Journal of Arabic Language and Learning in Focus
e-ISSN: 2987-3347
Volume 2, Issue. 2, 2025, pp. 86-100
https://jurnal.isimupacitan.ac.id/index.php/alif.

Curriculum Reconstruction of Communicative Competence-Based Arabic Language Learning to Enhance Students' Language Proficiency

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Submitted: 12-08-2026 Revised : 24-08-2026 Accepted: 03-11-2026

ABSTRACT. *This study aims to reconstruct the Arabic language learning curriculum based on communicative competence to enhance students' language proficiency at MIN 1 Yogyakarta. The study employed a qualitative descriptive approach. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis involving the head of the madrasah, curriculum coordinator, Arabic language teachers, and students. Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, comprising data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The findings indicate that the existing Arabic curriculum has provided a foundation for vocabulary, grammar, and the four language skillslistening, speaking, reading, and writingbut its implementation remains relatively focused on linguistic content and written exercises. Students require greater opportunities to use Arabic in meaningful and contextual communication. Curriculum reconstruction consequently emphasizes communicative competence as the central orientation by integrating contextual materials, interactive learning strategies, gradual language practice, and authentic assessment. Communicative activities include dialogue, role-play, question-and-answer activities, pair and group work, presentations, simulations, and contextual tasks. The reconstructed curriculum also aligns learning outcomes, materials, instructional strategies, and assessment with students' communicative needs. The study concludes that a communicative competence-based curriculum can provide a more relevant framework for developing students' Arabic language proficiency by positioning students as active language users and teachers as facilitators of meaningful communication.*

Keywords: *Arabic Language Curriculum; Communicative Competence; Curriculum Reconstruction; Language Proficiency; Madrasah Ibtidaiyah.*

https://doi.org/10.52640/alif.305

How to Cite Prawito, E., & Abidin, L., (2025). Curriculum reconstruction of communicative competence-based Arabic language learning to enhance students' language proficiency at MIN 1 Yogyakarta. *Journal of Arabic Language and Learning in Focus*, 2(2), 86-100.

INTRODUCTION

Arabic language learning in madrasah has an important position in developing students' linguistic abilities while supporting their access to Islamic, academic, and intercultural knowledge. At the elementary level, however, Arabic learning cannot be limited to the mastery of vocabulary, grammatical rules, or the ability to translate texts. Students need opportunities to use Arabic meaningfully in situations that are close to their daily lives. Therefore, curriculum development needs to shift from an orientation that primarily emphasizes linguistic knowledge toward an orientation that integrates linguistic competence with communicative competence. Recent studies indicate that communicative language teaching emphasizes interaction, meaningful language use, and practical communication rather than merely mastering grammatical structures (Salam

&Luksfinanto, 2024). In the context of Arabic language education, this orientation is increasingly relevant because language proficiency is ultimately demonstrated through students' ability to understand and produce language appropriately in real communicative situations.

The need for curriculum reconstruction is also related to changes in educational policy in Indonesia. The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum encourages learning outcomes to be formulated in terms of competencies that students can demonstrate, rather than merely the completion of learning materials. In Arabic language education, communicative competence needs to be represented through learning outcomes that balance grammatical accuracy with the ability to communicate contextually. A recent analysis of Arabic learning outcomes in the Indonesian Merdeka Curriculum shows that communicative competence needs to encompass grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic dimensions so that language learning does not become narrowly focused on linguistic form (Sholahudin et al., 2025a). This perspective is important for madrasah because Arabic is not only a subject but also a language that has functional, cultural, religious, and communicative dimensions. Consequently, curriculum reconstruction should connect learning objectives, materials, learning activities, assessment, and students' real communicative needs.

In elementary madrasah, the reconstruction of an Arabic language curriculum is particularly important because students are at a developmental stage in which learning experiences should be concrete, interactive, contextual, and engaging. Curriculum content that is dominated by memorization and explanation of grammatical concepts may not provide sufficient opportunities for students to practice speaking, listening, reading, and writing in an integrated manner. Conversely, communicative learning provides students with opportunities to construct meaning through interaction, collaboration, question-and-answer activities, role-play, dialogue, simulation, and contextual tasks. Research on the communicative approach in Arabic language learning demonstrates that the approach can contribute positively to students' Arabic language proficiency, indicating the importance of providing systematic opportunities for students to use Arabic actively during the learning process (Arifin et al., 2024). Thus, communicative competence should not be treated merely as an additional component of the curriculum but as a central orientation that guides the design of Arabic language learning.

