

## ONLINE TEACHING CHALLENGES: THE ROLE OF CREATED AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS IN TEACHING ARABIC TO NON-ARAB SPEAKERS AT SCHOOLS

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### ABSTRACT

**Background and Purpose:** There are many difficulties which both Arabic teachers and non-Arab speakers encounter in the process of learning Arabic language. Covid- 19 has made online teaching inevitable. The role of created audio-visual aids in teaching Arabic to non-Arab students as well as the challenges faced by students learning through online classes is explored. The criteria for creating audio-visual aids and their effects is also investigated.

**Methodology:** A descriptive analysis method is adopted to describe the challenges and difficulties that foundation and primary students face when learning Arabic via online-based means and to analyse the effects of the created audio-visual aids on students. A questionnaire was distributed to 79 foundation and primary students.

**Findings:** It was found that the usage and application of audio-visual tools in online-based teaching effectively eases students' interaction with one another, contributed to better academic achievement, increased their vocabulary, enabling them to construct simple short sentences. It has also changed the students' perception of Arabic and instilled a passion for learning Arabic.

**Contributions:** The study substantiates that the usage of audio-visual aids in online Arabic teaching is a key component to help non-Arab students to learn Arabic easily and effectively online.

**Keywords:** Online Learning Challenges, Non-Arab Speakers, Audio-Visual Aids, Teaching Arabic

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Arabic is an essential tool for Muslims to effectively understand the teachings of Islam. The Holy Quran, can only be accurately understood by one's mastery of the Arabic language. Due to the different layers of meanings that the Quranic utterances convey, there is a difficulty in detecting the proper precise meanings of the Qur'an. Such lexicosemantic ambiguity results from the fact that language as a written genre is completely different from speech as oral production. Hence, it is essential to master the sub-fields of Arabic language such as grammar, rhetoric, spelling and phonology.

Accordingly, the interest to learn Arabic among non-native speakers has increased tremendously, resulting in the establishment of institutes, centers and platforms, which teach Arabic such as American Association of Teachers of Arabic (AATA), Arab Centre for Study in Qatar, Peking University in China, Arabic Language Teaching Institute for Non-Arabic Speakers and Arabic for Non-Native Speakers Program at Al-Faisal Institute in Saudi Arabia, Sultan Qaboos College for Teaching Arabic Language to Non-Native Speakers in Oman, The National Center for E-Learning in London and Arabic for All Programs online in Saudi Arabia. Many who specialize in Arabic Studies have committed to finding solutions and opportunities for everyone to learn Arabic. Numerous platforms for people to access Arabic books have been developed and initiated. Physical and online learning centres and platforms with experienced teachers have also been made accessible to all. Nevertheless, non-Arabic speakers are still confronted with the challenges, i.e., improper pronunciation of some Arabic letters and the lack of vocabulary. However, the most prominent challenge that has been noticed among teachers were students' misconception of Arabic as a difficult language and students' poor motivation. Moreover, the abrupt transition to online teaching due to Covid-19

has heightened the situation and posed new challenges to students and teachers especially from the psychological aspect. The above is addressed by NurulAshikinIzhar, Yahya M. Al-Dheleai, and Nor AsnizaIshak as follows(2021, p. 1425), "The vulnerable groups' students who did not have access to proper technology infrastructure such as possessing gadgets with an internet connection, may lose the learning opportunities which they can have previously at school". With regards to psychological challenges, AndiWahyulrawan, Dwisona and Mardi Lestari (2020, p. 57) confirm the negative effects of Covid-19 on students, stating:

The psychological impact of students on online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, namely (1) students are bored with online learning after the first two weeks of learning from home, (2) considerable anxiety on study subjects whose parents have low income, because they have to buy a quota to be able to take part in online learning, and (3) emotional disturbances are indicated by changes in mood or mood caused by too many assignments that are considered ineffective by students.

