

HOW OUTPUT-BASED STANDARDISATION OF WRITING SKILLS LEARNING SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED FOR NON-ARABIC SPEAKERS

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Abstract: The role and function of *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* in learning Arabic is very crucial, therefore someone cannot reach it before he masters other language skills such as *Mahārah Al-Istima`*, *Mahārah Al-Kalām*, *Mahārah Al-Qirā'ah*. Departing from the complex capacity of *Mahārah Al-Kitābah*, this research aims to review the essence and standard outcomes of Arabic language learning for non-Arabs. A qualitative approach using the systematic literature study method was used in this research to answer the research objectives above. Data sources come from several literatures related to the topic from books, journals, and some non-Arabic speaking teachers or students. All of which were obtained and collected through in-depth interviews and documentation techniques. Data analysis uses qualitative descriptive techniques by presenting a comprehensive understanding narratively. The results of this research indicate that standards for writing skills in language learning based on a reference framework such as CEFR can be adopted and used in *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* learning by considering the addition of Arabic language characteristics, where in that framework there are no typical characteristics of Arabic that must be mastered by learners of Arabic as a foreign language in Indonesia.

Keywords: *Mahārah Al-Kitābah*, Arabic Writing Skills, Curriculum, CEFR, TASOL.

Introduction

There is no doubt that writing skill is considered as one of the most difficult skills of the other four language skills. This skill is not

taught to students unless they have finished learning the skills of listening, speaking, and reading. Ibn Khaldun viewed that the order of the various skills above is determined by the characteristics of the language itself, regardless of the type of language.¹

The four skills are further grouped into two types: receptive skills (*Mahārāt Istiqbaliyyah*) which include listening and reading, and productive skills (*Mahārāt Intājiyyah*) which include speaking and writing.² Hani Ismail stated that the urgency and difficulty in learning writing skills is due to the fact that writing is one of the two productive skills, it is also due to natural factors where productive skills are more difficult than receptive skills because it includes a diverse set of competencies ranging from linguistic competencies such as phonological, lexical, semantic, syntactic, and cultural competencies and the social context of the language users, then there are also literary competencies, metaphorical expressions and rhetoric.³ Therefore, writing skills are the end result of various skills and language elements that learners of Arabic as a foreign language have acquired.

Mahārah Al-Kitābah or writing skills refer to the art of expressing ideas, feelings, and viewpoints by using language as a medium to convey them and present them to others in the form of written subjects. The forms and purposes of writing are very diverse, and each form has requirements and rules that distinguish it from the others, but all of them have in common the need to have good writing skills so that one can complete his writing activities perfectly.

In response to the above concept, Thuaimah argues that the concept of *Al-Kitābah* in some programmes is narrowed down to be limited to copying or spelling and extends into others to include various mental processes necessary for self-expression.⁴ Therefore, defining writing skills is a scientific and practical necessity at the same time, and

¹ Abdul Rahman Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddimah Ibn Khaldun*, 1st edn (Beirut: Dar al-Qalam, 1978) <<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022050700107776>[Opens in a new window]>.

² Muh Sabilar Rosyad, Faishol Mahmoud Adam, and Uril Bahrudin, "The Natural Situation and Its Effective Role in Designing Arabic Listening Skills Teaching Materials for Non-Native Speakers/ المواقف الطبيعية ودورها الفعال في استمداها مادة مهارة الاستماع للناطقين بغيرها", *Ijaz Arabi Journal of Arabic Learning*, 6.3 (2023), 586–604 <<https://doi.org/10.18860/ijazarabi.v6i3.19531>>.

³ Hani Ismail Ramadan and others, *Ma`āyir Mahārāt Al-Lughah Al-`Arabiyyah Li Al-Nāṭiqin Bi Ghairihā; Abḥāṣ Muḥkamah* (Turki: al-Muntada al-Arabi al-Turki, 2018).

⁴ Rusydi Ahmad Thuaimah, *Ta`lim Al-`Arabiyyah Li Ghair Al-Nāṭiqin Bibā; Manābijuhu Wa Asālibuhu* (Maroko: Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO), 1989).

not a mere intellectual or academic endeavour. Abdur Rahim added that this is what makes it difficult for a researcher to define the specific meaning of the skill because writing skills and their mastery is a conversation about the whole language.⁵

The above phenomenon indirectly affects learners of Arabic as a foreign language, especially in Indonesia and including non-formal institutions such as pesantren.⁶ In addition, the complexity and confusion related to the orientation or achievement of learning Arabic writing are often generalised at each level, so that the results of one's writing at the beginner level are measured by the writing standards for the intermediate and even advanced levels. Therefore, the standardisation of *Mabārah Al-Kitābah* needs to be mapped and studied more deeply to obtain the criteria of a writing that is suitable for the age level and ability of learners of Arabic as a foreign language.

