

## **Educational Games for Enhancing Arabic Language Proficiency: A Literature Review at the Madrasah Aliyah Level**

**Hunainah**

Universitas Muhammadiyah Palangkaraya, Indonesia  
[hunainah@umpr.ac.id](mailto:hunainah@umpr.ac.id)

**Tanti Oktorisa**

Universitas Muhammadiyah Palangkaraya, Indonesia  
[oktorisaa@gmail.com](mailto:oktorisaa@gmail.com)

**Devita Novia Rahmah**

Universitas Muhammadiyah Palangkaraya, Indonesia  
[devitanoviar@gmail.com](mailto:devitanoviar@gmail.com)

**Annisa Nurjannah**

Universitas Muhammadiyah Palangkaraya, Indonesia  
[an9939325@gmail.com](mailto:an9939325@gmail.com)

### ***Abstract***

The teaching of Arabic in Madrasah Aliyah (Islamic senior high schools) continues to face persistent challenges, including limited learning media, monotonous instructional methods, and low student motivation. Although various strategies have been introduced, research specifically addressing the integration of educational games into Arabic language learning at the Madrasah Aliyah level remains scarce. A game-based approach, however, has been widely recognized as effective for enhancing student engagement, motivation, and mastery of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This study employs a library research design with descriptive analysis to examine the effectiveness of educational games, the factors that support their success, and their theoretical and practical implications. The findings show that educational games contribute to vocabulary development, improved speaking and listening skills, and increased learner confidence and motivation. Successful implementation depends on thoughtful game design, alignment with curriculum objectives, the teacher's role as facilitator, and the integration of technology-supported learning tools. Theoretically, this review

affirms the shift toward interactive, student-centered pedagogy. Practically, the results provide guidance for teachers, curriculum developers, and researchers seeking to optimize Arabic language learning through contextual, engaging, and enjoyable methods.

**Keywords:** Arabic Language Learning; Educational Games; Gamification; Madrasah Aliyah; Language skills

### ملخص

تواجه عملية تعليم اللغة العربية في المدرسة الثانوية الإسلامية) جملة من التحديات، من أبرزها محدودية الوسائل التعليمية، ورتابة الأساليب التدريسية، وضعف دافعية المتعلمين. وعلى الرغم من تعدد الاستراتيجيات المقدمّة، ما تزال الدراسات التي تتناول دمج الألعاب التعليمية في تعليم اللغة العربية على مستوى المدرسة الثانوية الإسلامية محدودة. وقد أثبت المدخل القائم على الألعاب فاعليته في تعزيز مشاركة الطلاب ودافعتهم، وتنمية المهارات اللغوية الأربع: الاستماع، والكلام، والقراءة، والكتابة. اعتمد هذا البحث المنهج المكتبي والتحليل الوصفي لدراسة فاعلية الألعاب التعليمية، وعوامل نجاحها، وانعكاساتها النظرية والعملية. وأظهرت النتائج أنّ الألعاب التعليمية تسهم في تنمية الحصيلة اللغوية، وتحسين مهارات الاستماع والمحادثة، وزيادة الثقة بالنفس لدى المتعلمين. ويرتبط نجاح تطبيقها بجودة تصميم اللعبة، ومواءمتها للأهداف المنهجية، ودور المعلم بوصفه مسيّراً، إضافة إلى توظيف الوسائل التقنية الداعمة للتعلم. نظرياً، يبرز البحث التحوّل نحو نموذج تعلّم تفاعلي متمركز حول الطالب. وعملياً، تقدّم النتائج مرجعاً للمعلمين والمصممين والباحثين في تحسين تعليم اللغة العربية بأسلوب سيّاق تفاعلي ممتع.

الكلمات الرئيسية: تعليم اللغة العربية؛ الألعاب التعليمية؛ التلعيب؛ المدرسة الثانوية الإسلامية؛ مهارات اللغة.

