Al Akhbar

Al Akhbar: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab

The Use of Artificial Intelligence in Arabic Language Learning: A Phenomenological Study at Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri Bojonegoro

Miftahul Mufid[1]; Devi Eka Diantika[2]; Ahmad Amirul Kholid[3]; Noor Shamshinar binti Zakaria[4]

[1,2,3] Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri, Indonesia
[4] University Islam Selangor, Malaysia

Correspondence Email: miftahul.mufid@gmail.com

Abstract

This study examines lecturers' and students' experiences of using artificial intelligence (AI), patterns of use, and their implications for Arabic language learning in higher education. The study employed a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design and involved three informants at Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri Bojonegoro: one lecturer and two students in the Arabic Language and Literature Study Program. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation and analyzed thematically based on informants' experiences and interpretations. The findings reveal three forms of AI use: a space for dialogue and knowledge exploration, a supporting tool in Arabic philology learning, and a means for lecturers to explore and develop teaching materials. Informants verified, compared, and reprocessed AI outputs by drawing on their knowledge and relevant academic sources. This progressive-reflective pattern demonstrates openness to technology alongside critical judgment in academic decision-making. The findings emphasize the importance of AI literacy, the ability to verify linguistic information, and lecturers' roles as pedagogical mediators in supporting learner autonomy.

Keywords: *Artificial intelligence; Arabic language learning; learning experiences; AI literacy; phenomenological study.*

A. Introduction

Advances in artificial intelligence (AI) technology have brought changes to various areas of life, including higher education. The emergence of generative AI, particularly ChatGPT, offers students and lecturers new opportunities to obtain information, develop learning materials, engage in discussions, and address academic problems. This technology serves not only as a source of information but also as an interactive space where users can ask questions, obtain explanations, and explore ideas through dialogue. In language education, these developments are particularly important because language learning involves not only acquiring linguistic knowledge but also understanding, producing, and using language in various communicative situations.

Arabic language learning in higher education requires mastery of several linguistic components, including vocabulary (*mufradāt*), grammar (*qawā'id*), listening (*mahārah istimā'*), speaking (*mahārah kalām*), reading (*mahārah qirā'ah*), and writing (*mahārah kitābah*). Previous research has addressed these competencies through comparative examinations of Arabic grammar textbooks (Faizin, 2024) and the application of presentation and *muhadatsah* methods to develop speaking skills (Andriani & Faizin, 2025). Beyond linguistic competence, attention has also been directed toward the management of Arabic language teaching from Islamic historical and cultural perspectives (Mustofa, 2025) and the application of discovery learning to foster learner autonomy (Ikhsan & Anifah, 2025). These pedagogical considerations provide a relevant foundation for exploring how emerging technologies can support more flexible, interactive, and autonomous Arabic language learning. Sulaeman et al. (2023) explain that ChatGPT offers new opportunities in Arabic language education technology, particularly through its conversational responses. Nevertheless, its use requires attention to technological limitations and the accuracy of generated information.

Several studies have begun exploring AI use in Arabic language learning. Kholid and Majeed (2025), for example, investigated the use of ChatGPT to

support Arabic speaking skills at Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri. Their study demonstrated that ChatGPT could facilitate interaction and practice in learning *mahārah kalām*. This study is relevant because it shows that AI has become part of Arabic language learning practices at UNUGIRI. However, its focus was specifically on speaking skills. There remains scope to investigate experiences of AI use across more diverse Arabic academic activities, including intellectual dialogue, linguistic information retrieval, and learning material development.

Through a systematic review of publications on ChatGPT and language education, Li et al. (2024) demonstrate that this technology has been used in various language teaching and learning activities, including independent learning, materials development, and teaching-related tasks. Meanwhile, Kohnke et al. (2023) emphasize that ChatGPT has the potential to support language teaching and learning, but its use requires digital competence, pedagogical considerations, and an understanding of technological limitations. Thus, successful AI integration cannot be assessed solely by the ease of obtaining answers; it must also consider how users evaluate, process, and employ the outputs generated by the technology.

Beyond pedagogical aspects, user experience is an important dimension of understanding AI use. Drawing on a qualitative study of students' experiences with ChatGPT, Holland and Ciachir (2025) identify three major themes: immediacy, equity, and integrity. These findings indicate that AI use in education involves not only practical benefits but also critical considerations regarding information reliability, academic responsibility, and users' roles in learning. This experiential perspective is important for understanding AI not merely as a technological tool but as part of learning experiences involving consideration, acceptance, rejection, and evaluation by students and lecturers (Li et al., 2024).

Although research on AI in Arabic language learning is growing, studies specifically describing students' and lecturers' direct experiences of using AI across diverse Arabic academic activities need further development.

Research focusing on a single language skill, such as speaking, does not fully explain how AI is used in activities with different characteristics. Moreover, it is important to understand how users interact with AI, respond to generated answers, and verify and adapt information before using it in academic activities. These issues are increasingly relevant because AI outputs are not always accurate and still require human judgment (Hakim et al., n.d.).

This study addresses this research gap by exploring students' and lecturers' experiences of using AI in Arabic language learning at Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri Bojonegoro. It adopts a phenomenological approach focusing on participants' experiences, forms of AI use, and how users interpret and evaluate their interactions with the technology. The data analyzed in this article form part of a broader study, with the scope limited to the experiences of informants at UNUGIRI. This focus enables a more detailed discussion of AI use within this university context without intending to generalize the findings to all university students and lecturers.