Studies on the standardisation of *Mabārah Al-Kitābah* for Arabic language learners in Indonesia are not new. ACTFL standards, for example, as discussed by Mustaghfirin and Hikmah, especially in the aspect of writing skills.⁷ Nuraini et al. in their findings stated that teaching materials with ACTFL standards were considered effective in improving students' writing skills at the novice level.⁸ The same thing can also be found in the findings of Maimunah et al. which states that teaching materials at the novice low level in *Mdrasah Ibtidaiyah* Arabic textbooks worry about ACTFL instructional standards.⁹ However, sometimes the targets or standards in KMA 183 2019 are seen as higher for students in grades 1 and 2 of *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*, where according

⁵ Rāid Abdul Rahīm, *Tadris Mabārah Al-Kitābah: Al-Nazariyyah Wa Taṭbiq* (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Markaz al-Malik Abdullah al-Dauli li Khidmah al-Lughah al-Arabiyah).

⁶ Mohammad Makinuddin, 'Bahasa Arab Sebagai Kekhasan Pesantren Dan Tantangannya Dalam Situasi Global', *JALIE; Journal of Applied Linguistics and Islamic Education*, 1.2 (2017), 288–308 <<https://doi.org/10.33754/jalie.v1i2.107>>.

⁷ Mustaghfirin and Hikmah, 'Analisis Kemahiran Menulis Dalam Buku Ajar Bahasa Arab 2 Kelas 8 Madrasah Tsanawiyah Kurikulum KMA 183 Berdasarkan Perspektif ACTFL', *INTIFA: Journal of Education and Language*, 1.1 (2020), 81–95 <<https://doi.org/10.62083/5gdgex09>>.

⁸ Nuraini Nuraini, Imam Asrori, and Mamluatul Hasanah, 'Material Development for Arabic Writing Skills Based on International Standards 1 Tathwir Al-Mawad Al-Dirasiyyah Li Maharah Al-Kitābah Fi Dhau'i Al-Ma 'ayir Al-'Alamiyyah', *Jurnal Al Bayan: Jurnal Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab*, 14.2 (2022), 290–307 <<http://dx.doi.org/10.24042/albayan.v14i2.13901>>.

⁹ Iffat Maimunah and others, 'Analisis Buku Ajar MI Berstandar ACTFL', *Al-Fusha: Arabic Language Education Journal*, 4.2 (2022), 52–64 <<https://doi.org/10.36835/alfusha.v4i2.847>>.

to ACTFL students at that level are still unable to use functional language,¹⁰ as well as at the level of *Madrasah Tsanawiyah* grade IX where writing proficiency materials are consistently at a high novice level.¹¹

In almost all the above studies, there is a tendency and similarity between the instructional objectives of learning Arabic language skills in general and writing skills in Indonesia with ACTFL (*American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages*) standards. Therefore, this study aims to complement the existing studies through the presentation of various standards of Arabic writing skills (*Mahārah Al-Kitābah*) that are popular and often referred to in designing instructional objectives in Arabic language learning in general, whether they come from official language institutions or associations of a region or country or personally such as Arabic language learning experts for foreign speakers.

Thus, this study is an attempt to add to the previous views with the intention of enriching and strengthening the existing findings, and although the number is small, this effort should be appreciated and praised, because it delves into studying an area of language skills (*Mahārah Al-Kitābah*) that is rarely seen by researchers compared to speaking and reading skills. Based on the above, this research focuses on the study of the urgency and standardisation of *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* for learners of Arabic as a foreign or second language.

Literature Review

The Concept of *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* for Non-Arabic Speakers

Mahārah, according to Ibn Mandhur, is the proficiency of something in all its aspects and its complete mastery, so that often a capable person is called skilful and proficient or clever.¹² Lexically, *Mahārah* means mastery or being mastered, and being proficient in a particular thing.¹³ *Mahārah* also means something that has skill or wisdom in it and becomes skilled through it,¹⁴ while according to the

¹⁰ Moh Ainin, 'Menakar Al Maharah Al Lughawiyah Dalam KMA 183 Dengan Standar ACTFL', *Jurnal Shant Al-Arabiyah*, 11.1 (2023), 1–18 <<https://doi.org/10.24252/saa.v11i1.29255>>.

