

HOW CEFR IS IMPLEMENTED IN ARABIC LANGUAGE LEARNING IN MADRASAH SCHOOLS (A Case Study at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Mambaus Sholihin)

¹Friendis Syani Amrulloh, ²Ahmad Miftahul Maarif

Universitas Kiai Abdullah Faqih Gresik, Indonesia

E-mail: friendissyani@gmail.com,¹ marufmuhammad74@gmail.com²

Abstract: This study examines the implementation of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in Arabic language learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Mambaus Sholihin, an Islamic educational institution emphasizing religious values. This research used a case study method with a qualitative approach involving semi-structured interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. The findings show that despite significant efforts to integrate the CEFR through communicative activities such as role plays and group discussions, its implementation is still hampered by various factors, including teachers' lack of understanding of the CEFR, the dominance of religious themes in learning materials, and limited resources such as teaching materials and technology. In addition, the assessment system that still focuses on traditional approaches is one of the main obstacles to achieving CEFR objectives that emphasize communicative skills. This study recommends intensive training for teachers, development of teaching materials relevant to the CEFR standards, and reformulation of the assessment system to support the effective implementation of the CEFR. The results of this study provide important insights into the adaptation of the CEFR in the local context of madrasahs and open up opportunities for further research on the integration of the CEFR across different cultural and educational contexts.

Keyword: CEFR, Madrasah, Communicative Learning, Arabic Language.

Introduction

Pondok Pesantren Mambaus Sholihin is a pesantren-based educational institution emphasizing mastery of Arabic and English as an integral part of its curriculum. In this environment, students learn

religion in depth and are invited to integrate language skills into their daily lives.¹ Communication in this pesantren environment is conducted in both languages, creating a unique linguistic ecosystem and supporting language competence development. As one of the main focuses, Arabic is used in various formal and informal activities, such as religious discussions, presentations, and social interactions between students.² This model reflects the efforts of pesantren to bridge traditional values with global needs, including language acquisition as a means of international communication, and this does not stop at the secondary education level, but develops to the level of pesantren-based universities.³ However, in the context of globalization and modern language learning standards, this pesantren has used the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) framework to increase its effectiveness and relevance to international standards.

The CEFR is emerging as a significant language teaching and assessment standard, including in Arabic language teaching and the Pesantren environment. The CEFR provides a structured approach to language learning by emphasizing competency development across writing, reading, and speaking skills through clear benchmarks.⁴ For example, CEFR-based materials have improved students' essay writing ability, while harmonized assessment tools have facilitated the evaluation of language proficiency standards.⁵ In addition, several

¹ Imam Nur Aziz and Yuli Ani Setyo Dewi, 'The Concept of Language Environment: A Descriptive Study at Madrasah Aliah Keagamaan Gresik', *EDUKASI: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam (e-Journal)*, 7.2 (2019), 1–23.

² Friendis Syani Amrulloh, 'CEFR and Its Implementation in Arabic Language Learning at Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School', *JEET, Journal of English Education and Technology*, 5.01 (2024), 31–44.

³ Muh Sabilar Rosyad, Uril Bahrudin, and Faishol Mahmoud Adam Ibrahim, 'The The Reality of Learning Arabic Listening Skills at Pesantren-Based Universities from the Perspective of Teaching Materials', *Lisanudhad: Jurnal Bahasa, Pembelajaran, Dan Sastra Arab*, 10.2 (2023), 92–120 <<http://dx.doi.org/10.21111/lisanudhad.v10i02.10914>>.

⁴ Sukanya Kaowiwattanakul, 'CEFR Based Learning Approach: Using Literature to Enhance EFL Students' Reading Skills and Critical Thinking Skills', *English Language Teaching*, 14.11 (2021), 66 <<https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v14n11p66>>; Nadiah Kassim and Harwati Hashim, 'Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR): A Review on Its Implementation in ESL/EFL Classrooms', *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 13.12 (2023) <<https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v13-i12/20149>>.

