

## Education Integrating Communicative Competence and Digital Literacy in Arabic Curriculum

Muzakki Abdurrahman<sup>1\*</sup>, Nur Aqila<sup>2</sup>, Muhammad Thohir<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>State Islamic University Sunan Ampel Surabaya, Indonesia

Email Author : [muzakki.arahman@gmail.com](mailto:muzakki.arahman@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [opierqilah29@gmail.com](mailto:opierqilah29@gmail.com)<sup>2</sup>, [muhhammadthohir@uinsa.ac.id](mailto:muhhammadthohir@uinsa.ac.id)<sup>3</sup>

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*Abstract: The development of Arabic language curricula in higher education faces challenges in integrating communicative competence and digital literacy in ways that align with the demands of the 21st century. This study aims to formulate an integrative curriculum model that combines these two aspects in Arabic language learning at Kiai Abdullah Faqih University (UNKAFA) Gresik. The research employs a qualitative approach with a developmental research design, involving 30 students as research subjects and 5 key informants in in-depth interviews. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis and were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. The findings indicate that learning is still dominated by a structural approach and that the integration of digital literacy has not yet been carried out systematically. Based on these findings, this study contributes an integrative curriculum framework linking communicative competence and digital literacy for Arabic curriculum development. Therefore, an integrative curriculum model based on communicative competence and digital literacy is proposed through activity- and technology-based learning approaches. This model is expected to enhance students' communication skills and strengthen their readiness to respond to digital challenges in the global era.*

**Keywords:** Arabic Language Curriculum, Communicative Competence, Digital Literacy, Higher Education, 21st-Century Learning

Abstrak : Pengembangan kurikulum bahasa Arab di pendidikan tinggi menghadapi tantangan dalam mengintegrasikan kompetensi komunikatif dan literasi digital agar sesuai dengan tuntutan pembelajaran abad ke-21. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk merumuskan model kurikulum integratif yang menggabungkan kedua aspek tersebut dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab di Universitas Kiai Abdullah Faqih (UNKAFA) Gresik. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain penelitian pengembangan yang melibatkan 30 mahasiswa sebagai subjek penelitian dan 5 informan utama dalam wawancara mendalam. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan analisis dokumen, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan teknik analisis tematik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran masih didominasi oleh pendekatan struktural dan integrasi literasi digital belum dilakukan secara sistematis. Berdasarkan temuan tersebut, penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi berupa kerangka kurikulum integratif yang menghubungkan kompetensi komunikatif dan literasi digital untuk pengembangan kurikulum bahasa Arab. Oleh karena itu, diusulkan model kurikulum integratif berbasis kompetensi komunikatif dan literasi digital melalui pendekatan pembelajaran berbasis aktivitas dan teknologi. Model ini diharapkan dapat meningkatkan kemampuan komunikasi mahasiswa serta memperkuat kesiapan mereka dalam menghadapi tantangan digital di era global.

**Kata Kunci :** Kurikulum Bahasa Arab, Kompetensi Komunikatif, Literasi Digital, Pendidikan Tinggi, Pembelajaran Abad ke-21

## INTRODUCTION

In the era of higher education transformation marked by globalization and the advancement of digital technology, language curricula no longer focus solely on the mastery



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of linguistic structures, but also on contextual communication skills and adaptive digital literacy [1]. This shift requires a reorientation of curricula that can address the demands of 21st-century learning, where students are expected not only to understand linguistic rules, but also to use language effectively in various communicative situations and to utilize digital technology as a learning medium [2]. Therefore, the development of an Arabic language curriculum has become a strategic issue that needs to be examined in depth, particularly in the context of higher education [3].

In the era of higher education transformation characterized by globalization and rapid technological advancement, language education is no longer oriented solely toward the mastery of linguistic structures but increasingly emphasizes communicative competence and digital literacy [4]. Contemporary higher education requires students not only to understand language systems but also to communicate effectively in diverse social and academic contexts and to utilize digital technologies as part of the learning process [5]. Therefore, curriculum transformation has become an important agenda in responding to the demands of 21st-century education [6].