¹¹ Ismail Ubaidillah, Moh Ainin, and Muassomah Muassomah, 'Tingkat Kemahiran Berbahasa Dalam Buku Ajar Bahasa Arab KMA 183 Berdasarkan Perspektif ACTFL', *Tsaqofiya: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Arab*, 5.1 (2023), 74–91 <<https://doi.org/10.21154/tsaqofiya.v5i1.135>>.

¹² Jamāluddīn Muhammad Ibn Mandhūr, *Lisān Al-'Arab*, 3rd edn (Beirut: Dār al-Ihyā' al-Turāts al-'Arabi, 1993), p. 387.

¹³ Khalīl Ibn Ahmad Al-Farāhidī, 'Kitāb Al-'Ain' (Dar Maktabah Hilal).

¹⁴ Majma' al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah, 'Al-Mu'jam Al-Wasīf' (Kairo: Maktabah al-Syuruq al-Dauliyah, 2004).

term is a perfect performance that is based on understanding, easy, efficient, and accurate, while saving time and effort.¹⁵ Therefore, skills are part of the ability component.¹⁶ Skill is a methodological and scientific trait possessed by a person so that he is capable of carrying out work as well as possible, and with intelligence and full of sharpness. *Mahārah* terminology is close in meaning and composition to the English term 'skill'.¹⁷

Al-Kitābah lexically in *Muʿjam Lisān al-ʿArab* means writing, derived from the verb form *Kataba Yaktubu Kitābatan* which means *al-Jamʿu*. While the terminology of *Al-Kitābah* according to the term is the transition of linguistic sounds into written symbols on paper or other media with the aim of transferring information to others regardless of time and place, in addition to the purpose of documenting, preserving, and facilitating the dissemination of information and knowledge.¹⁸

Al-Kitābah is a communicative activity that takes place between the sender (writer) and the receiver (reader) based on a set of common foundations and principles that essentially represent the goal of language use, which is to use language in a variety of diverse life situations. Talking about *Al-Kitābah*, which in the researcher's perspective is language in the written aspect and not in the aspect of speech or oral speech, is something that is commonly known and even agreed upon. Therefore, observers of the field of Arabic language learning have defined the concept of *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* as follows:

1. A thinking or intellectual activity that depends on one's awareness of what one wants to express and the ability to organise experience and present it in a way that suits the writer's purpose.¹⁹

¹⁵ Suhailah Muhsin Kazim Al-Fatlawi, *Kifāyat Al-Tadris; Al-Maḥḥūm Al-Tadrib Al-Adā'* (Amman: Dar al-Syuruq, 2003), p. 25.

¹⁶ Rusydi Ahmad Thuaimah and Ahmad Abu Syinab, *Tahḍīd Al-Mahārat Al-Lughawīyah Wa Mustawīyatuhā* (Kairo: Dar al-Fikr al-Arabi, 2005).

¹⁷ Badruzzaman, 'Ta'lim Mahārah Al-Kitābah Li Ghair Nāṭiqīn Bi Al-ʿArabīyah', *Jurnal Ilmiah Didaktika*, 14.1 (2013), 128–42 <<http://dx.doi.org/10.22373/jid.v14i1.493>>.

¹⁸ Muhammad Saleh Al-Shanti, *Al-Mahārat Al-Lughawīyah: Madkhal Ilā Khaṣāis Al-Lughah Al-ʿArabīyah Wa Funūnuhā*, 5th edn (Saudi Arabia: Dar al-Andalus, 2003), p. 205.

¹⁹ Rusydi Ahmad Thuaimah, *Al-Marja' Fi Ta'lim Al-Lughah Al-ʿArabīyah Li Al-Nāṭiqīn Bi Lughāt Ukhra'; Al-Qism Al-Annwal* (Makkah Mukarramah: Jami'ah Umm Al-Qura, 1986).

2. A set of activities and skills each characterised by a specific need imposed on the writer.²⁰
3. The endeavour of transforming thought ideas into written symbols.²¹

However, there is a view that some of the concepts above are still general and limited to the level of terminological definition and have not touched the operational or procedural realm. Therefore, learning *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* procedurally should be based on three main pillars, namely:

1. Students' ability to write with legible and clear writing.
2. Students' ability to write correctly in accordance with *Imlā'* rules.
3. Students' ability to express their thoughts, ideas, and feelings in clear and correct language.²²

Based on these three pillars, a conclusion can be drawn stating that writing skill is the learners' ability to express their thoughts and feelings in writing in Arabic with correct structure and meaning. What is meant by the learner's ability is his ability to perform linguistically, namely using and exploring language. Structurally, it is the conformity with the prevailing rules of the Arabic language, syntactically, morphologically and *Imlā'* itself. It is different from meaning which includes lexical and semantic conformity.

