of the following stages: reading, coding, analyzing, and drawing conclusions. The analysis was conducted using historical and thematic approaches to examine the continuity and transformation of the Arabic language's functions over time.

During the literature review phase, the researcher examined previous studies to identify trends in existing research and uncover research gaps. The results of the review indicate that research on the Arabic language has generally focused on its role as a religious language, a medium of instruction, and a vehicle for the transmission of knowledge within Islamic civilization. However, research specifically examining the contribution of the Arabic language as an instrument for human intellectual development through the integration of normative Islamic sources, classical scholarly traditions, and the context of modern education remains relatively limited. Therefore, the research gap in this study lies in the absence of a comprehensive study explaining the role of the Arabic language in shaping critical, analytical, and reflective thinking skills, as well as in building a sustainable intellectual tradition. Based on this gap, the novelty of this study lies in its integrative approach, which examines the Arabic language not only as a religious language and a medium of communication but also as an instrument for human intellectual development by combining normative, historical, educational, and contemporary perspectives in the digital age.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Qur'an in Arabic

The Arabic language holds a special place in Islam because it was chosen as the language of the Qur'anic revelation so that divine messages could be accurately understood by humankind. Allah SWT's choice of Arabic was not a linguistic coincidence, but rather a decision rich in meaning.

Regarding the verse above, Imam Ibn Kathir states in his exegesis, “This is because Arabic is the most eloquent, clearest, broadest, and deepest in meaning of all languages; therefore, the Qur’an was revealed in that language.”

The Qur’an was revealed in Arabic, making this language the primary source of revelation and the epistemological foundation for Muslims. Arabic in the Qur’an serves not only as a medium for conveying messages but also as an instrument for shaping complex and profound structures of meaning. The use of distinctive rules of *nahwu*, *sharaf*, and *balaghah* in the Qur’an demonstrates the exceptional uniqueness of this language compared to others. Modern linguistic studies confirm that the morphological structure of the Arabic language supports the clarity of meaning and rhetorical power of the Qur’anic verses (Mardjoko Idris, 2022). The integrity of meaning and the depth of the message in the original language cannot be replaced by translation, making Arabic the only path to a comprehensive understanding of the Qur’an (Mubarak, 2020). Therefore, an understanding of the Arabic language serves as the primary foundation for mastering “*Ulum al-Qur’an*” (the sciences related to the Qur’an), which encompasses various aspects such as *asbāb al-Nuzūl*, *makkiyyah* and *madaniyyah*, *mutasyabihat*, the interrelationships between verses, and *i’jāz al-Qur’ān*. All branches of this discipline are heavily dependent on a sound and accurate understanding of the Arabic language, as every concept and term in ‘*Ulum al-Qur’an*’ is shaped by Arabic linguistic structure (Misnawati, 2021). For example, to understand the context of a verse’s revelation or the meaning of a specific term, one must master the rules of *nahwu* and *sharaf* as well as the linguistic nuances of the revealed text (Rusdi, 2015). In this regard, ‘*Ulūm al-Qur’ān*’ serves as a methodological framework that facilitates a scientific and systematic reading of the Qur’an, while also reinforcing the position of the Arabic language not only as a means of communication, but also as an epistemological structure that underpins Islamic scholarship.

In the field of exegesis, classical exegetes such as al-Tabari and al-Qurtubi based their works on a deep understanding of the Arabic language. They drew upon various linguistic disciplines—such as *nahwu*, *sharaf*, and *balaghah* to accurately interpret the texts of the Qur’an (Anwar, 2023). Even in the contemporary context, computerized studies of the Qur’an reveal a very high degree of consistency in linguistic patterns, for example in the placement of word roots and sentence structure. This research serves as evidence that the use of the Arabic language in the Qur’an possesses unmatched precision, making the use of Arabic an absolute prerequisite for a deep and scholarly understanding of the teachings of revelation.

