



Integrating Life Skills in Arabic Language Education: Enhancing Bilingual University Graduates' Employability and Competencies

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Abstract: Nowadays, in the competitive global job market, university graduates need more than language skills—they require essential life skills like communication, critical thinking, teamwork, and adaptability. This article presented the exploration of a life skills-based Arabic language education model at two Indonesian bilingual universities, UIN Malik Ibrahim Malang and UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung. By integrating these skills into the Arabic curriculum, the model aimed to improve both language proficiency and employability. The qualitative method were used such as case studies, interviews, and classroom observations, the research identifies effective practices and challenges. Active learning approaches, including communicative and task-based methods, enhance student engagement and retention, while technology tools like e-learning platforms increase accessibility. However, challenges such as limited resources, faculty training, and cultural resistance remain. The study recommended strategic interventions for teacher training, curriculum reform, and international collaboration. It emphasized the relation between language learning and professional skills, advocating a holistic educational approach and suggesting future research on long-term employability and digital tools.

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Introduction

World-Class Universities (WCUs) significantly impact higher education globally. Achieving WCU status requires excellence in research, teaching, and international collaborations. Research focused on enhancing WCU performance is crucial, especially

in developing economies, for driving academic innovation and global recognition.¹² World-Class Universities (WCUs) drive national educational reforms for quality improvement and economic growth. Bilingual education is a key for equipping students with linguistic skills to thrive globally, enhancing academic performance, and opening diverse career opportunities.³⁴ Bilingual education, including Arabic language instruction is to enhance global competitiveness and foster cognitive flexibility, critical thinking, and academic performance. It also attracts international students, contributing to university sustainability and cultural diversity, key components of World-Class Universities.⁵⁶

Arabic holds a prominent position as a key language for international communication, particularly within the ASEAN region which serves as a vital tool for developing cooperation across various sectors, including religion, science, and economics.⁷ In bilingual universities, a structured program of Arabic language study is essential for enhancing students' job prospects, ensuring they are well-prepared for the demands of the workforce.⁸ Bilingual education faces challenges in higher education, particularly in Arabic language learning, due to a shortage of qualified trainers, outdated methodologies, and inadequate resources. Traditional teaching approaches also limit interactive learning. To overcome these challenges, universities should adopt innovative, communicative, and technology-based approaches to language instruction.⁹

Integrating life skills-based learning into Arabic language instruction can boost students' employability by developing essential competencies like problem-solving,

¹ Ha Thi Hai Do and Anh Ngoc Mai, "Role of the Government in the Establishment of World-Class Universities in China," *Policy Futures in Education* 21, no. 2 (2023): 205–219.

² Jian Li and Eryong Xue, "A Social Networking Analysis of Education Policies of Creating World-Class Universities for Higher Education Sustainability in China," *Sustainability* 14, no. 16 (2022): 10243.

³ Mary-Claire Ball, et al., "Effective Bilingual Education in Francophone West Africa: Constraints and Possibilities," *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 27, no. 6 (2024): 821–835.

⁴ Ellen Bialystok, "Bilingual Education for Young Children: Review of the Effects and Consequences," *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 21, no. 6 (2018): 666–679.

⁵ Xiangyue Yun, et al., "Probing Into the Bilingual Teaching of the Course of 'Internet and New Media': Practice's Perspective," *SHS Web of Conferences* 168 (2023)

⁶ Amirullah Abduh, et al., "A Meta-Analysis of Language Policy on Bilingual Education in Indonesian Universities: Implication for Multicultural Education and Internationalization," *International Journal of Language Education* 6, no. 2 (2022): 210–220.

⁷ Amirullah Abduh, et al., "A Meta-Analysis of Language Policy on Bilingual Education in Indonesian Universities: Implication for Multicultural Education and Internationalization," *International Journal of Language Education* 6, no. 2 (2022): 210–220.

⁸ Sudi Yahya, et al., "Teaching Methods, Challenges, and Strategies for Improving Students' Arabic Linguistic Competence," *Ijaz Arabi Journal of Arabic Learning* 6, no. 3 (2023): 870–880.