Mastery of *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* requires one to master a set of other competencies such as *Imlā'* with its various forms namely: *al-Imlā' al-Manzūr*, *al-Imlā' al-Manqūl*, *al-Imlā' al-Masmū'* or *Ihtibārī*. Likewise, the competence of *Inṣyā'* and *Ta'bir* with its various patterns viz: *al-ta'bir al-Waẓīfī*, *al-ta'bir al-Muqayyad*, *al-ta'bir al-Hurr*, and finally the competence of writing reproduction or *al-Khatt* with its various types. Rozaq et al. noted that this can start with regular daily essay writing practice.²³ *Imlā'* learning includes the basic knowledge that learners must master before learning other writing components, because at this stage their ability to

²⁰ Maḥmūd Kāmil Al-Nāqah, *Ta'lim Al-Lughah Al-'Arabīyyah Li Al-Nāṭiqīn Bi Lughāt Ukbrā; Ususubu Madākhiluhu Wa Turuq Tadrisibi* (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Jami'ah Umm Al-Qura, 1985).

²¹ Abdur Rohman bin Ibrahim Fauzan, *Idā'at Li Mu'allim Lughah Al-'Arabīyyah Li Ghair Al-Nāṭiqīn Bihā* (Riyadh: Maktabah Lisanil Arab, 2010).

²² Thuaimah, *Al-Marja' Fi Ta'lim Al-Lughah Al-'Arabīyyah Li Al-Nāṭiqīn Bi Lughāt Ukbrā; Al-Qism Al-Awwal*.

²³ Muhammad Abdur Rozaq, Muh Sabilar Rosyad, and Salih Abdulrahman Alsounusi Yousuf Al-Senhaji, 'The Use of Daily Essays to Improve Arabic Writing Skills (an Experimental Study for New Students of English Departmen)', *Naatiq: Journal of Arabic Education*, 1.2 (2024), 80–92 <<https://doi.org/10.33367/naatiq.v1i2.6338>>.

write what they hear is fostered and explored.²⁴ In line with this, Abduh added that the purpose of learning *Imlā'* is to achieve learners' ability to write what they want in a correct writing by paying attention to the writing rules prevalent in the language being taught.²⁵

Hani Ismail in this case tries to classify writing skills comprehensively at different levels namely beginner, intermediate and advanced. At the beginner level, Arabic learners need to make simple sentences or easy linguistic formats, such as describing pictures of schools or houses with the sentence '*Hāẓībi Madrosatun* or *Hāẓā Baitun*', and pictures of birds with the sentence '*Hāẓā Ṭāirun*' and so on like birds on trees.²⁶

While at the intermediate level, Arabic learners need to compose paragraphs from simple, uncomplicated, and not long sentences, then connected with appropriate conjunctions and the *al-ta`bīr al-Muqayyad* pattern is often used at this level. As for the advanced level, Arabic learners need to have the ability to express their thoughts and feelings precisely and accurately. Being able to write on a variety of topics, and often the *al-ta`bīr al-Hurr* pattern is used at this level so that Arabic learners can write whatever and however they want.

Method

Research Approach and Type

Given that this research aims to understand and provide recommendations for appropriate implementation for learning writing skills for non-Arabic speakers in Indonesia, this research uses a qualitative approach with systematic literature study and educational policy analysis. according to Snyder, consideration of previous relevant literature is essential for all research disciplines and all research projects.²⁷ The use of qualitative approach in this case is to explore the views of teachers and students regarding the implementation of output-

²⁴ Muh Sabilar Rosyad and Muhammad Ainul Haq, 'Problematika Dan Solusi Pembelajaran Dikte Bahasa Arab (IMLA) Pada Siswa Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Darul Ulum Gresik', *Al-Lahjah*, 7.1 (2024), 1–9 <<https://doi.org/10.32764/allahjah.v7i1.4245>>.

²⁵ Dawud Abduh, *Nahwa Ta`lim Al-Lughah Al-`Arabīyah Wazīfīyyan*, 1st edn (Kuwait: Muassasah Dar al-Ulum, 1979), p. 35.

²⁶ Ramadan and others.

²⁷ Hannah Snyder, 'Literature Review as a Research Methodology: An Overview and Guidelines', *Journal of Business Research*, 104 (2019), 333–39 <<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.07.039>>.

based standards in learning writing skills. In addition, this research also uses an exploratory design with a policy analysis approach.

