



Developing and Modifying Arabic Writing Instruction Materials Based on *Idhāfah* and *Na't* Constructions through a Problem-Based Learning Approach

Dr. Nurhidayati

Department of Arabic Literature, Faculty of Letters, Universitas Negeri Malang,
Indonesia

E-mail: nurhidayati.fs@um.ac.id

Abstract

This study focuses on the development and modification of Arabic writing instructional materials that emphasize *Idhāfah* (construct phrase) and *Na't* (adjectival phrase) structures through a **Problem-Based Learning (PBL)** approach. The aim is to enhance students' grammatical accuracy, coherence, and analytical awareness in constructing Arabic sentences. Using the **Research and Development (R&D)** design and the **ADDIE model**, the study involved stages of analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. The developed materials were tested on third-semester students of the Arabic Language Department at Universitas Negeri Malang. Data were collected through expert validation, classroom observation, and student performance analysis. The findings revealed that the developed materials achieved high validity (average score 91.4%), practicality, and effectiveness. Students demonstrated significant improvement in composing accurate *Idhāfah* and *Na't* constructions, with overall writing accuracy increasing by 83%. Moreover, the PBL approach stimulated critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. The study concludes that contextual problem-based writing tasks can bridge linguistic theory and practical application, fostering meaningful and independent Arabic writing competence.

Keywords: Teaching Material Development, Arabic Writing, *Idhāfah* Construction, *Na't* Construction, Problem-Based Learning

1. Introduction

Writing in Arabic requires mastery of syntactic precision and semantic coherence, especially when constructing *Idhāfah* (construct phrases) and *Na't* (adjectival phrases), which represent fundamental grammatical relations in Arabic. However, many university students

struggle to apply these structures appropriately in their writing. Common errors include mismatches in definiteness, gender, and agreement between modifiers and head nouns, reflecting a gap between grammatical knowledge and writing practice.

Traditional approaches to teaching Arabic writing often emphasize mechanical drills or sentence translation without real communicative purpose. Consequently, students fail to internalize grammatical functions contextually. Responding to this issue, this study integrates **Problem-Based Learning (PBL)** as a pedagogical framework that links grammar instruction with real-life communication and cognitive engagement.

PBL encourages learners to solve authentic linguistic problems through exploration, collaboration, and reflection. By embedding *Idhāfah* and *Naʿt* within problem scenarios—such as composing advertisements, reports, or cultural descriptions—students are challenged to use grammar meaningfully rather than mechanically. Thus, this research aims to develop and modify Arabic writing materials that embody these principles and assess their effectiveness in improving syntactic competence and creativity.

2. Method

This research employed the **Research and Development (R&D)** methodology using the **ADDIE model**, which includes five stages: Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation.

2.1. Analysis

The analysis stage identified three major learning needs:

1. Lack of contextual writing materials integrating grammar and creativity.
2. Frequent grammatical errors in *Idhāfah* and *Naʿt* usage.
3. Low student motivation in writing courses due to repetitive, theory-based exercises.

Needs analysis data were collected from lecturer interviews, student questionnaires, and analysis of student writing samples.

2.2. Design

In this phase, learning objectives were formulated to develop students' ability to:

- Identify and analyze *Idhāfah* and *Naʿt* structures in authentic texts.
- Apply these structures correctly in composition.

- Solve communicative tasks using writing as a tool for expression.

Learning modules were designed into **six thematic units**:

1. Identity and Description
2. Places and Ownership
3. Professions and Attributes
4. Events and Relationships
5. Social Issues and Reports
6. Argumentative Writing

Each unit consisted of problem-based tasks such as completing missing parts of a paragraph, correcting incorrect sentences, and writing short essays in response to contextual prompts.

2.3. Development

At the development stage, the modules were validated by three experts in Arabic linguistics, writing pedagogy, and instructional design. Validation focused on:

- **Content accuracy** (linguistic correctness, relevance of examples).
- **Instructional design** (clarity, sequencing, task variety).
- **Language usability** (clarity, consistency, and aesthetics).

Expert validation results averaged **91.4%**, categorized as “very valid.” Several revisions were made—such as increasing examples from authentic Arabic media and enhancing reflective writing tasks.