⁹ Fuhui Tong, et al., "A Systematic Literature Synthesis of 19 Years of Bilingual Education in Chinese Higher Education: Where Does the Academic Discourse Stand?," *Sage Open* 10, no. 2 (2020).

teamwork, and adaptability. This approach enhances students' skills beyond language proficiency.¹⁰ Incorporating life skills into education fosters holistic learning, preparing graduates for dynamic work environments.¹¹¹² Effective Arabic language education requires a well-structured curriculum including *Nahwu* (grammar), *Shorof* (morphology), *Balaghah* (rhetoric), and *Mu'jamiyah* (lexicology). Providing the traditional methods with e-learning platforms, mobile apps, extracurricular activities, and cultural exchange programs can enhance language fluency and provide immersive learning experiences.¹³ Furthermore, traditional immersive learning environments often overlook the importance of language fluency.¹⁴

The example of the universities such as UIN Malik Ibrahim Malang and UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung have implemented effective strategies in Arabic language education, combining technology-based learning, communicative methods, and immersion activities to enhance language skills and cultural understanding. Partnerships with Arabic-speaking communities provide students with practical experience and cultural exposure.¹⁵¹⁶ Despite the existence of positive approaches, scaling bilingual education and making life skills-based Arabic language learning commonplace presents numerous challenges. Common barriers include insufficient resources, resistance to pedagogical change, and a lack of institutional investment in curriculum development.¹⁷ Many Islamic universities continue to adhere to traditional educational models, which may not effectively accommodate bilingual instruction.

The theoretical frameworks supporting the inclusion of bilingual education and life skills training at the tertiary level are robust. Constructivist learning theory posits that

¹⁰ Sudi Yahya, et al., "Teaching Methods, Challenges, and Strategies for Improving Students' Arabic Linguistic Competence," *Ijaz Arabi Journal of Arabic Learning* 6, no. 3 (2023): 870-880.

¹¹ Faye Chiedu and E Jirandeh, "Quantifying Executive Functions: Bilingual Education's Cognitive Impact in Special Education," *International Journal of Religion* 5, no. 6 (2024): 22–38.

¹² Amirullah Abduh, et al., "A Meta-Analysis of Language Policy on Bilingual Education in Indonesian Universities: Implication for Multicultural Education and Internationalization," *International Journal of Language Education* 6, no. 2 (2022): 210-220.

¹³ Mohammad S. Ulum, et al., "Dynamics of Content Knowledge: Learned From Indonesian Arabic Teachers," *Education Research International* 2023 (2023): 1–17.

¹⁴ Kay Gallagher, "Bilingual Education in the UAE: Factors, Variables and Critical Questions," *Education Business and Society Contemporary Middle Eastern Issues* 4, no. 1 (2011): 62–79.

¹⁵ Akmaliyah Akmaliyah and Mohammad R. Ridho, "Teaching Arabic in State Islamic University," *Ideas Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning Linguistics and Literature* 8, no. 1 (2020): 16-24.

¹⁶ Muhammad Hattab and Munirul Abidin, "Development of Arabic Language Curriculum With Integration-Interconnection Paradigm Referring KKNI and SN-DIKTI," *Sustainable Jurnal Kajian Mutu Pendidikan* 6, no. 2 (2023): 421–431.

students learn most effectively when they actively engage with material and construct their knowledge; thus, bilingual and interactive contexts are particularly effective.¹⁸¹⁹ Sociocultural theory emphasizes the importance of social interaction and cultural context in language learning, further validating the need for experiential and immersive learning methods. This study aimed to analyze the processes of Arabic education development at UIN Malik Ibrahim Malang and UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung, specifically focusing on the integration of bilingual education and life skills training in reinforcing their status as World-Class Universities (WCUs). The analysis was to illuminate suitable practices, pedagogical challenges, and institutional strategies for enhancing Arabic language instruction and its impact on student outcomes and global employability.