Data Source

The data sources came from several participants who were some Arabic teachers who taught non-Arabic speakers, non-Arabic students or learners who studied Arabic in Indonesia, and documents related to the curriculum and syllabus of Arabic language education applied in Indonesian educational institutions, as well as educational standards or existing policies regarding Arabic language teaching.

Data Collection Techniques

There are two data collection methods used in this study. The first is in-depth interviews with Arabic language teachers and students to gain perspectives on the challenges and opportunities of implementing output-based standards in writing learning. The second is document study, which is analysing documents related to existing learning standards and education policies in Indonesia related to Arabic language learning.

Data Analysis and Validity

This research uses thematic analysis techniques, where the data from interviews and documentation will be analysed thematically to identify the main patterns or themes that emerge in the implementation of writing skills learning. In addition, there is also a qualitative descriptive analysis technique to provide an in-depth description of the challenges and solutions in the implementation of output-based standards and existing Arabic writing skills learning policies to evaluate the suitability and relevance of implementing output-based standards in the Arabic language education curriculum in Indonesia. While the validity used is peer review, which is an effort to involve peers to assess findings and interpretations in data analysis.

Research Stages

The research was conducted through several stages starting from the initial data collection, namely literature study related to language learning standards, previous research on writing learning, and curriculum documents and syllabus. The next stage was collecting field data from teachers and students. This was followed by the data analysis stage which involved coding the data from interviews, identifying themes and patterns relevant to the implementation of output-based standards. The last stage is synthesis and development of recommendations in the form of an approach to implementing output-based standards that is appropriate to the Indonesian context.

Results and Discussion

The Urgency of *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* for Non-Arabic Speakers

Writing has a greater urgency than just a mere process of *al-ta`bir wa al-Insya*²⁸ because writing is a writing system that reflects communicative activities carried out by a person as a means of conveying ideas and desires to others systematically to achieve certain goals.

Arabic writing has contained the Qur'an and the Prophet's Noble Hadith since several centuries ago, as well as millions of pages written in diverse and complex fields of science, this further adds to its virtues and advantages over other languages. If we look closely at the texts of the Qur'an and Hadith, we will find the extent of Islam's attention to writing and encouragement to record knowledge. Even in the Qur'an we find a signal or indication of the urgency of writing and the role of science, a person will write down his own deeds and later he will find his deeds written in a notebook that will be presented to him on the Day of Judgment. Among the verses of the Holy Qur'an and Prophetic Hadiths that indicate the urgency of writing are as follows:

١. إِفْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ * عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ* (سورة العلق، الآية ٣-٥).
٢. إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى وَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَدَّمُوا وَآثَارَهُمْ وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ فِي إِمَامٍ مُّبِينٍ (سورة يس، الآية ١٢).
٣. وَلْيَكْتُبْ بَيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبٌ بِالْعَدْلِ (سورة البقرة: الآية ٢٨٢).
٤. روي عن عبد الله بن عمرو بن العاص: "قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: قيدوا العلم، قلت: يا رسول الله وما تقييده؟ قال: كتابته."
٥. مقتطفات الإمام محمد بن إدريس الشافعي: العلم صيد والكتابة قيده # قيد صيودك بالحبال الواثقة # فمن الحماقة أن تصيد غزالة # وتركها بين الخلائق طالقة.

The urgency of writing skills stems from the fact that writing is a vital means of linguistic communication. If conversation is the spoken side of language, then writing is the written side of language. Therefore, the early scientists considered that writing is more useful than others. This was stated by Siddiq Al-Qanuji that all information and knowledge can be known through one of three things: signs or signals, words, and writing.²⁹ He further observes that signs depend on sight, and speech depends on the presence of the interlocutor and his sense of hearing, while writing does not depend on anything and that is why its benefits

²⁸ Rakan Abdul Karim Habib, *Handasah Al-Iqna` Fi Al-Ittisāl Al-Insānī*, 1st edn (Jeddah: Maktabah Dar al-Jeddah, 2009), p. 207.

²⁹ Siddiq bin Hassan Al-Qanuji, *Abjad Al-Ulūm* (Damaskus: Wizarah al-Tsaqafah wa al-Irsyad al-Qaumi | Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiah, 1978), p. 251.

are considered the most extensive, noble, and characterise human activities that distinguish them from animals. Writing represents the memory of human civilisation throughout the ages and preserves science and history. Without writing, more of a nation's history and knowledge would be lost.³⁰

In the field of Arabic language learning, writing is one of the four language skills that students or foreign language learners must master. Therefore, the learner's need for writing is an urgent need, where he needs to express his academic achievements (through written exams) in the classroom, and he also needs it to express his ideas and feelings outside the classroom.

The importance of writing increases as the level of Arabic learners increases, as well as their need for language skills, especially *Mahārah Al-Kitābah*. Often the aim of learners who continue their studies at an advanced level is to continue and perfect their academic or professional levels, and the teaching and learning process principally relies on writing skills, whether in recording events, doing assignments, and taking written examinations.

Al-Nāqah added that the orientation of learning *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* is to equip learners on the mastery of writing in Arabic, both in transcribing or copying, *Imlā'*, and expression. According to him, the learning objectives of *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* can be summarised in one main objective which is the mastery of using the Arabic sentence structure system (syntax) in writing messages or topics that can be understood by Arabs or native speakers.³¹ The secondary goal is the growth of stimulus and motivation in learners. This is because when the learner masters writing skills in the target language, he/she will feel confident and capable of learning the language and acquiring the skills. In addition, self-confidence results in the removal of psychological barriers that result in the fear of not mastering the language, and also the result of the wrong mental perception that Arabic is difficult and not easy.

Therefore, *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* cannot be ignored or even its right to be reduced in Arabic language learning programmes for foreign speakers. Otherwise, the linguistic structure based on the four pillars will be missing one of them, and this way is not justified by logic.

³⁰ Ramadan and others, p. 232.

³¹ Al-Nāqah.

Standardised Outcomes of Mahārah Al-Kitābah for Arabic Language Learners

Before discussing the standards in learning *Mahārah Al-Kitābah*, researchers should first review some general and specific objectives in learning Arabic writing skills. This is because the pattern and form of learning standardisation designed and determined must be in line with the direction and purpose of learning itself.

According to Thuaimah, among the general objectives of learning *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* is to eliminate the tension of students or learners of Arabic and not to distract them between several language skills, fulfil their desire and desire to learn about linguistic symbols, and also equip them with functional skills needed in life. Al-Nāqah in this regard attempts to explain in detail the learning objectives of *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* namely:

1. Write Arabic letters and understand the relationship between letter shapes and their sounds.
2. Write Arabic words with separate and conjoined letters, and distinguish between letter forms at the beginning, middle and end of words.
3. Mastering how to write Arabic with clear and correct writing, also writing patterns starting from right to left.
4. Know punctuation marks and how to use them.
5. Know the principles of spelling and some differences between pronunciation and writing in Arabic.
6. Using a language style appropriate to the topic or idea being expressed.
7. Translate ideas in writing into sentences using correct and appropriate wording according to the context and grammatical forms.
8. Writing speed, expressing ideas and feelings in correct, precise, clear and expressive language.³²
9. Imagining and organising ideas and linking them to the plan that has been developed around the topic, as well as writing them in the form of paragraphs that are in harmony with each other.
10. Diversifying writing style, vocabulary and structure to suit readers with different characteristics.

³² Al-Nāqah, p. 235.

11.Improve the level of writing, either by editing, correcting errors, or rewriting entirely.³³

Based on the CEFR for Language framework, the level of language competence is determined through several skill standards divided into six criteria, starting from A-1 which represents the level of recognition and ending at C-2 which represents the level of proficiency.³⁴ Furthermore, the researcher in this case seeks to explain some of the above criteria that focus on the learning outcomes of Arabic writing skills that must be achieved at each level, namely:

Table 1. CEFR Version of Writing Skill Outcome Standards

Level	Activities
A-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Learners can write short and easy-to-understand letters, such as holiday greetings. b. Learners can fill in personal data forms, such as writing name, nationality, and address.
A-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Learners can write short and easy memos and letters related to primary needs. b. Learners can write simple personal letters, such as thank you letters.
B-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Learners can write comprehensible and coherent texts on familiar topics or topics of personal interest. b. Learners can write a personal letter describing experiences and impressions.
B-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Learners can write clear and detailed texts on various topics related to their interests. b. Learners can write articles or reports, providing information and justification in favour or against different points of view. c. Learners can write letters reflecting personal interests of events and experiences.
C-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Learners can express themselves in clear and structured text and express their views at length. b. Learners can write about complex topics in letters, articles or reports and explain what they find important and interesting. c. They can choose a language style that is appropriate for the reader.

³³ Rusydi Ahmad Thuaimah, *Al-Usus Al-`Ammah Li Manābij Ta`lim Al-Lughah Al-`Arabīyyah; I`dāduhā Wa Taṭwīrūhā Wa Taqwīmūhā*, 1st edn (Kairo: Dar al-Fikr al-Arabi, 2004), p. 68.