Within Arabic language education in higher education, curriculum development plays an important role in shaping students' competencies comprehensively, including linguistic, communicative, and strategic competencies [7]. Arabic language learning is expected not only to facilitate students' understanding of grammatical structures but also to support their ability to communicate meaningfully and adapt to technological developments [8]. Consequently, curriculum design must provide opportunities for contextual language use and technology-supported learning experiences [9].

The development of digital technology has expanded opportunities for language learning through digital platforms, interactive media, and online learning environments that support engagement and learner autonomy [10]. Digital literacy has become a critical competency in Arabic language learning because students are increasingly required to access, evaluate, manage, and produce information through digital environments [11]. However, integrating digital literacy into Arabic language curricula remains challenging due to limitations in curriculum adaptation, lecturer readiness, and the absence of systematic integration strategies (Afril et al., 2024).

At Universitas Kiai Abdullah Faqih (UNKAFA) Gresik, Arabic language curriculum development is directed toward preparing graduates who possess both linguistic mastery and communication skills supported by digital competence. Nevertheless, preliminary observations indicate that instructional practices remain predominantly oriented toward structural learning approaches emphasizing *nahwu* (syntax) and *sharaf* (morphology). As a result, students' opportunities to develop communicative competence and actively engage with digital learning environments remain limited.

Previous studies have increasingly emphasized the importance of digital literacy in higher education. Zhao et al. (2021) reported that digital competence among students and lecturers remains relatively basic and requires systematic curriculum integration [1]. Farias-Gaytan et al. (2023) highlighted that digital transformation has positioned digital literacy as a core competency in higher education, although implementation challenges remain at institutional and pedagogical levels [13]. Similarly, Ramdana et al. (2026) demonstrated that pedagogical innovations such as flipped classrooms, gamification, and multimodal learning may strengthen digital literacy and student engagement when supported institutionally [14].

Despite these developments, previous studies tend to examine digital literacy and communicative competence separately [15]. Limited attention has been given to how these competencies can be integrated into curriculum design, particularly within Arabic language education in higher education [16]. Meanwhile, communicative competence remains essential

because successful language learning depends not only on grammatical mastery but also on meaningful language use in authentic contexts [17].

This study identifies three major gaps. First, a conceptual gap exists because previous studies have not sufficiently integrated communicative competence and digital literacy into a unified curriculum framework for Arabic language learning. Second, an institutional gap is found in the context of UNKAFA Gresik, where Arabic instruction remains predominantly grammar-oriented and has not fully accommodated communication and digital competencies. Third, a curriculum-design gap emerges due to the absence of an operational framework capable of systematically translating these competencies into curriculum objectives, instructional activities, and assessment practices.

Based on these gaps, this study aims to formulate an integrative curriculum framework for Arabic language learning that combines communicative competence and digital literacy within higher education contexts. The study focuses on identifying curriculum needs, analyzing existing learning components, and developing a conceptual model applicable to Arabic language instruction at Universitas Kiai Abdullah Faqih (UNKAFA) Gresik.

Theoretically, this study contributes to expanding discussions on Arabic language curriculum development by integrating communicative competence and digital literacy into a single conceptual framework. Practically, the proposed framework is expected to provide guidance for curriculum redesign and instructional innovation within Arabic language programs in higher education.

Accordingly, this study addresses the following research questions: (1) What are the current conditions of communicative competence development in Arabic language learning at UNKAFA Gresik? (2) How is digital literacy integrated into the existing Arabic language curriculum? and (3) How can an integrative curriculum framework combining communicative competence and digital literacy be developed for Arabic language learning in higher education?

## **METHODS**

### **A. Research Design**

This study employed a qualitative approach using a developmental research design to formulate an Arabic language curriculum framework integrating communicative competence and digital literacy in higher education. This design was selected because the study aimed not only to describe existing learning practices but also to develop a conceptual curriculum framework grounded in empirical findings. The developmental process consisted of three stages: (1) needs identification, (2) curriculum and learning analysis, and (3) curriculum framework formulation.

### **B. Participants and Sampling**

The participants consisted of 30 students from the Arabic Language Education Study Program at Kiai Abdullah Faqih University (UNKAFA) Gresik. These participants were involved to obtain an overview of students' learning experiences and perceptions regarding communicative competence and digital literacy in Arabic language learning. From this group, five students were purposively selected as key informants for in-depth interviews based on their ability to provide detailed and relevant information related to curriculum implementation and learning experiences.

