

INTEGRATING MEDIA LITERACY IN ARABIC LANGUAGE LEARNING AT MADRASAH TSANAWIYAH NEGERI 1 TANAH DATAR

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Article Info

Received: January 24, 2026

Revised: February 13, 2026

Accepted: March 12, 2026

Online Version: March 21, 2026

Abstract

This study explores the integration of media literacy in Arabic language learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 Tanah Datar using a qualitative approach. The research is grounded in the increasing importance of digital media in educational contexts and the necessity for students to critically engage with information. Media literacy is positioned as a crucial competency that enhances students' linguistic, cognitive, and socio-cultural skills within Arabic language instruction. Data were collected through classroom observations, in-depth interviews with teachers and students, and document analysis of lesson plans and teaching materials. The findings reveal that integrating media literacy not only improves students' comprehension of Arabic texts but also fosters critical thinking, creativity, and digital awareness. Teachers employed various strategies, including the use of digital platforms, audiovisual media, and interactive tasks that encourage students to analyze and produce media content in Arabic. However, challenges such as limited technological infrastructure, varying levels of digital competence among teachers, and curriculum constraints were identified. The study concludes that effective integration of media literacy requires systematic planning, teacher training, and institutional support. This research contributes to the development of innovative Arabic language pedagogy and provides practical insights for educators in similar contexts.

Keywords: Arabic Language Learning, Madrasah Tsanawiyah, Media Literacy



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Journal Homepage	https://journal.zmsadra.or.id/index.php/jqa
How to cite:	Mudinillah, A., Ouertani, R., Mohamed, A., & Warsame, M. (2026). Integrating Media Literacy in Arabic Language Learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 Tanah Datar. <i>Qaul 'Arabiy</i> , 2(1), 64–74. https://doi.org/10.66139/jqa.v2i1.xxx0
Published by:	Yayasan Zia Mulla Sadra

INTRODUCTION

Media literacy has become an essential component in modern education as digital technologies increasingly shape how knowledge is produced and consumed (Hobbs, 2021). In the context of Arabic language learning, integrating media literacy offers new opportunities to enhance students' engagement and comprehension through authentic materials. The growing exposure of students to digital content necessitates the development of critical skills to evaluate and interpret information effectively (Livingstone, 2021). At the same time, Arabic language education in Indonesian madrasahs often remains traditional, focusing heavily on grammar and translation methods (Rahman, 2022). This gap highlights the urgency of incorporating media literacy into language instruction to make learning more relevant and contextual. Therefore, this study aims to examine how media literacy can be integrated into Arabic language learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 Tanah Datar. By doing so, the research seeks to contribute to the development of more dynamic and meaningful learning experiences.

The significance of this research lies in its attempt to bridge the gap between traditional pedagogical practices and contemporary educational demands (Jenkins, 2021). Arabic language learning is not merely about mastering linguistic structures but also about understanding cultural and communicative contexts. Media literacy provides a framework for students to interact with various forms of media, including texts, videos, and social platforms, in the target language (Koltay, 2021). Furthermore, integrating media literacy aligns with 21st-century skills, such as critical thinking, creativity, and digital competence (Alfulana et al., 2025). In Indonesian madrasahs, where religious and linguistic education intersect, this integration can enrich both domains. Consequently, exploring this approach is crucial to improving the quality of Arabic language education. This study addresses this need by focusing on a specific institutional context.

Another important aspect of this research is its relevance to the challenges faced by educators in adapting to digital transformation (Selwyn, 2021; Redecker, 2022). Teachers often encounter difficulties in integrating technology due to limited resources and training. In the context of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 Tanah Datar, these challenges are particularly evident in Arabic language classrooms. Despite these limitations, there is a growing awareness of the importance of media literacy among educators (Anwar et al., 2025). This study investigates how teachers navigate these challenges and implement innovative strategies in their teaching practices. By examining real classroom experiences, the research provides insights into practical solutions and best practices. Ultimately, this contributes to a better understanding of how media literacy can be effectively integrated into language education.