³⁴ Abd al-Nashir Utsman Shabir, *Al-Iṭār Al-Marja`i Al-Aurūbi Al-Musytarak Li Ta`allum Al-Lughāt Wa Ta`limūhā Wa Taqwīmūhā* (Makkah Mukarramah: Jami'ah Umm Al-Qura, 2016), p. 44.

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- C-2
- a. Learners can write clear and precise texts in an appropriate style.
 - b. Learners can write letters, reports or complex articles that present a problem in a logical and effective structure that helps the recipient pay attention and remember the key points.
 - c. Learners can also write summaries and reviews of literary and professional works.
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It should be noted that the CEFR for Language framework above focuses on creative and functional writing skills that are considered to go beyond *Imlā'*, *Naskh* and *Tabajji* as Thuaimah, Al-Nāqah and others see it. This is assumed because the framework was developed as a reference for learning European languages, not for Arabic language learning specifically. Therefore, Hani Ismail sees that for the objectives of writing skills in the European framework to be suitable for non-Arabic speakers, the characteristics of the Arabic language must be considered through the addition of several explanations that make harmonisation between the objectives of the CEFR and the objectives of Arabic language learning for foreign speakers (TASOL), especially in writing skills as follows:

Tabel 2. Harmonisation of CEFR and TASOL in Arabic writing skills

Level	Types	Activities
A-1	CEFR	Able to copy letters, words, and sentences correctly.
	TASOL	Able to write Arabic letters separately and continuously, distinguish the forms of writing at the beginning, middle and end of words, and master the method of writing from right to left by paying attention to the proportionality of the distance between letters and their size at the word level or space at the sentence level, and pay attention to letters when below and above the line.
A-2	CEFR	Able to correctly write words and sentences that have been learnt and memorised previously.
	TASOL	Able to write words and sentences that come to mind without the need to copy or imitate them until familiar with the Arabic writing system, as well as combining sounds and written symbols correctly, as well as identifying some common words that are spoken but not symbolised in writing such as هذا وهذه or written but not spoken such as the letter alif in the word كتبوا.
B-1	CEFR	Able to correctly write words and sentences that have never been learnt before.

	TASOL	Able to master the rules of <i>Imlā'</i> or Arabic dictation and write words and sentences based on the awareness of the relationship between the sound and the written symbol, so that Arabic learners are helped in writing down what they hear or just making related notes.
B-2	CEFR	Able to write sentences and phrases that are dictated or the results of one's own essay by paying attention to correct punctuation.
	TASOL	Able to use punctuation marks and know the meaning and how to use them in Arabic, this is because there are differences between the Arabic punctuation system and other languages.
C-1	CEFR	Able to write by paying attention to the rules of Arabic spelling or the appropriate <i>Imlā'</i> rules.
	TASOL	Able to master the rules of Arabic spelling, which is an important knowledge in mastering Arabic writing, especially for some letters whose writing methods change such as writing همزة متوسطة, همزة متطرفة, همزة الوصل, همزة القطع, الألف اللينة.
C-2	CEFR	Able to write topics divided into sentences and paragraphs without spelling or writing errors, and with careful punctuation.
	TASOL	Able to master the division of topics into sentences and paragraphs based on articulation or ideas and make no spelling or writing errors.

With the additions framed in the harmonisation above, the CEFR for Language framework becomes more suitable for learning Arabic writing skills to non-native speakers. The combination of international standards of language learning in Europe with the characteristics of the Arabic language makes the above criteria the ideal standardisation of Arabic language learning for non-Arabic speakers in general and writing skills (*Mahārah Al-Kitābah*) in particular.

No matter how ideal the standardisation of *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* learning for Arabic learners in Indonesia, language learning is an accumulative process that does not occur in a day and night or even from morning to evening, but rather occurs over a long period of time where a learner acquires something new. In line with that, Ahmad Madkur emphasised that learning language skills requires reinforcement of what has been learnt previously as well as preparation for what will

be learnt next.³⁵ Mushtafa al-Isawi added that writing skills and language skills in general, all of which cannot be achieved without continuous practice and repetition.³⁶

Product-based *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* output standards produced by learners of Arabic as a foreign language can be grouped into two types, namely:

1. *Kitābah Ijra'iyyah* (procedural) which performs specific and direct functions such as summaries, reports, complaints or complaints, requests, rejections and so on.
2. *Kitābah Ibdā'iyyah* (creative) which is characterised by art and literature such as poems, verses, novels, stories, dramas, biographies, and the like.