Methods

This study examined the evolution of Arabic language instruction within bilingual university settings at UIN Malik Ibrahim Malang and UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung using a qualitative research methodology, more precisely a multi-site case study approach.²⁰ Since a multi-site case study methodology enables a comparative investigation of language instruction practices across many institutions, it was selected. This method is very useful for spotting recurring trends and variances in teaching methods, difficulties, and results.²¹ This study can provide insights into the efficacy and adaptability of various pedagogical approaches by looking at the implementation of bilingual education at several locations which would ultimately help to improve best practices in Arabic language learning.²²

¹⁷ Hamzah Hamzah, et al., "A Case Study on the Development of Arabic Students in the Arabic Language Education Study Program at IAI DDI Polewali Mandar, West Sulawesi, Indonesia," (2021).

¹⁸ Burhan Ozfidan and Lynn M. Burlbaw, "A Framework for Understanding of Bilingual Education in Turkey: A Mixed Method Approach," *Journal of Education and Training Studies* 5, no. 10 (2017): 188-196.

¹⁹ Weihong Wang and Xiao L. Curdt-Christiansen, "Translanguaging in a Chinese-English Bilingual Education Programme: A University-Classroom Ethnography," *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 22, no. 3 (2018): 322-337.

²⁰ Burhan Ozfidan and Lynn M. Burlbaw, "A Framework for Understanding of Bilingual Education in Turkey: A Mixed Method Approach," *Journal of Education and Training Studies* 5, no. 10 (2017): 188-196.

²¹ Satja Sopha and Alexander Nanni, "The CIPP Model: Applications in Language Program Evaluation," *The Journal of Asiaticfl* 16, no. 4 (2019): 1360-1367.

²² Blasius A. Chiatoh and Emmanuel T. Mbah, "Teacher Preparation and the Implementation of Official Bilingualism in Anglophone Primary Schools in Cameroon: A Study of Some Teacher Training Colleges in the Buea Municipality," *MJSSH* 3, no. 1 (2024): 1-10.

The two top Islamic universities in Indonesia, UIN Malik Ibrahim Malang and UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung, were the subject of this study. These educational establishments were chosen because of their proactive participation. A thorough grasp of the educational ecosystem was ensured by the participation of students, faculty, language instructors, and university administrators.²³ The data collection methods were employed to ensure a comprehensive and in-depth analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with administrators and academics to investigate curriculum design and institutional practices, while student interviews provided insights into their challenges and experiences in learning the language. This approach, as noted by Özfıdan and Aydın,²⁴ facilitated open-ended discussions that reveal opinions on the effectiveness of bilingual education.

Focus group discussions (FGDs) with students were also held to assess their engagement in learning Arabic. It highlighted their views on teaching strategies and institutional support while offering comparative insights across different learning group. Additionally, direct classroom observations were performed to examine instructional strategies, student-teacher relationships, and language use in multilingual contexts which provided immediate insights into areas needing improvement and the overall effectiveness of teaching.²⁵ Finally, document analysis of curriculum plans, course syllabi, and policy reports was conducted to evaluate the language teaching practices aligned with international educational standards.

The data collected was analyzed with Miles and Huberman's interactive model, comprising three stages.²⁶ Data reduction involves sorting and condensing relevant information from observations, interviews, and documents while identifying recurring themes. The study employed data triangulation techniques to ensure validity and trustworthiness with methodological triangulation (interviews, focus groups, and observations), data source triangulation (administrators, teachers, and students), and

²³ Jane K. Lartec, et al., "Strategies and Problems Encountered by Teachers in Implementing Mother Tongue-Based Instruction in a Multilingual Classroom," *Iafor Journal of Language Learning* 1, no. 1 (2014).

²⁴ Burhan Ozfıdan and Lynn M. Burlbaw, "A Framework for Understanding of Bilingual Education in Turkey: A Mixed Method Approach," *Journal of Education and Training Studies* 5, no. 10 (2017): 188-196.

²⁵ Ibon Manterola, "Bilingual Education Searching for Promising Didactic Proposals," *Frontiers in Psychology* 5 (2014).

²⁶ Yohannes Telaumbanua, et al., "E-Political Caricatures-Assisted Cooperative Learning: Disengaging EFL Learners From Individualistic, Competitive and Racial Discrimination's Learning Settings," *Studies in English Language and Education* 7, no. 2 (2020): 504-526.

theoretical triangulation (Sociocultural Theory and Constructivist Learning Theory) to provide a comprehensive analysis.²⁷²⁸ The research adhered to strict ethical guidelines which ensured participant confidentiality and informed consent. Key measures included providing detailed study information, obtaining signed consent forms, anonymizing data, and securing ethical clearance from institutional review boards.