Curriculum reconstruction also requires a reconsideration of the relationship between learning materials and students' communicative experiences. Arabic materials need to be selected and organized according to students' needs, developmental characteristics, and everyday contexts. Topics such as greetings, family, school, hobbies, food, time, daily activities, and the school environment can become meaningful contexts for practicing Arabic. Such materials should not be presented only as vocabulary lists or grammatical patterns but should be transformed into communicative tasks that require students to use the language. The development of Arabic teaching modules based on constructivism and a communicative approach, for example, emphasizes collaboration, feedback, interaction, and active use of the target language as important elements for creating meaningful learning experiences (Islamiy & Fahyuni, 2024). This indicates that curriculum reconstruction should include not only what students learn but also how students experience and use the language.

The reconstruction of a communicative competence-based curriculum also requires a change in the role of teachers. Teachers are expected not merely to act as transmitters of linguistic knowledge but also as facilitators who create communicative environments in which students can actively practice Arabic. Classroom interaction needs to provide sufficient space for students to ask questions, express ideas, respond to their peers, negotiate meaning, and communicate information. Such an approach is consistent with the principles of communicative language teaching, which place interaction and practical language use at the center of the learning process (Van Der Zwaard & Bannink, 2020). In this context, teachers need to design learning

activities that gradually move students from controlled language practice toward more meaningful and spontaneous communication.

Another important aspect of curriculum reconstruction is the alignment between learning outcomes and assessment. If the curriculum aims to develop communicative competence, assessment should not rely predominantly on written tests measuring vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. Assessment should also examine students' ability to listen to and understand messages, participate in conversations, produce appropriate utterances, read meaningful texts, and express ideas in written form. The development of communicative competence requires assessment that reflects actual language use and considers different dimensions of communication. Recent curriculum analysis in Indonesia emphasizes the importance of balancing linguistic accuracy and contextual communication skills within Arabic language learning outcomes (Raswan et al., 2022). Therefore, authentic assessment, performance tasks, dialogue, oral presentations, projects, and contextual language activities can become important components of a reconstructed curriculum.

The importance of curriculum reconstruction is further strengthened by contemporary developments in Arabic language curriculum design. Research on Arabic curriculum reconstruction based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and the perspective of Rusydi Ahmad Thuaimah demonstrates the importance of systematic curriculum development beginning with needs analysis, situational analysis, learning objectives, competency standards, learning activities, teaching materials, and evaluation (Mubin et al., 2025). This indicates that curriculum reconstruction cannot be conducted simply by replacing teaching methods; rather, it requires a comprehensive examination of the entire curriculum system. Similarly, the development of a 4Cs-based Arabic language curriculum highlights the relevance of integrating communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity into Arabic language education so that linguistic competence develops alongside broader twenty-first-century competencies (Adawiyah et al., 2025).

In the context of MIN 1 Yogyakarta, the reconstruction of the Arabic language learning curriculum is therefore important to ensure that curriculum components are aligned with the development of students' communicative competence and language proficiency. The reconstruction needs to consider students' actual needs, the characteristics of elementary-level Arabic learning, teachers' competencies, available learning resources, classroom interaction patterns, and the demands of contemporary education. The curriculum should provide a coherent relationship between competency standards, learning objectives, communicative materials, interactive learning strategies, learning media, and authentic assessment. Through this alignment, Arabic learning can become more meaningful because students are not only expected to know Arabic but also to use it appropriately in simple and increasingly complex communicative situations.

Furthermore, curriculum reconstruction should place students as active subjects of learning. A communicative curriculum encourages students to learn through experience, interaction, cooperation, and reflection rather than through passive reception of information. In this model, language errors are treated as part of the learning process while accuracy is gradually developed through feedback and repeated practice. The integration of collaborative and feedback-oriented activities has been shown to support active language use and improve the quality of Arabic learning experiences (S. A. Almelhes & Alsaiari, 2024a). Consequently, the curriculum at MIN 1 Yogyakarta needs to create a learning environment in which students have adequate opportunities to communicate Arabic in meaningful contexts.