In this study, we attempt to uncover the learning difficulties faced by non-native speakers of Arabic and address the challenges faced by them. Thus, we look for solutions and try to enhance the students' love for Arabic and their motivation to learn it, solve the psychological problems resulting from Covid-19 and improve their Arabic. Having tried different tools, we've found that audio-visual tools are the most effective with the group of students we are currently dealing with, since it provides learners with enjoyment. Over time, these educational aids will change students' perception of Arabic and enhance their motivation to attend Arabic classes.

This study attempts to propose ways to facilitate the learning process of the Arabic language for non-native speakers. It proposes the method and criteria for selecting audio-visual aids and the ways in which they are applied to generate significant results. Considering the above stated problems, three questions are posed:

1. What are the most common difficulties that foundation and primary non-Arab students face in learning Arabic through online-based teaching?
2. How should audio-visual aids be used to teach Arabic to non-Arab speakers?
3. What are the attitudes of the primary non-Arab students toward the audio-visual aids, and how do they affect their opinion towards learning Arabic?

This paper therefore aims to: Firstly, identify the difficulties and obstacles that non-Arab-speaking foundation and primary students face in learning Arabic online during Covid-19, secondly, explore the role and the criteria of applying audio-visual aids and thirdly, describe the attitudes of the primary non-Arab students towards the selected audio-visual aids, and present the impact of these aids to improve their competency levels.

When considering the objectives of this paper it explores the role of audio-visual stories in the development of students' Arabic learning. Starting with the challenges that the foundation and primary students face in learning Arabic online generally and subsequently, the audio-visual tools, their criteria and methods of application. It concludes with the students' attitudes towards audio-visual aids and its effects on the students' desire and level in learning Arabic.

The significance of this study lies in the fact that it will help identify the difficulties and obstacles that non-native Arab speakers encounter when learning Arabic. It further shows the importance of using audio-visual tools in teaching Arabic face to face and via online-based tools. Furthermore, the findings of this study may guide other research in developing appropriate curricula and teaching methods in different disciplines.

This study adopted a descriptive-analytical method to describe the noticeable difficulties that were faced by the foundation and primary non-Arab-speaking students when learning Arabic through online-based teaching. The criteria used to create the audio-visual aids will be also explained. Furthermore, assessment of students' improvements after the application of the necessary tools, were carried out and are presented.

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a plethora of research pertaining to the difficulties facing non-native Arab speakers when learning Arabic language. Dajani, et. al. (2013)'s *Difficulties of learning Arabic for non-native speakers*, addresses the problems and difficulties that non-native Arab learners face when learning vocabulary, grammar, semantic inferences, lexical items and morphological processes such as derivations and inflections. Although the researchers recommended the use of audio-visual aids, and discussed the benefits of these aids, no specific tools were mentioned.

Mosbahe, et. al. (2019) on the other hand examined the problems faced by bilingual students when transferring some linguistic aspects into the Arabic language. Mosbahe also highlighted other challenges faced by language teachers, i.e., academic preparation and training. However, the aforementioned study ignored the tools that may address these problems, including audio-visual tools.

Marwa Mohamed (2020) highlighted a significant number of difficulties and obstacles that non-Arabic speakers face in terms of speaking and writing skills. There was however no attention given to the personal and general problems with regards to the students' opinions towards Arabic itself. She did however focus on educational challenges and psychological problems that students experienced when learning Arabic online.

When considering possible solutions to propose when teaching Arabic to non-native speakers, once again a plethora of publications exist. Omran Musleh and Mohammad Abdel-Rahman Ibrahim (2016), *Using the short story in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers: Middle Students levels a Model*, seems to be applicable in this paper's context. It was found that short stories could be a good choice for building a syllabus in teaching non-Arabic speakers due to their attractiveness. Fourteen short stories based on the theoretical foundations which make the short story text a suitable element to construct a syllabus for learners at the intermediate level were presented. These story selection were restricted to narrative stories which were only used in the physical class context. Omran Musleh (2018) makes the case for selecting the content of narrative texts should depend not only on the curricula but have attraction as a factor as well. Once again, the recommendations were based on the physical class context.