Results and Discussion

The successful bilingual education in higher education relies on clear institutional policies that support linguistic diversity and academic excellence. Many universities implement structured policies to enhance learning outcomes and rankings, focusing on language policy, stakeholder engagement, professional development, and institutional support.²⁹ Effective bilingual education policies require comprehensive language planning that balances national languages with global lingua francas like English or Arabic. Both Malaysia and Indonesia prioritize dual-language proficiency to foster national identity and global competencies, preserving local heritage while enhancing international communication.³⁰

Bilingual university policies significantly influence student language proficiency and career readiness by creating an environment that promotes language acquisition and practical use. This research showed that students in bilingual programs achieve higher language proficiency, which is crucial in the competitive job market, while also enhancing essential employability skills like communication and intercultural awareness.³¹³² Furthermore, international collaborations and partnerships are key indicators of bilingual education effectiveness, enhancing universities' global

²⁷ Timothy Clark, *The Cambridge Introduction to Literature and the Environment*, (Cambridge: University Press, 2011).

²⁸ Ramadhan K. Yuda, et al., "The Value of Religiosity in Malay Poetry in West Kalimantan Province and Its Use as Teaching Material for Literary Appreciation," *Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference of Humanities and Social Science* (2022): 35-51.

²⁹ Hamidah Yamat, et al., "Upholding the Malay Language and Strengthening the English Language Policy: An Education Reform," *International Education Studies* 7, no. 13 (2014): 197-205.

³⁰ Amirullah Abduh, et al., "A Meta-Analysis of Language Policy on Bilingual Education in Indonesian Universities: Implication for Multicultural Education and Internationalization," *International Journal of Language Education* 6, no. 2 (2022): 210-220.

³¹ Liuman Li, "Investigating the Impact of Bilingual Education on Cross-Cultural Competence: A Case Study of a Prominent International School in Shenzhen, China," *Lecture Notes in Education Psychology and Public Media* 33, no. 1 (2024): 69-74.

engagement and quality through joint research and student exchanges. Such initiatives provide students with immersive language experiences and develop crucial cross-cultural competencies for professional growth.³³

Student satisfaction and retention rates are key indicators of bilingual education effectiveness. High satisfaction levels reflect successful teaching methods and curriculum design, while strong retention suggests effective language learning support. Institutions that promote interactive and tech-enhanced bilingual education often see higher student satisfaction.³⁴ International partnerships and MOUs play a crucial role in bilingual education by facilitating student exchange programs. These programs enhance language proficiency and intercultural competence through immersive, real-world experiences.³⁵ Moreover, MOUs encourage collaborative research on bilingual education, leading to innovative teaching methods and policy advancements.

International collaborations facilitate resource sharing, allowing institutions to access advanced educational materials, online learning platforms, and faculty training programs, which enhance bilingual education by offering diverse learning opportunities and global academic perspectives. The incorporation of technology, especially through language learning applications and virtual exchange programs, further improves the accessibility and reach of bilingual education.³⁶ Bilingual education policies in universities boost student proficiency, career readiness, and institutional reputation through comprehensive frameworks and stakeholder engagement. International partnerships further enhance these outcomes by facilitating collaborative curriculum development and immersive experiences, preparing students for global success.

The implementation of Arabic language education in bilingual universities boosts linguistic proficiency and cultural competence through innovative pedagogies and

³² María E. G. Parra, et al., "Key Factors to Evaluate the Impact of Bilingual Programs: Employability, Mobility and Intercultural Awareness," *Porta Linguarum Revista Interuniversitaria De Didáctica De Las Lenguas Extranjeras*, no. 35 (2021): 93–104.

³³ Qingchun Wang, et al., "Arts-Based Methods in Socially Engaged Research Practice: A Classification Framework," *Art/Research International a Transdisciplinary Journal* 2, no. 2 (2017): 5–39.