### **C. Data Collection Instruments and Procedures**

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations, and curriculum document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the selected informants to explore students' perceptions of current Arabic learning practices, communication opportunities, digital learning experiences, and expectations for curriculum

improvement. Interview questions focused on learning experiences, perceived limitations of existing instruction, communication practices, and the use of digital technologies in Arabic learning.

Observations were conducted during classroom learning activities to examine instructional approaches, classroom interaction patterns, student participation, and the use of digital media. Particular attention was given to identifying whether learning activities facilitated communicative competence and digital literacy development.

Document analysis was carried out to examine curriculum-related documents, including the curriculum structure, Graduate Learning Outcomes (CPL), Semester Learning Plans (RPS), course distribution, and learning components used in the Arabic Language Education Program. The document analysis focused on identifying: (1) the proportion of courses emphasizing linguistic competence, (2) the proportion of courses promoting communicative competence, (3) the integration of digital literacy into learning outcomes and instructional activities, and (4) the alignment between curriculum objectives and current instructional practices.

#### D. Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The analysis process consisted of five stages: (1) familiarization with interview transcripts, observation notes, and curriculum documents, (2) initial coding of meaningful units, (3) categorization and theme development, (4) interpretation of relationships among themes; and (5) synthesis of findings into curriculum-development recommendations.

During the coding process, data were grouped into three analytical categories: communicative competence, digital literacy practices, and curriculum implementation. These categories served as the basis for identifying integration patterns and designing the proposed curriculum framework.

#### E. Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

To enhance the credibility of the findings, methodological triangulation was applied by comparing information obtained from interviews, observations, and curriculum documents. In addition, continuous cross-checking among data sources was conducted to maintain consistency during interpretation. Participation in this study was voluntary, and all participants were informed about the objectives and procedures of the study before data collection. Participants' identities were anonymized to ensure confidentiality and ethical compliance.

#### F. Curriculum Framework Development

The findings obtained from the analysis stage were used to formulate an integrative curriculum framework. The framework was developed by aligning identified curriculum needs with communicative competence principles and digital literacy dimensions. The resulting framework emphasizes activity-based learning, contextual communication practices, and the systematic integration of digital technology into Arabic language learning to support 21st-century educational demands.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Students' Needs for Communicative Competence

The findings indicate that students of the Arabic Language Education Study Program at Kiai Abdullah Faqih University (UNKAFU) Gresik demonstrate a substantial need for strengthening communicative competence in Arabic language learning. This theme emerged from thematic analysis of interview data obtained from five key informants and was further supported by classroom observation results. Overall, participants perceived that current

instructional practices remain predominantly oriented toward grammatical mastery rather than active language use.

Most participants reported that learning activities continue to emphasize linguistic components, particularly nahwu (syntax) and sharaf (morphology), while opportunities for communicative practice remain limited. This instructional orientation influences students' confidence and ability to use Arabic in authentic situations, especially in academic and daily communication contexts. One participant (P2) stated:

“During this time, we have more often studied nahwu theory, but rarely practiced speaking, so when asked to speak Arabic, we still find it difficult.”

This statement suggests that students experience a discrepancy between linguistic understanding and communicative performance. Although they are familiar with grammatical concepts, the limited exposure to real communication activities restricts their ability to actively use Arabic. A similar concern was expressed by another participant (P4):

“We understand grammatical rules, but we are still not fluent in expressing ideas in Arabic.”

This finding indicates that the challenge faced by students is not merely related to language knowledge acquisition but also to the absence of sufficient opportunities for communicative engagement. Therefore, language instruction that prioritizes structural mastery alone may not adequately support students in developing practical communication skills. Students also emphasized the importance of contextual and interactive learning experiences. One participant (P1) explained:

“If there are activities like discussions or presentations fully conducted in Arabic, that would be more helpful.”

This statement reflects students' expectations for learning environments that facilitate active participation and meaningful communication. Interactive activities such as discussions, presentations, collaborative learning tasks, and authentic communication experiences were perceived as more supportive of communicative competence development.