⁵ Şeyda Sari Yildirim and Sergen Sumengen, 'A CEFR-Based Comparison of Cambridge English Teaching Course Book and Ministry of National Education Course Book in Terms of Writing Skills Requirements', *RumeliDE Dil ve Edebiyat*

studies highlighted its impact on curriculum design and language proficiency outcomes.⁶ However, limited research specifically focuses on applying the CEFR in Arabic language teaching within the unique cultural and educational environment of Pesantren, a significant gap given that Pesantren represents a distinct educational system that integrates religious values with modern learning approaches.

This study aims to explore and analyze such perceptions by examining how the CEFR interacts with the pedagogical practices and cultural values present in the Pesantren. The findings are expected to provide practical recommendations for educators and policymakers, enabling them to fine-tune CEFR integration in a way that respects the unique identity of the Pesantren while promoting global language competence. Ultimately, this research seeks to address the identified gaps and lay the groundwork for further studies on implementing the CEFR in culturally rich non-Western educational environments, encouraging a more inclusive and adaptable framework for language education worldwide.

Method

This research uses a case study design with a data triangulation approach that includes semi-structured interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis to obtain comprehensive data.⁷ The research location was Madrasah Tsanawiyah Mambaus Sholihin, and the informants were kept anonymous to maintain research ethics. The research participants consisted of 5 Arabic teachers, 15 students from grades VIII-IX, and two curriculum developers involved in designing and implementing CEFR-based Arabic learning.

Data collection methods included interviews, observation, and document analysis. Interviews were conducted using a structured guide to explore teachers' perceptions of CEFR adaptation, implementation strategies, and obstacles faced. Observation focused on communicative competence-based classroom activities, such as role-play and

Araştırmaları Dergisi, 33, 2023, 1295–1309
<https://doi.org/10.29000/rumelide.1286184>.

⁶ Ibrahim Fatih Demirel and Özlem Fakazli, 'A CEFR-Based Comparison of English and Turkish Language Teaching Course Books in Terms of Speaking and Writing Skills', *Kuramsal Eğitimbilim*, 14.2 (2021), 167–85
<https://doi.org/10.30831/akueg.851117>; Aina Hartini Mohamad Khair and Parilah Mohd Mohd Shah, 'ESL Teachers' Perceptions on the Implementation of CEFR in Malaysian Primary Schools: Issues and Challenges', *Journal of Advances in Education Research*, 6.1 (2021) <https://doi.org/10.22606/jaer.2021.61005>.

⁷ J.W Cresswell, *Research Design* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2002).

discussion, to document learning practices directly. Meanwhile, document analysis included examining the syllabus, lesson plans, and teaching materials to assess alignment with CEFR principles. Data analysis was conducted using thematic techniques with open and axial coding processes to identify patterns and central themes from the data collected.

Result

Interview Data

Semi-structured interviews aimed to explore teachers' perceptions, CEFR implementation strategies, and challenges. The following are the results of the interviews with five classroom teachers and two curriculum developers.

Table 1. Interview results

No	Aspects	Findings
1	Teacher's Understanding of CEFR	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 3 out of 5 teachers only understand CEFR as a framework for improving conversation- 2 Teachers relate the CEFR to proficiency levels (A1-C2) but do not understand how they are operationalized. <i>(Kami diajari bahwa CEFR itu penting untuk siswa bisa ngobrol pakai bahasa Arab, tapi tidak ada pelatihan teknis. (Teacher A))</i>
2	CEFR Integration Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- A2 (basic) level for grade VII.- Level B1 (intermediate) for class IX.- Additional task-based modules such as Introducing Yourself at the Airport and Interviewing Scholars' Leaders <i>(Kami mencoba mengintegrasikan CEFR melalui modul berbasis tugas agar siswa lebih aktif menggunakan bahasa Arab dalam situasi nyata. (Curriculum Developer 1))</i>
3	Implementation Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Lack of Specialized Training: 100% of teachers mentioned a lack of technical training on the CEFR.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Student Resistance: Accustomed to traditional memorization methods.- Resources: Limited CEFR-relevant teaching materials. (Kami butuh pelatihan lebih lanjut soal CEFR. Saat ini, kami hanya mengandalkan buku panduan tanpa pengalaman langsung. (Teacher C)) (Siswa merasa sulit beradaptasi karena mereka lebih terbiasa menghafal kosakata daripada berbicara langsung." (Teacher D))
4	Proposed Solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Intensive training for teachers on CEFR.- A stepwise approach helps students reduce reliance on memorization methods.- Developing local teaching materials under the context and CEFR standards is needed.- Teachers conduct periodic evaluations to monitor student progress. (Kami kesulitan menemukan modul atau buku yang sesuai dengan standar CEFR untuk bahasa Arab. (Curriculum Developer 2))