### Abstrak

Pembelajaran bahasa Arab di Madrasah Aliyah masih menghadapi berbagai kendala, seperti keterbatasan media, metode yang monoton, serta rendahnya motivasi belajar siswa. Meskipun berbagai strategi telah diperkenalkan, kajian khusus tentang integrasi permainan edukatif (educational games) dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab di Madrasah Aliyah masih terbatas. Padahal, pendekatan berbasis permainan terbukti mampu meningkatkan keterlibatan, motivasi, serta penguasaan keterampilan *istimāʿ*, *kalām*, *qirāʾah*, dan *kitābah*. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode studi pustaka dengan analisis deskriptif untuk meninjau efektivitas permainan edukatif, faktor keberhasilan, serta implikasi teoretis dan praktisnya. Hasil kajian

menunjukkan bahwa permainan edukatif berkontribusi pada pengayaan kosakata, peningkatan kemampuan berbicara dan menyimak, serta peningkatan kepercayaan diri peserta didik. Keberhasilan penerapan dipengaruhi oleh desain permainan, keterpaduan dengan tujuan kurikulum, peran guru sebagai fasilitator, dan dukungan teknologi pembelajaran. Secara teoretis, penelitian ini menegaskan pergeseran menuju pembelajaran interaktif dan berpusat pada siswa. Secara praktis, hasil kajian memberikan rujukan bagi guru, pengembang kurikulum, dan peneliti dalam mengoptimalkan pembelajaran bahasa Arab melalui pendekatan yang kontekstual dan menyenangkan.

**Kata kunci:** Gamifikasi; Keterampilan Bahasa; Madrasah Aliyah; Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab; Permainan Edukatif.

## A. Introduction

The integration of educational games into Arabic language instruction has gained increasing scholarly attention over the past decade, particularly as learning environments shift toward student-centred, interactive, and technology-mediated approaches. Foundational studies on Game-Based Learning (GBL) emphasise that games can serve as powerful environments for constructivist learning, where meaning is built through active engagement, exploration, and problem-solving (Clark et al., 2016; Mayer, 2019; Qian & Clark, 2016)

In the context of Madrasah Aliyah (MA), Arabic is a compulsory subject whose mastery is closely tied to the four fundamental language skills—listening (*istimāʿ*), speaking (*kalām*), reading (*qirāʾah*), and writing (*kitābah*). Yet evidence from various Indonesian studies shows that conventional approaches remain dominant, limiting classroom engagement, lowering motivation, and providing insufficient opportunities for communicative practice. These constraints reinforce the need for pedagogical strategies that foster participation, reduce anxiety, and facilitate meaningful language-use experiences.

Educational games—both traditional and digital—have emerged as a promising response to these issues. Their effectiveness aligns with established theories in educational psychology. Game-Based Learning theory posits that well-designed games stimulate attention, repetition, and situated practice, supporting long-term retention (Mayer, 2019). Flow Theory explains that optimal learning occurs when challenge and skill are in balance, generating deep engagement during gameplay (Hamari et al., 2016). Keller’s ARCS Model further highlights attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction as essential motivational components inherently embedded in game structures (Keller, 2010). Recent research also shows that game environments support constructivist learning through interaction and negotiation of meaning, as learners guess vocabulary, provide corrective feedback,

justify choices, and construct simple utterances during play (Alexiou & Schippers, 2018; Coleman & Money, 2020; H. Li & Zhang, 2025; Mayer, 2019).

Empirical findings in Arabic language learning similarly support the advantages of games. Uliyah and Isnawati (2019) report significant improvements in maharah kalām through interactive games. Hastuti et al. (2023) show that gamification increases learner motivation and participation, while Suherman et al. (2023) highlight that structured media design enhances vocabulary mastery. Research on Scramble Cards indicates that competitive activities foster quicker lexical retrieval among Generation Alpha learners (Ummah et al., 2025). In digital contexts, tools such as Quizizz, Wordwall, and Educandy have been shown to reduce anxiety, promote self-regulated learning, and improve participation (Hadiyanto et al., 2020; Purba & Jamil, 2023; Yasmar & Amalia, 2024). Global studies also confirm the potential of gamified learning to enhance academic performance and engagement across subject areas (Subhash & Cudney, 2018).

