

TEACHING MAHARAH ISTIMA' THROUGH THE SANTRI CHARACTER APPROACH AT PESANTREN SUNAN DRAJAT LAMONGAN

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Abstrak

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The teaching of maharah istima' (listening skills) serves as the primary foundation for Arabic language acquisition, particularly for students in pesantren-based higher education institutions. However, pedagogical practices often focus solely on linguistic aspects, neglecting the integration of Islamic character formation. This article aims to comprehensively describe the instruction of maharah istima' through a santri (Islamic boarding school student) character approach, utilizing Arabic-language videos embedded with Islamic values and ethics at Pesantren Sunan Drajat Lamongan. This study employed a qualitative descriptive method involving 27 third-semester students at Sunan Drajat University, Lamongan. The instructional process spanned one semester (14 sessions), encompassing stages of thematic introduction, video listening, analysis of mufradat (vocabulary) and expressions, and reflection on moral values (akhlaq). Data were collected through observation, documentation, and instructional reflection. The results indicate that this approach is effective in enhancing maharah istima' competence, enriching Arabic language mastery, and fostering students' religious, moral, and social character. These findings affirm that integrating Arabic language learning with santri character education is highly relevant for development in Islamic higher education.

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INTRODUCTION

Maharah istima' is a fundamental skill in Arabic language learning that plays a strategic role in developing comprehensive linguistic competence. Listening serves as the primary gateway for language acquisition because it provides learners with authentic linguistic input (Brown, 2007; Richards, 2008). In the context of Arabic instruction in Islamic higher education, maharah istima' functions not only as a tool for language mastery but also as a medium for internalizing Islamic values.

The reality of Arabic language instruction in higher education suggests that the teaching of maharah istima' remains largely mechanical, oriented toward the comprehension of sounds and linguistic structures without the inclusion of moral significance or messaging. This condition results in less contextualized learning that fails to fully support the objectives of Islamic education, which emphasizes the formation of akhlaq al-karimah (noble character). In fact, students within a pesantren environment possess religious characteristics that have the potential to be further developed through value-based Arabic learning.

Sunan Drajat University Lamongan, as an institution rooted in the pesantren tradition, holds an integrative vision of scholarship, Islamicity, and santri character building. Therefore, innovation in maharah istima' instruction is required to integrate Arabic language competence with character education. One relevant strategy is the utilization of Arabic-language videos containing Islamic and ethical content available on the YouTube platform.

YouTube provides authentic materials that are contextual, engaging, and accessible. Short lectures, exemplary stories, Islamic dialogues, and Arabic da'wah content present not only a living language but also moral messages and character values aligned with pesantren educational goals (Mayer, 2009; Harmer, 2007). Consequently, maharah istima' instruction based on Islamic-valued videos is expected to improve listening competence while simultaneously shaping student character. Based on this rationale, this article focuses on describing the teaching of maharah istima' through the santri character approach at Pesantren Sunan Drajat Lamongan, specifically for third-semester students at Sunan Drajat University Lamongan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Maharah Istima' in Arabic Language Learning

Maharah istima' (listening skill) is a foundational skill in Arabic language learning that holds a strategic role in overall language acquisition. In language learning studies, listening is viewed as a receptive skill that serves as the entry point for the acquisition of productive skills—speaking and writing—as well as the other receptive skill, reading. Brown (2007) defines maharah istima' as the ability to understand the meaning of spoken language delivered through various media, both directly and indirectly. This definition emphasizes that listening is not merely the act of hearing linguistic sounds but involves a complex cognitive process of capturing, interpreting, and understanding the message conveyed by the speaker.

In the context of learning Arabic as a foreign language, maharah istima' occupies a vital position. Arabic possesses phonological, morphological, and syntactical characteristics that differ from the mother tongues of most Indonesian learners. Therefore, proficient listening skills are a prerequisite for learners to recognize hijaiyah (Arabic alphabet) sounds, intonation, word stress, and sentence structures. Without

adequate listening ability, learners will encounter difficulties in developing other language skills.