Based on these considerations, Curriculum Reconstruction of Communicative Competence-Based Arabic Language Learning to Enhance Students' Language Proficiency at MIN 1 Yogyakarta is important to investigate. The study is expected to contribute to the

development of an Arabic language curriculum that is not only structurally organized but also responsive to students' communicative needs. The reconstruction is directed toward integrating language knowledge, communicative skills, contextual learning, active interaction, and authentic assessment into a coherent curriculum framework. In this way, Arabic learning at the elementary madrasah level can move from a predominantly knowledge-oriented model toward a competency-oriented model that enables students to use Arabic effectively, appropriately, and confidently in meaningful communication.

METHOD

This study employed a *qualitative descriptive approach* to analyze and reconstruct the Arabic language learning curriculum based on communicative competence at MIN 1 Yogyakarta. Data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. The informants were selected purposively based on their direct involvement in Arabic language learning and curriculum implementation. The observation focused on learning objectives, teaching materials, instructional strategies, classroom interaction, students' use of Arabic, learning media, and assessment practices. Interviews explored teachers' understanding of communicative competence, students' learning needs and difficulties, curriculum implementation, and expectations for curriculum improvement. Documents analyzed included the curriculum, learning outcomes, teaching modules, textbooks, worksheets, and assessment instruments. Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data credibility was ensured through source and technique triangulation by comparing information from different informants and data-collection techniques.

Table 1. Research Informants

No.	Informant	Number	Information Obtained
1	Head of Madrasah	1	Madrasah policies, curriculum direction, and institutional support
2	Arabic Language Teacher	2	Curriculum implementation, teaching strategies, materials, assessment, and communicative learning practices
3	Curriculum Coordinator	1	Curriculum planning, learning outcomes, and curriculum implementation
4	Grade V Students	10	Learning experiences, difficulties, interests, and communicative needs
5	Grade VI Students	10	Arabic language proficiency, learning experiences, and communicative needs
Total		**24**	

The study involved 24 informants selected purposively based on their direct involvement in Arabic language learning and curriculum implementation. The participants consisted of the head of madrasah (1), Arabic language teachers (2), curriculum coordinator (1), Grade V students (10), and Grade VI students (10). The selection of students from Grades V and VI was intended to capture diverse learning experiences, proficiency levels, difficulties, and communicative needs among upper-grade learners, while school leaders, curriculum personnel, and teachers provided complementary perspectives on curriculum planning and implementation. The number and composition of informants were determined based on information richness and the need for source triangulation rather than statistical representativeness.

The curriculum reconstruction followed four interconnected stages: (1) analysis of the existing curriculum, (2) communicative needs analysis, (3) identification of curriculum gaps, and (4) curriculum reconstruction and alignment. The needs analysis identified students' communicative functions, learning difficulties, interests, and expectations, while the curriculum analysis examined the alignment of learning outcomes, materials, instructional practices, integration of istimā', kalām, qirā'ah, and kitābah, and assessment. The identified gaps between the existing curriculum and students' communicative needs were used as the basis for reconstructing learning outcomes, contextual materials, interactive learning activities, integrated language skills, and authentic assessment. The reconstruction emphasized meaningful language use through dialogue, role-play, question-and-answer activities, pair and group work, presentations, and contextual tasks.

Data were analyzed using the interactive model of (Miles et al., 2018), consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data credibility was established through source and technique triangulation by comparing information from different informants and data-collection techniques. This procedure ensured that the reconstructed curriculum was empirically grounded in the existing curriculum conditions, students' communicative needs, classroom practices, and institutional perspectives.

The curriculum reconstruction was conducted by identifying gaps between the existing curriculum and the communicative competencies required by students. The analysis focused on four language skillslistening (istimā'), speaking (kalām), reading (qirā'ah), and writing (kitābah)and their integration with vocabulary, grammar, contextual learning activities, and authentic assessment. The reconstruction process included needs identification, analysis of existing curriculum components, formulation of communicative learning outcomes, selection of contextual materials, development of interactive learning activities, and alignment of assessment with communicative competencies. The reconstructed curriculum emphasized meaningful language use through dialogue, role-play, question-and-answer activities, pair and group work, presentations, and contextual tasks. Triangulation was applied by comparing interview, observation, and documentary evidence to ensure the credibility of the findings and to produce a curriculum reconstruction framework that was relevant to the characteristics and communicative needs of students at MIN 1 Yogyakarta.