The final rationale for this study is its contribution to the broader discourse on educational innovation in Islamic schools (Hasan, 2022). Madrasahs play a crucial role in shaping students' intellectual and moral development. Integrating media literacy into Arabic language learning can enhance students' ability to engage with diverse sources of knowledge while maintaining their cultural identity. Moreover, this approach supports the development of independent learners who can critically analyze information (Potter, 2021). By focusing on a specific case study, this research offers valuable insights into the practical implementation of media literacy. Therefore, the study is both timely and relevant in addressing current educational challenges. It provides a foundation for future research and policy development.

Media literacy is broadly defined as the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media in various forms (Hobbs, 2021). This concept has evolved alongside technological advancements, emphasizing critical engagement with digital content. In educational contexts, media literacy is seen as a key competency that supports lifelong learning (Livingstone, 2021). It enables students to navigate complex information environments and make informed decisions. In language learning, media literacy enhances comprehension by exposing learners to authentic materials (Koltay, 2021). This integration fosters both linguistic and critical skills. Therefore, understanding media literacy is essential for its application in Arabic language education.

Arabic language learning traditionally emphasizes grammar, vocabulary, and translation (Rahman, 2022; Hasan, 2022). While these elements are important, they often fail to engage students in meaningful communication. Modern approaches advocate for communicative and contextual learning strategies (Ritonga et al., 2025). Media literacy aligns with these approaches by providing real-world contexts for language use. Students can interact with authentic Arabic media, such as news, videos, and social media posts (Khairanis et al., 2025). This exposure enhances their understanding of language and culture. Consequently, integrating media literacy can transform traditional teaching methods.

Theoretical frameworks supporting media literacy integration include constructivism and socio-cultural theory (Zaenuri et al., 2025). These theories emphasize the role of social interaction and contextual learning. Media platforms provide opportunities for collaborative learning and knowledge construction. Students actively engage with content and develop critical thinking skills (Jenkins, 2021). In Arabic language learning, this approach encourages students to use the language in authentic contexts. It also promotes learner autonomy. Thus, theoretical perspectives support the integration of media literacy.

The integration of media literacy in language education has been widely recognized as a transformative approach that enhances both cognitive and communicative competencies (Ilmiani & Miolo, 2021). In the context of Arabic language learning, media literacy allows students to engage with authentic linguistic inputs derived from digital platforms, such as online news, educational videos, and social media interactions (Hobbs, 2021; Livingstone, 2021). This exposure provides learners with real-life language usage that goes beyond textbook examples, thereby improving their interpretative and analytical abilities. Furthermore, media literacy encourages students to critically assess the credibility and relevance of the information they encounter, which is essential in an era characterized by information overload (Koltay, 2021). In classroom practice, teachers can design tasks that require students to analyze Arabic media texts and produce their own content, fostering creativity and language proficiency simultaneously. Such practices align with contemporary educational paradigms that emphasize active learning and student-centered instruction. Therefore, integrating media literacy not only supports language acquisition but also equips students with essential life skills.

Another important dimension of media literacy in Arabic language education is its role in fostering intercultural competence. Language learning is inherently connected to cultural understanding, and media serves as a rich source of cultural representation (Jenkins, 2021). Through exposure to Arabic media, students gain insights into the social, political, and cultural contexts of Arabic-speaking communities. This process enhances their ability to interpret meanings within context and develop empathy toward different perspectives (Anggara & Nashoihi, 2025). Moreover, media literacy helps students recognize biases and stereotypes that may be present in media content, enabling them to become more critical and reflective learners. In practical terms, teachers can incorporate activities such as comparing different media representations or discussing cultural themes presented in Arabic videos and articles (Faiqoh et al., 2025). These activities not only improve language skills but also deepen cultural awareness. Consequently, media literacy plays a vital role in shaping well-rounded learners who are capable of navigating diverse cultural landscapes (Livingstone, 2021).