Maharah Istimah' as the Basis of Language Acquisition

In second language acquisition theory, maharah istima' is regarded as the primary source of language input. Krashen (1985), through the Input Hypothesis, asserts that language acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to "comprehensible input." Listening becomes the main vehicle for obtaining this input, especially in the early stages of language learning. Thus, the quality and quantity of input obtained through listening activities significantly determine the success of language learning.

In Arabic instruction, the input gained through maharah istima' serves not only to introduce vocabulary and language structures but also to build "language intuition" within the learner. Through repeated exposure to spoken Arabic, learners begin to recognize language patterns naturally, making the learning process more effective and sustainable. Furthermore, maharah istima' plays a role in developing speaking skills. Learners with strong listening skills tend to find it easier to imitate authentic Arabic pronunciation, intonation, and expressions. This aligns with Richards' (2008) view that listening and speaking are two interrelated skills that cannot be separated in language learning.

Characteristics of Maharah Istimah' Instruction

The teaching of maharah istima' has distinct characteristics that differentiate it from other language skills. Listening is temporal, meaning that spoken utterances occur within a specific time frame and cannot be naturally repeated like written text. Consequently, istima' instruction demands high concentration, information processing speed, and short-term memory capacity.

In Arabic learning, the challenges of istima' instruction are increasingly complex due to differences in sound systems and language structures. Learners often struggle to distinguish similar letter sounds, understand utterances at a native speaker's normal speed, and grasp word meanings in diverse contexts. Therefore, maharah istima' instruction must be designed systematically and progressively. Richards (2008) emphasizes that effective listening instruction must involve authentic materials, meaningful contexts, and active strategies that encourage student engagement. Authentic materials expose learners to language used in real-world situations, thereby increasing relevance and learning motivation. Meaningful contexts help learners understand the overall message rather than just comprehending word-for-word.

Instructional Strategies for Maharah Istimah'

Instructional strategy is an important factor in the success of maharah istima' (listening skills) instruction. Listening strategies can be distinguished into two main types: bottom-up and top-down strategies. Bottom-up strategies focus on the recognition of sounds, vocabulary, and language structure, while top-down strategies emphasize the utilization of context, background knowledge, and prediction of meaning. Both strategies need to be combined in a balanced manner in Arabic language instruction. Learners need to be trained to recognize sounds and vocabulary accurately, while simultaneously understanding the context and message globally. This approach enables learners to develop comprehensive and flexible listening abilities. Furthermore, maharah istima' instruction should involve metacognitive strategies, such as planning, monitoring, and evaluating the listening process. Vandergrift and Goh (2012) emphasize that metacognitive awareness in listening can enhance learners' ability to manage the

comprehension process more effectively. Thus, istima' instruction focuses not only on the outcome but also on the learning process itself.

The Role of Authentic Materials in Istima' Instruction

Authentic materials play a crucial role in maharah istima' instruction. Authentic materials refer to teaching resources derived from the use of Arabic in real life, such as lectures, dialogues, news reports, and media content. The use of authentic materials allows learners to interact with a living and contextual language, thereby increasing motivation and comprehension. In the context of Islamic education, authentic materials containing Islamic values have significant added value. Learners not only learn the language but also understand the moral and spiritual messages within the material. This aligns with the objectives of Arabic language education in Islamic higher education institutions, which emphasize the integration of linguistic competence and Islamic values.

Challenges and Opportunities in Maharah Istima' Instruction

Despite its strategic role, maharah istima' instruction also faces various challenges. Time constraints, a lack of authentic materials appropriate for learners' proficiency levels, and minimal training in listening strategies are common obstacles. However, technological advancements provide significant opportunities to overcome these challenges. Digital platforms like YouTube offer diverse Arabic-language content that can be utilized as istima' teaching materials. This content allows learners to access authentic Arabic flexibly and independently. With appropriate use of technology, maharah istima' instruction can be developed to be more innovative and effective.