Oran J. Stewart (1982) studied the importance of audio-visual stories in teaching English to non-English speakers. It was found that the application of audio-visual media was effective in teaching non-native English students. Based on the previous studies we extend the methods used to teaching Arabic to non-native students. This study therefore combines creative audio-visual tools with short stories considered for the online platform.

### 2.1 Difficulties and Challenges of Online Teaching Arabic to Primary Non-Arabic Students

In the process of learning a new language, learners face challenges and difficulties at first which is part of the adventure to learn Arabic. Teaching Arabic should thus be based on understanding students' cognitive abilities related to language acquisition. This understanding should be applied to the four basic language skills (reading, writing, listening and conversation). One of us has first-hand experience in learning and teaching English as a foreign language which has elucidated the sequence of these abilities and their differences among students. With this experience, one gets closer to understanding students' feelings and ability to acquire new things in a foreign language. Showcasing the skill of speaking and the level of fluency are what excites others to acknowledge proficiency in the new language.

It is also rare to find a discussion and study of the delusional challenges related to the student's beliefs and guesswork. Some students believe that Arabic is very difficult and it could be impossible to learn it, especially its grammar. In addition to these beliefs, the new challenges and difficulties mentioned before have also emerged in online teaching. This has made teaching Arabic to the non-native foundation and primary students more difficult. With the covid-19 situation and all physical classes being suspended these challenges became manifest. For instance, the lack access to the Internet. In this context, Aisyah Sufian, et. al., (2020) state, "The Internet is a critical source of access during this period, as the need for high-speed data access impacted educational performance at home" (p. 768). Furthermore, simple tools like textbooks, written materials and other tools have been found ineffective in teaching Arabic online.

Many students have also reported suffering psychological issues due to online learning resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic. In this framework, AndiWahyuIrawan, Dwisona and Mardi Lestari (2020, p. 54) confirm that the burden of online teaching is one of the contributing factors to students' stress levels, which requires them to use online media that they have just learned and must immediately understand, resulting psychological effects on students, which can be expressed in the form of anxiety, fear, and anxiety.

A case could be made that the most prominent difficulty for the Arabic is linked to the attitudes of students. Confessions from students indirectly, show that they do not want to learn Arabic, assuming that Arabic is difficult. Many phrases like "Teacher, Arabic is tough," "teacher please translate into English", "teacher, I do not understand your language" are echoed by students. Students' belief about the complexity of the Arabic language, as well as their difficulty to learn and understand its parts, particularly grammar is one of the first challenges faced. Students are seeming to also not be as motivated to learn Arabic when compared to English. Thus, the interest in learning Arabic dwindles as other science subjects seem more pertinent.

Moreover, in Malaysia, Arabic is not spoken at many universities nor is it used in professional life; thus, students tend not to study Arabic seriously. Unlike other subjects, the percentage of those not attending Arabic classes is very high.

A further challenge is the environment. Once the lesson is finished, they find it difficult to communicate first hand with Arab students, especially during quarantine. Staying at home has reduced students' opportunities of meeting Arab friends and colleagues face-to-face. In other words, the school offers a great opportunity to help students master the language through daily contact with other students (Arabs or advanced non-Arab learners). This has negatively affected students' language proficiency. Parents generally also do not have proficiency in Arabic and are thus unable to encourage them and help them achieve their homework.

Online-based learning environment magnifies the difficulties that teachers and students face in the process of learning Arabic. Language learning requires active, integrated, and overlapping pursuits, demotivated students seem to fuel their demotivation via online educational platforms, particularly through muting the microphone and turning off the camera. Other activities like playing games and watching video clips during the online-based lessons tend to be more attractive. This is a disadvantage of online classes which enable students to attend virtually while exhibiting a lack of awareness and engagement. It therefore has a negative impact on their overall performance.