Despite this growing body of evidence, several research gaps remain. First, many studies focus on learning outcomes—such as vocabulary gains or improved test scores—without explaining how games support each of the four Arabic skills or align with linguistic competencies required at the MA level. Second, theoretical mechanisms underpinning game effectiveness are often mentioned but not deeply analysed. Third, most Indonesian studies mention digital games only at the implementation stage, with little attention to instructional design processes such as needs analysis, mechanics selection, prototyping, or evaluation. As a result, teachers frequently adopt games informally without systematic alignment to learning objectives.

A further gap lies in the lack of international publications specifically addressing educational games for Arabic language learning. Systematic searches on Taylor & Francis Online (2020–2025) and SpringerLink (2020–2025) yielded no directly relevant studies, while ScienceDirect identified only one. This scarcity of international scholarship underscores the significance of conducting a comprehensive literature review on this topic.

These gaps indicate the need for a review that synthesises current findings while evaluating educational games from theoretical, skills-based, and design-oriented perspectives. Accordingly, this study provides a thematic literature review of educational games in Arabic language learning at the MA level by analysing: (1) determinants of effectiveness grounded in major educational theories; (2) their pedagogical implications for developing *istimāʿ*, *kalām*, *qirāʾah*, and *kitābah*; and (3) essential stages of digital game development—including needs analysis, mechanics selection, prototype design, skills integration, testing, and evaluation—that remain

underexplored. By addressing these dimensions, this review aims to offer a clearer conceptual foundation for teachers, curriculum developers, and researchers seeking to optimise game-based Arabic instruction in Islamic secondary education.

## **B. Method**

This study employed a library-based research design with a qualitative descriptive approach. This approach was selected because the research aimed to review, interpret, and synthesise established scholarly findings without collecting field data. In line with the characteristics of library research as outlined by Zed (2014), the analysis focused on written sources to understand relevant concepts, theories, and empirical results. This method is also consistent with qualitative literature review models, which although not necessarily structured as a systematic literature review, still require clear, rigorous, and accountable procedures (Booth, 2016; Snyder, 2019).

The analysed literature comprised national and international journal articles, academic books, conference proceedings, as well as theses and dissertations published within the past ten years. The inclusion criteria targeted publications discussing the use of educational games in Arabic language learning, including both conventional games (role-play, card-based activities, word puzzles, and movement-based games) and digital games such as Quizizz, Wordwall, Kahoot!, digital flashcards, and mobile-based learning applications. Literature selection followed qualitative document-review principles, emphasising relevance, methodological clarity, and conceptual contribution (Bowen, 2009; George, 2008).

Literature searches were conducted through Google Scholar, DOAJ, Garuda Ristekbrin, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, and Taylor & Francis Online using combinations of keywords such as “Arabic educational games”, “Arabic game-based learning”, “Arabic gamification”, and “digital Arabic learning tools”. This procedure followed Booth et al.’s (2016) recommendations on the need for explicit search strategies in non-SLR literature reviews. The search results indicated that international publications on educational games for Arabic language learning remain limited. Searches in Taylor & Francis Online (2020–2025) did not identify any articles directly addressing this topic, while SpringerLink mainly returned studies on digital learning and play-based learning without specific focus on Arabic educational games. ScienceDirect (2020–2025) produced only one directly relevant article—*Design and Development of Arabic Online Games: A Conceptual Paper* (Hamizul & Rahimi, 2015)—with the remaining results related to general game-based learning. Google Scholar yielded a substantially larger pool of studies, yielding 106 publications, of which 27 were closely related to Arabic game-based learning,

while several others addressed immersive gamification and the use of VR/AR technologies.