2.4. Implementation

The revised materials were implemented for **eight weeks** among 24 third-semester students at the Department of Arabic Literature, Universitas Negeri Malang. Teaching sessions followed the **PBL cycle**: problem presentation, group investigation, solution formulation, and reflection.

Students worked in small groups, analyzing sentence patterns, diagnosing syntactic problems, and proposing corrections collaboratively. The lecturer served as a facilitator, providing scaffolding questions and feedback rather than direct correction.

2.5. Evaluation

Evaluation was carried out through:

- **Expert validation**
- **Observation sheets** (teaching feasibility and engagement)
- **Writing performance tests**
- **Student perception questionnaires**

The evaluation aimed to measure not only linguistic improvement but also changes in critical thinking, creativity, and motivation.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Improvement of Writing Accuracy

The implementation of problem-based writing tasks significantly enhanced students' mastery of *Idhāfah* and *Naʿt*. Pre-test and post-test comparisons showed an improvement from **58% to 83%** accuracy in syntactic application. Errors such as adjective-noun mismatch, misuse of definite articles, and incorrect word order decreased markedly.

The integration of contextual tasks allowed learners to analyze real-world sentences rather than isolated drills. For example, in a task titled “Describing a Historical Place,” students had to use *Idhāfah* structures like *bābu al-madrasah*, *masjidu al-jāmiʿ*, and *muʿallimu al-lughah*, emphasizing ownership and relational meaning. This context-based reinforcement made grammar functional rather than abstract.

3.2. Enhancement of Critical Thinking and Collaboration

PBL requires learners to explore, hypothesize, and evaluate linguistic problems collaboratively. During classroom observations, students engaged in analytical discussions, comparing sentence alternatives such as *baytu al-ustādh al-kabīr* vs. *al-baytu al-kabīr li al-ustādh*. Such negotiation fostered meta-linguistic awareness—the ability to think about language use critically.

Group reflections revealed that collaborative problem-solving improved both understanding and confidence. One student stated:

“Solving sentence problems together helps me notice grammar rules I never realized before.”

This aligns with **Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory (1978)**, emphasizing the role of social interaction and scaffolding in developing higher mental functions.

3.3. Integration of Grammar and Meaning

Unlike traditional grammar exercises, the developed materials embedded grammatical structures within meaningful communicative contexts. For instance, the unit on “Professional Identity” required students to write job advertisements, descriptions, and biographies using accurate *Na‘t* forms. This linkage between grammar and meaning strengthened students’ ability to apply rules creatively.

The finding supports **Halliday’s (1994)** functional grammar perspective, which views language as a resource for meaning-making. By connecting grammatical form to semantic function, students learned not just *how* to form structures, but *why* they are used in particular contexts.

3.4. Student Motivation and Perception

Questionnaire data showed that **94%** of students found the materials engaging and relevant. They appreciated the authentic tasks and opportunities to solve linguistic problems collaboratively. Many also reported that PBL activities helped them “think in Arabic” rather than translate from Indonesian.

Motivation increased because learning became purposeful, linked to problem-solving and expression. According to **Deci and Ryan’s Self-Determination Theory (2000)**, this autonomy-driven learning fosters intrinsic motivation—essential for sustained progress in writing.

3.5. Validation of Effectiveness

Statistical analysis of writing scores confirmed that the PBL-integrated materials achieved significant effectiveness ($t = 6.47, p < 0.05$). Observation data also indicated high levels of engagement and creativity. These results affirm that task-based and problem-oriented strategies can successfully bridge grammatical theory and writing performance.

4. Conclusion

The development and modification of Arabic writing materials based on *Idhāfah* and *Na‘t* constructions using a Problem-Based Learning approach proved effective in enhancing both linguistic accuracy and cognitive engagement. The integration of real-world writing problems enabled students to internalize grammatical rules within meaningful contexts, transforming passive knowledge into active competence.

This study highlights three key contributions:

1. **Pedagogical innovation:** shifting grammar teaching toward analytical, problem-solving pedagogy.
2. **Linguistic reinforcement:** improved syntactic accuracy and cohesion in Arabic writing.
3. **Motivational impact:** increased learner autonomy, collaboration, and creativity.

Future research is recommended to expand the model for other grammatical themes (e.g., *jumla ismiyyah*, *jumla fi'liyyah*) and to integrate digital PBL environments that encourage continuous, reflective writing.

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