

Research Article

Kaifa Haluka Comic: Facilitating Arabic Language Learning through Innovative and Interactive Technology

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Abstract: The progression of information and communication technology has simplified and increased the flexibility of Arabic language learning. It would be a missed opportunity not to fully utilize these advancements. This is where the comic 'Kaifa Haluka' comes in, as it offers a bilingual application in Arabic (transliterated) and English, which has proved to be a valuable resource in teaching and learning Arabic, according to survey results. The comic's interactive element, including the use of QR codes to access videos, has been particularly effective in facilitating learning, and the comic has even won an award for best invention and commercial product at UiTM Kelantan's Invention, Innovation & Design Staff event. It has also been presented at the Invention, Innovation & Design Exposition and received positive feedback from students at UiTM Kelantan, as well as from foreign users such as Arabic language teachers and the public.

Keywords: Arabic language learning, innovations, interactive learning, 'kaifa haluka' comic

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1. INTRODUCTION

Learning Arabic can be a challenging task, especially for those who are not familiar with the language's complex grammar rules and unique script. However, incorporating comics into language learning can make the process more enjoyable and engaging.

Comics are a unique tool for learning Arabic because they combine visual elements with written language. This combination provides an opportunity for learners to develop their reading and comprehension skills while also improving their vocabulary and grammar. Comics can also help learners become familiar with the different dialects and variations of Arabic, as comics from different regions and backgrounds often incorporate local expressions and idioms. According to Kamus Dewan (2010), comics refer to books containing stories accompanied by humorous illustrations.

Studies have shown that using comics for language learning can improve learners' motivation, engagement, and language proficiency (Iwai & Fujita, 2021). A study by Tomasi and Moretto (2019) found that using comics as a language learning tool increased learners' vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension, and overall language proficiency. The study also found that learners who used comics in their language learning process showed higher levels of motivation and enjoyment compared to those who did not.

One of the benefits of learning Arabic through comics is that it provides a low-pressure environment for language practice. Comics are usually short and can be read at the learner's own pace. Learners can take their time to analyse the text and illustrations, and they can refer to a dictionary or grammar guide if needed. This allows learners to build their confidence and gradually increase their proficiency in the language. Comics can also be a fun and engaging way to learn Arabic. The use of colourful illustrations and dialogue bubbles can make the learning process more enjoyable and less intimidating. Comics can also be used as a basis for language learning activities, such as creating dialogue bubbles for a comic strip or summarizing the plot in Arabic.

Smith (2006), state that comics are a combination of text and illustrations that can assist in the learning process and develop strong imagination by using illustrations as a visual aid to the text. Comics are a potential tool that can be used for language teaching and learning at all levels. Abdul Halim & Norshidah's (2017) study on the 'Use of Comics in Teaching towards Communication Skills' shows that comics can increase students' communication during the teaching and learning process in the classroom with their teachers and peers. The use of comics as a teaching aid helps improve the level of communication skills, and it also changes students' perceptions about learning by using a fun and engaging method in the classroom. Mc Cloud's (1993) book, *Understanding Comics*, explains that comics are easier to comprehend, making it a useful tool for attracting readers' interest and an effective learning aid. Gene (2003) states that the use of comics has many benefits for education, including enhancing learning motivation, providing visual stimulation, improving the medium of instruction, being popular, and developing students' thinking skills. He further explained that comics are naturally attractive to students because they serve to record and maintain their interest in the subject matter. Abdul Murad's (2013) study also shows that using comics to match students' learning styles based on their cognitive abilities can improve their motivation towards learning.

In his research titled "Comic Strip as a Text Structure for Learning to Read," McVicker (2007) proposes the use of comic strips to develop visual literacy skills, which is important to acknowledge and improve. Comics can provide an alternative source of reading materials to achieve this goal. Meanwhile, in his study "Connecting Through Comics: Expanding Opportunities for Teaching and Learning," Bolton Gary (2012) suggests that comics can facilitate learning by utilizing alternative learning strategies that include cognitive aspects, motivation, and information processing, especially in abstract learning content. Havva Yaman (2010) also emphasizes the importance of communication and critical thinking skills for 21st century students, suggesting that comics and cartoons can be an effective medium for teaching in modern classrooms. Overall, the use of comic books has the potential to enhance the teaching and learning process and improve language skills, as proven in Nor Sakinah's (2015) study that found the use of Arabic language comic books improved students' achievement and received positive feedback.

Based on previous research, the process of teaching and learning involves diverse techniques, with the use of materials like magazines and newspapers being particularly effective. These resources capture the attention of students, motivating them to engage in the learning process. As a result, exploring the efficacy and applicability of educational comics is a valuable area of inquiry that requires further investigation.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

A significant obstacle that many students face while learning a second language (L2) in academic settings is the lack of opportunities to use the language, as noted by Abdul-Hakeem Kasem (2016:41). Learning a second language requires a firm commitment, regular practice, appropriate teaching methodologies to comprehend the foundation of the language, and other pertinent factors, according to Muhamadul Bakir (2007:61). Therefore, the Kaifa Haluka comic is employed to foster students' interest in learning Arabic language. As Muhamadul Bakir (2007:62) explains, teaching Arabic is a challenging task for language instructors, as it requires significant effort to improve and simplify teaching and learning activities.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The objective of the study is to explore the use of Kaifa Haluka Comic as a supplementary medium to learn Arabic language.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researchers of this study gathered data by distributing a questionnaire to 127 students at UiTM Kelantan who were taking Arabic language courses, specifically TAC101 (Arabic language Level 1) and TAC151 (Arabic language Level 3) as their elective subjects. The questionnaire was created using the Google Form app to simplify the process of data analysis. The results of the study will be elaborated in the following section.