All selected literature was analysed using content analysis techniques (Krippendorff, 2019), which involved identifying recurrent themes, comparing patterns across studies, and synthesising relationships between theories and empirical findings. This approach enabled a clearer mapping of the effectiveness of educational games, the factors influencing their successful implementation, and their implications for Arabic language learning at the upper-secondary (Madrasah Aliyah) level.

### C. Results and Discussion

This section presents the findings of the literature review on the use of educational games in Arabic language learning at Madrasah Aliyah. The discussion is organised into three main themes: (1) the effectiveness of educational games, (2) the determinants of their success in Arabic instruction, and (3) the theoretical and practical implications for teaching Arabic at the secondary level. The synthesis of previous studies highlights both the pedagogical benefits and the challenges faced in integrating game-based learning within Arabic curricula.

#### 1. The Effectiveness of Educational Games in the Literature Review

International and regional scholarship has consistently demonstrated that educational games—whether conventional or digital—contribute positively to language learning, including Arabic. Their effectiveness is observed in increased motivation, vocabulary retention, cognitive engagement, and social interaction. This effectiveness can be understood through three major pillars: (1) empirical findings showing improved linguistic performance through diverse forms of games; (2) educational game design frameworks incorporating digital and non-digital games based on CLT, TBLT, and the DGBL model; and (3) cognitive-motivational mechanisms explaining how games enhance attention, engagement, flow, and intrinsic motivation.

Firstly, empirical evidence supporting the effectiveness of educational games. A number of experimental and quasi-experimental studies show that educational games enhance vocabulary acquisition, learning attention, and linguistic task performance. A meta-analysis of 26 studies on L2 vocabulary learning reported that digital games produced high effect sizes compared to traditional instruction, particularly when the games involved repeated semantic processing, time-limited decision-making, and frequent exposure (Tsai & Tsai, 2018). These findings are relevant for Islamic Senior High School learners who require frequent and meaningful exposure to *mufradāt* in low-anxiety environments. A recent study utilising the commercial game *Return to Monkey Island* also indicated significant

vocabulary improvement in both individual and collaborative modes, with the latter outperforming due to negotiation of meaning and problem-solving interaction (Kyle Lai & Howard Chen, 2025) . Such interaction aligns with socioconstructivist principles underpinning communicative Arabic learning.

In the context of Arabic instruction specifically, studies on Arabic online game development (Hamizul & Rahimi, 2015; Sahrir & Alias, 2012) report consistent increases in vocabulary retention, motivation, and learning interest. Although some were conducted in primary education settings, their principles remain relevant for Madrasah Aliyah due to shared needs for frequent practice and immediate feedback.

Secondly, cognitive and motivational mechanisms underlying game-based learning. Cognitive and motivational mechanisms provide further explanation for why games are effective. Recent research on VR-based educational games shows that immersive environments strengthen intrinsic motivation by satisfying autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs (J. Li et al., 2025). Additionally, game-induced flow—when challenge and skill are optimally balanced—promotes active engagement, whereas low-flow groups often remain passive (Chou et al., 2023). A systematic review on gamification confirms increases in motivation, engagement, and self-efficacy, although learning outcomes do not automatically improve without attention to collaboration and feedback design (Romero-Rodríguez et al., 2024). Other findings show that engagement does not always correlate directly with achievement (Bong et al., 2025), reinforcing the need for structured integration in Islamic Senior High Schools.

Various game formats including AR-VR, narrative games, and personalised games further explain cognitive mechanisms. A 2024 systematic review highlighted that AR-VR strengthens form-meaning mapping through contextual visualisation, supporting thematic vocabulary mastery in Arabic (Romero-Rodríguez et al., 2024). Alternate Reality Games (ARGs) encourage collaboration, persistence, and long-term interest (Connolly et al., 2011), while personalised games cater to individual learner differences, which significantly improves participation (Khenissi et al., 2016).