³⁴ Amirullah Abduh, et al., "A Meta-Analysis of Language Policy on Bilingual Education in Indonesian Universities: Implication for Multicultural Education and Internationalization," *International Journal of Language Education* 6, no. 2 (2022): 210–220.

³⁵ Jane K. Lartec, et al., "Strategies and Problems Encountered by Teachers in Implementing Mother Tongue-Based Instruction in a Multilingual Classroom," *Iafor Journal of Language Learning* 1, no. 1 (2014).

³⁶ Yohannes Telaumbanua, et al., "E-Political Caricatures-Assisted Cooperative Learning: Disengaging EFL Learners From Individualistic, Competitive and Racial Discrimination's Learning Settings," *Studies in English Language and Education* 7, no. 2 (2020): 504–526.

technologies. Effective methodologies include CLT, TBLT, and CLIL, while e-learning platforms, mobile apps, and online forums facilitate interactive and collaborative learning, enhancing student engagement and outcomes.³⁷³⁸³⁹⁴⁰⁴¹ A comparative analysis of Arabic language education models in bilingual universities worldwide shows similarities and differences in instructional strategies. Many Arab institutions emphasize integrating Arabic and English, similar to UIN Malik Ibrahim Malang and UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung, while universities in Lebanon and the Gulf adopt content-based instruction, enhancing comprehension through academic subjects.⁴² A notable distinction in Arabic language education models is the emphasis on digital learning, with UIN Malik Ibrahim Malang and UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung beginning to incorporate e-learning tools and mobile applications, while Gulf region institutions have significantly invested in online platforms and AI-driven language tools to enhance personalized learning.⁴³⁴⁴

University graduates need essential life skills, such as communication, critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork, emotional intelligence, and digital literacy, to succeed in the global job market. These competencies enhance employability and workplace performance, with language proficiency playing a key role in developing these skills and achieving employment success.⁴⁵⁴⁶⁴⁷ Teamwork and collaboration skills are

³⁷ Andrew V. Danilov, et al., "Developing Computer Literacy of Bilingual Students via CLIL Methodology," *International Journal of Higher Education* 9, no. 8 (2020): 19-23.

³⁸ Sahya Anggara, "Exploring the Effectiveness of Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka Policy in Indonesian Higher Education Institutions: An in-Depth Case Study Analysis," *Al-Ishlah Jurnal Pendidikan* 15, no. 2 (2023): 1563–1570.

³⁹ Taufik Taufik, et al., "Integrating the Whoop It Up Strategy With the AIR (Auditory, Intellectually, Repetition) Learning Model in Arabic Language Learning," *Arabiyat Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab dan Kebahasaaraban* 10, no. 2 (2023): 163–177.

⁴⁰ Dede Sutisna and Yusuf A. S. Atha, "Strategies to Increase Interest in Arabic Learning at Senior High School," *Ta Lim Al- Arabiyyah Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab & Kebahasaaraban* 7, no. 2 (2023): 299–314.

⁴¹ Kay Gallagher, "Bilingual Education in the UAE: Factors, Variables and Critical Questions," *Education Business and Society Contemporary Middle Eastern Issues* 4, no. 1 (2011): 62–79.

⁴² Nahla N. Bacha, "Bilingualism as the Medium of Educational Instruction: An Exploratory Study of Student and Teachers' Views in Lebanon," *International Journal of English Linguistics* 9, no. 3 (2019): 330-346.

⁴³ Wardatun Nasiha, et al., "Design of a Website-Based Arabic Typing Application for Students of Arabic Language Education Program at University," *Assyfa Learning Journal* 1, no. 1 (2023): 12–24.

⁴⁴ Kay Gallagher, "Bilingual Education in the UAE: Factors, Variables and Critical Questions," *Education Business and Society Contemporary Middle Eastern Issues* 4, no. 1 (2011): 62–79.