The Arabic language is rich in nuances, double meanings, and figurative language. In exegesis, the ability to understand these linguistic nuances is essential for correctly interpreting the text of the Qur’an. Qur’anic texts often employ language that is concise, layered, and frequently open to multiple interpretations. Therefore, mastery of Arabic linguistics is an absolute prerequisite for understanding and interpreting the Qur’an (Al-Zarkasyi, 1995). In the field of exegesis, there are several approaches and methods used by exegetes, all of which rely on a deep understanding of the Arabic language. The approaches (methods for elucidating the meaning of verses) used include linguistic, Sufi,

hadith-based, contextual, and logical approaches. Meanwhile, the methods of Qur'anic exegesis for interpreting the verses of the Qur'an include ijmalī, tahlīlī, muqarīn, and maudhū'i. (Rifa'i et al., 2023).

With the passage of time and intellectual developments, the study of 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān is no longer static as a classical legacy, but has evolved into a tool for critical analysis capable of addressing contemporary issues. Contemporary 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān studies have moved beyond the bayani (textual) approach and have begun to integrate the burhānī (rational-scientific) and 'irfānī (spiritual-semantic) approaches. Thematic (maudhū'i) exegesis, contextual exegesis, and hermeneutical approaches have become part of the modern discourse in the development of Qur'anic scholarship. This demonstrates that the Arabic language and the sciences of the Qur'an possess epistemological flexibility that enables both to engage with the realities of the present age (Kamal, 2019). Contemporary studies in Ulumul Qur'an are also influenced by the social sciences. Sociological and anthropological approaches help contextualize the meaning of the Qur'an. Ulumul Qur'an now serves not only as a tool for understanding the text linguistically but also for examining how the text is understood, interpreted, and implemented within the social context of society (Hasbullah, 2021).

The findings of this study are consistent with the research by Ridwan (2023), which states that the Arabic language is the key to comprehensively understanding the Qur'an, and the research by Khair (2022), which regards Arabic as the foundation of Islamic education because it is the language of revelation. However, these studies still rely on Arabic as the primary means of understanding religious texts. According to this study, the Arabic language serves not only as a medium for understanding revelation but also as a tool for developing critical, analytical, and reflective thinking through mastery of the Qur'an and its exegetical methodologies. Therefore, this study expands the function of the Arabic language from a linguistic-religious perspective to an epistemological perspective related to human intellectual development.

2. Scholarly Works in Arabic

The Arabic language also served as the primary medium for the dissemination of knowledge during the classical Islamic era. Many monumental works in various fields were written in Arabic, such as *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* by Imam al-Ghazali, which integrates elements of philosophy, Sufism, and Islamic law into a systematic and logical framework of thought (Sekarningrum & Rohma, 2024). To this day, this work remains a primary reference in Islamic scholarly discourse, demonstrating the power of the Arabic language as a scientific medium. In modern studies, researchers have conducted structural analyses of this text and found that the arguments presented follow a rigorous scientific mode of thinking, indicating that the Arabic language is capable of conveying rational concepts with a high degree of clarity. In the field of medicine, for example, *Al-Qanun fi al-Tibb*, written by Ibn Sina, serves as significant evidence of the Arabic language's capacity as a vehicle for the development of structured medical science. This work functions as a medical encyclopedia whose references have endured for centuries, not only in the Islamic world but also in Europe (Zulaicha et al., 2025).

Modern medical research still draws upon the terminology found in these classical Arabic texts, demonstrating that the Arabic language holds not only historical value but also practical and scientific value in the development of contemporary science. This reaffirms that Arabic has long been recognized as a universal academic and scientific language. In addition to the works of Ibn Sina, there are many other works by non-Arab Muslim intellectuals—such as Sibawaih, Al-Farabi, Al-Kindi, and Al-Ghazali—written in Arabic, all of which played a very important and strategic role in the study and development of Islamic sciences and Islamic civilization across various academic disciplines. This demonstrates that, at that time, Arabic was the language of science. Their works later laid the groundwork for the establishment of scientific libraries as a means of documenting scholarly works. All of these scholarly works—both classical and contemporary—as well as the establishment of scholarly libraries, serve as evidence of the Arabic language’s contribution to the development of knowledge. Thus, the Arabic language continues to be a vital foundation in the Islamic scholarly tradition and a bridge for the creation of scholarly works, whether classical or contemporary (Machrup Eko Cahyono, Salma Fikria & Nurul Musyafaah, 2024).