Implications of Maharah Istima' Instruction in Arabic Language Education

Pedagogically, maharah istima' has broad implications in Arabic language education. Systematically designed and contextualized istima' instruction can enhance overall language competence. Additionally, istima' instruction can serve as a means to develop positive attitudes toward the Arabic language and increase learning motivation. In the context of Islamic higher education, maharah istima' instruction also has value implications. Arabic, as the language of Islamic teachings, can be a medium for internalizing Islamic values and character formation. Thus, maharah istima' instruction contributes not only to language mastery but also to the formation of students' Islamic personalities.

Character Education from a Pesantren Perspective

Character education is the core of the Islamic education system, aiming to produce a complete human being (*insān kāmil*), one who possesses a balance between cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions. From an Islamic perspective, education is not solely directed toward the mastery of knowledge but also toward the formation of noble character (*akhlak mulia*) as a manifestation of faith and piety to Allah Almighty. Al-Attas (1993) asserts that the primary goal of Islamic education is the inculcation of *adab*, which is the recognition and acknowledgment of the reality of everything according to the order established by Allah. This concept of *adab* serves as the main foundation of character education in Islam. Pesantren, as traditional Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, have long been known as centers for shaping the character and ethics of *santri*. The pesantren educational system does not merely emphasize the transfer of religious knowledge but also shapes the *santri*'s personality through a comprehensive and continuous process of internalizing Islamic values. In this context, character education in pesantren is not an additional program but the soul and primary

orientation of all educational activities.

The Concept of Character Education in Islam

Character education in Islam stems from the view that humans are created with an innate disposition (fitrah) that must be developed through education. Character (akhlak) is the primary indicator of the success of Islamic education. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) affirmed that the main mission of his prophethood was to perfect human character. Therefore, character education in Islam cannot be separated from the values of akhlak al-karimah sourced from the Qur'an and Sunnah. Al-Attas (1993) posits that Islamic education must produce a civilized person (manusia beradab), capable of positioning knowledge, self, and environment proportionally according to Islamic values. Character education from this perspective is not only normative but also applicable, reflected in the attitudes, behaviors, and mindsets of the learners. Thus, character education encompasses the formation of moral awareness, value commitment, and behavioral habits consistent with Islamic teachings. In the context of modern education, the Islamic concept of character education aligns with ideas proposed by contemporary education experts. Lickona (2012) states that character education must include three main components: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. These three components align with the Islamic concept that emphasizes the integration of knowledge (ilmu), faith (iman), and action (amal).

Pesantren as a Character Education Institution

Pesantren have a unique character in the system of character education. Dhofier (2011) explains that pesantren are Islamic educational institutions with a strong tradition of shaping santri personalities through an dormitory system, close relationships between the kiai (religious leader/teacher) and santri, and the habituation of Islamic values in daily life. The pesantren environment allows the educational process to continue 24 hours a day, so value internalization occurs not only in the classroom but also in daily living. The emulation (keteladanan) of the kiai and ustaz (teachers) is the primary method of character education in pesantren. Santri learn ethics not just through advice and formal teaching but also through direct observation of their educators' attitudes and behavior. This emulation creates a natural and effective learning process, as character values are transmitted through real examples. In addition to emulation, pesantren also apply the method of habituation (pembiasaan) as a means of character formation. Routine activities such as congregational prayers, Quranic study, service (khidmah), time discipline, and simple living become effective mediums for character learning. Through this habituation, values like discipline, responsibility, simplicity, and social care are gradually instilled in the santri.

Santri Character Values

The character values developed within pesantren reflect Islamic values that are both universal and contextual. Zarkasyi (2015) identifies several core values of the santri character, including honesty, discipline, responsibility, the ethics of seeking knowledge (adab menuntut ilmu), and social concern. These values are relevant not only within the pesantren environment but also in broader societal life.

Honesty serves as a fundamental value in santri character education. Students are taught to be truthful in words and actions as a form of moral integrity. Discipline is also a pivotal value formed through time management and pesantren regulations. Santri are conditioned to respect time, obey rules, and fulfill obligations with full responsibility.

