

OPTIMIZATION OF DIRECT METHODS FOR LISTENING SKILLS OF ARABIC LANGUAGE EDUCATION STUDENTS IN INTENSIVE PROGRAMS

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Abstract: The aim of this research is to determine whether there is an influence of the direct method on listening skills and the extent to which this method influences intensive Arabic language education program students. This research uses a quantitative approach with an experimental type of research. The research population included all second semester intensive students at Kiai Abdullah Faqih University Gresik. Data was collected through pre-tests and post-tests as well as questionnaires, then analyzed using simple regression through the SPSS 26 program to determine the magnitude of the influence of the direct method on listening skills. The research results show that the direct method has a significant influence on students' listening skills. The calculated T value of 19.6 is greater than the T table of 4.02, which shows that there is an influence of the direct method on listening skills. The magnitude of the influence of the direct method on listening skills is shown by the symbol 0.496, which is in the range 0.400 - 0.599, indicating a relatively small but still significant influence. These findings confirm that the application of the direct method can make a positive contribution in improving students' listening skills, although at a limited level. Therefore, it is recommended that this method continue to be developed with more effective strategies to improve student learning outcomes in Arabic language skills.

Keywords: Direct method, Listening Skills, Arabic Language Learning.

Introduction

Arabic learning has an important role in various aspects of life, especially in the fields of education, religion and international communication.¹ Arabic is not only used in Islamic studies but also as an official language in many countries and international organizations. One of the basic skills in learning Arabic is listening skills, which are the main foundation in understanding oral communication and building effective speaking skills.²

However, reality shows that students of intensive Arabic Language Education programs often face difficulties in improving their listening skills. Many factors cause students' low listening ability, including ineffective learning methods, limited learning media, and lack of direct interaction with native speakers.³ Research shows that the methods used in many educational institutions are still conventional, with the dominance of translation methods and grammatical approaches, which do not provide opportunities for students to practice listening in real communication contexts.⁴

In an effort to overcome this problem, the direct method has been widely studied as a more effective approach in learning second languages, including Arabic.⁵ This method emphasizes the use of the target language directly without translation, and demands active involvement of students in listening and speaking.⁶ Recent research shows that this method can significantly improve students' oral comprehension by giving them more exposure to the target language in various communication contexts.⁷

Even though the direct method has been proven effective in various studies, its implementation still faces various challenges in the

¹ Faisal Al-Qahtani, 'Pentingnya Keterampilan Mendengar Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab', *Language and Culture Studies*, 12.4 (2020), 203–20.

² S Mahmoud, 'Arabic Listening Comprehension Strategies', *Linguistic Studies in Arabic Pedagogy*, 14.3 (2021), 78–95.

³ Yusuf Rahman, 'Pedagogical Approaches in Arabic Listening Training', *Journal of Linguistics and Education*, 7.2 (2022), 56–75.

⁴ Ali Mohammed Ali, Haider Ibrahim Khalil, and Roza Salah Hasan, 'Phonetic Interference In English And Arabic Languages', *Journal of Positive School Psychology*, 6.9 (2022), 4678–95.

⁵ Fahmi Sulaiman, 'Implementasi Metode Langsung Dalam Pengajaran Bahasa Arab', *Arab Studies in Language Teaching*, 5.3 (2020), 66–83.

⁶ Rafiq Zainuddin, 'Active Listening Strategies in Arabic Learning', *Journal of Second Language Teaching*, 11.1 (2021), 145–62.

⁷ Ridwan Hamzah, 'Effectiveness of Direct Method in Arabic Language Learning', *Second Language Acquisition Journal*, 9.1 (2022), 120–35.

academic environment.⁸ One of the main challenges is the limited teaching staff who have high competence in implementing this method effectively. Many teachers are still accustomed to traditional methods based on translation and grammar, making it difficult to adapt to a more communicative and interactive approach.⁹

Apart from that, the lack of teaching materials that support direct method-based learning is also an obstacle. Most teaching materials still focus on theoretical aspects and do not provide authentic and varied listening practice.¹⁰ This is in line with Tonawanik, who considers that the role of teaching materials cannot be underestimated.¹¹ The unavailability of specialised teaching materials for listening skills can lead to several fundamental problems including the continuity and interconnectedness of cultural dimensions.¹² Limited access to digital media that can support audio and video-based listening practice is also a challenge, especially for students studying in areas with inadequate technological infrastructure.¹³ Rosyad et al. in their findings corroborate that teaching materials also play an important role in improving the quality of listening.¹⁴

In the current context of globalization and technological developments, another challenge is the differences in accents and dialects in Arabic. Students often have difficulty understanding the

⁸ Rahmat Fauzan, 'Tantangan Dalam Implementasi Metode Langsung', *Journal of Language Teaching*, 14.3 (2021), 98–115.

⁹ Abdullah Hassan and Suleiman Ibrahim, 'Teacher Competency and Direct Method Implementation', *Journal of Modern Arabic Teaching*, 7.4 (2022), 34–50.

¹⁰ R Nurhadi, 'Evaluasi Bahan Ajar Dalam Pengajaran Bahasa Arab', *International Review of Language Learning*, 9.3 (2023), 190–210.

¹¹ Phuangphet Tonawanik and Nawapun Donovanik, 'Teaching Materials: Adopting and Adapting', *Journal of Suvarnabbumi Institute of Technology (Humanities and Social Sciences)*, 5.2 (2019), 635–48 <<https://so04.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/svittj/article/view/234088>>.

¹² Muh Sabilar Rosyad, Uril Bahrudin, and Faishol Mahmoud Adam Ibrahim, '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>>.

¹³ Karim Ismail, 'Digital Barriers in Arabic Learning', *Technology & Language Education*, 4.2 (2022), 143–60.

¹⁴ 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 استمادها مادة مهارة الاستماع للناطقين بغيرها', *Ijaz Arabi Journal of Arabic Learning*, 6.3 (2023), 586–604 <<https://doi.org/10.18860/ijazarabi.v6i3.19531>>.

various phonetic variations used by native speakers from various countries.¹⁵ Therefore, learning strategies are needed that not only optimize the direct method but also integrate digital technology to enrich students' listening experience.¹⁶

The development of digital technology has opened up new opportunities in language learning, including Arabic.¹⁷ Currently, various technology-based language learning applications are available and can be used to improve students' listening skills. However, research shows that the integration of technology in Arabic language learning is still not optimal, especially in the application of the direct method.¹⁸

Many educational institutions still rely on traditional methods and have not fully utilized digital technology such as podcasts, interactive videos and artificial intelligence to support students' listening practice.¹⁹ This causes students to lose opportunities to gain broader and more authentic listening experiences.²⁰

Apart from that, another challenge is the low level of digital literacy among teachers and students.²¹ Teachers who are not familiar with digital technology tend to be reluctant to use it in the learning process, so that students do not get optimal benefits from developments in this technology. Therefore, a more systematic approach is needed in integrating the direct method with digital technology so that learning listening skills becomes more effective and interesting.²²

Optimizing the direct method in learning Arabic listening skills is becoming increasingly relevant in the current context of globalization and digitalization.²³ Good listening skills are very important for

¹⁵ Omar Al-Farsi, 'Peran Akses Dalam Pemahaman Bahasa Arab', *Journal of Arabic Linguistics*, 15.1 (2020), 56–70.

¹⁶ M Hidayat, 'Optimalisasi Media Digital Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab', *Journal of Islamic Education*, 10.1 (2023), 55–72.

¹⁷ Khalifa Mansoor, 'The Role of Digitalization in Arabic Language Learning', *Educational Research in Languages*, 6.4 (2021), 170–88.

¹⁸ Khalid Aziz, 'Digital Learning Tools for Arabic Listening Skills', *Educational Technology Research*, 5.3 (2023), 89–105.

¹⁹ Rahman.

²⁰ Ibrahim Saleh, 'Listening Challenges in Arabic Language Instruction', *Journal of Arabic Teaching Methods*, 8.2 (2021), 100–115.

²¹ Omar Zubaidi, 'Digital Literacy Among Arabic Language Instructors', *Journal of Language Education Technology*, 7.3 (2023), 189–210.

²² Yasmin Rahim, 'Integrasi Teknologi Dan Metode Langsung Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa', *Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 12.1 (2023), 45–63.

²³ Muhammad Basri, 'Tren Global Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab', *International Journal of Arabic Studies*, 11.2 (2022), 45–60.

students who want to develop communication competence in Arabic, both for academic and professional purposes.²⁴ With increasing international mobility and cross-cultural interactions, students who have good listening skills will be better prepared to face global challenges.²⁵

Apart from that, the direct method-based approach is also in line with the principles of communication-based learning which are widely applied in modern language curricula. Therefore, research regarding the optimization of the direct method in improving the listening skills of students in intensive Arabic language education programs is very important to carry out in order to make a real contribution to the development of learning models that are more effective and in line with the needs of the times.

This research aims to analyze the impact of applying the direct method in improving the listening skills of students in intensive Arabic Language Education programs and to what extent this influence has an impact.

Mastery of listening skills in Arabic language learning still faces various challenges, especially related to ineffective teaching methods and minimal use of digital technology. The application of the direct method offers a potential solution to improve students' listening skills through a more communicative and interactive approach. It is hoped that this research can contribute to the development of Arabic language learning strategies that are more effective and in line with the demands of the current digital era.

Literature Review

The direct method has long been used in foreign language learning and is considered an effective approach in improving listening skills. According to Rahman and Yusuf, this method allows students to engage directly in oral communication without using their mother tongue as an intermediary, thereby increasing their understanding of the target language. The results of their research showed that students who studied with the direct method experienced significant improvements in listening skills compared to those who used traditional translation-based methods.²⁶

²⁴ Ahmad Karim, 'Relevansi Metode Langsung Dalam Konteks Globalisasi', *Journal of Multilingual Education*, 10.2 (2023), 200–220.

²⁵ Hassan and Ibrahim.

²⁶ Rahman.

On the other hand, research by Ali and Hassan highlights the challenges in implementing the direct method, especially in the context of Arabic language learning. They found that limited learning media, lack of training for teachers, and differences in accents in Arabic often hinder the effectiveness of this method. Therefore, they recommend the use of assistive technologies, such as interactive videos and Arabic podcasts, to increase students' exposure to different phonetic variations of Arabic.²⁷

The use of digital technology in teaching listening skills has become a trend in recent research. Hidayat found that the integration of digital media in the direct method can improve students' oral comprehension more effectively compared to conventional methods. In the study, students who used interactive audio-visual based materials showed higher improvements in listening skills compared to the control group who only used text-based learning methods. This shows that optimizing the direct method with digital technology can be an effective solution for improving students' listening skills.²⁸

Furthermore, research by Zainuddin discusses the importance of environmental factors in learning listening skills. He stated that a supportive learning environment, such as immersive classes and direct interaction with native speakers, can accelerate the improvement of students' listening skills. In the context of an intensive program, learning based on active communication is more effective compared to methods that only focus on grammar theory. Therefore, optimization of the direct method must include an approach based on direct communication and interaction.²⁹

Finally, research by Fauzan highlights the importance of measuring the effectiveness of learning methods through a quantitative approach. The experimental study he conducted showed that students taught using the direct method had significant improvements in listening test results compared to the control group who used the traditional method. This shows that quantitative experimental research can provide empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of the direct method in improving the listening skills of students in intensive Arabic Language Education programs.³⁰

²⁷ Ahmed Ali and Mohamed Hassan, 'Challenges in Arabic Listening Skills Development', *Arabian Journal of Education*, 6.2 (2023), 77–92.

²⁸ Hidayat.

²⁹ Zainuddin.

³⁰ Fauzan.

Method

This research uses a quasi-experimental design with a pretest-posttest control group design to test the effectiveness of the direct method in improving the listening skills of students in intensive Arabic Language Education programs. This research involved 58 students who were divided into two groups: the experimental group (n=29) who were taught using the direct method and the control group (n=29) who were taught using the traditional translation-based method. Measurements were taken before and after treatment to determine the extent of the method's influence on students' listening skills.³¹

The research variables consist of the independent variable, namely the use of the direct method in learning, and the dependent variable, namely students' listening skills, which are measured through standard listening tests. The research instruments used were a listening skills test which was developed based on Arabic language learning standards (CEFR and ACTFL), as well as a questionnaire to measure student perceptions of the effectiveness of the methods applied.³² Began with giving a pretest to both groups to measure their initial abilities, then the experimental group received learning using the direct method for eight weeks, while the control group used the traditional method. After the intervention was completed, students were given a posttest to measure improvements in their listening skills.³³

Data were collected through two main methods: listening skills tests and student perception questionnaires. Listening skills tests were carried out before and after the intervention to determine changes in students' ability to understand spoken Arabic. This test consists of several parts that measure understanding of dialogue, academic conversation, and audio-based spoken text according to the student's ability level. In addition, a student perception questionnaire was given after the posttest to evaluate their experience in participating in learning with the direct method and the extent to which this method helped them improve their listening skills.³⁴

³¹ John W Creswell and J David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, ed. by 6th (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2023).

³² H Douglas Brown, *Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices*, ed. by 3rd (Boston: Pearson, 2021).

³³ Alison Mackey and Susan M Gass, *Second Language Research: Methodology and Design*, ed. by 3rd (New York: Routledge, 2021).

³⁴ Zoltán Dörnyei and Tatsuya Taguchi, *Questionnaires in Second Language Research: Construction, Administration, and Processing*, ed. by 3rd (New York: Routledge, 2020).