Figure 1. Contemporary Scientific Works

The image above is an example of a classic scientific work in Arabic: Ibn Sina’s *Al-Qanun fi al-Tibb*, a medical encyclopedia that remains a scientific reference to this day. During the classical period, Arabic served as the international language of science. As seen in Al-Khawarizmi’s *Kitāb al-Jabr wa al-Muqābalah*, mathematical terminology was formulated in Arabic using systematic logic, reflecting the language’s ability to convey rational ideas accurately (Al-Khawarizmi, 1988). Furthermore, Ibn Sina, in *Al-Qanun fi al-Tibb*, authored a medical encyclopedia that remained influential for centuries, demonstrating that Arabic could be used to formulate medical terminology with a high degree of precision (Sina, 2005). Similarly, Ibn Khaldun, in *Muqaddimah*, employed Arabic to formulate systematic and philosophical theories of society and history. His choice of vocabulary and sentence structure demonstrates that Arabic is used not only for communication but also as a tool for critical and scientific thinking (Khaldun, 2006).



Figure 2. Classical Arabic Scholarly Works

In the modern era, scholarship has undergone a transformation. A number of thinkers, such as Taha Abdurrahman and Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, have continued to use Arabic as the primary medium for their scholarly works. In *Ta'wīl al-Ḥadātha*, Taha Abdurrahman crafts a critique of modernity in a highly sophisticated and philosophical Arabic style, demonstrating that Arabic is capable of capturing the complexity of contemporary ideas (Abdurrahman, 2006). These contemporary thinkers demonstrate that Arabic can still be used to develop new approaches in philosophy, linguistics, and Islamic studies, provided they are accompanied by creativity and epistemological courage.

In the era of globalization, thousands of modern scientific articles are written in Arabic, covering various fields of study such as education, technology, psychology, and linguistics; these are the result of scientific knowledge. Scientific knowledge refers to all forms of knowledge obtained through a philosophical thought process that is empirical, systematic, objective, analytical, and verifiable, aimed at discovering truth through the scientific method (Firmansyah & Ali, 2021). In modern education, particularly at the university level, research plays a crucial role in the advancement of science and technology. As centers of research that contribute to the development of various academic disciplines, universities play a vital role in advancing such research. In fact, Article 1 of Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Regulation No. 53 of 2003 states that research is part of the National Standards and the Tridharma of higher education.



Figure 3. Scientific Library

Scholarly work is a vital foundation of higher education institutions; its significance lies not only in fulfilling the duties of faculty and students but also in developing teaching materials, supporting community service activities, and, of course, enhancing the university's reputation. Furthermore, this research yields various benefits for the academic community and the broader public (The Role of Research in Higher Education: Enhancing the Credibility of Education, 2024). Examples of modern scholarly works produced in higher education institutions include doctoral dissertations, master's theses, undergraduate theses, research papers, journal articles, and other academic articles. This demonstrates that Arabic remains actively used in contemporary academic discourse and research.

Nevertheless, in the contemporary era, the Arabic language faces serious challenges, making its revitalization necessary, particularly in the fields of science and technology. An ALECSO report notes that the weak development of technical vocabulary and the lack of policies for scientific publishing in Arabic are major obstacles to establishing the language as the language of modern science (ALECSO, 2020). Therefore, institutions such as the Majma' al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah continue to strive for the Arabization and standardization of terminology to strengthen the position of the Arabic language within the global scientific community. In this regard, Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas emphasized the importance of distinguishing between the "Islamization of science" and the mere translation of science into Arabic. He called for the establishment of a conceptual framework for science grounded in the Islamic worldview through the Arabic language (Al-Attas, 1993).

Critically speaking, the contribution of the Arabic language to the development of Islamic epistemology cannot be understood solely through its status as the language of revelation or the sheer volume of scholarly works produced in that language. Arabic makes an epistemological contribution because its linguistic structure serves as a conceptual framework that assists Muslim scholars in formulating, classifying, and justifying knowledge. In the Islamic scholarly tradition, terms such as 'ilm, ma'rifah, dalīl, burhān, 'aql, naql, ta'wīl, and ijtihād do not merely function as vocabulary, but represent specific concepts and processes in acquiring and testing truth. Thus, the Arabic language plays a role in shaping a conceptual framework that allows the relationship between text, reason, and empirical reality to be developed systematically.