Overall, these findings demonstrate that students require not only mastery of linguistic aspects but also continuous opportunities to use Arabic in functional contexts. Consequently, communicative competence should become a central component in curriculum development to support more interactive, contextual, and student-centered Arabic language learning. To provide a more structured representation of the identified needs, the findings are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1.**

Students' Needs for the Development of Communicative Competence in Arabic Language

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Curriculum Implication</b>
Learning Focus	Instruction remains predominantly grammar-oriented (nahwu and sharaf)	Increase communicative learning activities
Communication Skills	Students show limited confidence in speaking Arabic	Provide systematic speaking practice
Competency Gap	Students understand linguistic theory but struggle with practical communication	Integrate language knowledge with communication tasks
Students' Needs	Students require contextual communication experiences	Develop authentic and student-centered learning
Teaching Methods	Interactive activities such as discussions and presentations are preferred	Adopt communicative and activity-based approaches

As presented in Table 1, the findings indicate that curriculum improvement should move beyond structural language instruction and systematically integrate communicative competence into learning objectives, instructional strategies, learning experiences, and assessment practices. The identified patterns suggest that students' difficulties are not primarily caused by limited grammatical knowledge but rather by insufficient opportunities to apply Arabic in meaningful communicative contexts. Therefore, curriculum development needs to provide more interactive, contextual, and student-centered learning activities that encourage active language use and authentic communication experiences. These findings also demonstrate the importance of aligning curriculum design with students' actual learning needs to support more functional and sustainable language development. Accordingly, the identified needs became one of the empirical foundations for developing the proposed integrative curriculum framework presented in the following section.

## **B. The Condition of Students' Digital Literacy**

The findings indicate that the level of digital literacy among students of the Arabic Language Education Study Program at Kiai Abdullah Faqih University (UNKAFU) Gresik can be categorized as moderate. This theme emerged from thematic analysis of interview data and classroom observations. In general, students are familiar with the use of digital technologies such as smartphones, social media platforms, search engines, and online translation tools. However, the utilization of these technologies in Arabic language learning remains largely limited to information consumption rather than productive and communicative activities.

Most participants reported that digital technologies are primarily used to search for learning materials and translate texts, while activities involving content creation and digital interaction in Arabic remain uncommon. One participant (P3) stated:

“I usually use Google or YouTube to look for Arabic learning materials, but I have never tried creating my own content in Arabic.”

This finding indicates that students' digital engagement remains predominantly consumptive rather than productive. Although students demonstrate familiarity with digital platforms, they have not yet fully developed the ability to produce Arabic-language content or actively participate in digital learning environments. Another challenge identified through the interviews relates to digital communication practices. Students reported limited confidence in using Arabic in online communication spaces due to concerns about language accuracy and lack of habitual exposure. One participant (P1) explained:

“When it comes to communicating in Arabic on social media, I rarely do it because I am afraid of making mistakes and I am not used to it.”

This response suggests that barriers to digital literacy are not solely technological but also involve psychological and communicative dimensions. Fear of making mistakes and limited opportunities for authentic interaction reduce students' willingness to engage in Arabic communication through digital platforms. Students also demonstrated limitations in evaluating and utilizing digital information critically. One participant (P5) stated:

“Usually, when I find material on the internet, I just use it right away. I don't really know which sources are truly valid or not.”

This finding reveals that students still encounter challenges in information evaluation and digital decision-making. Their tendency to accept information without verification reflects limited development of critical digital literacy skills. Overall, the findings suggest that students' digital literacy has not yet progressed toward productive and communicative digital engagement. Improvement is particularly required in the areas of digital content production,

communication practices, information evaluation, and critical use of digital resources. To provide a clearer representation of the identified patterns, the condition of students' digital literacy is summarized in Figure 1.

