

ARABIC LANGUAGE LEARNING MODEL FOR ELDERLY IN MA'HAD ZUBAIR

Aulia Fitri¹, Yunaldi²¹ Islamic Institute of West Sumatra, Pariaman, Indonesia² State Islamic University Syekh Ali Hasan Ahmad Addary, Padangsidempuan, Indonesia**Corresponding Author:**

Aulia Fitri,

Department of Qur'an and Tafsir, Faculty of Ushuluddin, Islamic Institute of West Sumatra, Pariaman.

Email: auliafitri@iaisumbar.ac.id**Article Info**

Received: June 23, 2026

Revised: June 25, 2026

Accepted: June 28, 2026

Online Version: June 30,
2026**Abstract**

The high interest in learning Arabic among the elderly in the city of Padang has led Islamic institutions to offer Arabic language learning opportunities for seniors, one of which is at Ma'had Zubair. Many seniors wish to learn Arabic through various programs, such as proficiency in reading religious texts, speaking, writing, and grammar. This study aims to identify the learning models applied by teachers in teaching Arabic at Ma'had Zubair. A descriptive qualitative method was used, in which data were collected through observation, interviews, and documents. The findings of this study describe the discovery model and the CTL learning model as the most commonly applied by Arabic language teachers to older adults. Teachers implement the discovery model by preparing pictures, vocabulary, and props; the elderly students then individually identify the meanings and express them in Arabic. Meanwhile, the CTL model is applied by engaging the elderly students and providing them with more opportunities to act, try, and experience things for themselves, so that they are not merely passive listeners who simply receive the information conveyed by the teacher. It is therefore recommended that teachers develop and pay close attention to the learning process for the elderly so that it can be adapted for all age groups. Despite their advanced age, the elderly students were very enthusiastic and eager to learn Arabic at all proficiency levels.

Keywords: Arabic Language, Elderly, Learning Model, Ma'had Zubair

© 2026 by the author(s)

This article is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY SA) license

[\(https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/).

Journal Homepage

<https://journal.zmsadra.or.id/index.php/jqa>

How to cite:

Fitri, A., & Yunaldi, Yunaldi. (2026). Arabic Language Learning Model for Elderly in Ma'had Zubair. *Qaul 'Arabiy*, 2(2), 227–235. <https://doi.org/10.66139/jqa.v2i2.xxx0>

Published by:

Yayasan Zia Mulla Sadra

INTRODUCTION

A.H. Maslow explains that human basic needs are divided into three types: life needs, learning needs, and educational needs. From this statement, it can be concluded that humans cannot be separated from learning and education. Essentially, lifelong learning has become a learning concept whose purpose is to fulfill both learning needs and educational needs (Burhan Ibnu Hazin, imasinska, 2024).

Arabic is also the language of the Qur’an, the language of the Sunnah, the language of the Prophet and his companions, and a language widely spoken in the Middle East and even parts of Africa. Arabic has also become an integral part of Muslims’ religious practices, such as prayer, reciting the Qur’an, the call to prayer, and other acts of worship. Learning Arabic is practically a necessity for Muslims, as knowledge of the Arabic language helps them study religious teachings in depth and enhances their devotion in worship. In Indonesia, Arabic is taught from kindergarten through college, at both public and private institutions. Even Islamic institutions include Arabic as a required subject. Islamic boarding schools (pondok pesantren) throughout Indonesia naturally place greater emphasis on studying and interacting in Arabic.

However, Arabic language instruction is given more attention in formal schools, while non-formal schools receive less attention from various sectors, particularly the government. The government also pays less attention to older adults who wish to learn Arabic. For this reason, non-formal institutions are taking steps to support and facilitate the desire of older adults to learn Arabic in order to better understand Islam. Fenty Nur Azizah (Azizah et al., 2019) et al. note that Arabic language learning opportunities for older adults represent both a career opportunity and a challenge for Arabic language graduates seeking to teach Arabic to older adults, particularly in the context of non-formal education.

Maswani (Maswani, 2022) states that the Religion-Based Arabic Language Learning Model for adults is an extension of Qur’anic Arabic. Maswani concludes that the purpose of this study is to address the debate surrounding the concept of Arabic language learning for specific purposes (Arabic for a specific purposes). Hazin et al. (Burhan Ibnu Hazin, imasinska, 2024) describe efforts to meet basic educational needs and educational needs as having two criteria: the value component and the expectation component. This means they care about the future of older adults as they spend the rest of their lives. Hazin et al. conclude that the extent to which older adults are motivated to learn Arabic depends on internal factors—namely, a strong personal desire within the older adults themselves, without coercion from any party—and external factors—namely, facilities provided by the organizers that are sufficiently adequate (Burhan Ibnu Hazin, imasinska, 2024).