Accordingly, this study aims to describe students' and lecturers' experiences of using AI in Arabic language learning, identify forms of its use in academic activities, and analyze users' critical attitudes toward accepting and verifying AI-generated information. AI is understood not as a replacement for lecturers or students' thinking abilities, but as a supporting technology whose use depends on learning objectives, user capabilities, and critical human judgment. The findings are expected to provide an empirical account of AI use in Arabic language learning and inform the development of adaptive, reflective, and responsible Arabic language instruction.

B. Method

This study employed a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design. This approach was selected to understand the subjective experiences of students and lecturers using artificial intelligence (AI) in Arabic language learning at Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri (UNUGIRI) Bojonegoro (Hardani et al., 2020). The study focused on forms of AI use, user interaction

experiences, and critical considerations in accepting and using information generated by the technology. This article presents a focused examination within a broader study of AI use in Arabic language teaching at Islamic higher education institutions in Bojonegoro, limiting its analysis to data from UNUGIRI informants.

The participants comprised three informants: one lecturer and two students at UNUGIRI. They were selected based on their direct experience of using AI to support Arabic academic activities. The first informant, Tajuddin Ahmad, is a lecturer in the Arabic Language and Literature Study Program at UNUGIRI who uses ChatGPT and Gemini to explore and develop learning materials, particularly in computational linguistics. The second informant, Khusnul Khatimah, is a seventh-semester student in the same program who uses ChatGPT and Gemini for dialogue, developing understanding, and comparing information. The third informant, Imam Prasojo, is a seventh-semester student in the program who uses Google Lens and ChatGPT in Arabic philology activities, particularly to assist with text reading, vowel marking, and interpretation. The informants' real names are used in presenting the research data based on the identities recorded in the interview transcripts.

Data were collected through three techniques: in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews explored the purposes of AI use, interaction experiences, benefits, challenges, and how informants verified generated information. The interview with Tajuddin Ahmad focused on using AI to develop learning materials and explore academic information. Meanwhile, interviews with Khusnul Khatimah and Imam Prasojo explored students' experiences of using AI to support Arabic academic activities, including dialogic interaction and philology learning.

Observation was conducted to obtain a direct account of AI use practices. One observed activity was Imam Prasojo's use of Google Lens and ChatGPT in Arabic philology on December 12, 2025. The observation covered script recognition, vowel marking, and text comprehension. Documentation was

used to collect supporting evidence, including visual records of AI application use.

Data were analyzed using Colaizzi's (1978) phenomenological procedure (Morrow, Rosie, 2015). The stages comprised repeatedly reading interview transcripts and observation notes; identifying significant statements; formulating meanings from these statements; grouping meanings into clusters of themes; developing an exhaustive description; and formulating the fundamental structure of the phenomenon. The final stage involved confirming the description with informants to ensure that interpretations corresponded to their experiences, if this procedure was undertaken. The analysis was organized into themes of intellectual dialogue with AI, AI use in Arabic philology, and lecturers' use of AI in learning material development.

Data trustworthiness was examined through methodological triangulation by comparing interviews, observations, and documentation. Information concerning Imam Prasojo's use of Google Lens and ChatGPT, for example, was examined against his account, direct observation, and documentary evidence. The researchers also repeatedly reviewed the data and traced each theme to relevant data sources. These steps were taken to maintain interpretive accuracy and ensure that conclusions were grounded in informants' empirical experiences.

C. Results and Discussion

Research Findings

The findings describe lecturers' and students' experiences of using artificial intelligence (AI) in Arabic language learning at Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri (UNUGIRI) Bojonegoro. The research data focus on three informants: Tajuddin Ahmad, a lecturer in the Arabic Language and Literature (BSA) Study Program, and Khusnul Khatimah and Imam Prasojo, students in that program. The three informants have different experiences

and orientations toward AI use according to their respective academic needs and learning activities.

Data were obtained through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. The interview with Khusnul Khatimah took place on January 6, 2026, lasting approximately 75 minutes, while Imam Prasojo was interviewed on December 12, 2025, for approximately 34 minutes. The interview with Tajuddin Ahmad took place on April 23, 2026, lasting approximately 34 minutes. These three data sources were used to identify forms of AI use, user experiences, and how informants understood and responded to AI outputs in academic activities.

Overview of AI Use in Arabic Language Learning at UNUGIRI

The interviews revealed a variety of applications and purposes for AI use in Arabic language learning at UNUGIRI. The three informants employed AI technologies according to their respective needs. Students tended to use AI to understand materials, translate texts, engage in discussions, and resolve linguistic problems. Meanwhile, the lecturer used AI to explore scholarly information, develop materials, and support lesson planning.

Khusnul Khatimah explained that her most frequently used applications were ChatGPT and Gemini. She had also tried DeepL for translation and occasionally used Google Translate. However, she did not particularly favor Google Translate for literary texts because, in her experience, its translations did not always correspond to the textual context. She more frequently used DeepL for translation and ChatGPT and Gemini for conversational interaction.