**Figure 1.**  
The Condition of Students' Digital Literacy in Arabic Language Learning

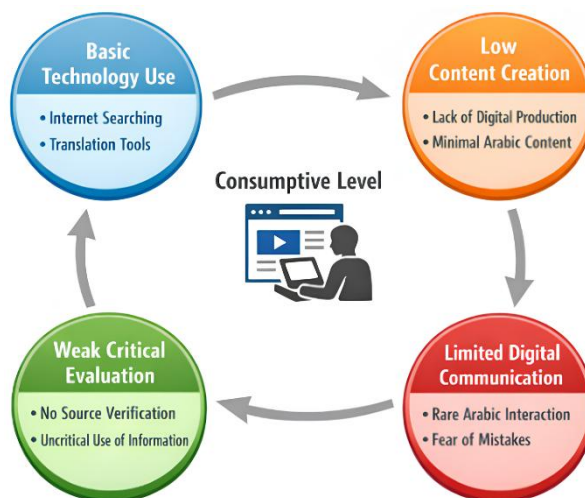


Figure 1 illustrates that students' digital literacy remains concentrated at a consumptive level and consists of four interconnected characteristics. First, students demonstrate basic technology use, reflected in their dependence on internet searching and translation tools. Second, students show low content creation ability, indicated by limited experience in producing Arabic digital content. Third, students exhibit limited digital communication, characterized by low participation and fear of making mistakes when communicating in Arabic online. Fourth, students display weak critical evaluation, particularly in verifying sources and assessing the credibility of digital information.

These interconnected conditions indicate that digital literacy development should not focus solely on technology access but also on strengthening productive participation, digital communication competence, and critical thinking. Therefore, systematic integration of digital literacy into curriculum objectives, learning activities, and assessment becomes necessary to support Arabic language learning in the digital era. These findings subsequently informed the development of the proposed integrative curriculum framework presented in the following section.

### C. Analysis of the Existing Curriculum

The curriculum analysis was conducted using official documents of the Arabic Language Education Study Program at Kiai Abdullah Faqih University (UNKAFA) Gresik, including the curriculum structure, Graduate Learning Outcomes (CPL), Semester Learning Plans (RPS), course descriptions, and course distribution across semesters. The analysis aimed to identify how communicative competence and digital literacy have been accommodated within the existing curriculum. To improve analytical transparency, curriculum documents were reviewed and classified into three categories according to their dominant learning orientation: (1) courses emphasizing linguistic competence, (2) courses focusing on communicative competence, and (3) courses incorporating digital literacy elements into learning activities and instructional practices.

The document analysis indicates that the curriculum remains predominantly oriented toward strengthening linguistic competence. Most courses place greater emphasis on grammatical mastery, textual understanding, and language structure analysis through subjects

such as nahwu, sharaf, balaghah, and qira'ah. These courses are designed to develop students' understanding of linguistic systems and Arabic texts.

Meanwhile, communicative competence appears to receive more limited attention within curriculum implementation. Courses intended to support active language use, such as muhadatsah and kitabah, are available but tend to be distributed unevenly across semesters and are not yet systematically integrated into broader learning experiences. As a result, opportunities for continuous communication practice remain relatively limited. To provide a clearer overview of the curriculum orientation identified through document analysis, the findings are summarized in table 2.

**Table 2.** Curriculum Orientation Based on Document Analysis

<b>Curriculum Category</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>
Linguistic Competence	Emphasizes grammar, language structure, and text analysis
Communicative Competence	Focuses on speaking, writing, interaction, and language use
Digital Literacy Integration	Supports the use of digital media and technology in learning

Table 2 demonstrates that the current curriculum orientation remains more strongly associated with linguistic competence than with communicative and digital development. Communicative competence has already been introduced through several learning components; however, it has not yet become a continuous element across the curriculum structure. Similarly, digital literacy integration remains supplementary and is generally implemented as a supporting learning tool rather than as an explicit curriculum objective. These findings indicate that the existing curriculum has not yet fully balanced language mastery, communication practice, and digital engagement.

Classroom observations further supported these findings. Observations conducted in several core courses, particularly nahwu and qira'ah, revealed that instructional practices remain dominated by lecture-based delivery, language explanation, and written exercises. Interactive learning activities involving active language use, such as discussions, oral presentations, role-plays, and collaborative communication tasks in Arabic, were still relatively limited.

Interview findings also reinforced this pattern. Most participants explained that assignments were generally oriented toward grammatical exercises and written analysis rather than communicative production. One participant (P2) stated:

“Most assignments focus on grammar and written exercises rather than speaking or communicating in Arabic.”

This finding reflects a gap between curriculum expectations and classroom implementation. Although communication is recognized as an important learning objective, instructional practices remain more strongly associated with structural language mastery than with functional language use.

From the perspective of digital literacy, analysis of the Semester Learning Plans (RPS) and classroom implementation indicates that technology integration remains relatively basic. The use of digital media is generally limited to presentations, material searches, and access to online references. No explicit indicators were identified that specifically target Arabic digital communication skills or digital content production.