⁴⁵ Mohammad Ittshaam Zaheer, et al., "Understanding the Key Competencies of Market-Ready Building Surveying Graduates From Employers' Perspectives," *Journal of Engineering Design and Technology* 19, no. 1 (2020): 291–314.

essential in modern workplaces which professionals must work effectively in diverse teams and respect different perspectives to enhance career prospects.⁴⁸⁴⁹⁵⁰ Emotional intelligence, encompassing self-awareness, empathy, and interpersonal skills, is vital for managing stress and building strong relationships. Additionally, digital literacy is crucial, as graduates need to be proficient in the application of digital platforms for communication and productivity.⁵¹⁵²⁵³⁵⁴

Language proficiency boosts employability by enabling cross-cultural communication and enhancing soft skills like problem-solving, communication, and teamwork which are vital for career advancement. Employers associate bilingualism with better decision-making and confidence. Assessment tools such as the Competency Assessment Rubric and the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) effectively measure these competencies and encourage proactive skill development.⁵⁵⁵⁶ Peer assessments can improve teamwork and critical thinking through student feedback, while portfolios can showcase skill growth for self-reflection and employer review. Experiential learning, such as internships, links theory to practice, enhancing motivation.

⁴⁶ Tamil Salvi Mari, et al., "Are They Ready Yet: Architecture Graduates Employability Skills from Employers' Perspective," *Journal of Design and Built Environment* 22, no. 1 (2022): 88–96.

⁴⁷ Denise Jackson, "Testing a Model of Undergraduate Competence in Employability Skills and Its Implications for Stakeholders," *Journal of Education and Work* 27, no. 2 (2014): 220–242.

⁴⁸ Hary Suswanto, et al., "VHS Competency Test, Implementation of Industry Demands, and Graduates' Competence in Indonesia," *2nd International Conference on Vocational Education and Training* (2019).

⁴⁹ Karen J.A. Catacutan, et al., "Employability Study of the Business Administration Graduates of Catholic Educational Institution," *Universal Journal of Educational Research* 8, no. 1 (2020): 156–161.

⁵⁰ Maripaz C. Abas and Ombra A. Imam, "Graduates' Competence on Employability Skills and Job Performance," *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education (Ijere)* 5, no. 2 (2016): 119–125.

⁵¹ NIK NIK-AZIS, et al., "Graduates' and Employers' Perceptions on Competencies Obtained From an Undergraduate Dental Curriculum," *Jurnal Sains Kesehatan Malaysia* 19, no. 01 (2021): 81–87.

⁵² Sunita Srivastava, et al., "Development and Validation of a Comprehensive Nursing Competence Assessment Questionnaire (CNCAQ) to Determine the Perceived Clinical Competence of Nursing Graduates," *Nursing & Midwifery Research Journal* 20, no. 2 (2024): 96–111.

⁵³ Vinay Sharma and Ajay Singh, "Developing Conceptual Framework for Life Skills: The Employability Requisite in the Hospitality Industry," *Interantional Journal of Scientific Research in Engineering and Management* 8, no. 10 (2024): 1–3.

⁵⁴ Elisa Gagnon, "Transitioning From University to Working Life: A Comparison of Business Graduates' Perceptions of Skills Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic," *Proceedings of the 55th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences* (2022).

⁵⁵ Elisa Gagnon, "Transitioning From University to Working Life: A Comparison of Business Graduates' Perceptions of Skills Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic," *Proceedings of the 55th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences* (2022).

⁵⁶ Umme T. Moon, et al., "Is Life Support Competencies an Urgent Issue in Undergraduate Medical Education of Bangladesh?," *Bangladesh Journal of Medical Education* 15, no. 1 (2024): 3–11.

SMART goals and gamified technology further boost student engagement, accountability, and active participation in life skills education.⁵⁷⁵⁸⁵⁹⁶⁰

Finally, creating a supportive learning environment that emphasizes peer collaboration has been shown to improve student motivation. Encouraging group activities, discussions, and collaborative projects fosters a sense of community and belonging, which positively impacts students' enthusiasm for learning.⁶¹ Establishing mentorship programs which students can seek guidance from peers and faculty members further enhances their motivation and engagement in life skills education. In conclusion, student competency in life skills is essential for success in the global workforce. Key competencies such as communication, critical thinking, teamwork, emotional intelligence, and digital literacy significantly enhance employability. The correlation between language proficiency and life skills development underscores the importance of integrating both aspects into higher education curricula.