Online education, teachers also tend to lose some direct control and supervision opportunities due to students and teachers being in two different places (MOE, 2020). Thus, it is imperative to engage parents in managing students' disciplines to reduce the disengagement between students and online classes, especially with students at the primary level (UNESCO, 2020).

Other factors are related to psychological problems such as depression, sadness, anxiety, isolation, introversion, distance from others, a predisposition to lethargy, shyness and loneliness resulting from Covid-19. These problems have significantly affected students and demotivated them.

Furthermore, COVID-19 related issues have had detrimental effects on learners. According to a CDC report, the number of children suffering from mental health deterioration to the point where they needed to visit the hospital's emergency room in 2020 doubled from 2019. These mental problems affect children's comprehension and ability to focus. Such problems have caused many schools in other countries to create specific classes for students who suffer from distraction and not being able to focus on a computer screen for three hours per week.

Lastly an important consideration is individual differences. Some students are good at speaking skills but not at reading, some others are good at reading some words but they cannot speak Arabic. Some of the students further understand Arabic easily but are unable to speak it or read it and so on. To handle this issue, it is essential to use different teaching methods in one lesson.

### **3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN**

#### **3.1 Audio-Visual Aids: Definition, Examples, Criteria and Importance**

Based on the problems and challenges mentioned above, some solutions are suggested, especially psychological problems, which are directly related to the teaching environment in order to encourage students to learn Arabic. If a child loves the Arabic language and wants to learn it, s/he, with the teacher's help, will achieve his/her goal. The tools used and the online-teaching method is one of the most important solutions to eliminate such challenges. Active and enjoyable audio-visual aids can be the solution in attracting students' attention and may create motivation to learn Arabic.

##### **3.1.1 Definition of Audio-Visual Tools**

Audio-visual materials are generally defined as "training or educational materials directed at both the senses of hearing and the sense of sight, films, recordings, photographs, etc. used in classroom instructions, library collections or the likes" (Ashaver&Igyuve, 2013, p. 44). These materials provide information through the sense of hearing, sight, or through a combination of both senses. According to a study by (Anzaku, 2011) (as cited in Ashaver&Igyuve, 2013, p. 44), "the term audio-visual materials is commonly used to refer to those instructional materials that may be used to convey meaning without complete dependence upon verbal symbols or language". Some audio-visual materials such as motion pictures use audio and visual equipment, videos and other materials that use sound and images. According to Ashaver&Igyuve (2013, p 44):

audio-visual materials are very important and useful in education because, the normal learner in so far as the functions of his preceptor mechanisms are concerned, gains understanding in terms of multiple impressions recorded through the eye, ear, touch and other series. This is to say that audio-visual materials are the equipment through which that function can occur, that does not occur in isolation, rather through a balance pattern from any preceptor mechanism that is stimulated by external occurrences.

##### **3.1.2 Examples of Audio-Visual Aids**

New and creative teaching methods were formulated using audio-visual aids to improve the teaching process, clarify the meaning of words, explain ideas, train students to acquire many skills and to instill values. The narration of simple written texts were reproduced and turned into visual and audio slides to make them enjoyable and attractive. The following are some examples:

- Recreating the written texts into audio-visual material, listening and speaking aids were combined by turning the long, written texts into a short-spoken conversation using For year 1 students, the teacher created animal characters to make students enjoy the conversation and, at the same time, improve their speaking and listening skills. By employing images that highlight animal roles, students may learn new Arabic sounds and differentiate between them and get the meaning of the dialogue.
- Turning the simple classic conversation in the school book into visually attractive slides using pictures to attract students and the usage of colours to stress the keywords of the lesson topic. For example, to teach speaking skills, images were used expressing the content of texts and sometimes images were combined with difficult terms and phrases to help students read and express the chronological sequence of the text to achieve a comprehensive understanding. Colours were also used to differentiate between the parts of the sentences and to stress the new terms.
- Introducing the new terms included in the new lessons to students before the start of the lesson. New terms were defined using flash and reading cards, images and translation. It was recommended that students read English-translated phrases silently and pay attention to images. The terms were read to the students and they were encouraged to repeat them loudly two or three times to memorize them.
- Using both words and pictures to make a sentence. This helps students differentiate between the parts of the sentence (preposition/verb/name) and the way they organize them to make a sentence because students (especially years 1 and 2) often face difficulties in understanding Arabic grammar and Arabic sentence structure due to its differences from English.
- For revision, the usage of games, google forms, quizzes and the wheel of names with some changes to the latter; change the names to of the questions of the last lessons while combining the questions with sound effects were used to make students more excited.