Thirdly, game design frameworks enhancing Arabic language proficiency. The efficacy of educational games is further reinforced by structured design frameworks. Digital Game-Based Learning (DGBL) integrates pedagogy, game elements, and motivation (Hamizul & Rahimi, 2015) . Pedagogical components ensure learning objectives are embedded within gameplay; game elements such as challenge, narrative, instant feedback, and visual dynamics provide repeated meaningful exposure to Arabic; and motivational dynamics align with Keller's ARCS model explaining how *Attention*, *Relevance*, *Confidence*, and *Satisfaction* emerge

during gameplay (Keller, 2010). When aligned, these elements foster cognitive processing, emotional stimulation, and social interaction.

Even in non-digital contexts, educational game effectiveness aligns with the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) (Ellis, 2003; J. C., Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Role-play, card games, and information-gap tasks allow negotiation of meaning, interaction, and immediate feedback. A systematic review of role-play research found consistent evidence that role-play improves fluency and learners' self-confidence (Albana et al., 2023). Lam and Li (2016) found that information-gap and task-based games improve negotiation of meaning. Grammar-focused games also reduce anxiety. Nunan (2004) confirmed that task-based games support motivation and participation.

In enhancing Arabic proficiency in Madrasah Aliyah, educational games strengthen motivation, interaction, and learning performance through natural, challenging, multimodal learning experiences. Empirical evidence shows that games help overcome affective barriers and create conditions conducive to acquiring the four language skills.

In Listening (*Istimā'*), the systematic use of language games has been shown to heighten motivation and active participation by providing repeated and meaningful input through rules, challenges, and immediate feedback (Lubis et al., 2021). In Speaking (*Kalām*), games such as *Truth or Dare* with a spin wheel enhance confidence, spontaneity, and fluency by creating low-anxiety, enjoyable spaces for oral production (Hasibuan et al., 2024).

In Reading (*Qirā'ah*), both digital and traditional game formats embed texts within purposeful decision-making tasks, encouraging students to read for progress within the activity rather than for mere compliance. In Writing (*Kitābah*), writing-based games foster interest, reduce anxiety, and promote active encoding, leading to improved accuracy and overall written performance (Bachtiar & Almardhi, 2023). Games also enhance vocabulary acquisition, social interaction, and classroom supportiveness (Hayat, 2022). Competitive and collaborative features allow adolescents to practise Arabic naturally and meaningfully.

## **2. Determinants of the Effectiveness of Educational Games**

In Arabic language education, the success of educational games is shaped by multiple interrelated determinants that must be addressed holistically. Firstly, game design is pivotal. Effective games provide compelling interfaces, clear rules, and strong alignment with linguistic learning objectives, particularly vocabulary and skill development (Suherman et al., 2023; Uliyah & Isnawati, 2019). Empirical

studies report that game formats ranging from AR–VR (e.g., *Kitabah for Kids*) to immersive commercial environments such as *Minecraft* or *Assassin’s Creed* cultivate intrinsic motivation, collaboration, and contextual language use (Hamizul & Rahimi, 2015; Lubis et al., 2021).

Secondly, pedagogical alignment determines educational value. Games must reinforce curriculum goals, complement communicative activities informed by CLT and TBLT principles, and address learners’ cognitive and affective needs (Ellis, 2003; J. C. , Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Board games including *Scrabble Arabic Vocabulary*, *Snakes and Ladders*, and *Domino Card Games* have been shown to strengthen vocabulary retention while leveraging healthy competition and cooperation to increase engagement (Bachtiar & Almardhi, 2023; Hayat, 2022; Ummah et al., 2025).

Thirdly, teacher facilitation is fundamental. Teachers serve as facilitators, mediators, and instructional designers who adapt gameplay to learner readiness. For digital tools such as Kahoot, Wordwall, Educaplay, and mobile *charades* activities, teachers are responsible for designing challenges, monitoring participation, and providing scaffolding or corrective feedback (Laila Agustina et al., 2023; Nashoih & Janah, 2022; Rahmayanti et al., 2021). Professional training is therefore vital for managing classroom dynamics, particularly within multimodal and immersive contexts (Puspitasari, 2024).