The novelty of this study lies in the Arabic language learning model implemented by Ma’had Zubair, which takes into account the curriculum, syllabus, lesson plans, textbooks, and the design of approaches, methods, and strategies developed for the Arabic language learning process for older adults. Meanwhile, the initial hypothesis suggests that the cognitive, psychological, and physiological characteristics of older adults are significantly different. However, this does not preclude the possibility that Arabic language learning for older adults can proceed smoothly. Cognitively, the most prominent characteristic of older adults is intelligence. Most older adults experience a decline in cognitive function, so their thought processes in managing the information they receive also slow down slightly.

Physiologically, older adults experience a decline in various functions, including hearing—which encompasses auditory clarity and other aspects—as well as vision, which involves visual acuity, depth perception, and other factors. Their bodies are not as strong as they once were, and they experience various age-related neurological issues. Based on the above explanation, the purpose of this article is to explain in detail how the Arabic language learning process takes place for older adults, including the methods, strategies, and teaching materials used. The practical goal for older adults in learning Arabic is to gain a thorough

understanding of the teachings of Islam as derived from the Qur'an and Hadith. Additionally, they will be able to speak Arabic directly when performing the Hajj and Umrah.

This study is important because there has been no specific discussion of Arabic language learning for older adults. The only study available is "The Jibril Method of Tahsin Al-Qur'an Instruction in Improving Reading Skills Among the Elderly in Nglebak Village," discussed by Asmi Aqidatul Izzah and Amir Muhammad Hidayatullah (Izzah & Hidayatullah, 2022). Next is a study titled "Islamic Education for the Elderly: A Look at Teaching Methods at the Ahsanu 'Amala Islamic Boarding School for the Elderly." This study focuses solely on religious education for the elderly in general and was written by Zaki Zakria et al. (Zakaria et al., 2023). The next study was conducted by Masruddin et al., titled "Evaluation of Qur'an Instruction for the Elderly at Madrasah Diniyah Sullamus Saniyah in Bincau Village, Martapura," which focused more on Qur'an instruction (Hermina, 2023). Thus, this study contributes to Arabic language learning for older adults who wish to study Arabic more intensively.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used was a descriptive qualitative method. The analytical technique proposed by Miles and Huberman, which involves three concurrent activities: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Aulia Fitri, 2021). Data were collected using a semi-structured interview technique with open-ended questions. This semi-structured, open-ended interview technique was used to give informants the freedom to answer based on their understanding, knowledge, and experience. Data collection methods: 1) observation, 2) Interviews, 3) documents.

The collected data was then analyzed using Miles and Huberman's qualitative data analysis technique through three stages: data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions and verification. The data reduction process involved simplifying and grouping the data obtained from interviews with informants and discarding unnecessary data. The data were then systematically presented in narrative form to make them easier to understand. Finally, conclusions were drawn and verified to uncover the intended meaning of the data.

The primary sources of data in qualitative research are actions and words. Other data, such as documents, photographs, or statistics, serve as supplementary data. The primary sources of data are obtained through observation and interviews. Data reduction is the process of selecting, simplifying, and transforming field data. Data reduction involves summarizing the results and selecting themes to derive meaning. Data presentation takes place after data reduction. Data presentation is the process of compiling information and organizing it in a way that makes it easy for readers to understand. 4) Drawing Conclusions. Drawing conclusions is done throughout the research, from data collection to data presentation and drawing final conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Arabic Language Learning

In Arabic language learning, there are four proficiency concepts that every language learner—whether a beginner or an advanced learner—must master. The skills involved in learning Arabic include (Istiqamah et al., 2023), *maharah al-Istima'* (listening skills) is a person's ability to understand words or sentences. Listening skills can be developed through continuous practice in distinguishing the sounds of word elements (phonemes) from other elements based on the correct articulation points of letters, whether directly from native speakers or through recordings.

Maharah al-Kalam (speaking skills), refer to the ability to articulate sounds or words to express thoughts—such as ideas, opinions, desires, or feelings—to a conversation partner. *Maharah al-Qiro’ah* (reading skills) involves seeing and understanding the content of what is written—whether aloud or silently—and spelling out or pronouncing what is written. Thus, reading encompasses two skills at once: recognizing the written symbols within the text and understanding its content. *Maharah al-Kitabah* (writing skills) refers to the ability to use linguistic symbols or patterns to express ideas, thoughts, and concepts in writing (Aini et al., 2021).