The ethics of seeking knowledge is a hallmark of pesantren education. Santri are taught to respect teachers, maintain humility (tawadhu'), and possess sincere intentions in their studies. This value is a crucial foundation in the learning process, as knowledge acquired without adab is feared to lack blessing (barakah). Social concern is also an integral part of character education, manifested through service activities (khidmah), mutual cooperation (gotong royong), and community service.

Lickona (2012) asserts that character values such as honesty, responsibility, and social concern are universal necessities in modern life. Consequently, santri character values hold high relevance in confronting the challenges of globalization and the moral crises occurring across various societal strata.

Relevance of Pesantren Character Education in Arabic Language Learning

Pesantren character education possesses strong relevance for integration into Arabic language instruction. As the source language of Islamic teachings, Arabic is rich in value content, making its instruction an effective vehicle for internalizing character values. Integrating santri character values into Arabic learning enables a holistic instructional process that is oriented not only toward linguistic competence but also toward the formation of an Islamic personality.

In Arabic language learning, character values can be integrated through material selection, instructional methods, and educational interactions in the classroom. Learning materials laden with Islamic values—such as hortatory texts, exemplary stories, and ethical dialogues—provide space for students to study the language while reflecting on moral values. This process aligns with the objectives of pesantren education, which emphasizes the integration of knowledge and ethics (akhlak).

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, character education from a pesantren perspective contributes significantly to the development of Islamic-based character education concepts. This approach affirms that character education must be rooted in local values and traditions that possess cultural and spiritual legitimacy. Pesantren, as Islamic educational institutions, hold the social and cultural capital necessary to serve as models for effective character education.

Practically, the integration of pesantren character values in Arabic language instruction provides guidance for educators in designing meaningful and contextual learning. Arabic lecturers in pesantren-based higher education can utilize santri character values as a foundation for curriculum development and instructional strategies. Thus, Arabic language learning produces graduates who are not only academically competent but also possess an Islamic character.

YouTube Video Media in Language Learning

Audio-visual media, particularly video, offers advantages in language learning by presenting language in real-world contexts supported by visuals and expressions (Mayer, 2009). YouTube, as a video-sharing platform, provides various authentic contents that can be utilized as Arabic teaching materials (Harmer, 2007). Research indicates that the use of YouTube videos is effective in enhancing maharah istima' skills, learning motivation, and student engagement (Handayani & Syafi'i, 2022; Abidin & Sunarko, 2025). Videos also allow for the integration of moral and character values through content embedded with Islamic messages.

Integration of Maharah Istimah' and Character Education

The integration of language learning and character education is a pedagogical approach increasingly relevant in the context of contemporary Islamic education. Language learning, specifically Arabic, cannot be separated from the values contained within the language itself. Arabic is not merely a tool for communication but also the primary medium for understanding the sources of Islamic teachings, such as the Qur'an and Hadith. Therefore, teaching maharah istima' as a foundational Arabic skill holds great potential as a means for internalizing Islamic character values.

Lickona (2013) emphasizes that effective character education must be integrated across all subjects rather than taught separately as additional material. This integration allows learners to experience values directly within the learning context, ensuring that these values are not only understood cognitively but also lived and practiced in daily life. In Arabic language learning, character education integration can be achieved through the selection of value-laden materials, reflective teaching methods, and educational interactions between educators and students.

Arabic as a Medium for Character Education

In the perspective of Islamic education, Arabic holds a special status as the language of revelation and the language of the Islamic scholarly tradition. Al-Attas (1993) emphasizes that Islamic education aims to form a civilized human being (manusia beradab)—one who understands and places everything proportionally according to the Islamic worldview. In this regard, Arabic functions as the primary tool to access, understand, and internalize Islamic values.

The instruction of maharah istima' enables students to interact directly with spoken Arabic texts containing moral and spiritual messages. Through the process of listening to lectures, advice, exemplary stories, and Islamic dialogues, students not only learn to understand linguistic structures but also absorb the ethical values contained therein. This makes Arabic language learning more meaningful as it is directly linked to the students' life goals and Islamic identity.