These contributions are evident in the development of various disciplines of Islamic studies. In the science of exegesis (tafsir), a mastery of the linguistic structure, meaning, and context of the verses forms the foundation for understanding the message of the Qur'an. In usul al-fiqh, the concepts of 'āmm, khāṣṣ, muṭlaq, muqayyad, manṭūq, and mafhūm demonstrate how linguistic analysis is used to derive legal conclusions. Meanwhile, in Islamic theology and philosophy, the Arabic language provides the terminology to discuss abstract issues such as existence, cause and effect, the soul, knowledge, and the relationship between revelation and reason. This demonstrates that the Arabic language is not merely a vessel for existing knowledge but also provides the tools for categorization and argumentation that enable that knowledge to be developed.

However, it is crucial to distinguish between Arabic as an epistemological tool and Arabic as the sole source of scientific truth. Language is fundamentally a tool that enables ideas to be formulated and communicated, whereas the validity of knowledge remains determined by the methods employed, the strength of the argumentation, consistency with sources, and in the empirical sciences by the processes of observation and verification. Therefore, the prominence of the Arabic language in the Islamic epistemological tradition does not mean that all knowledge conveyed in Arabic is automatically true. Rather, the strength of the Islamic scholarly tradition lies in its ability to integrate textual analysis (naql), rational reasoning ('aql), and experience or observation of reality in the process of knowledge production.

From this perspective, the works of Al-Ghazali, Ibn Sina, Al-Khawarizmi, and Ibn

Khaldun demonstrate that the Arabic language served as a space for dialogue among various sources and methods of knowledge. Al-Ghazali developed theological and philosophical arguments by combining religious sources and critical reasoning; Ibn Sina systematically developed the terminology of philosophy and medicine; Al-Khawarizmi used the Arabic language to formulate mathematical concepts that later influenced the development of science in various regions; while Ibn Khaldun developed social and historical analysis through concepts that allowed for the systematic study of social reality. Thus, the contribution of the Arabic language to Islamic epistemology lies in its ability to serve as a space for the articulation, categorization, and development of interdisciplinary knowledge, rather than merely as a language of writing.

This finding also has critical implications for the development of contemporary Islamic scholarship. When the Arabic language is unable to keep pace with developments in scientific and technological terminology, the issue is not merely a decline in the use of Arabic, but also the potential weakening of the language's capacity to serve as a medium for the production of new knowledge. Therefore, the revitalization of the Arabic language must be directed not only toward the translation of foreign terms but also toward the development of scientific terminology, concepts, and discourse that enable Arabic to once again become a language for the production of knowledge. In this context, the Arabization of terms must be accompanied by the development of research methodologies and scientific publication traditions so that Arabic does not remain merely a language for the reproduction of knowledge but becomes a language for the creation and development of new knowledge.

Thus, the analysis in this study shows that the contribution of the Arabic language to Islamic epistemology has three main levels. First, the textual level, which provides the tools for understanding and interpreting revelatory sources. Second, the methodological level, which shapes the terminology and structure of argumentation across various Islamic academic disciplines. Third, the productive level, which enables the emergence of new concepts, theories, and scholarly works in various fields. These three levels demonstrate that the role of the Arabic language in Islamic epistemology is active and productive: Arabic is not merely a medium for conveying knowledge, but serves as one of the instruments that enables knowledge to be formulated, developed, debated, and passed down.

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that the Arabic language plays a very important role in the development of Islamic science and scholarship. From the classical period to the modern era, Arabic has served not only as a tool for communication but also as the primary medium for producing influential scholarly works across various academic disciplines. The revitalization of the Arabic language is essential, particularly in science and technology, to strengthen its position within the global scientific community. Efforts toward the Arabization and standardization of terminology are key to ensuring that Arabic remains relevant and continues to contribute to the future development of science. Thus, Arabic continues to serve as a vital foundation within the Islamic scholarly tradition and as a bridge for the emergence of innovative scientific works.