Fourthly, technology integration influences accessibility and depth of engagement. Digital applications and AR/VR support repeated practice, contextualised input, and collaborative problem-solving (Connolly et al., 2011; Khenissi et al., 2016). Personalised and narrative-driven games improve autonomy and motivation by matching challenges to individual learning profiles (Luay et al., 2024; Romero-Rodríguez et al., 2024).

Finally, learner characteristics and feedback drive effectiveness. Prior knowledge, proficiency levels, and affective variables such as anxiety shape performance outcomes; meanwhile, iterative refinement of game modules based on learner feedback improves learning impact (Hunainah et al., 2023; Puspitasari, 2024). Implementing games across all four language skills requires thoughtful sequencing to balance cognitive load, collaborative interaction, and repeated exposure. The determinants of game effectiveness in Arabic education at the Madrasah Aliyah level include engaging and pedagogically coherent design, meaningful technology integration, active teacher facilitation, and learner-centred adaptation. Together, these factors create interactive and motivating environments that support sustainable Arabic language acquisition.

### **3. Theoretical and Practical Implications in Arabic Language Learning at Madrasah Aliyah**

The integration of educational games into Arabic language instruction offers both theoretical and practical contributions to learning at the Madrasah Aliyah level. Theoretically, educational games embody an active learning paradigm that strengthens motivation, engagement, and social interaction within a constructivist framework. Various game types contribute to distinct linguistic outcomes. Augmented reality games reinforce vocabulary mapping and contextualised visual input, while narrative-driven and alternate-reality games nurture collaboration, sustained curiosity, and deeper cognitive involvement. Personalised digital games additionally support differentiated learning pathways tailored to individual student profiles (Connolly et al., 2011; Khenissi et al., 2016; Romero-Rodríguez et al., 2024). These approaches remain aligned with Communicative Language Teaching and Task-Based Learning principles by providing meaningful, communicative tasks that promote negotiation of meaning and cooperative problem-solving (Lam, 2016).

Practically, educational games enhance Arabic language proficiency across the four skill domains commonly developed at Madrasah Aliyah. In listening (*istimā'*), game-based practice provides repeated, meaningful exposure to input that stimulates attention and engagement; digital platforms such as Educaplay and virtual reality environments allow learners to experience interactive audio-visual simulations of real communication (Lubis et al., 2021). In speaking (*kalām*), interactive games—including Truth or Dare with a spin-wheel, first-person challenge scenarios, and collaborative Minecraft missions—encourage fluency, spontaneity, confidence, and peer negotiation (Hasibuan et al., 2024). Reading (*qirā'ah*) benefits from narrative-embedded challenges that evoke intrinsic motivation to comprehend texts, strengthen visual attention, and reinforce lexical retention. Writing (*kitābah*) games, including mobile charades and task-based card platforms, create enjoyable and low-anxiety spaces that support accurate written production based on learners' proficiency levels (Bachtiar & Almardhi, 2023).

The practical implications further extend to motivation and affective development. The use of digital platforms such as Quizizz, Wordwall, and Kahoot enhances interaction and provides immediate feedback that supports self-regulation in learning (Hadiyanto et al., 2020; Purba & Jamil, 2023; Yasmar & Amalia, 2024). Gamification strategies cultivate learner autonomy, creativity, and analytical thinking by embedding linguistic tasks within meaningful game challenges (Luay et al., 2024). Teachers are required to adapt game-based activities to diverse learning needs, classroom constraints, and resource availability, while continuing to facilitate reflection and feedback for performance improvement (Aulia et al., 2022; Hunainah, 2024). Incorporating a varied range of game formats ensures that different learning

styles and affective needs are addressed, enabling broader participation and inclusivity in the learning process (Hamizul & Rahimi, 2015; Ummah et al., 2025).