In the pesantren context, Arabic has long been used as the primary medium for the transmission of knowledge and values. Dhofier (2011) explains that the pesantren tradition positions Arabic as the language of both scholarship and worship; thus, Arabic learning is always linked to santri character building. Therefore, the integration of maharah istima' and character education is not a new concept in the pesantren world but a revitalization of a long-standing Islamic educational tradition.

Maharah Istimah' as a Tool for Value Internalization

Maharah istima' possesses unique characteristics compared to other language skills. Listening requires concentration, patience, and a respectful attitude toward the speaker. These values are inherently aligned with character education, such as the etiquette of listening, humility, and openness to advice. Consequently, istima' instruction not only trains linguistic ability but also shapes the attitudes and behaviors of the learners.

In character-based maharah istima' instruction, students are encouraged to listen attentively, understand meanings deeply, and reflect on the messages conveyed. This reflection process is key to value internalization. Students are not merely asked to answer comprehension questions but also to relate the messages in the material to their own experiences and life realities.

Reflective approaches in Arabic language learning align with the concept of

meaningful learning, which emphasizes the connection between instructional material and the students' personal experiences. When students engage with Arabic materials relevant to their lives as santri (boarding school students) and Muslim scholars, the learning process becomes more profound and achieves a long-term impact.

The Role of Value-Laden Materials in Istima' Instruction

The selection of material is a key factor in the integration of maharah istima' (listening skills) and character education. Materials embedded with Islamic values and ethics provide space for students to acquire language while simultaneously reflecting on moral principles. Short video lectures, stories of the Prophet's companions, dialogues regarding etiquette and ethics, and Arabic-language da'wah (outreach) content serve as effective examples for this purpose.

Such materials present not only authentic Arabic but also a value-rich context of language use. Students can observe how language is employed to deliver advice, build empathy, and instill kindness. This is consistent with Lickona's (2013) view that character education must simultaneously involve cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions. In the context of maharah istima', value-laden materials also function as catalysts for discussion and reflection. After listening, students are encouraged to analyze mufradat (vocabulary) and expressions, followed by a discussion on the moral messages contained within. This process prompts students to think critically and reflectively while developing integrated linguistic abilities.

Integration of Ethical Values in the Instructional Process

The integration of character education in maharah istima' instruction resides not only in the content but also in the instructional process itself. The manner in which lecturers manage the classroom, provide feedback, and interact with students constitutes a vital part of character education. The lecturer's role-modeling in attitude, language use, and respect for student opinions provides a concrete example for students to internalize values.

This approach aligns with the pesantren tradition, which emphasizes emulation (keteladanan) as the primary method of character education. Santri learn not only from what is taught but also from how a teacher behaves and acts. In maharah istima' instruction, the lecturer serves as a model in applying the etiquette of listening, linguistic politeness, and respect for differing opinions. Furthermore, learning activities such as group discussions, presentations, and collective reflections provide space for students to practice character values, including cooperation, responsibility, and mutual respect. Thus, character education transcends discourse and is manifested in daily instructional practices.

Relevance of Integrating Istima' and Character Education in Islamic Higher Education

The integration of maharah istima' and character education holds high relevance in Islamic higher education, particularly within pesantren-based institutions. Students in this environment are required not only to master scientific knowledge but also to develop a holistic Islamic personality. Arabic language learning integrated with character values becomes a strategic vehicle to achieve these objectives.

In the face of globalization and technological advancements, students are exposed to diverse value influences. Pesantren-based character education plays a crucial role in equipping students with strong moral and spiritual foundations. Integrating these values into Arabic instruction enables students to confront these challenges with a solid

value-based grounding. These findings support Al-Attas's (1993) emphasis on the importance of integrating knowledge ('ilm) and ethics (adab) in Islamic education. Arabic, as a core component of Islamic studies, must be taught using approaches that foster adab and moral consciousness.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, the integration of maharah istima' and character education enriches Arabic language pedagogy with a value-based perspective. This approach demonstrates that language learning is not value-neutral but is inherently linked to social, cultural, and moral contexts. This opens opportunities for developing more holistic and contextual Arabic instructional models.