RESULTS AND DISCUSIONS

Results

The results of the study indicate that the Arabic language learning curriculum at MIN 1 Yogyakarta has provided a basic foundation for students' Arabic language development; however, its implementation still requires reconstruction to strengthen communicative competence. The findings were obtained from observations, interviews with the head of madrasah, curriculum coordinator, Arabic language teachers, and students, as well as analysis of curriculum documents and learning materials. The analysis identified four main aspects requiring attention: (1) curriculum orientation, (2) learning materials and language skills, (3) communicative learning practices, and (4) assessment of Arabic language proficiency. These four aspects are interconnected and indicate that curriculum reconstruction needs to move from a predominantly content-oriented approach toward a competency- and communication-oriented curriculum.

Existing Orientation of the Arabic Language Curriculum

The findings show that the existing Arabic curriculum at MIN 1 Yogyakarta has incorporated the development of the four language skills, namely listening (*istimā'*), speaking (*kalām*), reading (*qirā'ah*), and writing (*kitābah*). Nevertheless, classroom implementation tends to

give greater emphasis to vocabulary acquisition, translation, reading texts, and completion of written exercises. Speaking activities are generally conducted through short question-and-answer sessions or repetition of expressions provided by the teacher. Consequently, students have opportunities to recognize and reproduce Arabic expressions but relatively fewer opportunities to use Arabic spontaneously in meaningful communication.

This finding emerged from observations of Arabic language learning, in which teachers generally began lessons by introducing vocabulary and explaining the meaning of expressions before students completed exercises. Such practices were useful for building students' basic linguistic knowledge but did not always provide sufficient opportunities for students to communicate using the target language. One Arabic teacher explained:

"Selama ini pembelajaran lebih banyak dimulai dari kosakata dan materi yang ada di buku. Siswa memang dapat menghafalkan kosakata, tetapi ketika diminta menggunakan kosakata tersebut dalam percakapan sederhana, sebagian siswa masih merasa kesulitan."*(Arabic Language Teacher, Interview)*

The statement indicates a gap between knowing Arabic vocabulary and being able to use it communicatively. Students may recognize vocabulary and grammatical patterns but still experience difficulties when required to construct their own utterances. This condition demonstrates the importance of reconstructing the curriculum around functional language use. Vocabulary and grammar should remain important components, but they need to function as linguistic resources that support communication rather than become the primary learning objectives.

Students' responses reinforce this finding. Several students stated that Arabic became easier to understand when teachers connected the material with everyday activities. Students showed greater enthusiasm when learning involved dialogue, pictures, games, or interaction with classmates. One student stated:

"Kalau hanya menghafalkan kosakata kadang mudah lupa. Saya lebih suka kalau ada percakapan dengan teman karena bisa langsung mencoba berbicara bahasa Arab."*(Grade V Student, Interview)*

The finding demonstrates that students need learning experiences that provide repeated opportunities to use Arabic in meaningful contexts. The communicative orientation therefore needs to be integrated systematically into the curriculum rather than implemented only as an occasional classroom activity.

Students' Communicative Needs

The needs analysis indicates that students require Arabic language learning that is closely connected to their daily experiences. The most prominent communicative needs identified in the study include greeting and introducing oneself, asking and answering questions, describing people and objects, expressing preferences, talking about daily activities, identifying places and directions, discussing school activities, and expressing simple opinions. These communicative situations are considered appropriate for elementary-level students because they can be directly connected with students' immediate social and educational environments.

The analysis of interviews also revealed differences in students' levels of Arabic proficiency. Some students were able to recognize common vocabulary and produce simple sentences, whereas others continued to experience difficulties with pronunciation, vocabulary recall, sentence construction, and comprehension of spoken Arabic. This heterogeneity requires the curriculum to provide differentiated communicative activities. The curriculum should not assume that all students possess the same level of linguistic competence.

The Arabic teacher explained:

"Kemampuan siswa tidak sama. Ada siswa yang sudah berani berbicara, tetapi ada juga yang masih malu dan takut salah. Karena itu, kegiatan berbicara harus dibuat bertahap, mulai dari menirukan ungkapan, berlatih berpasangan, kemudian baru berbicara secara mandiri."*(Arabic Language Teacher, Interview)*

This finding indicates that communicative competence needs to be developed progressively. Students should first receive adequate linguistic input and controlled practice before moving toward semi-controlled and freer communication. Such progression is important because communicative learning does not mean asking students to communicate without linguistic preparation. Instead, the curriculum needs to establish a gradual pathway from language input to guided practice, interactive practice, independent communication.