Interview findings further revealed that students rarely receive assignments requiring the creation of Arabic digital products such as videos, podcasts, or collaborative online projects. This suggests that digital literacy currently functions more as a supporting element rather than as an integrated curriculum component.

Overall, the findings indicate an imbalance between linguistic competence, communicative competence, and digital literacy integration within the existing curriculum. Although structural language development remains important, communication practices and technology integration have not yet been systematically accommodated. Therefore, curriculum development should move toward a more integrative approach that aligns language mastery, communicative performance, and digital engagement in response to the demands of 21st-century Arabic language education.

These findings subsequently became one of the empirical foundations for developing the proposed integrative curriculum framework presented in the following section. The findings presented above demonstrate that the challenges of Arabic language learning at UNKAFA Gresik are not limited to instructional practices but are also closely related to broader curriculum orientation and learning design. The identified patterns indicate an imbalance between linguistic competence development, communicative practice, and digital literacy integration. Therefore, the following section interprets these findings through relevant theoretical perspectives and previous studies to explain their implications for curriculum development. This interpretation further serves as the basis for formulating an integrative curriculum model that is more responsive to the demands of contemporary Arabic language education.

#### **D. Integration of Communicative Competence in the Curriculum**

The findings demonstrate that Arabic language learning at UNKAFA Gresik remains predominantly oriented toward structural language mastery, while opportunities for communicative language use remain relatively limited. Students consistently reported difficulties in applying grammatical knowledge in authentic communication contexts and expressed the need for more interactive learning experiences. These findings indicate that communicative competence has not yet become a central component of curriculum implementation.

This condition supports previous arguments that language instruction focused primarily on grammatical accuracy may not sufficiently develop functional communication skills [18]. Within Arabic language education, communicative competence should not be positioned as an additional outcome but rather as an essential dimension of language learning itself. From the perspective of communicative competence theory, the findings can be interpreted using the framework proposed by Canale and Swain, which includes grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence [19]. The curriculum findings indicate that grammatical competence has received stronger attention, whereas sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic dimensions remain less visible in learning implementation.

This imbalance suggests the need for curriculum redesign that expands learning objectives beyond language knowledge toward meaningful language use. Students should not only understand sentence structures but also develop the ability to express opinions, negotiate meaning, participate in discussions, and communicate effectively in different academic and social situations.

Pedagogically, these findings imply that communicative competence should be embedded through instructional approaches that emphasize language practice and interaction. Approaches such as communicative language teaching (CLT), task-based learning, and project-based learning may provide opportunities for students to engage more actively in Arabic communication [20]. In addition, curriculum transformation should also involve changes in assessment practices. Evaluation should move beyond measuring grammatical understanding and include students' communicative performance through authentic assessments such as presentations, project outputs, communication tasks, and reflective

learning activities [21]. Therefore, the integration of communicative competence should be understood not merely as curriculum enrichment but as a restructuring of learning orientation that supports students' active use of Arabic in real contexts.

### **E. Integration of Digital Literacy in Arabic Language Learning**

The findings reveal that students' digital literacy remains largely consumptive and has not yet developed into productive and communicative engagement. Although students frequently access digital resources, their participation in creating Arabic digital content and engaging in online communication remains limited.

These findings indicate that technology integration within Arabic language learning still functions primarily as instructional support rather than as a component of competency development. This result aligns with previous studies showing that digital literacy integration in higher education often remains focused on technology access rather than meaningful digital participation [7].

Digital literacy should be understood as a multidimensional competence involving the ability to access, evaluate, produce, and communicate information critically and responsibly [22]. Within Arabic language learning, these dimensions become increasingly important because digital environments create opportunities for authentic communication and autonomous learning.

The findings suggest that current curriculum implementation has not yet systematically incorporated opportunities for students to develop digital communication skills. Students rarely engage in learning activities requiring digital production, collaboration, or communication in Arabic. To address this limitation, curriculum implementation may incorporate project-based learning, blended learning, and flipped classroom approaches that encourage students to become active producers of Arabic digital content [23].