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

There were 127 UiTM Kelantan students who participated in this study. The analysis is carried out based on 2 major aspects Usefulness and ease of use of KKH.

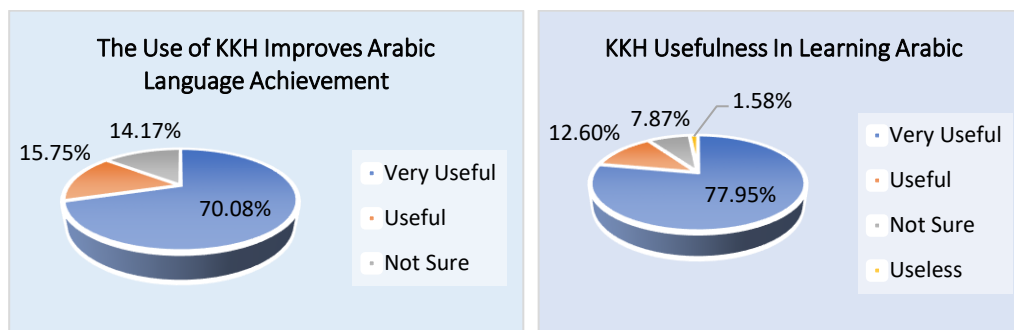


Figure 1: Analysis of Usefulness of KKH

Analysis on the Usefulness of KKH

Figure 1 shows the results of a survey on the usefulness of KKH. A total of 89 respondents (70.08%) believed that the use of comics improved their Arabic language learning achievement. While 20 (15.75%) and 18 (14.17%) respondents respectively viewed this comic has a positive effect and can be used as an effective medium. In addition, 99 respondents (77.95%) thought this comic was useful in learning Arabic followed by 16 respondents (12.60%) and 10 respondents (7.87%) who were positive with this medium of learning the Arabic language. Nonetheless, only 2 respondents (1.58%) are still sceptical about the usefulness of the comic. Overall, none of the respondents thought that the use of comics did not have a good effect on their Arabic language learning.

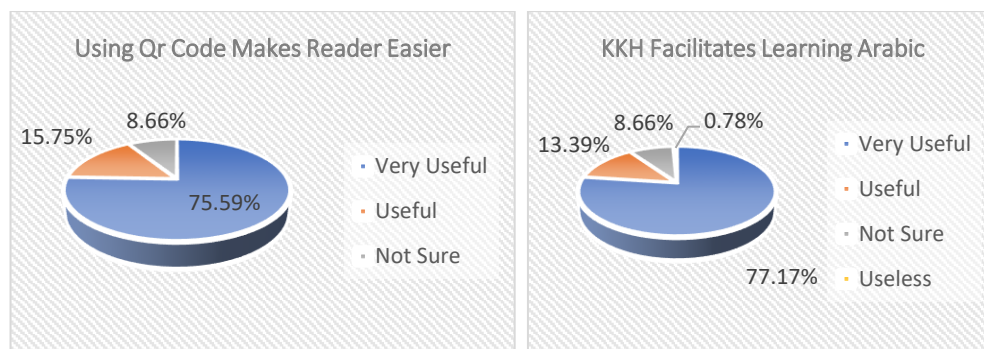


Figure 2: Analysis of Ease of Use of KKH

Analysis on the Ease of Use of KKH

Figure 2 shows the data on the ease of use of KKH. 75.59% or 96 respondents strongly agreed that the use of QR Code facilitates the reading process. It is followed by a total of 20 respondents (15.75%) who perceived that it was an easy application to use. While 11 respondents (8.66%) responded not sure about the ease of use of KKH. Based on observation, the ease of use was assessed based on the interactive aspects applied in the comic. This shows that the use of the comic is at a satisfactory level. One of the reasons is because the reading of KKH not only bound to reading per se but the application interactive concept that comes along with the comic. A majority of 98 respondents (77.17%) strongly agreed that KKH to facilitate their Arabic language learning. This is followed by 17 (13.39%) and 11 (8.66%) respondents respectively agreed that KKH is a positive tool in learning Arabic. There was one respondent (0.78%) who stated that the comic is useless. Nonetheless, it can be concluded that KKH can facilitate the readers to learn the Arabic language.

6. CONCLUSION

The results of the survey show that the use of KKH can improve the learning of Arabic language among the students, especially the students at UiTM Kelantan. Most of the students viewed KKH as having a positive effect and can be used as an effective medium in their learning of the language. In terms of ease of use, students strongly agreed that the use of QR Code facilitates the reading process because it is easier for them to use. The ease of use is assessed based on the interactive aspects applied in the comic. In conclusion, most students strongly agreed that KKH is an instrument that can be employed in learning the Arabic language.

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