The life skills-based Arabic language education model integrates language proficiency with essential skills like communication, critical thinking, resilience, and teamwork, effectively preparing students for professional and academic success. By emphasizing adaptability, real-world application through experiential learning, and fostering cultural awareness and intercultural communication, this approach enhances employability, motivation, and the ability to thrive in diverse, dynamic global workplaces.⁶²⁶³ A key strength of the life skills-based Arabic education model is its focus on developing students' resilience and adaptability, essential traits in current dynamic job market. Employers value candidates who can handle uncertainty and collaborate in

⁵⁷ Glorian Sorensen, et al., "Promoting Life Skills and Preventing Tobacco Use Among Low-Income Mumbai Youth: Effects of Salaam Bombay Foundation Intervention," *Plos One* 7, no. 4 (2012).

⁵⁸ Weihong Wang and Xiao L. Curdt-Christiansen, "Translanguaging in a Chinese-English Bilingual Education Programme: A University-Classroom Ethnography," *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 22, no. 3 (2018): 322-337.

⁵⁹ Diana Maddah, et al., "The First Life Skills Intervention to Enhance Well-Being Amongst University Students in the Arab World: 'Khotwa' Pilot Study," *Health Psychology Open* 8, no. 1 (2021).

⁶⁰ Diana Maddah, et al., "The First Life Skills Intervention to Enhance Well-Being Amongst University Students in the Arab World: 'Khotwa' Pilot Study," *Health Psychology Open* 8, no. 1 (2021).

⁶¹ Marzieh Pashmdarfard, et al., "Strategies to Promote the Quality of Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Education: A Qualitative Study," *Medical Journal of the Islamic Republic of Iran* 36 (2022).

⁶² Nur Afiqah Athirah Mohd Rushdi and Lily H. Asbulah, "Higher Education Students' Engagement and Factors That Constrain Students' Activeness in Learning Arabic Language," *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development* 12, no. 2 (2023): 1069-1621.

⁶³ Said Alwi, et al., "Internalization of Character Education Values in Arabic Language Learning at Islamic Boarding School in Indonesia," *Al-Ta Rib Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab IAIN Palangka Raya* 12, no. 1 (2024): 89-102.

multicultural environments.⁶⁴ By incorporating experiential learning and problem-solving activities, this model enhances students' competencies and career prospects and promotes cultural awareness and intercultural communication skills necessary for success in global professional settings.

Despite the benefits, implementing bilingual and life skills-based education in Islamic universities faces challenges, including a lack of resources and trained personnel. Many institutions struggle to offer sufficient professional development for educators which hinders effective bilingual instruction and life skills integration.⁶⁵⁶⁶⁶⁷ Additionally, limited access to modern teaching materials and technology restricts the adoption of innovative methodologies that could enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. Cultural resistance in Islamic universities challenges bilingual education undermines cultural identity and reduces support. Integrating life skills into Arabic curriculum faces difficulties in curriculum design and assessment, causing fragmented learning and decreased student motivation. To improve effectiveness, policies recommend active learning and character-based curricula that emphasize values like discipline and teamwork, fostering engagement, holistic development, and better alignment with career goals in diverse, global contexts.⁶⁸

In order to improve the effectiveness of life skills-based Arabic language education, several policy recommendations can be made. Prioritizing active learning methodologies will encourage collaborative and interactive experiences that enhance understanding and skill development, leading to increased student engagement and language proficiency.⁶⁹⁷⁰ Furthermore, curriculum development should focus on character-based learning by integrating values like discipline, creativity, and teamwork

⁶⁴ Husna Husna, et al., "The Impact of Hybrid Quantum Learning Methods on Arabic Language Acquisition Among Students of Islamic Boarding School in Indonesia," *Jallt* 2, no. 1 (2024): 1–12.

⁶⁵ Vanda A. Raad, et al., "Medical Education in a Foreign Language and History-Taking in the Native Language in Lebanon – A Nationwide Survey," *BMC Medical Education* 16, no. 1 (2016): 1-6.