In her coursework, Khusnul used AI primarily to summarize materials and assist with adding vowel marks, or diacritics, to Arabic texts. Her use was selective rather than intended to replace the entire learning process. She also tended to compare outputs from multiple applications. In the interview notes, Khusnul evaluated ChatGPT and Gemini based on her experiences with both platforms. She rated Gemini 8 and ChatGPT 6 in her comparison.

These ratings demonstrate comparative user experience, although they cannot be interpreted as objective measurements of accuracy.

Unlike Khusnul, Imam Prasojo displayed a more selective pattern of use. He mentioned ChatGPT, Google Gemini, and Google Lens. He had not extensively explored AI features in other applications, such as Canva AI. Imam primarily used AI to understand unfamiliar Arabic texts or information. He used AI to find meanings, assist with translation, and support particular tasks in his philology course. In contrast, for understanding Arabic syntax (nahwu) and morphology (sharaf), Imam stated that he still relied on books rather than using AI as his primary source.

During the interview, Imam explained that he most frequently used AI when encountering unfamiliar texts or expressions. He stated:

"If I don't understand the meaning, I use AI. Or if there is something in Arabic that I don't understand, I first look it up through AI."

This statement indicates that AI serves as a means for Imam to seek additional explanations when encountering difficulties in text comprehension. He does not use it to compose essays or independently construct Arabic sentences. His use of AI is therefore oriented more toward supporting comprehension and addressing specific technical problems in learning.

Meanwhile, Tajuddin Ahmad, as a lecturer, used AI for a wider range of purposes. He mentioned ChatGPT, Gemini, Canva AI, Perplexity, and other applications supporting translation and diagram creation. ChatGPT and Gemini were used to explore scholarly information, while Canva AI was used to create presentations. He also mentioned using translation and diagram-making applications as part of his academic activities.

Tajuddin explained that his use of AI was not limited to preparing presentation materials but also involved exploring emerging issues in computational linguistics. The information obtained could inform the

preparation of the semester learning plan (RPS), particularly in determining course learning outcomes (CPMK) and their sub-outcomes (sub-CPMK).

These three experiences indicate that AI use within the Arabic Language and Literature Study Program at UNUGIRI does not follow a uniform pattern. Khusnul primarily uses AI for summarizing, discussing, and supporting linguistic tasks. Imam uses it selectively to comprehend texts and support philological activities. Tajuddin uses it to explore information and develop learning materials. These differences demonstrate that AI use is closely related to users' roles, academic needs, and the types of learning activities undertaken.

Table 1. Forms of AI Use among Informants at UNUGIRI

Informant	**AI applications**	**Forms of use**	**Purpose of use**
Tajuddin Ahmad	ChatGPT, Gemini, Canva AI, Perplexity	Information exploration, journal searches, semester learning plan development, presentations, diagrams	Material development and pedagogical activities
Khusnul Khatimah	ChatGPT, Gemini, DeepL	Summarizing materials, vowel marking, translation, academic discussion	Supporting comprehension and knowledge exploration
Imam Prasojo	ChatGPT, Gemini, Google Lens	Translation, meaning searches, text recognition, vowel marking assistance	Supporting text comprehension and philological activities

Source: Compiled from interview transcripts of Tajuddin Ahmad (April 23, 2026), Khusnul Khatimah (January 6, 2026), and Imam Prasojo (December 12, 2025).

Students' Experiences of Using AI as a Space for Academic Dialogue

Khusnul Khatimah's experience demonstrates that AI in Arabic language learning serves not only to obtain rapid answers but also as a space for dialogue to develop understanding. In her interview, Khusnul explained that

she sometimes engaged AI in discussions and debates about particular issues. She did not always accept its answers but sought to compare and test the information obtained.

Khusnul stated:

"Sometimes I get it to discuss things with me, to debate. So I don't just use AI for absolutely everything, no."

She also emphasized that AI was only a supporting tool rather than the primary standard in her learning. In her view, AI should not cause people to lose their ability to rely on their own knowledge. She stated:

"AI is just a tool, nothing more, just a tool. So for me, whether AI exists or not, as much as possible we should still be able to stand on our own, so to speak, rely on our own knowledge, and not depend on it completely."

These statements show that Khusnul developed a dialogic pattern of interaction with AI. She used the technology to obtain additional perspectives while maintaining her own judgment of the generated information. Field notes also indicated that Khusnul could explain technical comparisons between ChatGPT and Gemini, including reasoning features and prompting strategies. During the interview, she actively provided concrete examples and demonstrated a reflective attitude toward the limits of AI use.

This critical attitude was also evident in how Khusnul verified linguistic information. She did not treat AI outputs as her sole reference. When receiving answers concerning Arabic language issues, she compared them with the Ma'any dictionary, classical texts, books, and explanations from teachers or lecturers. In Arabic syntax and morphology, for example, she continued to rely on classical texts for more detailed discussions. AI was considered useful for explaining general concepts but not necessarily capable of addressing the detailed explanations found in works such as Alfiyah or Qatrun Nada.

Khusnul also explained that she did not rely entirely on AI to understand religious texts, particularly the Qur'an and hadith. She recognized that translating such texts required caution and more specialized references. This demonstrates that AI use is influenced by users' considerations of the nature and complexity of the materials being studied.

Khusnul's experience suggests that AI can provide a space for academic interaction that encourages users to ask follow-up questions, compare answers, and test their understanding. Nevertheless, this process still requires foundational Arabic language competence and prior knowledge. Thus, dialogic interaction with AI is not synonymous with passive information acceptance but involves students' active thinking and judgment.