- To teach 'writing skills to students, our own recordings with sound effects were used during dictation.
- Many online educational platforms have been developed, some of which are ClassDojo, Google Classroom and extra Zoom meeting. Such platforms help teachers and students contact and so teachers can guide students remotely to do their home-based assignments. These platforms also help students to download the lesson's created audio-visual materials and access anytime. We create videos for activities that are brief and that fit learning objectives and goals. With that in mind, we consider activities that children can enjoy with their parents at home, enable them to be flexible to use many resources accessible at/from home.

### **3.1.3 Criteria of Creating/Selecting Audio-Visual Aids**

It is true that Arabic language skills are different (reading, speaking listening and writing) and so require different and diverse audio-visual aids. These educational methods and tools cannot be used randomly since they ought to follow some criteria and conditions for selecting the appropriate audio-visual aids and content which must fit the subject matter (the curriculum), the educational environment (physical/online class), the age of students, their interests, their levels, their previous experiences, and their cognitive abilities. The selected audio-visual tools should also go along with the activities and educational goals of the teaching methods employed. The following criteria is thus recommended before applying the audio-visual aids:

- Determining the goal by using the materials (speaking, listening, reading or writing improvements).
- Paying attention to the period of the aids, especially when using video to know the extent appropriate with the duration of the show.
- Audio-visual aids should be appropriate with the educational environment. For instance, the tools used during online classes are different from the physical class.
- The teacher should focus on the set of information and incidents that serve those goals so that students' attention does not wander into irrelevant details and moves away from the lesson's precise goal.
- They should be simple for students to utilize.
- The degree to which the medium's material is acceptable for the students' culture and community.
- They should fit in the students' age and cognitive abilities.
- Clarity of the tool, as well as its organization, coordination, and aesthetic sense.
- The tool should add some new explanation to the textbook.
- Considering the linguistic integration of the four English skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). This should be reflected in the students' level of improvement, evaluation and performance.
- The ideas, facts and information that the content presents should be as clear and concise as possible so as to students keep always focused.
- Simple sentences and phrases should be used by teachers and so common words, clear style and simple structures should be employed and learned.
- Considering the language that fits the non-native learners' level.
- Presenting the audio-visual slides easily and entertainingly to capture students' attention, stimulate their interest, generate their motivation for learning, and improve their imaginative talents.
- Making sure that the audio-visual tools are used to provide students with opportunities to compete, run effective dialogues and share opinions.

### **3.1.4 Importance of Audio-Visual Aids**

There is a lot of information that cannot be conveyed through textbooks or discussions. To present this information, it is essential to provide images, stories, voices and animated presentations that contain more than one role for students to understand during an online class. They also help to identify the information to be communicated. Through audio-visual aids, some information communicated can be identified so that the learner's mind is not distracted, for example, when using the Data Show, the information connected can be developed in the formulation of the teacher who can convey the information.

Facilitating and simplifying information for students can be done by summarizing important points in different forms such as pictures, slides, videos and other audio-visual tools that make the information easier to simplify ideas. In this context, a lot of information may be unclear that can be clarified by showing audio-visual aids that illustrate these vague aspects. These means also help to develop students' observational power and increase their abilities to record notes and deduce information. It helps learners store necessary information in mind. In this context,

according to a study by (Dike, 1993) (as cited in Ashaver&Igyuve, 2013, p. 46), "Audio-visual resources can therefore contribute to the clarity of information presented by allowing students to visualize what is learned".

### **3.2 Participants and materials**

To investigate the benefits and importance of audio-visual aids, a questionnaire was used in focus group discussions with the 79 students. They were asked direct questions to give their opinions on using audio-visual aids and to what extent they benefit from them to improve their Arabic. The study samples at schools were selected for foundation and primary students learning the Arabic language in the first semester of 2021/2022. The sample consists of 79 students.

## **4.0 RESULTS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

Based on the experience in creating and applying audio-visual aids in teaching Arabic to non-Arabic foundation and primary students, it has been noticed that the right educational tools may help turn students imaginations into reality; and therefore affect their spirit, inspire their motivation and love of the Arabic language, develop their creative skills, and enrich their linguistic and cognitive knowledge.

First of all, these methods have helped the simplification of the grammar of the Arabic language. Students should know at this stage that Arabic contains a lot of vocabulary that can indicate one meaning, but it varies depending on the context. The basic necessary rules of semantics should also be taught. By using the audio-visual aids, we find the methods helpful to enrich the students' vocabulary (either, perceptible or abstract). During the experience, we have noticed how students acquire new vocabulary by employing photos, videos and accompanying images with words and sentences. In terms of rules, despite their young age and being beginners, students have begun to recognize simple sentences and combinations and differentiate between the sentence verb and subject by accompanying sentences with pictures and an illustration of the meaning of sentences.

Secondly, audio-visual aids also help to develop students' four language skills so that it is easy for them to communicate and explain information to students. This makes them more skillful, creative and understanding of information. Students also have begun to get used to speaking in Arabic, pronouncing letters correctly and learning to imitate sounds. Repeated hearing accompanying written text from audio recordings and videos has helped students gain in acquiring in reading skills. Furthermore, breaking sentences into words and words to characters and using colors helped students improve writing and dictation skills. What is more, frequent listening, watching stories and videos and acquiring new vocabulary have improved students' skill of speaking Arabic.

Finally, the experience in applying these audio-visual tools has effectively changed students' views towards Arabic, which thus makes them interested in learning Arabic. Some students emphasized that audio-visual tools have made the process of learning Arabic easier. Such tools have helped attract students' attention and thus provide them with a lot of information and knowledge. The significance of educational audio-visual means lies in the psychological aspects of education because it can provide all the basic conditions that make the learning process better. Over time, the teacher has noticed that students' enthusiasm and interest have increased because of their awareness and understanding, which emphasizes that audio-visual aids are an effective tool for increasing understanding. Students have also become passionate about Arabic because they enjoy the lesson. This interest is demonstrated by students' interaction and participation, for instance, a few days after the implementation of these methods students show more interest to attend Arabic language classes. Students also do the activities we share with them through online education platforms. Some feedback was also received from parents that their child is starting to watch and enjoy videos at home.

Table 1: Students' Attitudes towards Using audio-visual aids in online Arabic class

The use of Audio-Visual Aids in Learning Arabic Online	Agree	Disagree	No answer
Using pictures, flashcards, colors and reading cards makes the online lesson attractive.	74	2	3
I love Arabic and I enjoy learning it online.	60	7	12
I find Arabic easy after using audio-visual aids.	67	7	5
My mind is not distracted during Arabic class while attending the lesson online	70	7	2
Online educational platforms such as Class Dojo, Google Classroom and extra Zoom meetings enable me to contact my teacher anytime.	65	2	12

It is flexible for me to download the lesson's created audio-visual materials, to use many resources accessible at/from home and to watch the videos uploaded anytime without facing internet problems.	72	2	5
My parents access the materials uploaded on the platforms and help me to do my assignments at home.	62	7	10
I understand the materials shared by the teacher on google classroom and do my home-based assignments.	67	3	9

Table 1 shows that the majority of the students thought that using audio-visual aids would enable them to be attracted to online Arabic classes (n=74), love Arabic and enjoy learning via online-based lessons (n= 60). The table demonstrates that Arabic is easy (n=67) and helps students pay attention to the online-based lessons (n= 70). The table illustrates that audio-visual aids help students a- contact their teacher anytime through online educational platforms (n= 65), b- download the lesson's created audio-visual materials, watch the videos uploaded anytime (n= 72), d- do assignments at home with parents' help (n= 62), e- understand the materials shared by the teacher on google classroom, and f- do home-based assignments. (n=67).