Practically, this approach provides guidance for Arabic lecturers in designing meaningful and relevant instruction. Lecturers can select materials that not only match the students' linguistic proficiency but also contain values aligned with the institution's educational vision. Consequently, maharah istima' instruction can become an effective medium for developing both linguistic competence and student character.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study utilized a qualitative descriptive method aimed at systematically describing the process of teaching maharah istima' through the santri character approach. The research subjects consisted of 27 third-semester students from the Arabic Language Education Program at Sunan Drajat University, Lamongan.

The instruction was conducted over one semester across 14 sessions. Data collection techniques included classroom observation, documentation of instructional tools, and lecturer reflections on learning outcomes. Data were analyzed through stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The Process of Santri Character-Based Maharah Istima' Instruction

The instructional process began with the introduction of character-based maharah istima' themes, such as honesty, responsibility, the ethics of seeking knowledge, Islamic brotherhood (ukhuwah Islamiyah), and social concern. These themes were derived from Arabic-language videos containing Islamic and ethical values accessed via YouTube.

Students were instructed to open video links, listen attentively, and subsequently analyze the content regarding vocabulary, linguistic expressions, and ethical educational messages. The analysis results were presented and discussed in class. The lecturer provided feedback, linguistic corrections, and reinforcement of character values.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of maharah istima' instruction using the santri character approach at Sunan Drajat University Lamongan demonstrate a significant impact on both linguistic aspects and character formation. The one-semester instructional period utilizing Islamic value-based videos not only improved the students' linguistic listening abilities but also strengthened the affective and moral dimensions essential to pesantren-based education.

Enhancement of Maharah Istima' Competence

Linguistically, students showed improved ability in comprehending general Arabic audio content. In the early stages, most students struggled to grasp main ideas, distinguish similar phonemes, and understand sentence structures in spoken Arabic discourse. This is consistent with the characteristics of learners of Arabic as a foreign

language, who often face phonological and lexical obstacles (Brown, 2007).

However, after several sessions utilizing the video-based pattern, students began to show significant progress. They became more accustomed to intonation variations, native speaker speech rates, and the context of Arabic use in real-life situations. The short lectures, Islamic dialogues, and exemplary stories used as teaching materials provided authentic and meaningful language input, facilitating the students' understanding of the overall message.

These findings support the Input Hypothesis theory proposed by Krashen (1985), which asserts that language acquisition proceeds optimally when learners receive "comprehensible input." Arabic-language videos embedded with Islamic values serve as a rich, contextual, and relevant source of input that aligns with the students' religious backgrounds.

Furthermore, students demonstrated an enhanced ability to identify main ideas and detailed information from oral discourse. Initially, students tended to focus on word-for-word comprehension, which often led to a loss of the overall meaning. However, through repeated listening exercises and classroom discussions, students began to develop global listening strategies (top-down listening), such as utilizing visual cues, situational contexts, and prior knowledge. These results align with Richards (2008), who emphasizes that effective listening instruction must involve the development of listening strategies rather than merely recognizing sounds and vocabulary. Thus, video-based maharah istima' instruction enhances not only learning outcomes but also the students' cognitive processes in language comprehension.

Enrichment of Vocabulary (Mufradat) and Communicative Expressions

Beyond improving content comprehension, this instructional approach had a positive impact on enriching students' mufradat and mastery of communicative expressions. The videos used in the sessions contained vocabulary and expressions frequently employed in the contexts of da'wah (proselytizing), moral advice, and Islamic social interactions. This enabled students to learn a living and contextualized Arabic, rather than just textbook-based language.