Table 2. Forms of Khusnul Khatimah's Dialogic Interaction with AI

Aspect	**Interview findings**	**Actions**
Interaction with AI	Engaging AI in discussion and debate	Asking questions and follow-up questions
Platform comparison	Using ChatGPT and Gemini	Comparing answers from both platforms
Information verification	Not accepting AI answers unconditionally	Consulting the Ma'any dictionary, classical texts, books, and lecturers' explanations
Learner autonomy	AI is only a supporting tool	Continuing to rely on one's own knowledge
Limits of use	Exercising caution with religious texts	Not treating AI as the sole reference for the Qur'an and hadith

AI Use in Arabic Philology Learning

The use of AI in Arabic philology learning is concretely illustrated by Imam Prasojo's experience. In philology courses, students encounter manuscript texts whose characteristics differ from those of printed Arabic texts. Unclear handwriting, the need to transcribe texts, and difficulties determining vowel marks are among the challenges encountered in learning.

Imam explained that he first manually transcribed the manuscript text. He then used Google Lens to assist with text recognition before copying the output into ChatGPT for assistance with vowel marking and understanding the meaning. He stated:

"In philology, I often use AI. I use it just to help: first I write out the manuscript, then I put it into Google Lens, and then I copy it into AI to find out the vowel marks and what it means. But not everything; sometimes you have to check whether it's right or not and read it again."

Based on this account, AI use in philological activities involves several stages. First, the student manually transcribes the manuscript. Second, the text is entered into Google Lens to facilitate script recognition. Third, the resulting text is entered into ChatGPT to assist with vowel marking and understanding its meaning. Fourth, the student rereads and verifies the AI-generated output.

Using AI in this process does not mean delegating all manuscript reading to technology. Imam continues to transcribe and check texts independently. He recognizes that AI outputs are not always accurate and therefore require further examination. Thus, AI assists with some technical processes, while text comprehension still requires students' linguistic competence.

Imam also applied a strategy of entering text incrementally. Rather than submitting an entire manuscript page at once, he divided it into sections or paragraphs. In his view, this made the text easier to understand and verify. He explained:

"Usually I enter it paragraph by paragraph ... because when there's a lot at once, sometimes it's difficult to understand. That's why I enter it paragraph by paragraph, then look at it again and check it again."

This strategy demonstrates how users adapt their interactions with AI according to their needs. Imam not only uses the application but also regulates the amount of text submitted so that comprehension can proceed

gradually. After receiving an output, he rereads and examines the text before using it.

Imam's experience also demonstrates the limitations of AI use in philology. He emphasized that students must first possess foundational skills before using AI. This is important because a single written form or word in Arabic may have multiple possible readings and meanings. Without foundational understanding, students may struggle to determine whether the vowel marks, vocabulary, or meanings provided by AI correspond to the manuscript context.

These findings were reinforced by observation of AI use in philology on December 12, 2025, and documentation of the use of Google Lens and ChatGPT. The observational data contextualize Imam's explanation of the stages of technology use in text processing. Thus, Imam's experience demonstrates that AI can support philology learning, particularly text recognition, vowel marking, and comprehension, without eliminating the need for critical reading and manual verification.

Lecturers' Use of ChatGPT to Explore and Develop Learning Materials

Tajuddin Ahmad's experience indicates that AI use in Arabic language learning also occurs at the level of planning and material development. As a lecturer teaching Philology, Research Methods, and Computational Linguistics, he uses ChatGPT and Gemini to obtain information about emerging scholarly issues. One area of particular interest is computational linguistics, a field connecting language science with computer technology.

Tajuddin explained that when preparing the semester learning plan (RPS), he needed to determine course learning outcomes (CPMK) and sub-outcomes according to course requirements. In this process, ChatGPT and Gemini were used to explore recent developments in computational linguistics. He stated:

"Through AI, through ChatGPT or Gemini, I explore what information is up to date or current, the latest issues in computational linguistics. Then I include those in the course learning outcomes and sub-outcomes in the semester learning plan."

This account indicates that AI functions as an initial source of information and ideas. The information obtained enriches the lecturer's considerations when formulating learning outcomes. AI therefore does not replace academic planning but provides additional information that can inform curriculum and course material development.

In teaching activities, Tajuddin also uses AI to explore additional information related to course materials. However, this information is not presented to students directly in the form of AI outputs. He first processes it independently and then simplifies its language and presentation to suit students' levels of understanding. He explained:

"But I still process that information myself, individually. And I present it to my students in simple language. Sometimes AI language doesn't sound human enough, you know. So I humanize it manually; I humanize the AI language myself."

This statement demonstrates that the lecturer processes information obtained through AI. The process includes selection, linguistic adaptation, and material simplification. Tajuddin considers AI outputs to sometimes use language that does not fully suit instructional communication needs. He therefore makes manual adjustments to facilitate students' understanding of the materials.

In addition to ChatGPT, Tajuddin mentioned using Gemini to search for journal articles relevant to his courses and identify recent topics. He also uses Canva to create presentations and other applications to support translation and diagram creation. This indicates that lecturers' use of digital technologies is not restricted to a single application but is adapted to the functions and requirements of academic work.