⁶⁶ Nasiha, Afifah, and Amir, "Design of a Website-Based Arabic Typing Application for Students of Arabic Language Education Program at University," *Assyfa Learning Journal* 1, no. 1 (2023): 12–24.

⁶⁷ Hasan Murshed, et al., "Recent Medical Graduates' Abilities in Carrying Out Consultations With Patients: Views of Interns, Medical Teachers, and Medical Graduates," *Bangladesh Journal of Medical Education* 14, no. 1 (2023): 26–34.

⁶⁸ Syeda R. Tahir, "Exploring Bilingual Dynamics," *International Journal of Contemporary Islamic Studies (IJCIS)* 1, no. 1 (2024): 1–12.

⁶⁹ Amirullah Abduh, et al., "A Meta-Analysis of Language Policy on Bilingual Education in Indonesian Universities: Implication for Multicultural Education and Internationalization," *International Journal of Language Education* 6, no. 2 (2022): 210-220.

into Arabic instruction, producing well-rounded graduates. Continuous professional development for educators is also essential. Providing training in modern pedagogical approaches equips faculty members with the skills needed to implement interactive and student-centered teaching strategies effectively. Without adequate professional development opportunities, educators may struggle to adapt to evolving educational demands.⁷¹ Furthermore, enhancing learning resources and technological infrastructure can support innovative teaching practices. Equipping institutions with digital platforms, interactive tools, and language laboratories will enable students to engage in immersive and practical Arabic language learning experiences, improving both language proficiency and life skills development.⁷²

International collaboration can further enhance the effectiveness of bilingual and life skills-based education. Establishing partnerships with global institutions can provide valuable insights into best practices and facilitate student exchange programs that expose learners to real-world language applications. These collaborations enable universities to benchmark their Arabic language programs against successful models in other bilingual institutions which develop continuous improvement in educational quality. The life skills-based Arabic language education model is crucial for preparing students for professional and academic success by integrating language instruction with essential life skills training. However, challenges such as limited resources, cultural resistance, curriculum design, and student motivation need to be addressed for effective implementation. This study offered valuable insights into bilingual education and Arabic learning but was limited by its focus on two specific universities and a short duration that prevented long-term observations. Finally, some participant responses may have been influenced by social desirability bias, potentially affecting the authenticity of the data collected. Despite these limitations, the study employed rigorous methodological approaches to ensure the reliability and validity of its conclusions.

⁷⁰ Said Alwi, et al., "Internalization of Character Education Values in Arabic Language Learning at Islamic Boarding School in Indonesia," *Al-Ta Rib Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab IAIN Palangka Raya* 12, no. 1 (2024): 89–102.

⁷¹ Hasan Murshed, et al., "Recent Medical Graduates' Abilities in Carrying Out Consultations With Patients: Views of Interns, Medical Teachers, and Medical Graduates," *Bangladesh Journal of Medical Education* 14, no. 1 (2023): 26–34.

⁷² Hidayah, et al., "Peer Tutoring Activities Implementation in Arabic Language Development at Indonesian Islamic Universities," *Jallt* 2, no. 1 (2024): 25–32..

Conclusion

This study highlighted the effectiveness of integrating life skills into Arabic language education within bilingual university settings, significantly enhancing students' employability and readiness to face global challenges. The findings demonstrated that successful language education requires not only linguistic proficiency but also the ability to apply knowledge in diverse, real-world contexts. Key challenges identified include resource limitations, limited faculty training, and cultural resistance to bilingual education. To address these, the study proposed solutions such as comprehensive teacher training programs, curriculum innovation, and fostering international collaborations. Among the strengths of this research were its multi-site qualitative approach and the use of diverse data collection methods, which provided a rich, nuanced understanding of the educational practices and challenges. However, limitations included the focus on only two universities which might affect the generalizability of the findings and time constraints that limited long-term observation. Hence, by investigating this inquires, the future research can explore longitudinal studies to assess the sustained impact of life skills-based language education on graduates' employability and investigate the expanding role of digital tools and AI in enhancing both language proficiency and life skills development

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Author Contributions Statement

NA and DAW conceived of the presented ideas. DAW and ASM collected the data by carrying FGD the presented results. ASM and MRJ edited the final manuscript before it was submitted.

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