Students were able to identify and record new mufradat appearing in the videos, subsequently discussing their meanings and usage in different contexts. This analytical process encouraged students to be more active and reflective in their learning. They did not merely memorize vocabulary but understood the nuances of meaning and their communicative functions. Mastery of communicative expressions also improved; students became more familiar with expressions of advice, invitation, and moral expressions prevalent in Islamic discourse. This is crucial as language mastery encompasses not only lexical and grammatical aspects but also pragmatic and sociocultural dimensions (Cook, 2016). These findings are consistent with research by Handayani and Syafi'i (2022) as well as Abidin and Sunarko (2025), which states that utilizing YouTube video media in Arabic instruction is effective in enhancing students' vocabulary and communicative expression mastery. Videos allow students to observe how language is used in real-world contexts, making learning more meaningful.

Formation of Students' Islamic Character

The most prominent aspect of maharah istima' instruction through the santri character approach is its impact on the formation of the students' Islamic character. Students did not only learn to understand Arabic but were also invited to reflect on the ethical values (akhlak) contained within the video materials. Values such as honesty,

responsibility, speech etiquette, social concern, and Islamic brotherhood (ukhuwah Islamiyah) became integral parts of the learning process.

Through discussions and presentations, students connected the moral messages in the videos with their daily lives as students and santri. This process facilitated a deeper internalization of values because students were not passive recipients; they actively processed and articulated these values. This approach aligns with character education concepts that emphasize the importance of reflection and direct experience (Lickona, 2012). Observation data showed positive behavioral changes during the learning process: students became more disciplined in attendance, more responsible in completing assignments, and more polite in interactions with lecturers and peers. While character shifts cannot be fully measured quantitatively in a short period, these indicators suggest that value-based instruction has a significant impact on the students' affective dimension. These findings support Al-Attas's (1993) assertion that the primary goal of Islamic education is the formation of a civilized human being (insan beradab). In this context, Arabic serves not only as a tool for communication but also as a vehicle for shaping Islamic ethics and personality.

The Role of the Lecturer as a Facilitator of Values and Language

The success of character-based maharah istima' instruction is also inseparable from the role of the lecturer as a facilitator. The lecturer does not merely deliver material but also directs discussions, provides linguistic feedback, and reinforces the moral messages emerging during the session. This role is vital in ensuring a balanced integration between language and character. The lecturer provides corrections for linguistic misunderstandings while clarifying any imprecise value interpretations. Consequently, students gain a holistic understanding of both linguistic aspects and values. This approach is consistent with the views of Creswell and Poth (2018) regarding the importance of the educator's role in creating reflective and meaningful learning.

Relevance to Prior Research

The findings of this study are in line with previous research highlighting the effectiveness of video media in language learning. Mayer (2009) states that multimedia learning can enhance comprehension by simultaneously combining visual and auditory channels. Liu and Li (2021) also found that the use of audio-visual materials improves listening skills and learning motivation among foreign language students. Moreover, the integration of character education in language learning strengthens students' affective and social dimensions. Lickona (2012) affirms that effective character education must be integrated across all subjects rather than taught in isolation. Santri character-based maharah istima' instruction is a concrete example of such integration. Within the pesantren context, these findings support the views of Dhofier (2011) and Zarkasyi (2015) regarding the importance of value-based education in shaping the santri personality. Arabic instruction integrated with ethical values serves as a strategic means to reinforce the students' Islamic identity.

Instructional Implications

Pedagogically, the results of this study indicate that maharah istima' instruction through the santri character approach has broad implications. First, Arabic language learning can be designed to be more contextual and meaningful by utilizing media relevant to the students' lives. Second, the integration of character values in language learning can strengthen the holistic goals of Islamic education. Third, this approach can

serve as a model for Arabic instruction in pesantren-based higher education and other Islamic educational institutions. By utilizing easily accessible learning resources like YouTube, lecturers can develop innovative instruction without requiring significant financial expenditure.

CONCLUSION

The instruction of maharah istima' through the santri character approach at Pesantren Sunan Drajat Lamongan is effective in enhancing students' listening competence while simultaneously fostering Islamic character. The utilization of Arabic-language YouTube videos embedded with Islamic values and ethics serves as a contextual and relevant instructional strategy. This approach is recommended for further development in Arabic language teaching within pesantren-based higher education institutions.

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