The table explains that teachers' understanding of the CEFR is still limited; three out of five teachers only understand the CEFR as the "framework for improving conversation" without technical knowledge, while the other two teachers associated the CEFR with proficiency levels (A1-C2) but did not understand how to operationalize them. One teacher states, "*Kami diajari bahwa CEFR itu penting untuk siswa bisa ngobrol pakai bahasa Arab, tapi tidak ada pelatihan teknis.*" In terms of CEFR integration, the curriculum developers have adopted the A2 (basic) level for grade VII and B1 (intermediate) for grade IX, as well as using additional task-based modules such as "*Introducing yourself at the airport*" and "*Interviewing Ulama (scholars).*" However, the implementation of the CEFR faces some obstacles, including the lack of specialized training for teachers, students' resistance to communicative activities due to the

habit of memorization methods, and limited resources such as CEFR-relevant teaching materials. As a solution, teachers and curriculum developers propose intensive training, a gradual approach for students to reduce reliance on rote methods, the development of local teaching materials that fit the context and CEFR standards, and periodic evaluations to monitor student progress. This research shows that although the CEFR is beginning to be integrated into the curriculum, significant efforts are still needed to overcome the challenges and ensure its effective implementation.

CEFR-based Learning Activities in the Classroom

The researcher conducted participatory observation for 12 sessions to find potential solutions in CEFR-based learning to improve the quality of Arabic language learning. The following is a table of observation results.

Table 2. Observation Result

No	Observation Aspects	Findings
1	Communicative Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Role-play "<i>Beli Makanan di Pasar</i>", 60% of students are active but use mixed dialect.- Group discussion "<i>Kisah Nabi</i>": Students have difficulty expressing opinions in standard Arabic, so they often switch to Indonesian when they find it difficult.
2	Integration with Traditional Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The teacher combines religious vocabulary memorization with situational conversation practice. Example: Memorize "<i>wudhu</i>" and then practice asking questions about how to do wudhu.
3	Use of Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Only 2 out of 5 teachers use short videos for listening practice.- Students face limited access to CEFR-based digital platforms.- Animated videos about conversations in the market are used, but no interactive application exists.

The table describes the results of participatory observation during 12 sessions (4 weeks, three sessions per week) to document

CEFR-based learning activities in the classroom. The focus of observation includes teacher-student interaction in communicative activities such as role-play and discussion, the use of teaching materials that support linguistic competence (listening and speaking), integration between grammar learning (*nahwu-shorof*) with CEFR-based tasks, and the use of technology or learning media. The findings show that in communicative activities, such as the role-play "Buying Food in the Market" in class VIII, about 60% of the students are actively involved, yet still use mixed dialects (Arabic-Fictional) instead of standard Arabic. Meanwhile, in group discussions about "*Kisah Nabi*" in class IX, students have difficulty expressing opinions in standard Arabic, with some even resorting to Indonesian when frustrated by limited vocabulary.

On the other hand, teachers try to integrate traditional learning methods, such as memorizing religious vocabulary, with situational conversation practices to strengthen students' understanding. For example, students are asked to learn vocabulary words such as "ablution" and then practice asking or explaining in a conversational context, such as "How do I perform ablution correctly?" This approach helps students connect memorized vocabulary with its use in daily life, although its implementation still requires refinement. However, the use of technology in learning is still minimal. Only 2 out of 5 teachers use short videos, such as animated clips about conversations in the market, to practice listening skills. In addition, there is no access to CEFR-based digital platforms, such as interactive applications, due to limited infrastructure and training for teachers in utilizing modern technology.

Findings from Document Analysis

Document analysis was used to determine the alignment of CEFR principles in classroom learning. The following are the results of the document analysis:

No	Aspect	Findings
1	Syllabus and lesson plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 40% of activity refers to a CEFR descriptor.- Dominant religious themes (70%),- The common theme is only 30%. (<i>Siswa mampu mendeskripsikan gambar menggunakan 5 kalimat.</i>)
2	Teaching materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Focus on religious texts (hadiths and prophetic stories).- Dialog sehari-hari hanya sebagai pelengkap.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">- There is no CEFR assessment rubric.- The daily dialogue about "shopping in the market" is only at the end of the chapter.
3	Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Oral exam 20%- Written exam 80%.- Focus on translation and grammar instead of communicative skills.- The written exam emphasizes <i>nahwu-shorof</i> more than the practice of speaking.

The document analysis table reveals that implementing CEFR in Arabic language learning in madrasah still faces several significant challenges. Regarding syllabus and lesson plans, only 40% of activities refer to CEFR descriptors, such as "students can describe a picture using five sentences". In addition, religious themes dominate the learning materials with a proportion reaching 70%, while general themes such as family, environment, or daily situations only cover 30%. It shows that the curriculum is still very much focused on religious aspects compared to developing students' communicative skills in standard Arabic.

Regarding teaching materials, the primary textbooks remain oriented towards religious texts, such as hadith, prophet stories, and worship-related vocabulary. Although some chapters are supplemented with additional examples of everyday dialogues, such as conversations in the market or introducing oneself, they are often only supplementary without strong integration with the core learning activities. Furthermore, the student worksheets do not include an assessment rubric based on CEFR "can-do statements", making it difficult to measure student progress according to CEFR proficiency levels precisely.

The grading system is also leaning towards the traditional, with oral exams accounting for only 20% of the total grade, while written exams dominate up to 80%. Written exams focus more on translation skills and mastery of grammar (*nahwu-shorof*) than students' communicative skills. This imbalance shows that communicative aspects have not been prioritized in learning evaluation. Overall, the findings show that despite efforts to integrate the CEFR, the implementation is still limited and requires a thorough revision of the syllabus, teaching materials, and assessment system to align more with the CEFR principles.

CEFR Implementation Profile at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Mambaus Sholihin

Implementation Aspects	Description	Example Activities	Implication	Challenge
Curriculum Integration (Level A2-B1)	Teachers adopt the CEFR partially with a focus on the basic (A2) to intermediate (B1) levels. They train students to understand and use Arabic in simple communication contexts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Module "Self-Introduction" (A2).- The project "Interviewing Figures" uses complex sentences (B1).- The task of writing is to write a letter of application (B1).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Students can interact in everyday situations.- Students Increase their motivation to learn through contextual assignments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Lack of inter-level continuity due to material limitations.- Assessment has not yet fully referred to the CEFR descriptors.
The Dominance of Religious Themes in Communicative Activities	Communicative activities are designed by integrating religious themes (70%), such as prophet stories, worship terms, and moral values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Role-play "Delivering Khutbah Jumat".- Group discussion on "Hikmah of Fasting".- Presentation on "Biographies of Famous Ulama".	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Learning is relevant to students' religious identity.- Religious vocabulary is internalized through practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Students have difficulty using Arabic for non-religious themes (family, technology).- A limited creative teacher is a hybrid themes designer

The table explains that curriculum integration in Arabic language learning in madrasas is done by selecting the A2-B1 level, which is considered appropriate for the average ability of students. Examples of learning activities show attempts to combine

communicative competence with existing curriculum structures, such as through simple conversations or descriptions of everyday situations. However, the dominance of religious themes is an integral feature of the madrasa's mission, with 70% of learning materials relating to religious content such as prophet stories, hadith, and terms of worship. While this is important for maintaining institutional identity, the dominating religious theme significantly limits students' exposure to global communication contexts and practical situations in modern Arabic. The main challenge is the lack of balance between the spiritual context and the need for students to master Arabic as a universal means of communication. Therefore, strategies are needed to harmonize these two aspects so that students understand religious vocabulary and adapt to communicative needs in various modern contexts.

Data Triangulation

Data triangulation revealed significant consistencies and discrepancies regarding implementing CEFR in Arabic language learning. Interviews and observations show that teachers do not fully understand the CEFR framework but try to integrate communicative activities into the learning process. This finding is reinforced by document analysis, which shows that the assessment system is still dominated by traditional approaches, with written exams (translation and grammar) accounting for 80% of the total grade. In comparison, oral exams account for only 20%. However, there is a discrepancy between the syllabus and the teaching materials; although the syllabus includes the CEFR, the teaching materials are not holistically designed to support the development of students' communicative competence. In addition, the observation results show that students seem more confident in language activities compared to the conclusion of the teacher interview, which mentions that students tend to be "passive." It indicates a difference in perception between the teacher and the actual classroom practice. It suggests a difference in perception between teachers and actual classroom practice and the need for better alignment between curriculum, teaching materials, and learning implementation to support the effective implementation of the CEFR.

Discussion

CEFR integration in the Arabic curriculum

Implementing the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in Arabic language learning in madrasah is a strategic step to improve students' communicative

competence, which has tended to be dominated by traditional approaches based on memorization. In the context of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Mambaus Sholihin, the integration of CEFR into the Arabic curriculum is an innovative effort to present a learning approach that is more holistic and relevant to global needs. However, implementing CEFR in a madrasah environment is not free from challenges, primarily due to the institution's characteristics that emphasize religious values and limited resources and teachers' understanding of the framework. This study shows that although significant efforts exist to integrate CEFR, the implementation is still exploratory and requires refinement to achieve the expected learning objectives. Therefore, the CEFR integration strategy in the Arabic curriculum becomes an important aspect that needs to be analyzed to answer the research gap on how CEFR can be adapted to the madrasah's local context without neglecting religious education's mission.

This study's findings align with previous studies' results, which show that implementing the CEFR in non-European contexts often faces cultural and curricular adaptation obstacles.⁸ Cultural factors in learning Arabic as a foreign language are often an obstacle, so it is deemed necessary to integrate the two cultures in the mother tongue and the target language.⁹ According to Elhadi,¹⁰ one of the main challenges in implementing the CEFR in Arabic-speaking countries is the dominance of traditional approaches that focus on grammar (*nahwu-shorof*) and the lack of emphasis on communicative skills. It is also reflected in this study, where religious themes, such as prophet stories, hadith, and worship vocabulary, still dominate 70% of the learning materials in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Mambaus Sholihin. Nonetheless, the findings show an attempt to combine CEFR with traditional approaches through communicative activities such as the role-play "Buying Food in the Market" and group discussion on "Prophet's

⁸ Nadrah Zainal Abidin and Harwati Hashim, 'Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR): A Review on Teachers' Perception & Plurilingualism', *Creative Education*, 12.04 (2021), 727–36 <<https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2021.124051>>.

⁹ Muh Sabilar Rosyad, Muhammad Farih, and Muhammad Ainul Haq, 'Implementasi Paradigma Bahasa Sebagai Budaya Pada Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Di Indonesia; Problematika Dan Sosuli', *PROSIDING KONIPBSA: Konferensi Nasional Inovasi Pembelajaran Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab*, 3.1 (2023), 120–33 <<https://conference.uin-suka.ac.id/index.php/konipbsa/article/view/1340>>.

¹⁰ Asciea Elhadi, 'Collaborative Translation and Meaning Making: Using English Language Learners' First Language as a Resource for Language Learning and Academic Achievement in the Classroom' (University of Toronto (Canada), 2023).

Story". This approach is similar to the strategy proposed by Drivoka Sulistyaningrum et al.¹¹ which suggests integrating the CEFR with local content to maintain cultural relevance and religious values. However, this study also highlights the imbalance between religious themes and the practical needs of modern Arabic, which poses a challenge to implementing the CEFR.

In addition, this finding also supports the argument put forward by Setiadi et al.,¹² which states that CEFR integration requires systematic revision of syllabus, teaching materials, and assessment methods. In this study, only 40% of the activities in the lesson plans refer to the CEFR descriptors. At the same time, the assessment system is still heavily skewed towards the traditional, with written exams dominating up to 80%. The findings suggest that despite efforts to adopt the CEFR, its implementation has not been fully optimized due to the lack of teacher training and limited access to teaching materials that support communicative competence. In addition, the absence of assessment rubrics based on CEFR "can-do statements" in student worksheets makes it challenging to measure student progress precisely according to CEFR proficiency levels. It suggests that CEFR integration requires better infrastructure support, including intensive training for teachers and the developing of teaching materials that are more relevant to the CEFR standards.

Scientifically, this finding has important implications for Arabic curriculum development in madrasah. First, integrating the CEFR into the Arabic curriculum requires a flexible and adaptive approach to accommodate the local characteristics of the madrasah. For example, the dominating religious theme can be utilized as a starting point for introducing CEFR concepts through situational dialogues that combine religious vocabulary with the context of daily life. For example, students can be encouraged to practice asking questions or explaining how to perform ablutions in Arabic, which strengthens their religious understanding and improves their communicative skills. This approach can be a model for integrating CEFR with spiritual values so that its implementation does not contradict the educational mission of the madrasah.

¹¹ Siti Drivoka Sulistyaningrum, Ifan Iskandar, and Ratna Dewanti, 'Pengintegrasian Literasi Digital Dalam Pembelajaran Berbicara Bagi Guru Bahasa', *P2M STKIP Siliwangi*, 9.1 (2022), 60–74 <<https://doi.org/10.22460/p2m.v9i1.3293>>.

¹² Samsi Setiadi and others, 'Model Materi Ajar Kitābah Muqayyadah Berbasis CEFR Dan Terintegrasi Keterampilan Abad Ke-21', *Ta'lim Al-'Arabiyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab & Kebahasaaraban*, 6.1 (2022), 83–94.

This research suggests the need to diversify learning themes to provide students with broader exposure to global communication contexts, as the over-dominance of religious themes may limit students' ability to adapt to universal communicative situations.

Therefore, the curriculum needs to include general topics such as family, environment, and social issues relevant to daily life under the CEFR principles that emphasize the use of language in various real contexts. In addition, reforming the assessment system becomes very important to reflect the CEFR principles, considering that currently, the assessment system at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Mambaus Sholihin still focuses on traditional aspects such as translation and grammar. The assessment system needs to include communicative aspects through rubrics based on CEFR "can-do statements" and an increased proportion of oral exams to assess Arabic speaking, listening, and interaction skills.

The success of CEFR implementation also depends on the capacity of teachers and the availability of resources, so intensive training for teachers and the development of teaching materials relevant to CEFR standards are top priorities. Collaboration between teachers, curriculum developers, and Arabic language experts is needed to produce teaching materials that are more aligned with CEFR principles, and the utilization of technology, such as interactive applications or digital platforms, can be a potential solution. With a comprehensive and inclusive approach, the integration of CEFR will improve students' communicative competence and open up opportunities for madrasahs to contribute to developing Arabic language learning that is more modern and relevant to global needs. This research is expected to serve as a reference for other educational institutions that want to adopt the CEFR in their local contexts and encourage further research on the adaptation of the CEFR in various cultural and academic contexts.

Impact of Implementation on Teaching and Assessment Methods

Implementing the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in Arabic language learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Mambaus Sholihin significantly changes teaching and assessment methods. However, the application is still in the exploratory stage. The results show that integrating the CEFR has encouraged teachers to adopt a communicative approach through activities such as role-play and group discussion, which were previously rarely practiced in the madrasah context. However, the dominance of

religious themes and teachers' limited understanding of the CEFR are factors that limit the effectiveness of the implementation. In addition, the assessment system still focuses heavily on the traditional approach, with written exams dominating up to 80%, while oral exams only account for 20%. It shows an imbalance between the CEFR objectives emphasizing communicative skills and the current assessment practices. Therefore, the impact of CEFR implementation on teaching and assessment methods becomes an important aspect that needs to be critically analyzed to answer the research gap on how CEFR can be adapted in the madrasah's local context without neglecting religious education's mission.