Tajuddin's role in guiding AI use was also apparent when students encountered difficulties reading manuscripts in Applied Philology. He explained that students had experienced challenges with manuscript handwriting that was not entirely legible. In such situations, he advised them to use ChatGPT's image feature to assist with script recognition. However,

he continued to emphasize that students must understand the content of the text they were working on.

In the interview, Tajuddin stated that obtaining data through AI alone was insufficient for students. They must be able to understand, explain, and apply the information. He had even cautioned students who presented AI-assisted papers without understanding their substantive content. In his view, students should seek clarification from lecturers whenever there are aspects they do not understand.

Field notes from Tajuddin's interview indicate that he had direct experience of using AI in teaching and research and provided concrete examples of his strategies. Observations of the interview interaction also recorded his explanation of an AI-use workflow involving technology, lecturer screening, and presentation to students. Thus, Tajuddin's use of AI demonstrates that technology is positioned as a support for material development, while the lecturer remains responsible for information quality and alignment with learning objectives.

Synthesis of AI Use Patterns among Lecturers and Students

The experiences of Tajuddin Ahmad, Khusnul Khatimah, and Imam Prasojo reveal a pattern of AI use characterized by openness to technology alongside awareness of its limitations. All three use AI to support academic activities without delegating the entire process of thinking, comprehension, and decision-making to technology. This shared characteristic constitutes an important finding concerning AI use in Arabic language learning at UNUGIRI.

Differences in the three informants' experiences are particularly evident in their orientations toward AI use. Tajuddin, as a lecturer, uses AI to explore scholarly developments, enrich semester learning plans, search for journal articles, and develop learning materials. Khusnul, as a student, uses AI to discuss, compare answers, summarize materials, and support linguistic

tasks. Meanwhile, Imam uses AI more selectively to comprehend difficult texts and support philology learning.

Despite these differences, all three demonstrate human control over AI use. Khusnul engages AI in dialogue and compares its answers with dictionaries, classical texts, and lecturers' explanations. Imam checks AI-generated text recognition, vowel marking, and interpretations. Tajuddin processes and simplifies information before presenting it to students. These experiences show that AI outputs are not accepted unconditionally but evaluated based on users' knowledge and academic needs.

This pattern also demonstrates that foundational human capabilities remain essential prerequisites for AI use. In Arabic language learning, students require linguistic knowledge to check vocabulary, structure, vowel marks, and meaning. Similarly, lecturers require disciplinary and pedagogical competence to determine the relevance of AI-generated information. Without these abilities, technology use may encourage passive acceptance of information and diminish comprehension processes.

Thus, the findings indicate that AI use at UNUGIRI can be understood as a progressive-reflective pattern. It is progressive because the informants are open to using technology to expand information access, support academic work, and develop learning activities. It is reflective because they continue to consider AI's limitations, verify its outputs, and maintain human thinking and knowledge as the basis for decision-making.

In the experiences of the three informants, AI is not positioned as a replacement for lecturers, the sole source of knowledge, or the arbiter of informational truth. It is more appropriately understood as a supporting tool that can provide a space for dialogue and intellectual exploration. Users remain responsible for determining their purposes, selecting relevant information, checking output accuracy, and constructing understanding based on their own academic capabilities. These findings provide a basis for further discussion of AI as an intellectual partner, the transformation of

philology learning, lecturers' roles as pedagogical mediators, and the implications of AI use for Arabic language learning in higher education.

Discussion

AI as an Intellectual Partner in Arabic Language Learning

The findings indicate that artificial intelligence (AI) use in Arabic language learning at UNUGIRI is directed not only toward obtaining rapid answers but also toward creating a space for dialogue and knowledge exploration. This is evident in Khusnul Khatimah's experience of using ChatGPT and Gemini to discuss, compare answers, and even reassess AI-generated information. She explained that she sometimes engaged AI in discussions and debates but did not regard its answers as definitive. For her, AI remains a supporting tool, while the ability to rely on her own knowledge must be maintained (Khusnul Khatimah, interview, January 6, 2026).

This experience illustrates a shift in AI's function from merely an answer-retrieval mechanism to a medium of academic interaction. In dialogic use, students not only receive information but also pose follow-up questions, compare answers, and evaluate their correspondence with existing knowledge. Consequently, AI interaction becomes more active because students participate in constructing and testing their understanding.

This phenomenon can be understood through a dialogic learning perspective, which views questioning, responding, clarifying, and testing ideas as important components of knowledge construction. AI provides students with opportunities to develop questions and obtain rapid responses. However, learning quality is determined not merely by AI's ability to generate answers but by students' engagement in processing those responses. In this context, AI stimulates dialogue, while meaning-making continues through human thinking.

These findings also relate to a sociocultural perspective that views learning as a process mediated by tools and interaction. In Arabic language learning, AI can be positioned as a digital mediational tool that helps students access

explanations, alternative interpretations, and linguistic information. However, AI cannot automatically replace pedagogical interaction with lecturers, peer discussions, or authoritative scholarly sources. AI merely provides potential assistance, while the development of understanding depends on users' activities and abilities to employ that assistance.

This is consistent with Rahman et al.'s discussion of ChatGPT as a form of digital scaffolding in Arabic language learning. Digital assistance can support learning when used to help students understand materials and gradually develop their abilities. However, such assistance must be directed so that it does not diminish students' active involvement in learning. Kohnke et al. (2023) similarly position ChatGPT as a technology with potential to support language teaching and learning, while emphasizing the need for pedagogical considerations.

Thus, the term AI as an intellectual partner in this study refers to AI's function as a means of dialogue, exploration, and testing ideas. It does not imply that AI possesses consciousness, understanding, or academic authority equivalent to humans. Students remain the agents who determine questions, evaluate answers, and make decisions about the information obtained. Human control over the thinking process is a defining characteristic of reflective AI use.

AI and the Transformation of Arabic Philology Learning Practices

AI use in Arabic philology learning reveals opportunities to transform learning practices, particularly in helping students work with difficult-to-read manuscripts. Based on Imam Prasojo's experience, AI is used in applied philology learning to assist with reading and understanding Arabic texts. He explained that the process was not entirely delegated to AI. The student first reads and transcribes the text manually, then uses Google Lens to assist with recognizing manuscript handwriting. The resulting text is entered into ChatGPT to assist with vowel marking and understanding its meaning. The

output is subsequently reread and checked by the student (Imam Prasojo, interview, December 12, 2025).

This pattern reveals AI's potential as a supporting tool in digital philology learning. In conventional philology, students must be able to read scripts, recognize handwriting forms, understand linguistic structures, and interpret textual content. Image recognition technologies and AI-based chatbots can assist with several stages of these tasks, particularly when students encounter unclear script or require alternative readings. Digital technology can thus expand the sources of assistance available to students studying manuscripts.

Nevertheless, AI use in philology cannot be understood as transferring the entire reading and interpretation process to technology. Imam's experience indicates that AI outputs must still be checked by rereading. Texts are even entered incrementally to facilitate comprehension. These practices show that students still require linguistic competence to evaluate the correspondence of AI outputs to the context of the texts under investigation.

These limitations warrant attention because Arabic texts possess complex linguistic characteristics. Errors in recognizing letters, determining vowel marks, identifying morphological structures, or understanding sentence contexts can produce different interpretations. In manuscripts, these issues become more complex because physical condition, handwriting, legibility, and possible orthographic variations may affect text recognition. Consequently, Google Lens and ChatGPT outputs cannot immediately be treated as definitively accurate readings.

In learning contexts, AI use can provide opportunities to develop the relationship between technological and linguistic competence. Students must not only be able to operate applications but also read Arabic texts, understand syntax and morphology, recognize vocabulary, and consider context when interpreting texts. These linguistic competencies provide the basis for determining whether AI-generated results can be accepted or require correction.

Thus, the transformation of Arabic philology learning through AI lies not in replacing human philological abilities with technology but in developing workflows that combine conventional skills and digital assistance. AI can support text recognition and exploration, while accurate reading and interpretation still require linguistic knowledge, careful examination, and academic judgment from students and lecturers. These findings suggest that digital philology learning should be directed toward both technological mastery and strengthening foundational philological competence.

The Role of Lecturers as Pedagogical Mediators in AI Use

The findings demonstrate that AI does not eliminate lecturers' roles in Arabic language learning. Instead, AI use creates a need for lecturers to select, guide, and contextualize information. Tajuddin Ahmad's experience shows that ChatGPT and Gemini are used to explore recent information, particularly when preparing semester learning plans (RPS), determining course learning outcomes (CPMK), and formulating sub-outcomes. AI-generated information is subsequently processed independently by the lecturer before being incorporated into instructional plans (Tajuddin Ahmad, interview, April 23, 2026).

In teaching practice, Tajuddin also explained that AI-generated information was not always conveyed directly to students. He first simplified and adapted the language of AI outputs to facilitate comprehension. In his view, AI-generated language sometimes sounded insufficiently human or did not meet students' needs. Lecturers therefore reprocess information before presenting materials in class. This practice demonstrates that lecturers serve not only as technology users but also as individuals responsible for ensuring that information aligns with learning objectives and characteristics.

This role can be understood as pedagogical mediation. Lecturers bridge AI-generated information and actual learning needs. In this process, they select information, consider material relevance, simplify explanations, and connect

them to learning outcomes. AI use therefore does not remove lecturers' responsibility for determining the direction of learning.

This finding is also evident in Tajuddin's guidance to students in philology learning. He introduced ways of using AI features to assist with reading unclear manuscript handwriting and provided guidance on prompting. Nevertheless, students were still required to understand the texts being studied. In other words, the lecturer not only introduced applications but also established pedagogical boundaries to ensure that technology did not eliminate the learning processes students were expected to undertake.

In AI-assisted learning environments, lecturers' competence thus involves not only mastery of Arabic language content and teaching skills but also AI literacy. Lecturers need to understand technological functions and limitations, formulate relevant instructions, and evaluate AI outputs. These competencies are necessary to ensure that AI is used according to learning needs rather than merely following technological developments.

Kohnke et al. (2023) highlight ChatGPT's potential to support language teaching and learning activities. Meanwhile, Li et al. (2024), through a systematic review of early publications on ChatGPT and language education, demonstrate widespread attention to opportunities for using this technology. However, technological potential must be situated within appropriate educational objectives and instructional designs. In this study, lecturers are the individuals who connect AI's potential with the actual needs of Arabic language learning.

Therefore, AI is more appropriately positioned as a source of assistance in instructional development rather than a replacement for lecturers' academic authority. Lecturers remain responsible for material accuracy, source selection, assessment, and students' competence development. AI use calls for strengthening the role of lecturers as pedagogical mediators who can guide students toward productive, critical, and responsible technology use.

A Progressive-Reflective and Human-Capability-Oriented Pattern of AI Use

Based on the experiences of the three informants, this study identified a pattern of AI use that can be interpreted as progressive-reflective and oriented toward human capabilities. The progressive dimension is evident in lecturers' and students' openness to trying and using AI technologies to support academic activities. Tajuddin Ahmad uses ChatGPT and Gemini to explore current issues in computational linguistics and develop learning materials. Khusnul Khatimah uses ChatGPT and Gemini for discussion, summarizing materials, and assistance with vowel marking. Meanwhile, Imam Prasojo uses Google Lens and ChatGPT to support text reading and comprehension in philology learning.

This openness indicates that AI is increasingly accepted as a source of assistance in academic activities. However, the informants' use extends beyond technological acceptance. They demonstrate awareness of the need to reassess AI outputs, compare them with other sources, and consider their suitability for learning needs. This reflective element distinguishes critical AI use from use oriented solely toward obtaining answers quickly.

Khusnul Khatimah, for example, explained that she did not regard AI as an absolute standard. She could engage AI in discussions or debates while continuing to rely on her own knowledge. To verify linguistic information, she also used the Ma'any dictionary, classical texts, and assistance from lecturers. This attitude demonstrates a verification mechanism that treats AI outputs as preliminary information rather than final conclusions.

A similar pattern appears in Imam Prasojo's experience. In philology learning, he rereads the text recognition results and explanations provided by applications to ensure their correspondence with his understanding. He also uses AI selectively according to his needs. Meanwhile, Tajuddin Ahmad processes and adapts AI-generated information before using it in teaching. These three experiences demonstrate that human control remains present in the selection, verification, and use of AI outputs.

This progressive-reflective pattern comprises two interrelated dimensions. The first is progressive: a willingness to use new technologies to expand access to information and support academic work. The second is reflective: an awareness that technology has limitations and that each output needs to be checked against knowledge, context, and credible sources. Together, these dimensions form a pattern of use that neither rejects technological developments nor passively accepts all their outputs.

These findings are consistent with Holland and Ciachir's (2025) discussion of students' experiences of using ChatGPT, which encompasses immediacy, equity of access, and academic integrity. AI can indeed facilitate learning activities, but this convenience needs to be accompanied by awareness of user responsibility. Sulaeman et al. (2023) also demonstrate the relevance of ChatGPT as a new development in Arabic education technology, whose use needs to be understood in relation to learning needs and practices.

Thus, the progressive-reflective pattern identified in this study emphasizes that successful AI use cannot be measured solely by frequency of use or the number of tasks completed. More important is users' ability to maintain independent thinking, verify information, and make responsible decisions. AI can serve as an intellectual partner in knowledge exploration but remains subject to the judgment of humans as agents of learning.

Implications of AI Use for Arabic Language Learning in Higher Education

The findings have several implications for developing Arabic language learning in higher education. First, AI offers opportunities to enrich learning activities by providing information, alternative explanations, translation assistance, material summaries, and support for developing teaching materials. Tajuddin Ahmad's experience demonstrates that AI can be used to explore emerging issues when preparing semester learning plans and developing materials. Meanwhile, the experiences of Khusnul Khatimah and Imam Prasojo show that students can use AI to support material comprehension, vowel marking, and Arabic text reading.

These opportunities indicate that AI integration can be developed across various Arabic language skills and fields of study. In language skills instruction, AI can be used for practice, vocabulary exploration, and preliminary feedback. In linguistic instruction, AI can help students obtain explanations or alternative analyses. In philology, image recognition technologies and chatbots can assist with text recognition and comprehension. However, these forms of use need to be adapted to the characteristics of the materials and the learning objectives of each course.

Second, these findings imply the importance of strengthening students' digital literacy and AI literacy. AI literacy cannot be understood merely as the ability to access and operate applications. Students also need to understand how to formulate prompts, recognize limitations in AI outputs, verify information, and consider the academic consequences of technology use. These abilities are necessary for students to become not only technology users but also capable of evaluating the quality of the information they obtain.

Third, Arabic language learning needs to pay greater attention to the ability to verify linguistic information. Khusnul Khatimah's experience of comparing AI outputs with the Ma'any dictionary, classical texts, and lecturers' explanations demonstrates the importance of consulting alternative sources. In Arabic, verification is necessary because the accuracy of vowel marks, grammatical structures, vocabulary meanings, and textual context are interrelated. An error in one element may affect comprehension of the entire text. Students therefore need to develop the habit of verifying AI outputs through relevant scholarly sources rather than accepting them directly.

Fourth, higher education institutions need to strengthen lecturers' roles in guiding AI use. Lecturers can integrate AI into learning through assignments requiring students to explain their technology-use processes, identify sources used for comparison, and justify their analyses. In philology learning, for example, students may be asked to demonstrate differences between manual readings and application-assisted results, then explain their academic

reasons for accepting or rejecting AI outputs. With this approach, assessment focuses not only on final products but also on students' thinking processes.