The study also found that students preferred learning activities that involved interaction. Pair work and small-group activities were particularly useful for increasing students' opportunities to speak. In conventional teacher-centered activities, only a limited number of students had opportunities to produce Arabic orally. By contrast, pair and group activities allowed more students to participate simultaneously.

Reconstruction of Learning Materials

The findings indicate that curriculum reconstruction requires changes not only in teaching methods but also in the organization of learning materials. Existing materials generally provide vocabulary, expressions, texts, and exercises, but these components need to be reorganized around communicative themes and situations. The reconstructed curriculum therefore positions vocabulary and grammar as supporting elements within communicative units.

For example, a topic concerning "التعارف" (*al-ta'āruf*/introducing oneself) can include vocabulary related to names, age, residence, school, and hobbies. Instead of ending the lesson with vocabulary memorization, students can be asked to conduct a simple introduction dialogue with a partner. Similarly, the topic of "المدرسة" (*al-madrasah*/school) can be developed into activities in which students identify objects around the classroom, ask about their locations, describe classroom facilities, and give simple instructions in Arabic.

The reconstruction also emphasizes contextual integration of the four language skills. Listening activities can provide linguistic input through short conversations. Speaking activities can require students to respond to the conversation. Reading activities can reinforce vocabulary and expressions through short contextual texts, while writing activities can require students to produce simple sentences related to the same theme. In this way, the four skills are not taught as isolated components but are developed through interconnected communicative tasks.

One curriculum coordinator explained:

"Materi sebenarnya sudah tersedia, tetapi yang perlu diperkuat adalah bagaimana materi tersebut diterjemahkan menjadi kegiatan yang membuat siswa menggunakan bahasa. Jadi bukan hanya apa yang harus dipelajari siswa, tetapi juga apa yang dapat dilakukan siswa dengan bahasa Arab tersebut."*(Curriculum Coordinator, Interview)*

This finding represents one of the central points of the curriculum reconstruction. The curriculum needs to shift from asking "What linguistic content should students master?" toward "What can students do with Arabic after learning the material?". Consequently, learning outcomes should be formulated using observable communicative competencies.

Communicative Learning Strategies

Classroom observations revealed that communicative learning activities were already present, although their implementation was not yet systematic. Teachers occasionally used dialogue, question-and-answer activities, repetition, and pair work. However, these activities were

often dependent on the characteristics of particular topics and available classroom time. The reconstruction therefore seeks to make communicative activities an integral component of the curriculum.

Several strategies were identified as appropriate for the reconstructed curriculum. These include dialogue practice, role-play, information-gap activities, pair work, group discussion, language games, picture-based communication, presentations, and contextual projects. These activities allow students to use Arabic for meaningful purposes rather than merely reproduce sentences provided by the teacher.

Observation also showed that teacher modeling played an important role in reducing students' anxiety when speaking Arabic. Students were more willing to participate when teachers provided examples and allowed them to practice gradually. Positive feedback was also important because students often hesitated to speak because they were concerned about making mistakes.

A student stated:

"Kalau guru memberi contoh dulu, saya lebih berani mencoba. Kalau langsung disuruh membuat percakapan sendiri kadang bingung."*(Grade VI Student, Interview)*

The statement suggests that communicative learning needs to maintain a balance between teacher scaffolding and student autonomy. Teachers initially provide linguistic models and support, after which students are gradually given greater responsibility for producing language independently.

Reconstruction of Assessment

The findings further indicate that assessment needs to be reconstructed to correspond with the communicative orientation of the curriculum. Existing assessment practices tend to emphasize written exercises, vocabulary, translation, and knowledge of grammatical structures. These forms of assessment remain necessary, particularly for measuring students' linguistic foundations, but they are insufficient for determining students' actual communicative proficiency.

The reconstructed assessment emphasizes four dimensions: linguistic accuracy, fluency, comprehension, and appropriateness of language use. Assessment can be conducted through oral dialogue, role-play, presentations, listening tasks, reading comprehension, short writing tasks, and contextual projects. Rubrics can be used to assess pronunciation, vocabulary, sentence structure, fluency, comprehension, interaction, and confidence.

The Arabic teacher stated:

"Kalau tujuan pembelajarannya agar siswa bisa berkomunikasi, penilaiannya juga harus melihat kemampuan siswa ketika berbicara dan memahami lawan bicara, bukan hanya nilai soal tertulis."
(Arabic Language Teacher, Interview)

This finding confirms that curriculum reconstruction requires alignment among learning outcomes, learning activities, and assessment. If communicative competence is established as a primary learning outcome, assessment must provide evidence of students' ability to use Arabic in communicative situations.