This study's findings align with previous studies' results that highlighted the challenges of integrating the CEFR into non-European educational contexts. One of the main obstacles in implementing the CEFR in Arabic-speaking countries is the dominance of traditional approaches that focus on grammar (*nahwu-shorof*) and the lack of emphasis on communicative skills.¹³ In addition, the assessment system used in this madrasa still leans heavily towards the traditional, mainly focusing on translation and grammar. Implementing the CEFR requires reforming the assessment system to reflect the principles of communicative competence.¹⁴

In this study, the absence of an assessment rubric based on CEFR "can-do statements" in the student worksheets made it challenging to measure student progress precisely according to CEFR proficiency levels. It suggests that despite efforts to adopt the CEFR, its implementation has been unsuccessful due to the lack of teacher training and limited access to teaching materials that support communicative competence. Therefore, changes in teaching and assessment methods are crucial to support the effective implementation of the CEFR.

Scientifically, this finding has important implications for the development of teaching and assessment methods in Arabic language learning in madrasah. Implementing CEFR encourages changes in teaching methods, such as using communicative approaches through role-play and group discussion. However, it is still limited by the dominance of religious themes and teachers' less-than-optimal understanding of the CEFR. This is in line with the findings of Mukhlis

¹³ Demirel and Fakazli.

¹⁴ Talqis Nurdianto, 'Kompetensi Dasar Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab', *Yogyakarta: Zahir Publishing*, 2020.

who stated that the literacy level of Arabic language students and teachers in pesantren is still far from what is expected.¹⁵ Although CEFR adaptation faces cultural and curriculum challenges, a flexible approach can help overcome them. This implementation improves students' communicative competence and becomes a model for other educational institutions in integrating the CEFR locally. This study will encourage further research on CEFR adaptation in various educational contexts.

Conclusion

Implementing the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in Arabic language learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Mambaus Sholihin shows significant efforts to improve students' communicative competence. However, it still faces several challenges. Teachers' understanding of the CEFR is still limited, with only 40% of activities in lesson plans referring to CEFR descriptors. In comparison, the dominance of religious themes (70%) limits students' exposure to global communication contexts. Limited resources such as teaching materials and technology and an assessment system that still focuses on traditional approaches (written exams dominate up to 80%) are the main obstacles to achieving CEFR goals. Therefore, there are positive efforts through communicative activities such as role-play and group discussion, although the implementation is not optimal because students have difficulty using standard Arabic. To overcome this challenge, intensive training for teachers is recommended. The development of teaching materials relevant to the CEFR, reformulation of the assessment system with an emphasis on communicative aspects, and utilization of technology in learning are also recommended. This study provides important insights into the adaptation of the CEFR in the local context of madrasahs, but further research is needed to explore CEFR implementation strategies in various cultural and educational contexts, including the evaluation of long-term impacts on students' communicative abilities and the development of a more inclusive and sustainable CEFR integration model.

¹⁵ Mukhlis Utsman and Muh Sabilar Rosyad, 'Fenomena Rendahnya Minat Menguasai Keterampilan Membaca Serta Solusinya Dari Sudut Pandang Siswa Dan Guru', *LUGHATI: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab*, 1.01 (2023), 1–16.