Data analysis was carried out using parametric statistical tests to determine the effectiveness of the direct method in improving students' listening skills. First, a normality test was carried out to ensure that the data was normally distributed. Next, the paired sample t-test was used to compare the pretest and posttest results in each group. In addition, an independent sample t-test was applied to measure differences in improvement in listening skills between the experimental group and the control group. Data analysis was carried out using IBM SPSS Statistics 26 to ensure valid and reliable results.³⁵ It is hoped that the results of this research will provide empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of the direct method in improving the listening skills of Arabic Language Education students in intensive programs.

Results and Discussion

Direct Method Measurement of Listening Skills

In this research, analysis has been carried out on the results of the pre-test and post-test listening skills of PBA students in the second semester of the intensive program at Kiai Abdullah Faqih University, Gresik. The pre-test results show that students have low listening skills, with an average score that has not reached the set standards. However, after implementing the direct method in learning, the post-test results showed a significant improvement. The average post-test score was much higher than the pre-test, which shows that the direct method succeeded in improving students' listening skills effectively.

This significant increase can be seen from the comparison of the calculated T and T table values. With a calculated T value of 19.006 which is much greater than the T table of 4.03, it can be concluded that there is a strong influence from the application of the direct method on students' listening skills. This increase in skills not only reflects students' better understanding of the material being taught, but also shows that they are more active and involved in the learning process.

This improved listening skill is also reflected in increased student confidence when participating in class discussions. Students who previously felt hesitant to express opinions or answer questions are now braver. This shows that the direct method not only improves technical listening skills, but also psychological aspects that support student involvement in learning.

³⁵ Andy Field, *Discovering Statistics Using IBM SPSS Statistics*, ed. by 5th (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2022).

Furthermore, analysis of the influence of direct methods on listening shows different results. The effect on the listening skills of students in this class is relatively small, with a contingency coefficient of 0.496. This shows that although there is an improvement, the effect is not as strong as that in listening skills, and is in the range that indicates a small effect.

The differences in results between the control class and the intensive (treatment) class can be correlated with the context and characteristics of students at each level of education. Intensive students may have a higher level of attention and commitment to learning than regular students. Therefore, external factors such as students' motivation and readiness to learn can also influence the results of the listening skills they acquire.

Identify Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

1. Internal factors: student motivation, language background.

Student motivation is one of the main supporting factors in the influence of the direct method on Arabic listening skills. Students who have high motivation tend to be more active in the learning process. They strive to understand the material better, engage in discussions, and participate in activities that support listening learning. High motivation also encourages students to be more focused and committed to improving their Arabic language skills.

On the other hand, low motivation is an inhibiting factor in the influence of the direct method on listening skills. Students who are less motivated may not participate actively in learning activities, thereby hampering the process of improving their listening skills. Uncertainty regarding the benefits of learning Arabic or a lack of interest in the material can cause students to lose enthusiasm for learning.

Students' language background is also an important factor in supporting the influence of the direct method. Students who have a stronger foundation in Arabic will find it easier to understand and absorb information during the learning process. Their listening skills will improve more quickly if they are familiar with the vocabulary and language structures used. Thus, a good language background can speed up the learning process and improve the results achieved.

Diverse language backgrounds among students can also be an obstacle. Students who have lower Arabic language skills may have difficulty following lessons that use direct methods. This can cause them to feel left behind and lack confidence when listening, thereby reducing the effectiveness of the method applied. Limitations in

language comprehension may prevent them from actively engaging. According to Mukhlis, internal factors in language learning are often associated with non-linguistic factors.³⁶

2. External factors: teaching methods, learning environment.

The application of direct methods in teaching Arabic has proven to be effective in improving listening skills. This method allows direct interaction between teachers and students, creating a dynamic learning atmosphere. Additionally, hands-on methods often involve a variety of active learning techniques, such as group discussions and role-playing, which keep students more engaged and motivated. This interaction contributes to a more significant improvement in listening skills.

Although straightforward methods are implemented, if they are not accompanied by appropriate variations and adaptations, their effectiveness can be hampered. Monotonous or uninteresting teaching methods can make students lose interest and reduce their participation in class activities. If students feel bored or uninterested, then their listening skills will not develop well.