In general, the table emphasises that the majority of the students agreed that using audio-visual aids helps them in learning Arabic online because (1) it changes the students' attitudes towards Arabic, makes them love it and be interested in online Arabic lesson due to the attractiveness of the aids used, and (2) enables them to access different materials on the online educational platforms which help them to continue learning at/from home anytime.

Table 2: Attitudes of the Students on the Role of Audio-Visual Aids in Improving their Arabic

The Role of Audio-Visual Aids in Improving their Arabic	Agree	Disagree	No answer
I like watching the audio-visual conversation (short videos) because it helps me to improve my speaking and listening skills.	73	3	3
I believe that the flashcards and pictures help me to understand the text's meaning and increase my vocabulary.	75	1	3
I like colorful words used during the online –based lesson because it helps me to differentiate between sentence parts (preposition/verb/name)	70	5	4
Differentiating between the parts of the sentences (preposition/verb/name) enables me to make short sentences.	69	8	2
Using audio-visual aids helps me to define the new terms.	74	2	3
I think I can differentiate between Arabic and English sentence structures.	77	0	2

Table 2 demonstrates that the majority of the students, thought using audio-visual aids, would enable them to improve their speaking and listening skills (n=73), understand the text meaning and increase their vocabularies (n= 75), help them to differentiate between the sentence parts (n= 70), make short sentences (n= 69), define the new terms (n= 74) and differentiate between Arabic and English sentence structures (n= 77). Altogether, the frequencies emphasize that the majority of the students agreed that using audio-visual aids helps them in improving their Arabic, enabling them to understand easily, improve their language skills, promote grammar knowledge and increase their vocabulary.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

This study has discussed online teaching challenges and the role of created audio-visual aids in teaching Arabic to the non-Arab foundation and primary students. An attempt was made to identify the difficulties and obstacles that non-Arab-speaking foundation and primary students face in learning Arabic online during Covid-19. The study also investigated the role and the criteria to be applied when employing audio-visual aids to improve non-native Arabic students' proficiency in Arabic language and the students' attitudes.



Despite the students' attitudes towards the use of Arabic language, lexical, semantic, and phonological difficulties, it is clear that online learning is a major challenge for Arabic teachers to teach Arabic to non-Arabic primary students due to Covid-19 restrictions. This has led to many issues i.e. academic, emotional and psychological.

By studying the challenges of learning Arabic via online-based means to non-Arab speakers, it is found that students' perception about Arabic as a difficult language is a serious issue to add on the other related challenges as aforementioned. Other challenges are attributed to online learning environment, for instance, many students do not know how to use the Internet, other students are poorly engaged and involved in educational activities via online-based means. Some other challenges are related to psychological-based factors, for instance, some of the students are found to suffer from depression, sadness, anxiety, isolation, introversion. Finally, lack of knowledge of Arabic language and its sub-fields cause a major challenge for non-native Arab speakers to learn Arabic language.

After applying the creative teaching methods using audio-visual aids and based on the students' attitudes towards them, the findings show that these tools help in improving the teaching process, clarifying the meaning of words, explaining ideas, acquiring students effective skills especially by reproducing the narration and simple written texts. This can be accomplished by turning these texts into visual and audio slides to make them appropriate for teaching online. Based on the study, it is found that creating and applying audio-visual aids in teaching Arabic to the non-Arabic foundation and primary students has contributed to turning students' imaginations into reality; and therefore, affecting their spirits, inspiring their motivation and love of the Arabic language, developing their creativity skills, and enriching the students' linguistic and cognitive knowledge.

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