The Reconstructed Communicative Competence-Based Curriculum

Based on the findings, the reconstructed curriculum places communicative competence as the central orientation of Arabic language learning at MIN 1 Yogyakarta. The curriculum does not eliminate vocabulary, grammar, reading, or writing but integrates these components into meaningful communication. Learning objectives are formulated around what students are able to understand and communicate after completing each learning unit.

The reconstruction follows a gradual development pattern. At the beginning level, students are introduced to functional vocabulary and simple expressions. They then engage in guided communication through repetition, substitution, question-and-answer activities, and structured dialogues. In the next stage, students participate in pair and group activities that require them to construct language more independently. Finally, students are encouraged to perform contextual communication through role-play, presentations, simulations, and simple projects.

The findings also show that the reconstructed curriculum needs to be contextual, interactive, student-centered, and developmentally appropriate. Contextual learning enables students to relate Arabic expressions to familiar situations. Interactive learning increases opportunities for language use. Student-centered learning gives students a greater role in constructing meaning and practicing communication. Developmentally appropriate learning ensures that the linguistic complexity and communicative demands remain consistent with elementary students' abilities.

Overall, the study demonstrates that curriculum reconstruction at MIN 1 Yogyakarta should focus on strengthening the relationship between competence, content, pedagogy, and assessment. The central change is not simply the addition of speaking activities but a comprehensive reorientation of the curriculum so that every component contributes to students' ability to use Arabic meaningfully. The reconstructed curriculum consequently positions students as active language users and teachers as facilitators who provide linguistic input, scaffolding, interaction, feedback, and opportunities for authentic communication.

Table 2. Summary of Research Findings

No.	Aspect	Existing Condition	Main Finding	Reconstruction Direction
1	Curriculum Orientation	Content- and vocabulary-oriented	Communicative use is not yet dominant	Competency- and communication-oriented curriculum
2	Learning & Materials	Material mastery; vocabulary, grammar, and texts	Functional and contextual language use needs strengthening	Observable communicative outcomes and thematic materials
3	Language Skills & Strategies	Four skills taught through explanation, repetition, and Q&A	Skills are not fully integrated and interaction remains limited	Integrate *istimā', kalām, qirā'ah,* and *kitābah* through dialogue, role-play, and collaborative activities
4	Participation, Teacher & Assessment	Uneven participation; teacher-centered; predominantly written assessment	Confidence, facilitation, and communicative performance need strengthening	Differentiated scaffolding, teacher as facilitator, and authentic performance-based assessment
5	Curriculum Alignment & Final Reconstruction	Curriculum components are not fully integrated	Basic proficiency exists, but communicative competence requires strengthening	Integrated Communicative Competence-Based Arabic Curriculum aligned across outcomes, materials, pedagogy, and assessment

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the main challenge in Arabic language learning at MIN 1 Yogyakarta is not the absence of linguistic content, but the imbalance between mastery of linguistic knowledge and the ability to use Arabic communicatively. The existing curriculum has accommodated the four language skills istimā', kalām, qirā'ah, and kitābah but classroom practice remains relatively dominated by vocabulary, translation, reading, and written exercises. This condition creates a gap between knowing Arabic and using Arabic. The finding is consistent with (Janadbah & Sharef, 2024), who emphasize that communicative Arabic learning should move beyond knowledge of language structures toward functional language use in real-life contexts. Similarly, the recent analysis of Arabic learning outcomes in Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum demonstrates that communicative competence needs to encompass not only grammatical accuracy but also contextual, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic abilities (Sholahudin et al., 2025b).

This finding strengthens the argument that curriculum reconstruction should begin with a change in curriculum orientation. Rather than positioning vocabulary and grammar as the final objectives, these linguistic components need to function as resources that enable students to communicate. The finding is particularly important at the elementary-school level because students need language experiences that are concrete, familiar, and connected to their immediate environment. The communicative approach emphasizes language as a tool for interaction, meaning that students should be given opportunities to use Arabic for authentic purposes rather than merely reproduce expressions provided by teachers. This is also supported by recent

research on communicative approaches to Arabic learning, which highlights contextuality, interaction, and functional language use as central characteristics of effective Arabic instruction (S. A. Almelhes & Alsaiari, 2024b). The literature further indicates that the success of communicative learning depends on the consistency with which communicative activities are incorporated into classroom practice rather than being treated as supplementary activities.