Activities such as developing Arabic educational videos, podcasts, blogs, and online discussions may support both language competence and digital literacy simultaneously. In addition, digital integration should be reflected in curriculum objectives, learning activities, and assessment strategies rather than functioning solely as technological supplementation. Learning management systems (LMS), social media platforms, and collaborative digital environments may support more authentic and flexible communication practices [24]. Thus, digital literacy integration should become a systematic curriculum component that supports communication development and students' readiness for contemporary learning environments.

### **F. Proposed Integrative Curriculum Model**

Based on the findings of this study, the proposed curriculum model is designed as an integrative curriculum that systematically combines communicative competence and digital literacy in Arabic language learning. The model was developed by considering students' identified needs, current curriculum conditions, classroom practices, and the demands of 21st-century higher education. Unlike additive curriculum approaches in which communication and technology function only as supplementary elements, this model positions both competencies as core dimensions embedded within curriculum objectives, learning implementation, and assessment processes [25].

The proposed model emerged from three major findings identified in this study. First, curriculum implementation remains predominantly oriented toward structural language mastery. Second, opportunities for communicative practice are still limited and have not been consistently integrated across learning experiences. Third, digital literacy continues to function primarily as a supporting tool rather than as a targeted learning outcome. These

findings indicate that curriculum redesign requires a more systematic integration of communication practices and digital engagement throughout the learning process.

Conceptually, this curriculum model is grounded in communicative competence theory, which emphasizes language use in authentic contexts, and is strengthened by the digital literacy framework that highlights technological capability, critical thinking, digital participation, and ethical technology use [2]. Through this integration, learning outcomes are designed to simultaneously develop linguistic competence, communicative competence, and digital literacy. Consequently, students are expected not only to understand Arabic language structures but also to actively use Arabic in communication across multiple digital environments, including social media platforms, online forums, and technology-supported learning spaces.

From the instructional perspective, the model adopts activity-based learning and project-based learning approaches that encourage students to engage in real and digitally mediated communication experiences [26]. Learning activities may include Arabic discussions, collaborative projects, video production, podcast creation, reflective writing, and online interaction practices [27]. Such activities are expected to strengthen communication performance while simultaneously encouraging students to participate more actively in digital learning environments [28]. In addition, the proposed curriculum model emphasizes instructional innovation through the integration of communicative language teaching, flipped classroom practices, collaborative learning, and interactive digital media [29]. These approaches provide opportunities for students to construct knowledge through interaction and practical language use rather than relying exclusively on language explanation and memorization [30].

Assessment within this model is also redesigned to align with integrated learning objectives. Evaluation is not limited to measuring linguistic knowledge but extends to students' communicative performance and digital participation. Therefore, authentic assessment strategies including portfolios, digital projects, presentations, communication tasks, and reflective activities are positioned as important mechanisms for capturing students' overall learning development.

Accordingly, the proposed integrative curriculum model is expected to provide a more adaptive, contextual, and sustainable approach to Arabic language learning in higher education. Through the balanced integration of communicative competence and digital literacy, the model aims to produce graduates who are linguistically competent, communicatively effective, and prepared to respond to ongoing educational and technological transformation.

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

### 1. Conclusion

This study aimed to formulate an integrative Arabic language curriculum framework that combines communicative competence and digital literacy in higher education at Universitas Kiai Abdullah Faqih (UNKAFA) Gresik. The findings indicate that the existing curriculum remains predominantly oriented toward structural language learning, while opportunities for communicative practice and systematic digital literacy integration are still limited. Students demonstrated the need for more contextual communication experiences and more productive uses of digital technology in Arabic language learning.

Based on these findings, this study proposes an integrative curriculum model that combines linguistic competence, communicative competence, and digital literacy through activity-based and technology-supported learning. The model positions communication and

digital engagement as essential curriculum dimensions reflected in learning outcomes, instructional practices, and assessment.

## 2. Implication

Through this approach, Arabic language learning is expected to become more adaptive, contextual, and relevant to the demands of 21st-century education. Practically, the findings may support curriculum redesign and instructional innovation in Arabic language programs. Theoretically, this study contributes to discussions on curriculum development by integrating communicative and digital dimensions within a unified framework. However, this study was conducted within a single institutional context and the proposed model has not yet been empirically implemented. Future research is recommended to evaluate the effectiveness of this curriculum model across broader educational settings.

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