In summary, educational games in Arabic language instruction at Madrasah Aliyah foster meaningful engagement, active collaboration, tangible skill acquisition, and enhanced learner autonomy. Their successful implementation depends on thoughtful teacher facilitation, pedagogical alignment with curricular objectives, strategic technology integration, and ongoing adaptation based on learner feedback. When applied responsibly, games serve as an effective medium for strengthening Arabic language proficiency whilst simultaneously addressing motivational and pedagogical challenges. The following table summarizes the key outcomes of this study regarding the use of educational games in Arabic language learning at MA level.

**Table 1.** Key Findings of Educational Games in Arabic Language Learning

No	Focus / Skill	Pedagogical Role of Educational Games	Key Findings	Learning Impact
1.	Listening (istimā')	Provides repetitive, contextualised input that strengthens attention and comprehension	VR-based listening simulations and audio-quiz platforms	Enhanced auditory processing and increased engagement
2.	Speaking (kalām)	Facilitates spontaneous oral interaction and negotiation of meaning	Interactive speaking challenges and collaborative sandbox tasks	Improved fluency, confidence, and learner collaboration
3.	Reading (qirā'ah)	Embeds comprehension within narrative-based or problem-solving tasks	QR-mediated reading activities and story-driven challenges	Increased motivation and reinforced vocabulary
4	Writing (kitābah)	Encourages expressive text production with reduced affective pressure	Mobile interactive writing prompts and card-based writing tasks	Higher accuracy, creativity, and alignment with proficiency development
5	Vocabulary (mufradāt)	Strengthens lexical recall through semantic mapping and multimodal input	AR/VR-supported vocabulary tools and letter-tile games	Rapid memorisation and improved long-term retention
6	Affective & Social Skills	Fosters confidence, cooperation, and	Team-based online quiz tasks	Lower anxiety and higher participation

		constructive competition		
7	Cognitive & Strategy Skills	Enhances problem-solving, strategic learning, and autonomy	Narrative-quest puzzles and language-based logic games	Improved analytical thinking and learner independence

Across the reviewed literature, several consistent findings emerge with regard to the pedagogical value of educational games for Arabic language learning. Game-based tasks improve listening comprehension through repetitive and meaningful input; strengthen speaking performance by providing opportunities for spontaneous interaction; and enhance reading motivation through narrative-oriented challenges. Writing activities designed as games were shown to lower anxiety while supporting accuracy and creative expression, whereas vocabulary-oriented games—especially those integrating AR/VR—significantly accelerated lexical recall and retention.

Beyond linguistic gains, educational games contribute to affective development by increasing participation and reducing learning anxiety, and to cognitive development through improved problem-solving and learner autonomy. These cross-skill benefits indicate that educational games function not merely as supplementary activities, but as comprehensive pedagogical tools that integrate linguistic, cognitive, and affective dimensions of learning within the Madrasah Aliyah context.

#### **D. Conclusion**

This literature review demonstrates that educational games play a meaningful role in strengthening Arabic language learning by supporting vocabulary acquisition, listening comprehension, speaking fluency, and learner engagement. Their effectiveness is strongly tied to thoughtful pedagogical design, the application of communicative and task-based principles, and active teacher facilitation.

In the Madrasah Aliyah context, the incorporation of educational games is particularly relevant for enhancing motivation, reducing anxiety, and creating interactive learning experiences that are often limited in traditional instruction. However, several challenges persist, including varied student proficiency levels, limited teacher readiness, and constrained instructional time.

Despite these limitations, educational games hold considerable potential as transformative teaching tools. Future research should explore game designs tailored specifically to Arabic learning at the MA level, investigate models of teacher professional development, and examine the long-term impacts of game-based

learning on language proficiency. Overall, educational games merit systematic integration and continued innovation to strengthen Arabic language learning in Islamic Senior High Schools

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