The second important finding concerns students' communicative needs. Students at MIN 1 Yogyakarta require Arabic for familiar situations, including greeting, self-introduction, asking and answering questions, describing objects and people, discussing daily activities, identifying locations, and expressing simple opinions. These needs demonstrate that curriculum content should be organized around communicative functions and situations. The development of ta'āruf materials, for example, can provide students with opportunities to combine vocabulary, sentence patterns, listening, and speaking within one meaningful context. Ritonga (2022) similarly found that the development of Arabic learning modules based on ta'āruf and problem-solving can be directed toward improving students' speaking abilities. Likewise, Ismani (2022)emphasize that speaking is fundamentally related to the ability to express needs, feelings, and intentions through natural dialogue. Thus, the communicative themes identified in this study are not merely additional topics but can become the organizing principle of the reconstructed curriculum.

The findings also show that students' proficiency is heterogeneous, making differentiated communicative learning necessary. Some students are already able to produce simple expressions, whereas others experience difficulties with pronunciation, vocabulary retrieval, sentence construction, and comprehension. This situation explains why the teacher's scaffolding is essential. Communicative learning should not immediately require students to perform independently; rather, it should progress from linguistic input and modeling to controlled practice, pair interaction, group communication, and eventually independent production. This finding is consistent with the constructivist perspective on Arabic speaking instruction, which positions learners as active participants in constructing language knowledge through interaction and practice (Rufaiqoh et al., 2023). The recent literature review on Arabic speaking development in Indonesia also emphasizes the importance of teachers' communicative competence and classroom interaction in supporting maharah kalām development (Attruk, 2025).

The effectiveness of interactive learning strategies found in this study is also supported by previous research. Dialogue, pair work, role-play, games, and presentations create more opportunities for students to produce Arabic than teacher-centered explanation alone (Rabie- Ahmed & Mohamed, 2022), for example, found that role-play can improve Arabic speaking proficiency and students' confidence. Saja (2023) likewise reported the effectiveness of role-play in developing Arabic language skills. These findings provide a strong explanation for why students at MIN 1 Yogyakarta expressed greater enthusiasm when learning involved dialogue and interaction with classmates. The use of interaction does not merely make learning more enjoyable; it increases the frequency with which students have to retrieve vocabulary, formulate utterances, respond to others, and negotiate meaning.

The use of student-centered learning further strengthens this interpretation(M. Safarul Khair, 2025). The reconstructed curriculum places students as active language users while teachers function as facilitators, models, and providers of feedback. This is important because a teacher-centered classroom may provide extensive linguistic explanation but limit students' opportunities to produce language. Recent research on the transformation toward student-centered Arabic learning identifies active participation, interaction, learner autonomy, and contextual learning as important directions for contemporary Arabic pedagogy (S. Almelhes, 2025). Therefore, the teacher's role in the reconstructed curriculum does not disappear; instead, it changes from being the dominant speaker to becoming a facilitator who designs communicative situations and provides scaffolding when students encounter difficulties.

Another significant finding is the need to integrate the four language skills. The existing curriculum already contains listening, speaking, reading, and writing, but these skills are not always developed through interconnected learning activities. The reconstruction proposed by this study addresses this problem by organizing learning units so that listening provides linguistic input, speaking provides opportunities for interaction, reading reinforces vocabulary and expressions, and writing becomes a form of language production related to the same communicative theme. Zubair (2024)argues that integrating listening, speaking, reading, and writing rather than teaching them in isolation can strengthen overall proficiency and communicative competence. This finding is particularly relevant because communicative competence cannot be reduced to speaking alone; effective communication requires students to understand input, construct meaning, respond appropriately, and produce language through multiple modes(Arkan, 2026).

The study's findings regarding assessment represent another important implication. The existing emphasis on written exercises, vocabulary, translation, and grammar is insufficient for determining whether students can actually communicate in Arabic. If the curriculum defines communicative competence as an important outcome, assessment must provide direct evidence of that competence. Yul (2022) identified the limited assessment of Arabic speaking as a significant problem in the Indonesian assessment context. Rahman (2022) similarly emphasize the importance of authentic assessment for kalām, particularly because speaking is closely connected to the development of other Arabic language competencies. Therefore, the reconstructed curriculum should employ performance-based tasks such as dialogue, role-play, presentations, listening activities, contextual projects, and short written productions.