Meanwhile, according to the CEFR for Language framework, the types of output that can be produced through *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* are classified into three things namely comprehensive written products, creative writing, reports, and articles. This is because the overall functions of the written product categories such as transactional language use and evaluative language use are not separate and interrelated.³⁷

In line with the above output standards, al-Ghāli formulated several criteria that can be used as a benchmark for learning *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* as he quoted from Richards,³⁸ namely:

1. Use of punctuation and correct spelling and writing.
2. Constructing sentences.
3. Use of appropriate and contextualised vocabulary.
4. Organising paragraphs.
5. Organising the text.
6. Expressing ideas or thoughts clearly.
7. Develops and expands ideas or notions.
8. Review a title or topic.
9. Adopt an appropriate tone and style of language.

Based on the above explanation, the standardisation of learning outcomes of *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* should be in line with the

³⁵ Alî Aḥmad Madkûr, *Al-It̃ār Al-Mi'yārī Li Ta'allum Al-Lughah Al-'Arabīyyah Li Al-Nāṭiqīn Bi Ghairihā* (Kairo: Dar al-Fikr al-Arabi, 2016), p. 125.

³⁶ Jamal Mushtofa Al-Isawi, *Ta'lim Funūn Al-Lughah Al-'Arabīyyah Li Talāmīz Al-Marḥalah Al-Ibtidā'iyyah; It̃ār Li Al-Mumārasāt Al-Tadrīsiyyah Wa Al-Mihniyyah*, 1st edn (Uni Emirat Arab: Dar al-Kitab al-Jami'iy, 2005), p. 25.

³⁷ Shabir, p. 88.

³⁸ Jack C Richards, *Curriculum Development in Language Teaching* (New York: Cambridge university press, 2001).

characteristics and objectives of learning Arabic for foreign speakers. Thus, whatever outcomes are to be achieved must reflect the competency standards or core competencies of *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* itself, which include efforts to create the ability to express ideas, ideas, thoughts, feelings, and emotions by paying attention to the rules of using a good structural, morphological, and semantic language system, as well as training logical thinking in expressing ideas, sequencing, and proving their impact on the recipient of the message or writing.

Some learners of Arabic as a foreign language in Indonesia in the process of producing procedural, comprehensive, and creative writing often cannot be separated from elements of translation from Indonesian to Arabic, therefore good translation competence from the source language to the target language is considered a supporting element that can affect the quality of the writing produced.

With the complexity of learning *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* as a foreign language, a multidimensional and cross-competency curriculum is needed, or in the terms of Thuaimah and al-Nāqah known as a multi-focus curriculum. The features of this curriculum focus on language as a culture and communication tool, and language learning aims to help learners use language communicatively.³⁹ According to Krahnke, this curriculum is considered suitable for use in language learning as a second language (L2), regardless of the type of language.⁴⁰

Conclusion

Mahārah Al-Kitābah is the pinnacle of one's skill in mastering the competence of a language, and Arabic is no exception. *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* occupies a strategic position in the dissemination of knowledge across centuries because something written can last longer than something spoken, therefore its essential role cannot be underestimated. In realising good, effective, and productive writing competence, a clear and measurable reference is needed, therefore the standardisation of *Mahārah Al-Kitābah* learning outcomes for learners of Arabic as a foreign language, especially in Indonesia, must be in line

³⁹ Muhammad Sabilar Rosyad, Farid Qomaruddin, and Muhammad Farih, 'Kurikulum Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Untuk Penutur Asing: Ragam Konsep Dan Desain Silabus', *TADRIS AL-ARABIYAT: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Pendidikan Bahasa Arab*, 4.1 (2024), 67–89 <<https://doi.org/10.30739/arabiyat.v4i1.2713>>.

⁴⁰ Karl Krahnke, *Approaches to Syllabus Design for Foreign Language Teaching, Language in Education: Theory and Practice* (Washington, DC.; Center for Applied Linguistics.; ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics, 1987), p. 9 <<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED283385>>.

with the principles of standardisation of language learning in general and the characteristics of the Arabic language itself. As in the CEFR for Language framework pattern that has reviewed several standards of writing skills outcomes that are considered not representative of Arabic language competence in part because Arabic has a distinctive and unique linguistic system and characteristics that are rarely found in other languages. Thus, whatever standards are used in measuring the ability of Arabic language learners in writing adopted from several reference frameworks such as ACTFL, CEFL TESOL, BIPA must make adaptations or harmonisation with the characteristics of the destination language, namely Arabic.

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