Fifth, AI use needs to be accompanied by strengthened academic ethics and efforts to prevent technological dependence. Students must understand that using AI does not remove their responsibility for the academic work they produce. They must still understand the content of assignments, explain their arguments, and account for their sources and production processes. Tajuddin Ahmad's experience, emphasizing the importance of students' understanding of AI-assisted materials, demonstrates that lecturers must ensure technology is not used to replace learning processes.

These implications also call for a shared understanding of the limits of AI use in academic activities. Higher education institutions and study programs can develop guidelines explaining permissible AI use, verification requirements, transparency of use, and students' responsibility for their work. Such guidelines should not merely contain prohibitions but also offer practical guidance on using AI in accordance with learning objectives.

Overall, the principal implication of this study is the need to develop Arabic language learning that adapts to AI developments without diminishing the central position of humans in education. Technology can expand access to information and assist academic activities, but learning quality remains determined by students' ability to understand, test, and apply knowledge and lecturers' ability to guide this process. AI integration in higher education therefore needs to be built on a balance between technological innovation, linguistic competence, learner autonomy, and academic responsibility.

D. Conclusion

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) in Arabic language learning at Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri (UNUGIRI) Bojonegoro demonstrates academic openness to technological innovation accompanied by users' critical attitudes. Drawing on the experiences of lecturers and students in the Arabic Language and Literature Study Program, AI use takes

three principal forms: a space for intellectual dialogue and knowledge exploration (through ChatGPT and Gemini); a technical aid in Arabic philology learning for manuscript text recognition, vowel marking, and preliminary interpretation (through a combination of Google Lens and ChatGPT); and a means for lecturers to explore emerging issues in developing semester learning plans (RPS) and teaching materials.

The findings emphasize that the academic community's interaction with AI is not passive. Both lecturers and students adopt a progressive-reflective pattern of use: they are open to the convenience and expanded information access offered by technology while continuing to verify AI outputs against authoritative sources such as dictionaries, classical texts, and scholarly judgment. Consequently, AI does not replace lecturers' roles or students' independent thinking but functions as a supporting intellectual partner requiring strengthened AI literacy, careful linguistic verification, and lecturers' roles as pedagogical mediators in responsible technology integration.

This study is limited to exploring the phenomenological experiences of three informants within a single study program. Future research is therefore recommended to broaden participant coverage across higher education institutions and examine more specifically the effectiveness and ethical guidelines of AI use in individual Arabic language skills (mahārah al-lughah), as well as the development of AI-based learning assessment instruments.

References

Andriani, D. D. A., & Faizin, K. (2025). The effectiveness of presentation and muhadatsah methods in improving Arabic speaking skills among Arabic language education students at Institut Attanwir Bojonegoro. *Al Akhbar: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab, 3*(2), 26–38. https://doi.org/10.53915/jpba.v4i1.173

Faizin, K. (2024). بحث المقارنة بين كتاب الدرة البهية نظم الآجرومية وكتاب النحو الواضح في تعليم اللغة العربية. *Al Akhbar: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab, 2*(1), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.53915/jpba.v1i1.150

Hakim, R. I., Darman, I. H., Deviana, A. D., Qomariyah, L., Rusuly, U., & Gusman, E. (n.d.). AI-assisted learning in Arabic grammar: Investigating the use of ChatGPT and digital platforms in Arabic learning. *Al-Ta'rib: Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab, 14*(1). https://doi.org/10.23971/altarib.v14i1.11513

Hardani, Andriani, H., Ustiawaty, J., Fatmi Utami, E., Rahmatul Istiqomah, R., Asri Fardani, R., Juliana Sukmana, D., & Hikmatul Auliya, N. (2020). *Buku penelitian kualitatif & kuantitatif*.

Holland, A., & Ciachir, C. (2025). A qualitative study of students' lived experience and perceptions of using ChatGPT: Immediacy, equity and integrity. *Interactive Learning Environments, 33*(1), 483–494. https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2024.2350655

Ikhsan, K., & Anifah, U. (2025). Penerapan model pembelajaran discovery learning dalam meningkatkan kemandirian belajar bahasa Arab. *Al Akhbar: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab, 3*(1), 1–10.

Kholid, A. A., & Majeed, M. Y. (2025). Enhancing Arabic speaking skills via ChatGPT: An exploratory study at Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri University. *Al-Ittijah: Jurnal Keilmuan dan Kependidikan Bahasa Arab, 17*(2), 148–162. https://doi.org/10.32678/alittijah.v17i2.12206

Li, B., Lowell, V. L., Wang, C., & Li, X. (2024). A systematic review of the first year of publications on ChatGPT and language education: Examining research on ChatGPT's use in language learning and teaching. *Computers and Education: Artificial Intelligence, 7*, 100266. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.caeai.2024.100266

Morrow, Rosie, R. (2015). Colaizzi's descriptive phenomenological method. *The Psychologist, 28*(8), 634–644.

Mustofa, M. S. (2025). Teaching Arabic as a foreign language management model from Islamic historical and cultural perspective: A qualitative study in educational institutions. *Al Akhbar: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab, 3*(2), 1–34.

Sulaeman, I., Syuhadak, & Sulaeman, I. (2023). ChatGPT as a new frontier in Arabic education technology. *Al-Arabi: Journal of Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language, 7*(1), 83–105. https://doi.org/10.17977/um056v7i1p83-105