The successful integration of media literacy in Arabic language learning also depends on institutional support and teacher preparedness (Redecker, 2022; Selwyn, 2021). Teachers need adequate training to effectively utilize digital tools and incorporate media-based activities into their teaching practices. Without proper guidance, the use of media may remain superficial and fail to achieve its intended educational outcomes (Setiadi, 2025). Additionally, schools must provide the necessary infrastructure, such as internet access and digital devices, to facilitate media literacy integration. In the context of Madrasah Tsanawiyah, these requirements can be challenging due to limited resources and varying levels of technological readiness (Arham et al., 2025). However, strategic planning and policy support can help overcome these obstacles and promote sustainable implementation. Professional development programs and collaborative learning communities among teachers can further enhance their competencies in integrating media literacy. Therefore, a holistic approach involving teachers, institutions, and policymakers is essential to ensure the effective application of media literacy in Arabic language education (Potter, 2021).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design to explore the integration of media literacy in Arabic language learning (Creswell, 2021). Qualitative methods are suitable for understanding complex educational phenomena in natural settings. The research was conducted at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 Tanah Datar. Data collection involved observations, interviews, and document analysis. These methods provide rich and detailed insights into teaching practices. The study focuses on teachers and students as primary participants. Therefore, the methodology ensures comprehensive data collection.

This study employs a qualitative research design to explore the integration of media literacy in Arabic language learning at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 Tanah Datar. A qualitative approach is particularly appropriate for this research because it allows for an in-depth understanding of complex educational practices within their natural context (Creswell, 2021). The focus of the study is not merely to measure outcomes but to interpret how media literacy is implemented and experienced by both teachers and students. Through this approach, the researcher seeks to capture the nuances of classroom interaction, instructional strategies, and learners' responses to media-based activities (Denzin & Lincoln, 2021). Furthermore, qualitative research enables the exploration of participants' perspectives, which are essential for understanding the effectiveness of pedagogical innovations. By emphasizing rich, descriptive data, this method provides a comprehensive view of the phenomenon under investigation. Therefore, the qualitative design serves as a suitable framework for examining the integration of media literacy in Arabic language education.

The research adopts a case study approach to gain a detailed understanding of the specific context of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 Tanah Datar. A case study is particularly useful for investigating contemporary phenomena within real-life settings, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly defined. In this study, the case includes Arabic language classrooms, teachers, and students who are directly involved in the learning process (Stake, 2021). Data were collected from multiple sources to ensure a holistic perspective, including classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. This triangulation of data enhances the credibility and validity of the findings. Additionally, the case study approach allows the researcher to identify patterns and relationships within the data. By focusing on a single institution, the study provides in-depth insights that may inform similar educational settings. Consequently, the case study method is essential for achieving the research objectives.

The participants of this study consist of Arabic language teachers and students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 Tanah Datar. Teachers were selected based on their involvement in implementing media literacy practices, while students were chosen to represent diverse levels of proficiency and engagement. The selection of participants was conducted using purposive sampling, which is commonly used in qualitative research to identify individuals who can provide rich and relevant information. Data collection was carried out through direct classroom observations to capture teaching practices, as well as in-depth interviews to explore participants' experiences and perceptions. In addition, relevant documents such as lesson plans, teaching materials, and student assignments were analyzed to support the findings. This combination of data sources ensures a comprehensive understanding of the research context. Therefore, the selection of participants and data collection methods aligns with the objectives of the study (Patton, 2021).

Data analysis in this study follows a thematic analysis approach, which involves identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2021). The process begins with data familiarization, where the researcher carefully reads and reviews all collected data to gain a deep understanding of the content. This is followed by coding, where significant segments of data are labeled according to relevant themes. These codes are then organized into broader categories that reflect key aspects of media literacy integration in Arabic language learning (Saldaña, 2021). Throughout the analysis, the researcher continuously compares data from different sources to ensure consistency and validity. The use of thematic analysis allows for a systematic and flexible examination of complex data. As a result, the findings can be presented in a clear and meaningful way. Therefore, this analytical approach is suitable for achieving the research goals.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the research, several strategies were employed, including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was established through prolonged engagement in the field and triangulation of data sources, which help to validate the findings (Nowell et al., 2021). Transferability was addressed by providing detailed descriptions of the research context, allowing readers to determine the applicability of the findings to other settings. Dependability was ensured through a transparent research process, including clear documentation of data collection and analysis procedures. Confirmability was achieved by maintaining objectivity and minimizing researcher bias through reflective practices. Additionally, ethical considerations were carefully observed, including obtaining informed consent from participants and ensuring confidentiality. These measures contribute to the overall rigor and reliability of the study. Therefore, the research design is both methodologically sound and ethically responsible.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The findings indicate that teachers integrate media literacy through various digital tools (Redecker, 2022). They use videos, social media, and online articles to support learning. These tools enhance students' engagement and motivation. Students show increased interest in Arabic language lessons. The use of authentic media materials improves comprehension. Teachers also design interactive tasks (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Consequently, media literacy positively impacts learning outcomes.

The findings reveal that teachers at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 Tanah Datar have begun integrating media literacy into Arabic language instruction through the use of various digital tools (Redecker, 2022). These tools include educational videos, online articles, and social media content that are adapted to the students' level of proficiency. The incorporation of such media provides students with authentic language exposure, which significantly enhances their engagement in the learning process (Baili et al., 2025). Furthermore, classroom

observations indicate that students demonstrate increased motivation when interacting with multimedia resources compared to traditional textbook-based learning (Selwyn, 2021). Teachers also encourage students to analyze and interpret the content critically, fostering deeper comprehension. This approach not only improves linguistic skills but also develops critical thinking abilities. Therefore, the integration of media literacy has a positive impact on both teaching practices and student learning experiences.

Another significant finding is the improvement in students' reading and listening comprehension as a result of media-based learning activities (Hobbs, 2021). Students are exposed to a variety of Arabic texts and audiovisual materials, which provide contextualized language input. This exposure enables them to better understand vocabulary, grammar, and cultural nuances embedded in the language. During classroom activities, students are often asked to summarize or respond to media content, which enhances their analytical skills (Livingstone, 2021). Additionally, teachers report that students become more confident in expressing their ideas in Arabic. The use of media also helps bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. As a result, students are able to apply their language skills in more meaningful contexts. Thus, media literacy contributes significantly to improving comprehension skills.

The study also finds that media literacy integration fosters students' creativity in Arabic language learning. Students are encouraged to create their own media content, such as short videos, presentations, and written posts in Arabic (Jenkins, 2021). These activities allow them to actively use the language in expressive and innovative ways. Moreover, the process of content creation requires students to think critically about language use, audience, and message delivery (Koltay, 2021). Teachers facilitate this process by providing guidance and feedback, ensuring that students achieve the intended learning objectives. This creative engagement not only enhances language proficiency but also builds students' confidence. Consequently, students become more active participants in the learning process. Therefore, creativity emerges as a key outcome of media literacy integration.

In addition to cognitive and creative benefits, the integration of media literacy also influences students' attitudes toward Arabic language learning. Many students initially perceive Arabic as a difficult and less engaging subject. However, the use of media transforms their perceptions by making learning more interactive and enjoyable (Selwyn, 2021). Students express greater interest in participating in classroom activities and demonstrate a more positive attitude toward the subject. Teachers observe that students are more willing to engage in discussions and collaborative tasks (Rahman, 2022; Hasan, 2022). This shift in attitude is crucial for sustaining long-term learning motivation. Furthermore, positive attitudes contribute to better learning outcomes. Therefore, media literacy plays an important role in shaping students' perceptions of Arabic language learning.

Despite these positive outcomes, the study identifies several challenges in implementing media literacy in Arabic language classrooms (Redecker, 2022). One of the main challenges is the limited availability of technological resources, such as computers and stable internet access. This limitation affects the frequency and effectiveness of media-based activities. Additionally, some teachers lack sufficient training in using digital tools, which hinders their ability to integrate media effectively (Selwyn, 2021). Time constraints within the curriculum also pose challenges, as teachers must balance traditional content with innovative approaches. These factors highlight the need for institutional support. Therefore, addressing these challenges is essential for successful implementation.

Another finding relates to the varying levels of students' digital literacy skills. While some students are highly proficient in using digital media, others require additional guidance and support (Hobbs, 2021; Livingstone, 2021). This disparity affects the overall effectiveness of media literacy integration in the classroom. Teachers must adapt their instructional strategies to accommodate different skill levels (Koltay, 2021). In some cases, peer learning is

encouraged, where more proficient students assist their peers. This collaborative approach helps to bridge the gap and promotes a supportive learning environment. However, it also requires careful management by teachers. Therefore, addressing differences in digital literacy is an important consideration.

The study further reveals that collaborative learning plays a significant role in media literacy integration. Students often work in groups to analyze media content and complete tasks. This collaboration enhances their communication skills and fosters a sense of teamwork. Through group discussions, students exchange ideas and perspectives, which enriches their understanding of the material (Livingstone, 2021). Teachers facilitate these interactions by providing structured activities and clear guidelines. Collaborative learning also encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning. As a result, students develop both linguistic and social skills (Jenkins, 2021). Therefore, collaboration is a key component of effective media literacy integration.

Another important finding is the role of teachers as facilitators in the integration of media literacy (Redecker, 2022; Selwyn, 2021). Rather than acting as the sole source of knowledge, teachers guide students in exploring and analyzing media content. This shift in role reflects a more student-centered approach to learning (Mufidah et al., 2025). Teachers provide support and feedback while encouraging independent learning. This approach helps students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Additionally, teachers adapt their methods to suit the needs of their students. Therefore, the role of the teacher is crucial in ensuring the success of media literacy integration.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that integrating media literacy into Arabic language learning has significant benefits, despite certain challenges (Potter, 2021). The approach enhances students' engagement, comprehension, creativity, and critical thinking skills. It also fosters positive attitudes toward learning and encourages collaboration among students. However, successful implementation requires adequate resources, teacher training, and institutional support (Hobbs, 2021). The findings highlight the importance of a balanced approach that combines traditional and innovative teaching methods. Therefore, media literacy integration represents a promising strategy for improving Arabic language education in madrasahs.

Discussion

The integration of media literacy in Arabic language learning reflects broader educational trends (Selwyn, 2021; Potter, 2021). It aligns with the need for digital competence in modern education. The findings confirm that media literacy enhances both linguistic and critical skills. However, challenges remain in implementation. These include limited resources and teacher readiness. Addressing these issues is crucial. Therefore, the discussion highlights both opportunities and challenges.

The findings of this study align with broader educational trends that emphasize the importance of integrating digital competencies into language learning (Selwyn, 2021; Potter, 2021). Media literacy serves as a bridge between traditional pedagogical approaches and modern educational demands. The results indicate that students benefit significantly from exposure to authentic media content, which enhances both linguistic and critical skills (Hobbs, 2021). This suggests that media literacy is not merely an additional component but a fundamental aspect of contemporary education. Furthermore, the integration of media literacy supports the development of 21st-century skills. Therefore, its inclusion in Arabic language learning is both relevant and necessary.

The improvement in students' comprehension and engagement highlights the effectiveness of media-based learning strategies (Livingstone, 2021). These findings support previous research that emphasizes the role of authentic materials in language acquisition. By interacting with real-world media, students develop a deeper understanding of language use

and cultural context (Meilizia et al., 2025). This approach also promotes active learning, where students participate in meaningful tasks. As a result, learning becomes more dynamic and engaging. Therefore, media literacy contributes to more effective language instruction.