The findings of this study support the research by Nurjana (2022), which states that, through the works of classical scholars, the Arabic language has made a significant contribution to the development of Islamic scholarship. This finding aligns with research conducted by Sekarningrum and Rohma (2024), which emphasizes the importance of Imam Al-Ghazali in establishing the tradition of Islamic education. However, previous studies have typically focused only on how the Arabic language functions as the language of scholarly literature. This study offers a broader perspective by demonstrating that the Arabic language is a medium that shapes intellectual traditions across various fields of knowledge, such as philosophy, medicine, mathematics, and the social sciences. Furthermore, through the development and digitization of scientific terminology, the language remains relevant to the creation of contemporary scholarly works. Thus, this study affirms that the Arabic language has made significant contributions from the classical era to the modern era.

3. Arabic in Modern Education

The Arabic language plays a strategic role in modern Islamic education due to its function as the language of revelation, scholarship, and culture. In the context of education, Arabic is not merely taught as a foreign language, but rather as a tool for understanding primary Islamic texts such as the Qur'an, hadith, and classical literature. Therefore, the presence of Arabic in the contemporary Islamic education system is crucial in determining the direction and quality of students' religious understanding as well as their character development.



Figure 4. Modern Islamic Education.

In modern Islam-based education, the Arabic language serves to reinforce students' religious and moral values. Through the ability to read the Qur'an, hadith, and classical literature, students can understand religious teachings authentically. Sumardianto (2024) states that the teaching of Arabic in Islamic schools helps strengthen the development of students' spiritual and religious character, particularly through the internalization of Islamic values in the learning process. Arabic also holds strategic value in the context of global academic mobility.



Figure 5. Students at Al-Azhar University, Egypt

At international and national Islamic universities, Arabic has become a required course; in fact, many of these institutions' educational curricula are integrated with Arabic language programs. Examples include Arab universities such as Al-Azhar (Egypt), the Islamic University of Madinah, and Umm Al-Qura University in Mecca, as well as state Islamic universities such as UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim in Malang, STIBA Ar Rayah in Sukabumi, Unida Gontor, etc., where students are required to master both passive and active Arabic as an academic prerequisite. In addition to the university level, Arabic is also studied from elementary school (MI) through high school (SMA/MA/SMK). In this context, Arabic is not merely a means of communication but the primary gateway to accessing the Islamic scholarly heritage and engaging in global scientific dialogue..

Technological advancements in modern education have also driven innovation in Arabic language learning. Currently, many educational institutions use online applications, e-learning platforms, and artificial intelligence (AI)-based methods to teach Arabic. The use of technology-based learning tools can serve as a supportive resource for both the learning process and learning outcomes. Among the learning tools that can be used are Quizizz, Padlet, Audacity, and text-to-speech applications (Hilmi & Hasaniyah, 2023).



Figure 6. Digital Media Technology

Digital transformation in the field of education has also influenced approaches to Arabic language learning. The use of digital media, e-learning, and interactive learning applications has opened up new avenues for innovation in Arabic language instruction. This model is relevant for addressing the challenges of globalization and fostering Arabic-language digital literacy.

Although important, the teaching of Arabic in modern education systems faces various challenges, including linguistic, curricular, and sociological issues such as linguistic differences, a fragmented curriculum system, a shortage of qualified teachers, and a lack of social support. Nevertheless, through curriculum enhancement, teacher training, and the use of technology, Arabic can continue to be developed as an integral part of Islamic education today and in the future (Al Qolbi et al., 2024).

Arabic was also systematically used to classify and catalog knowledge in the scholarly libraries of the modern educational system. One example is Ibn al-Nadim's

Fihrist, which cataloged works across various fields of knowledge alphabetically and thematically in Arabic (Dhanani, 1994). This approach served not only as a reference but also as a sophisticated system of scientific documentation for its time.

Arabic became the primary medium for the transmission of knowledge to the Western world, particularly through translation centers such as those in Toledo and Sicily. Arabic works were translated into Latin by figures such as Gerard of Cremona and Michael Scot, who introduced new concepts in the fields of medicine and logic to Europe (Burnett, 2001). This process demonstrates how Arabic-language scientific libraries had a transnational impact. In the contemporary context, many ancient Arabic manuscripts have now been digitized and are preserved in global digital libraries such as Al-Maktaba al-Shamilah and the Qatar Digital Library at the international level, and ELiPSKi (Electronic Literacy of Islamic Religious Literature) at the national level (Heri Setiawan, 2024). Open access to Arabic-language scholarly works allows researchers worldwide to draw extensively on the Islamic scholarly heritage. This digitization also reinforces the position of Arabic as a relevant language of science in the modern era.