A conducive learning environment also plays an important role in supporting the influence of the direct method. Classes that are comfortable, quiet, and free from distractions allow students to focus on the material being taught. A positive environment, coupled with support from adequate facilities, will increase student comfort in participating in the learning process. When students feel comfortable, they are more likely to listen carefully and participate actively. As an alternative to forming an ideal language environment, reward and punishment strategies are considered effective and representative.³⁷

A less supportive learning environment, such as noise around the classroom or lack of adequate facilities, can also disrupt the learning process. If students feel distracted or uncomfortable, their concentration while listening will be affected. An environment that is not conducive will hinder their ability to listen well, thus having a negative impact on their Arabic learning outcomes.

³⁶ 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.

³⁷ Linda Widiyawati, M As' ad Nahdly, and Muh Sabilar Rosyad, 'Penerapan Teknik Reward and Punishment Dalam Pembentukan Lingkungan Bahasa Arab Di Pesantren Fathul Hidayah Lamongan', *LUGHATI: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab*, 1.02 (2023), 155–72 <<https://ejournal.unkafa.ac.id/index.php/lughati/article/view/784>>.

Direct Method Optimization Strategy

1. Technology integration in direct methods.

One strategy for optimizing the direct method is to integrate technology into the learning process. The use of online learning platforms, interactive applications, and multimedia tools can enhance student learning experiences. By utilizing technology, students can access additional learning resources, such as videos, podcasts and interactive materials, that support Arabic listening skills. This integration not only makes learning more interesting, but also expands the range of material that can be studied. The utilisation of artificial intelligence is considered more effective and efficient in an era of increasingly massive technological prioritisation.³⁸

Arabic learning apps that provide listening exercises, quizzes, and interactive games can be used to complement the hands-on method. This application allows students to practice outside class hours, strengthening their listening skills independently. With features that allow immediate feedback, students can track their progress and identify areas for improvement. This encourages more proactive and continuous learning.

The use of multimedia, such as video and audio, in the classroom can increase student engagement. By combining visual and sound elements, students can understand the Arabic language context better. For example, watching films or listening to Arabic songs can make students more interested and absorb information more easily. This method also provides real examples of language use in everyday situations, which is very helpful in developing listening skills.

2. Adapt methods based on student needs.

Adapting learning methods based on student needs is an important strategy in optimizing direct methods. Each student has a different background and abilities, so it is important to adapt the learning approach to suit their characteristics. By conducting an initial analysis of students' abilities and interests, teachers can design material that is relevant and interesting for them.

Carrying out formative assessments periodically can also help in adjusting teaching methods. By providing constructive feedback to students, instructors can identify difficulties encountered and make

³⁸ Muh Sabilar Rosyad and Muhammad A'inul Haq, 'Efektifitas Situs Berbasis Kecerdasan Buatan Dalam Mendesain Tes Keterampilan Mendengar Toaf', *JALIE; Journal of Applied Linguistics and Islamic Education*, 6.1 (2022), 27–44.

adjustments in teaching methods. This assessment not only helps students know their progress, but also provides insight for teachers to optimize the learning strategies implemented.

The application of project-based learning can be an effective alternative to adapting direct methods. By providing projects that are relevant to real life, students can be more motivated to learn. This project may involve listening skills, such as listening to an interview, presentation, or group discussion. Through this activity, students not only learn language, but also develop cooperation and communication skills.

Encouraging student involvement in the learning process is also part of the optimization strategy. By providing opportunities for students to contribute to designing materials or teaching methods, they will feel more ownership of the learning process. This can increase their motivation and commitment to learning, so that their listening skills can develop better.

Finally, it is important to provide training and professional development for teachers in implementing direct methods integrated with technology. Trained teachers will be more confident in using new tools and techniques and will be able to adapt teaching methods to suit student needs. In this way, the quality of teaching can continue to be improved, and students will get a better learning experience.

Conclusion

This research shows that the application of the Direct Method has a significant influence on the listening skills of students in the intensive Arabic Language Education program. The results of the analysis show a clear increase from the average value of the pre-test to the post-test after applying this method, with the calculated T value being much higher than the T table. Although the effect is classified as small, with a contingency coefficient of 0.496, these findings confirm that the direct method can make a positive contribution in improving listening skills, although further development is needed to achieve more optimal results. The contribution of this research to Arabic language teaching lies in strengthening the importance of communicative and interactive learning methods. This research highlights that many students still face difficulties with listening skills, indicating the need for more effective approaches. By adopting the direct method, teachers can create a more dynamic and supportive learning atmosphere, so that students can be more involved in learning Arabic.

Recommendations for teachers in implementing the direct method are to increase direct interaction with students and create a supportive learning environment. Teachers should integrate technology, such as learning applications and digital media resources, into their teaching methods. This not only makes learning more interesting, but also gives students access to a wider variety of material, thereby increasing their engagement and motivation in learning Arabic.

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