References

- Abidin, Nadrah Zainal, and Harwati Hashim, 'Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR): A Review on Teachers' Perception & Plurilingualism', *Creative Education*, 12.04 (2021), 727–36 <<https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2021.124051>>
- Amrulloh, Friendis Syani, 'CEFR and Its Implementation in Arabic Language Learning at Mambaus Sholihin Islamic Boarding School', *JEET, Journal of English Education and Technology*, 5.01 (2024), 31–44
- Aziz, Imam Nur, and Yuli Ani Setyo Dewi, 'The Concept of Language Environment: A Descriptive Study at Madrasah Aliah Keagamaan Gresik', *EDUKASI: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam (e-Journal)*, 7.2 (2019), 1–23
- Cresswell, J.W, *Research Design* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2002)
- Demirel, İbrahim Fatih, and Özlem Fakazli, 'A CEFR-Based Comparison of English and Turkish Language Teaching Course Books in Terms of Speaking and Writing Skills', *Kuramsal Eğitimbilim*, 14.2 (2021), 167–85 <<https://doi.org/10.30831/akukeg.851117>>
- Drivoka Sulistyaningrum, Siti, Ifan Iskandar, and Ratna Dewanti, 'Pengintegrasian Literasi Digital Dalam Pembelajaran Berbicara Bagi Guru Bahasa', *P2M STKIP Siliwangi*, 9.1 (2022), 60–74 <<https://doi.org/10.22460/p2m.v9i1.3293>>
- Elhadi, Ascica, 'Collaborative Translation and Meaning Making: Using English Language Learners' First Language as a Resource for Language Learning and Academic Achievement in the Classroom' (University of Toronto (Canada), 2023)
- Kaowiwattanakul, Sukanya, 'CEFR Based Learning Approach: Using Literature to Enhance EFL Students' Reading Skills and Critical Thinking Skills', *English Language Teaching*, 14.11 (2021), 66 <<https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v14n11p66>>
- Kassim, Nadiah, and Harwati Hashim, 'Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR): A Review on Its

- Implementation in ESL/EFL Classrooms’, *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 13.12 (2023)
<<https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v13-i12/20149>>
- Mohamad Khair, Aina Hartini, and Parilah Mohd Mohd Shah, ‘ESL Teachers’ Perceptions on the Implementation of CEFR in Malaysian Primary Schools: Issues and Challenges’, *Journal of Advances in Education Research*, 6.1 (2021)
<<https://doi.org/10.22606/jaer.2021.61005>>
- Nurdianto, Talqis, ‘Kompetensi Dasar Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab’, *Yogyakarta: Zahir Publishing*, 2020
- Rosyad, Muh Sabilar, Uril Bahrudin, and Faishol Mahmoud Adam Ibrahim, ‘The The Reality of Learning Arabic Listening Skills at Pesantren-Based Universities from the Perspective of Teaching Materials’, *Lisanudhad: Jurnal Bahasa, Pembelajaran, Dan Sastra Arab*, 10.2 (2023), 92–120
<<http://dx.doi.org/10.21111/lisanudhad.v10i02.10914>>
- Rosyad, Muh Sabilar, Muhammad Farih, and Muhammad Ainul Haq, ‘Implementasi Paradigma Bahasa Sebagai Budaya Pada Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Di Indonesia; Problematika Dan Sosuli’, *PROSIDING KONIPBSA: Konferensi Nasional Inovasi Pembelajaran Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab*, 3.1 (2023), 120–33
<<https://conference.uin-suka.ac.id/index.php/konipbsa/article/view/1340>>
- Sari Yildirim, Şeyda, and Sergen Sumengen, ‘A CEFR-Based Comparison of Cambridge English Teaching Course Book and Ministry of National Education Course Book in Terms of Writing Skills Requirements’, *RumeliDE Dil ve Edebiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 33, 2023, 1295–1309
<<https://doi.org/10.29000/rumelide.1286184>>
- Setiadi, Samsi, Muhammad Kamal, Fatwa Arifah, and Andri Ilham, ‘Model Materi Ajar Kitābah Muqayyadah Berbasis CEFR Dan Terintegrasi Keterampilan Abad Ke-21’, *Ta’lim Al-‘Arabiyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab & Kebahasaaraban*, 6.1 (2022), 83–94
- Utsman, Mukhlis, and Muh Sabilar Rosyad, ‘Fenomena Rendahnya Minat Menguasai Keterampilan Membaca Serta Solusinya Dari

Sudut Pandang Siswa Dan Guru', *LUGHATI: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab*, 1.01 (2023), 1–16