Arabic Language Teaching Models

A learning model is a plan or framework used as a guide for planning instruction in a classroom or tutorial setting. A learning model refers to the instructional approach to be used, including instructional objectives, the stages of learning activities, the learning environment, and classroom management (Handayani et al., 2023).

Various models can be applied in the process of learning Arabic. With advances in science, particularly in the field of linguistics, many models for teaching Arabic have been developed that teachers can apply the word square learning model is a learning model that uses crossword-style grids as a tool for delivering instructional content in the teaching-learning process. Teachers provide students with opportunities to develop their own learning strategies, which are guided by the teacher. There are various factors believed to have a direct impact on students’ success in the learning process at school. These factors include teacher professionalism, the availability of learning facilities and infrastructure, the curriculum, teaching materials, as well as factors directly related to students as learners in receiving and engaging in learning activities (Ika Rezky Handayani et al., 2023). The word square learning model is combined with visual aids, so the steps evolve and differ from those listed above. However, they do not stray far from the actual context. These steps include the following; 1) The teacher posts visual aids on the blackboard, 2) The teacher explains the material using the visual aids, 3) The teacher distributes worksheets to the students containing a question and answer boxes filled with randomized letters, 4) Students are asked to examine the question and shade in the answers they find in the provided boxes, 5) Fill in the words that have been intentionally omitted from a text provided on the student worksheet, 6) The teacher assigns points and evaluates the work (Ika Rezky Handayani et al., 2023).

The CTL Model. The CTL (Contextual Teaching and Learning) model is a holistic learning process designed to help elderly students understand the meaning of the instructional material and relate it to the context of their daily lives (personal and sociocultural contexts), so that they acquire dynamic and flexible knowledge and skills to actively construct their own understanding. The definition of CTL according to Howey R. Kenneth is “Contextual teaching is teaching that enables learning in which student apply their academic understanding and abilities in a variety of in-and out of school context to solve simulated or real world problems, both alone and with others”. (CTL is a learning approach that facilitates a learning process in which elderly students apply their academic understanding and skills in various contexts—both inside and outside of school—to solve simulated or real-world problems, either individually or collaboratively. In this regard, the required approach to learning involves engaging students by providing them with more opportunities to act, experiment, and experience things for themselves (“learning to do”), so that students are not merely passive listeners who simply receive information from the teacher. This type of learning is intended solely to enhance students’ practical learning experiences (Susiawati et al., 2022). Thus, in contextual learning, the focus is on knowledge and experience (real-world learning), active students, student-centered learning, higher-order thinking, critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, learning that is enjoyable, engaging, and not boring (joyful and quantum learning), as well as the use of various learning resources. There are eight components that characterize contextual learning,

namely: making meaningful connections, engaging in significant activities, self-regulated learning, collaborating, critical and creative thinking, nurturing the individual, reaching high standards, and using authentic assessment.

PBL (Project-Based Learning) Model. According to Turgut, the Project-Based Learning (PBL) model consists of projects that integrate science, technology, society, history, mathematics, and politics, and provide opportunities for productive discussion among elderly students. This approach encourages elderly students to conduct investigations focused on real-world problems, fostering their enthusiasm for learning and making instruction more effective. According to the findings of Munawaroh et al., the PBL learning model is more meaningful when combined with the teaching aids produced by the students, resulting in more lasting retention of the material (learning to know). This is because, in the Project-Based Learning model, students are able to create science-based products in the form of teaching aids, and PBL is effective in boosting the motivation of elderly students, leading to nearly all of them actively participating in learning activities (learning to do). Nearly all elderly students worked well in groups regardless of their cognitive abilities or gender (learning to live together) (Munawaroh et al., 2023).

The Cooperative Learning Model is a learning system that seeks to utilize peers (other students) as a learning resource, in addition to teachers and other learning resources. The application of the cooperative learning model can improve students' learning outcomes—cognitively, affectively, and psychomotorically—as well as their ability to collaborate. Cooperative learning is one component of the Project-Based Learning model. In the Project-Based Learning model, students create science-related products such as teaching aids, whereas in cooperative learning, students simply discuss and answer questions without creating teaching aids.