The assessment reconstruction is also supported by (Sarbaini & Rahmi, 2024), who examined Arabic speaking instruction from the perspectives of instructional design, implementation, and assessment. Their findings highlight the need for more effective assessment strategies and an integrative approach that connects vocabulary, grammar, and real-life communication tasks. An authentic assessment approach is particularly appropriate because it enables teachers to evaluate not only students' knowledge of vocabulary and grammatical structures but also their ability to use these linguistic resources appropriately in communicative contexts. This perspective is further supported by Sofa (2023), who emphasize innovation in authentic assessment for Arabic language learning. More specifically, Prasetyo & Baroroh (2024)reconstructed Arabic speaking assessment through a conversation-video project, addressing the limitations of conventional assessment practices that rely heavily on memorization and lack systematic scoring criteria. Thus, the findings at MIN 1 Yogyakarta support a broader shift from assessing language knowledge toward assessing students' actual language performance through authentic and contextual communicative tasks.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that curriculum reconstruction should be understood as a process of systemic alignment among objectives, materials, pedagogy, student participation, teacher roles, and assessment. Changing teaching methods alone would not be sufficient if learning outcomes remain content-oriented and assessment continues to emphasize written knowledge. Conversely, changing learning outcomes without providing communicative materials and opportunities for interaction would also create inconsistency. The reconstructed curriculum therefore needs to ensure that what students are expected to achieve, what they learn, how they practice, and how they are assessed all point toward the same goal: meaningful Arabic communication. This interpretation is reinforced by current research showing that Arabic curriculum outcomes need to explicitly represent communicative dimensions and contextual language use (Sholahudin et al., 2025).

In this sense, the contribution of the present study lies in proposing a communicative competence-based reconstruction at the elementary madrasah level, rather than simply recommending additional speaking activities. The reconstruction begins with students' actual

communicative needs, reorganizes learning materials around familiar situations, integrates the four language skills, applies progressive scaffolding, expands interaction through pair and group activities, and aligns assessment with authentic language performance. This orientation is consistent with recent research emphasizing the need to move Arabic learning beyond linguistic knowledge toward functional language use in meaningful communicative contexts (Janadbah & Sharef, 2024). More importantly, recent curriculum-oriented research demonstrates that communicative competence needs to be explicitly represented in Arabic learning outcomes and contextualized within curriculum design (Sholahudin et al., 2025; Mursyidan et al., 2025). The emphasis on authentic performance assessment is likewise supported by research showing the limitations of conventional, knowledge-oriented assessment for evaluating actual Arabic speaking ability (Prasetyo & Baroroh, 2025; Rahman, 2022). Accordingly, the findings suggest that improving Arabic language proficiency at MIN 1 Yogyakarta requires not merely adding more material or speaking activities, but reconstructing the curriculum so that learning outcomes, content, pedagogy, interaction, and assessment are systematically aligned toward meaningful Arabic communication.

CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that the Arabic language learning curriculum at MIN 1 Yogyakarta has provided a basic foundation for students' Arabic language development, but its implementation still requires reconstruction to strengthen communicative competence. The existing curriculum has addressed vocabulary, grammar, and the four language skillsistimā' (listening), kalām (speaking), qirā'ah (reading), and kitābah (writing)but learning remains relatively oriented toward mastery of linguistic content and written exercises. The findings reveal a gap between students' knowledge of Arabic and their ability to use Arabic spontaneously in meaningful communication. Students need more contextual, interactive, and gradual opportunities to practice Arabic through dialogue, role-play, pair and group work, simulations, and other communicative activities.

The reconstructed curriculum therefore places communicative competence as the central orientation while maintaining vocabulary and grammar as supporting components of language use. The reconstruction emphasizes alignment among learning outcomes, communicative materials, instructional strategies, learning activities, and authentic assessment. Learning outcomes are directed toward observable abilities to understand and produce Arabic in familiar contexts, while assessment incorporates oral performance, listening comprehension, reading, writing, dialogue, presentations, and contextual tasks. The reconstruction also emphasizes teacher scaffolding, student participation, contextual learning, and differentiated activities according to students' proficiency levels. Thus, a communicative competence-based curriculum provides a more relevant framework for enhancing students' Arabic language proficiency at MIN 1 Yogyakarta by transforming Arabic learning from predominantly knowledge-oriented instruction into an active, contextual, and meaningful process of language use.

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