The discussion in this study reveals that the Arabic language plays a very important role in human intellectual development, particularly in the context of Islam. Arabic serves not only as a means of communication but also as a primary epistemological tool for understanding revealed teachings, particularly the Qur'an. Linguistic rules such as *nahwu*, *sharaf*, and *balāghah* enable readers to explore the profound and complex meanings within the verses of the Qur'an. On the other hand, the sciences of the Qur'an ('*Ulūm al-Qur'ān*'), which are built upon the structure of the Arabic language, provide a scientific framework for understanding the sacred text, whether through classical or contemporary approaches.

Reflections from this study emphasize the importance of mastering the Arabic language as a foundational academic skill that cannot be overlooked. In the modern context, the development of exegetical methodologies such as thematic (*maudhū'i*) exegesis, contextual exegesis, and even hermeneutics demonstrates that the Arabic language retains significant epistemological relevance. Moreover, social approaches such as sociology and anthropology are increasingly being applied to understand the Qur'an within the context of society. In other words, the Arabic language and the '*Ulūm al-Qur'ān*' have transformed from mere tools for reading into multidisciplinary means of interpreting the reality of the Muslim community.

The primary reason for the need to reinvigorate the role of the Arabic language in education and Islamic studies is the increasingly complex nature of contemporary intellectual challenges. Secularism, moral relativism, and crises of religious identity across various regions of the Islamic world demand an approach that is not only textual but also contextual and functional. In this regard, the Arabic language and '*Ulūm al-Qur'ān*' hold great potential as tools for fostering a critical, systematic, and spiritually grounded way of thinking. Therefore, integrating Arabic into the educational system—particularly in Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) and Islamic universities—is a strategic step toward preserving the continuity of Islamic scholarly tradition and addressing the challenges of our time in a scholarly and relevant manner.

In a recent study, Harun and Shukri argued that a deep mastery of the Arabic language is directly linked to mastery of Islamic studies. Without active proficiency in Arabic, understanding of tafsir, hadith, and fiqh will be severely limited and tend to be purely textual. Therefore, the Arabic language serves as an epistemological foundation in Islamic education (Shukri, 2019).

Scholarly works in Arabic represent one of the highest manifestations of the role of the Arabic language in the intellectual development of the Muslim community. From the classical period to the contemporary era, Arabic has served as the primary medium for scholarly writing across various fields, including philosophy, medicine, astronomy, theology, exegesis, and Islamic law. The choice of Arabic as a scholarly language stems not only from its status as the language of revelation but also from its capacity to convey complex meanings and subtle nuances of thought. According to a study by Mahfud (2021), the richness of the Arabic language's structure enabled classical scholars such as Ibn Sina, Al-Farabi, and Al-Ghazali to articulate philosophical and scientific ideas in the form of systematic scholarly texts of high methodological value.

Research conducted by Maulana (2023) emphasizes that a number of contemporary scholarly works in the fields of Islamic economics, political thought, and Islamic ecology are currently written in Arabic to broaden the intellectual horizons of the Muslim community and bridge global dialogue among civilizations. This demonstrates that Arabic continues to function as a dynamic language of Islamic scholarship capable of adapting to the changing times, rather than merely serving as a symbol of scholarly cultural heritage.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that it differs from previous research. Arabic is studied in part as a religious language, a medium of learning, and an academic language. By integrating the three main dimensions of this study—Arabic as the language of revelation, the language of science, and the language of modern education—into a single framework for human intellectual development, this study offers a more comprehensive perspective. This integrative approach demonstrates that the contribution of the Arabic language extends not only to language proficiency but also to the formation of scientific epistemology, a tradition of critical thinking, academic culture, and educational epistemology. Therefore, this study offers a new conceptual contribution to the study of Arabic language education, particularly by expanding the idea that Arabic can serve as a strategic tool for enhancing human intelligence in the modern era.

This study offers significant theoretical and practical implications for the development of Arabic linguistics in contemporary Islamic education. Theoretically, this study supports the idea that the Arabic language should be viewed not merely as an object of linguistic research or a language of communication, but as an epistemological tool that contributes to the formation of the Islamic academic tradition. The findings of this study expand the paradigm of Arabic language research by positioning it as a multidisciplinary field, interconnected with the disciplines of education, Qur'anic and hadith studies, educational technology, and other Islamic sciences. Therefore, the development of Arabic language studies should not only focus on mastering linguistic elements such as nahwu, sharaf, and balāghah, but also on the ability to think critically, understand context, and comprehensively interpret the primary sources of Islam to meet

the needs of modern society. In practical terms, the findings of this study can serve as a foundation for developing Arabic language curricula and learning models at various levels of Islamic education. It is not only necessary to improve mastery of linguistic rules but also to enhance academic literacy, the ability to read scholarly literature in Arabic, and the use of digital technology and artificial intelligence (AI) as innovative methods for language learning. Furthermore, this study recommends that educational institutions and policymakers utilize the platform (Umar et al., 2025)

communicative, contextual, and technology-based approaches. The goal is for Arabic to serve not only as the language of religious texts but also as a tool for developing students' intellectual competencies in understanding primary Islamic sources in a deep and functional manner. According to Safitri's (2021) research, an integrated approach to Arabic language learning that combines technology with a communicative approach has been shown to enhance critical thinking skills and comprehension of the meaning in Islamic texts among students in madrasah aliyah and Islamic higher education institutions.

Mohammad Hashim Kamali suggests reforming Arabic language instruction through a more philosophical and interdisciplinary approach. He proposes that Arabic language learning focus not only on grammar but also on aspects of thought, logic, and rhetoric, thereby fostering the critical and analytical thinking that characterizes the Islamic scholarly tradition (Kamali, 2005).

This study aligns with the research by Cahya Edi Setyawan and Khairul Anwar (2020), which explains why Arabic is important for Islamic education in the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, as well as the research by Hilmi and Hasaniyah (2023). According to Sumardianto's (2024) study, learning Arabic also contributes to the development of students' religious character. However, the focus of this study is on the aspects of Arabic language learning and the use of media. By using Arabic as a tool for intellectual development, this study offers a more integrative perspective. It connects the aspects of revelation, classical scholarly tradition, academic literacy, and digital transformation in modern Islamic education. This approach demonstrates that learning Arabic not only makes you more proficient in speaking but also helps you think scientifically and strengthens academic culture.

CONCLUSION

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that Arabic is not merely a tool of communication, but rather a living and dynamic medium of knowledge in the intellectual development of Islam. As the language of the Qur'an, Arabic serves as the foundation for understanding Islam's primary sources through disciplines such as Ulumul Qur'an, tafsir, and other Islamic sciences. As a scholarly language, Arabic serves as a medium for the production and transmission of knowledge, giving rise to scholarly works across various disciplines. Meanwhile, in modern education, Arabic plays a role in strengthening academic literacy, source-based learning, and the utilization of educational technology.

The findings of this study indicate that Arabic's contribution to Islamic epistemology encompasses textual, methodological, and productive aspects. The practical implication is that strengthening Arabic in Islamic educational institutions

should be directed not only toward mastering language skills but also toward the ability to read and analyze primary sources, understand scholarly terminology, construct academic arguments, and foster a culture of research. Thus, Arabic language instruction must be integrated with the study of Islamic texts, academic literacy, and interdisciplinary research.

As a follow-up, Islamic educational institutions need to develop an Arabic language curriculum based on primary sources, enrich teaching materials with classical and contemporary scholarly works in Arabic, and utilize libraries and digital platforms to expand access to Arabic literature. The development and standardization of Arabic terminology in the fields of science and technology also need to be strengthened so that Arabic does not merely serve as a language for the transmission of knowledge but can once again function as a language for the production of knowledge. These efforts must be supported by enhancing educators' competencies, developing digital literacy, and fostering research collaboration among universities.

Thus, the revitalization of the Arabic language is a strategic step toward preserving the continuity of the Islamic intellectual tradition while responding to scientific developments in the era of globalization. Future research could empirically examine the relationship between proficiency in Arabic and critical thinking skills, academic productivity, and the development of Islamic epistemology within Islamic higher education settings.

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