The Integrated Learning Model is a learning model implemented to provide elderly students with a learning experience that helps them understand the objectives of Arabic language learning (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), which are divided into several aspects—including conversation, reading, dictation, and composition—in a comprehensive and meaningful way. This integrated learning model is based on several principles, including the principle of theme exploration, the principle of learning management, the principle of evaluation, and the principle of feedback. These principles distinguish integrated learning from other learning models.

The discovery learning model for elderly students is designed to help them understand concepts, meanings, and interrelationships through an inductive process that leads to conclusions. This learning model is based on the view that elderly students are both the subjects and objects of learning who possess the basic ability to develop optimally according to their capabilities. The learning process is viewed as a stimulus that encourages elderly students to engage in learning activities. Thus, with or without teacher guidance, students—whether individually or in groups—will engage more in problem-solving activities. The discovery learning model cannot be fully applied to Arabic language instruction in terms of its concepts, objectives, procedures, or developmental steps. This is because the background and objectives of this learning model are not aligned with the goals of foreign language instruction, which places greater emphasis on language skills. Nevertheless, the basic principles of the discovery model can also be applied to Arabic language learning, as this model places greater emphasis on critical, analytical, and logical thinking and reasoning skills. Furthermore, it is possible that other learning models will continue to evolve alongside advances in educational science (Susiawati et al., 2022).

Elderly

Older adults, or the elderly, are people who are undergoing a continuous or ongoing aging process characterized by factors such as a decline in physical endurance, a decline in cognitive function or thinking patterns, and an increased vulnerability to diseases that can lead to death due to a decline in the body’s metabolism.

According to Law No. 23 of 1998 in Indonesia, individuals aged 60 and older are classified as the elderly. Furthermore, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), the elderly are divided into four categories: Young Old (60–69 years), Old (70–79 years and older), the Old Old (80–89 years and older), and the Very Old (90 years and older). The elderly are also often perceived as having unchanging behavior, a monotonous mindset, and a narrow perspective; they are seen as uncreative, resistant to new things, and prone to looking back on the past, regressing to childhood, being resistant to change, stubborn, and selective; they may also be confused, disengaged from their surroundings, and prone to illness, loneliness, and unhappiness. There are several aspects experienced by the elderly, namely; 1) Physical changes. Physical changes in older adults can be seen in graying hair, skin that begins to wrinkle, declining vision (nearsightedness or farsightedness), a diminished sense of smell (nose/respiratory system), a diminished sense of taste (tongue), and declining hearing (ears/hearing system), 2) Mental changes. The mental changes experienced by the elderly significantly affect their psychological well-being, as they may face the loss of a spouse, family members, or close friends (bereavement), often find themselves isolated, feel lonely, and may even develop memory loss (dementia), 3) Social Changes (Ekasari, 2018.)

Ma’had Zubair

Ma’had Zubair is one of the Islamic institutions in the city of Padang, located within the Muhammadiyah University of West Sumatra complex. It offers two programs of study: Islamic Studies and Arabic Language, as well as Qur’an memorization. The institute aims to educate and produce religious scholars and practitioners who not only possess the Arabic language skills necessary to study the Islamic heritage but also possess a well-rounded personality and a commitment to da’wah for Allah Ta’ala and His Messenger.

Among the career prospects and opportunities for graduates of Mahad Zubair Padang after graduation are: Continuing their studies abroad at institutions such as: the Islamic University of Madinah, Umm al-Qura University in Mecca, King Saud University in Riyadh, Cairo, Egypt, Sudan, Yemen, Morocco, and others. Pursuing further studies at LIPIA in Jakarta. Pursuing further studies at partner universities of Mahad Ibnu Zubair Padang. Teaching Arabic and Quran memorization (tahfizh) at Islamic and public schools, such as Islamic boarding schools (pondok pesantren), Islamic kindergartens (TKIT), Islamic elementary schools (SDIT), Islamic junior high schools (SMPIT), Islamic high schools (SMAIT), and public schools. Establishing and pioneering educational institutions for Arabic language and Quran memorization (tahfizh). Serving as a muthawwif (guide) for Hajj and Umrah pilgrimages. Providing private tutoring in Arabic, the Quran, and Quran memorization (tahfizh).

The Application of the CTL and Discovery Models in the Learning Process

Based on the analysis of the data collected, it was found that the learning models used and implemented by teachers at Ma’had Zubair vary, such as the integrated learning model, Word Square, PBL (Project-Based Learning), and cooperative learning; however, the most prominent models are CTL and discovery learning. In the Arabic language learning model for the elderly at Ma’had Zubair, there are several factors that must be considered to ensure that the learning process runs smoothly as expected.