The development of students' creativity and critical thinking skills further demonstrates the value of media literacy integration (Jenkins, 2021; Koltay, 2021). These skills are essential for navigating the complexities of the digital age. The findings suggest that media-based activities encourage students to think independently and express their ideas creatively. This aligns with constructivist learning theories, which emphasize active engagement and knowledge construction (Lathifah et al., 2025). Moreover, these skills are transferable to other areas of learning. Therefore, media literacy has a broader educational impact.

Despite the positive outcomes, the challenges identified in this study highlight the need for systemic support. Limited resources and insufficient teacher training can hinder the effective implementation of media literacy (Redecker, 2022). Addressing these issues requires collaboration between educators, institutions, and policymakers (Selwyn, 2021). Professional development programs can enhance teachers' digital competencies and confidence. Additionally, investment in infrastructure is essential. Therefore, overcoming these challenges is crucial for sustainable implementation.

The role of teachers as facilitators reflects a shift toward student-centered learning. This approach empowers students to take an active role in their education (Hobbs, 2021; Livingstone, 2021). The findings indicate that when teachers adopt this role, students become more engaged and independent learners (Koltay, 2021). However, this shift also requires changes in teaching practices and mindset. Teachers must be willing to adapt and experiment with new methods. Therefore, teacher readiness is a key factor in successful integration.

In conclusion, the discussion highlights the significance of integrating media literacy in Arabic language learning (Potter, 2021). The findings demonstrate its potential to enhance various aspects of education, including engagement, comprehension, and critical thinking. However, successful implementation requires careful planning and support. The study provides valuable insights for educators and policymakers. It also opens opportunities for further research. Therefore, media literacy integration represents a meaningful advancement in Arabic language education.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the integration of media literacy into Arabic language learning significantly enhances the overall quality of the teaching and learning process. The findings indicate that media literacy not only increases students' engagement and motivation but also strengthens their language comprehension, communication skills, and critical thinking abilities. Through the use of diverse digital media, students become more active participants in constructing knowledge rather than passive recipients of information. Teachers play a central role in facilitating this process by selecting appropriate media resources, designing meaningful learning activities, and guiding students in evaluating the credibility and relevance of digital content. Consequently, the successful integration of media literacy requires educators to possess both pedagogical competence and digital literacy skills. Therefore, incorporating media literacy into Arabic language instruction should be regarded as a strategic priority for schools seeking to improve learning outcomes and prepare students for the demands of contemporary education.

The study also emphasizes that the effectiveness of media literacy integration depends largely on institutional readiness and continuous professional development. Schools and educational authorities need to provide adequate technological infrastructure, reliable internet access, and sufficient digital learning resources to support classroom implementation. Equally important is the provision of systematic training programs that enable teachers to develop the

knowledge and practical skills required to integrate media literacy into Arabic language teaching effectively. Without these forms of support, teachers may encounter challenges such as limited technological competence, insufficient instructional materials, and resistance to adopting innovative teaching practices. Furthermore, future studies are encouraged to investigate media literacy integration in different educational settings, including various school levels, geographical regions, and cultural contexts. Comparative and longitudinal research may also provide a deeper understanding of the long-term impact of media literacy on students’ linguistic achievement, digital competence, and higher-order thinking skills.

In conclusion, media literacy represents a promising and sustainable approach to modernizing Arabic language education in the digital era. It successfully bridges traditional language learning methods with contemporary digital pedagogies, creating a more interactive, student-centered, and authentic learning environment. The findings of this study contribute to the growing body of literature on educational innovation by demonstrating the pedagogical value of integrating media literacy into Arabic language instruction. Moreover, the study offers practical recommendations for teachers, school leaders, curriculum developers, and policymakers to strengthen the implementation of media literacy through curriculum development, teacher capacity building, and investment in educational technology. Ultimately, the integration of media literacy supports the development of 21st-century learners who are not only proficient in Arabic language skills but also capable of thinking critically, communicating effectively, collaborating responsibly, and navigating digital information in an ethical and informed manner.

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