The general steps in implementing the CTL and discovery learning models identified by the researcher are as follows; elderly students can master and understand every term they study, subjects such as ta'bir, qiraah, kitabah, adab, tafsir al-Quran, hadith, fiqh, balaghah, nahwu, sharaf, history, and tawhid must be structured in a way that is appropriate for the abilities of older adults in learning these subjects, elderly students use assistive devices during the learning process to help them understand the material, the instructor first explains the vocabulary or grammar rules contained in the material by demonstrating them or writing them clearly on the blackboard, for the topics of ta'bir and qiraah, it is hoped that the older students will be more active than the instructors; after the material has been practiced, the instructors will open a question-and-answer session, active language proficiency—not just passive—whether when completing assignments or doing exercises, the instructor encourages the elderly students to take turns speaking with one another, which also helps alleviate the shyness of the other elderly students, especially when covering the topic of ta'bir.

The CTL and discovery models require specific steps to ensure that elderly students can master the four competencies; this, of course, also requires the right methods. There are several methods that can be used to support this learning model, which the researcher identified as follows; 1) the qawaid wa tarjamah method emphasizes proficiency in reading, writing, and translating foreign languages and places greater emphasis on the rules of nahwu; instruction is delivered deductively on topics such as nahwu, qira'ah, kitabah, tafsir, hadith, tauhid, and balaghah, 2) direct method (mubasyarah) using the target language. This method emphasizes speaking and listening skills. The teaching is conducted inductively, specifically for the topics of ta'bir and ashwat, 3) the audio-lingual method. This method assumes that language is a habit; therefore, language instruction must be conducted through repetition. The goal is to achieve balanced language proficiency, following the sequence of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It is also commonly used for vocabulary and pronunciation exercises, 4) the eclectic (intiqaiyyah) method combines the positive aspects of both language skills and knowledge. This method requires older students to possess proficiency in listening, speaking, writing, and reading, 5) the qiraah method. The goal is to develop proficiency in reading. This involves providing textbooks. Students then work on understanding the meanings of key vocabulary words, expanding their vocabulary, and grasping the overall content. At Ma'had Zubair, this method is most often practiced through reading aloud by the elderly students. Only then are the rules explained.

Elderly Islamic Boarding School Students' Responses to the Use of the CTL and Discovery Learning Models in Various Language Skills; This learning model is appealing to elderly students. The results of this study indicate that the CTL and discovery models can improve Arabic proficiency among elderly students.

This study shows that, using the CTL and discovery models, elderly students are more active in their learning, enabling them to expand their vocabulary. In addition, they are able to understand the pictures, teaching aids, and instructions provided by the teacher to help them comprehend texts or the sentences they are about to express. As a result, the elderly students gain a new and amazing experience because they take turns speaking individually in front of the class, taking advantage of the opportunities provided by the teacher.

When teachers use the CTL and discovery learning models, the elderly students find the lessons enjoyable, especially when teachers incorporate appropriate media into the learning process—such as television, pictures, teaching aids, and a radio placed in the corner of the room that plays stories in Arabic—which helps expand their vocabulary every day.

The researcher concludes that the CTL and discovery learning models received a positive response from elderly students because, according to them, these models allow them to use their imagination in constructing sentences in Arabic and then translating them into Arabic. This, in turn, enhances the elderly students' understanding of the Arabic language. However, this model is not suitable for some elderly students due to their age and the decline in their

- Munawaroh, S., Pikanto, I., Azara, T., Prastiwi, T., & Latifah, A. (2023). AKHLAK SISWA DALAM PROSES PEMBELAJARAN. *Unisan Jurnal: Jurnal Manajemen Dan Pendidikan*, 02(08), 186–191.
- Susiawati, I., Zulkarnain, Z., Safitri, W., & Mardani, D. (2022). Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Di Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (Tinjauan Pada Kompetensi Guru Dan Model Pembelajaran). *El-Tsaqafah : Jurnal Jurusan PBA*, 21(1), 101–116. <https://doi.org/10.20414/tsaqafah.v21i1.4757>
- Zakaria, Z., Citraningsih, D., Ricky, R., & Wiranata, S. (2023). Pendidikan Islam Lansia : Memotret Metode Pembelajaran di Pesantren Lansia Ahsanu ‘ Amala. *Jurnal Kajian Pendidikan Islam*, 2(2).

Copyright Holder:

© Aulia Fitri and Yunaldi (2026).

First Publication Right:

© Qaul ‘Arabiy

This article is under:

