

Enhancing Arabic Language Reading Skills Through Arabic News Anchors: A Comparative Study of Indonesian and Malaysian Students

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ABSTRACT

Arabic news anchors provide valuable training for students to comprehend content, grasp messages, and refine pronunciation and fluency. This study evaluates the performance of Indonesian and Malaysian students in presenting Arabic news using a comparative methodology. The research followed several stages: collecting video recordings and scripts of Arabic news presentations by Indonesian and Malaysian students, reviewing each video multiple times, analyzing fluency based on the multidimensional fluency scale, noting errors, and coding. The sample was selected using purposive sampling, consisting of participants in an Arabic news reading training organized collaboratively by Ahmad Dahlan University, Indonesia, and Universiti Teknologi Mara, Malaysia. This study aims to assess and compare their performance against established theoretical benchmarks through a detailed analysis of student-produced videos from both countries. Findings show that students from both Indonesia and Malaysia performed best in the aspect of smoothness.

However, Indonesian students must improve their expression and volume, while Malaysian students should improve their pacing. The results indicate that a balance among expression, volume, phrasing, smoothness, and pace is essential for reading fluency and comprehension. The result found errors in Indonesian and Malaysian students in Arabic news anchors, which include Arabic syntax, pronouncing the *hijaiyah*, long-short vowels, and errors in reading unvowelized sentences caused by limited

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vocabulary. The findings concluded that Arabic news as authentic material combined with a multidimensional fluency scale as an assessment rubric can be used to evaluate students' Arabic reading skills in detail.

Keywords: Arabic language skills, Arabic news anchors, authentic material

INTRODUCTION

To be considered a master Arabic language, one is required to have Arabic listening, reading, speaking, and writing competency (Alanezi, 2021). However, Arabic non-native speakers struggle to achieve these four skills, especially reading and speaking (Al-Busaidi, 2019). Other studies have also mentioned various challenges and problems faced by non-native students in learning Arabic, especially those from Indonesia and Malaysia. The problems students in Indonesia face in learning Arabic are related to their educational background and motivation (Zakiah, 2021), Arabic syntax and morphology, and difficulties in memorizing Arabic vocabulary (Khasanah & Tantowi, 2023). On the other hand, the difficulties in learning Arabic faced by Malaysian students were caused by educational background, curriculum, difficulty in understanding Arabic material, and an uncondusive classroom environment (Syamsuddin & Mas'ud, 2007).

One common issue both Indonesian and Malaysian students face is the difficulty in understanding Arabic language learning materials. To address this problem, the use of authentic materials presents a relevant solution, particularly for improving reading

skills. Authentic materials refer to resources that are connected to real-life themes and contexts, allowing students to engage with the language as it is used in the real world (Islam, 2015). Authentic material strengthens the motivation of language learners to continue learning (Febriana, 2017; Kim, 2015), enhances their reading comprehension ability (Namaziandost et al., 2022) and language use (Gilmore, 2007), expands their vocabulary and cultural knowledge (Kim, 2015), and stimulates them to read further (Berardo, 2006). This is because authentic materials provide reading materials that follow the real-life experiences experienced by students in their daily lives (Rao, 2019). However, the validity of authentic resources has been vigorously debated because of the intricacy of the vocabularies and structures, and all of these might be seen as teaching tools (Mara & Mohamad, 2021).

One type of authentic material for training Arabic reading skills is Arabic news anchors. According to Berardo (2006), Arabic news anchors certainly ease students' practice of their reading skills by using authentic and diverse languages. By reading news in Arabic, students are also trained to understand the message in the news to avoid misunderstandings. Experts suggest several steps to be considered to understand news text, such as pre-reading, reading for main ideas, understanding text organization, reading for detail, vocabulary building, skimming, and critical reading (Elgibali & Sullivan, 2017). Students can also practice delivering news in Arabic by reading and

practicing Arabic speaking skills, so listeners can receive the news by watching Arabic news anchor videos. Besides, students learn how to pronounce Arabic words correctly from a native Arabic speaker. For those who learn Arabic as a second language, pronunciation is the most challenging skill to acquire (AlMansour, 2016). Additionally, news anchor training can also be seen as implementing project-based learning (Bauer-Ramazani et al., 2016).

Previous studies have explored the use of news anchors in language learning. First, news anchors can serve as a valuable resource by integrating news reports, video and text formats, into language education, thereby connecting students to the real world (Foley-Ryan, 2018). Consistent with these findings, Nurbayani (2022) also explored students' experiences, perceptions, and performance in utilizing the news anchor challenge on TikTok. She found that the use of the news anchor challenge could enhance students' speaking performance. Another study mentioned the emergence of a new category termed 'newsfluencers,' including journalistic YouTubers and TikTokers, who blend the roles of journalists and influencers to create news content that is more accessible and engaging for younger audiences (Hurcombe, 2024). The ease of access to news today, with its diverse variations, facilitates teachers in integrating it into language learning.

Besides, Kurihara et al. (2021) have devised a system to eliminate discomfort due to differences in speech styles by controlling speech style. Zulfikar et al.

(2020) also explore problems students face when listening to English news broadcasts. The findings demonstrate that the issues are due to unfamiliar topics, unfamiliar vocabulary, various accents, a quick speech rate, unintelligible pronunciation, difficulty making inferences, excessively long passages, complicated grammatical structure, and complex ideas. Another study by Alisia and El-Sulukiyyah (2020) discusses monophthong vowels mispronounced by the participants in an English reading competition. Very little research has been done on Arabic reading news, particularly on its relationship with Arabic reading and speaking skills. Besides, although various studies have shown the positive side of news anchors in language learning, this does not mean that teachers and students are aware of the various benefits offered by Arabic news, which encourages them to utilize it in Arabic learning. Therefore, this study was conducted to provide an overview from another perspective by comparing the fluency and the errors of students from two different countries in delivering Arabic news.

In this study, a multidimensional fluency scale is applied as a theoretical framework to evaluate the effectiveness of Arabic news anchors in developing reading fluency. Specifically, it assesses reading fluency beyond mere speed and accuracy, incorporating critical dimensions such as expression, phrasing, smoothness, and pace. These dimensions collectively contribute to effective communication, especially in authentic language contexts. By implementing this scale, this study

identifies specific fluency strengths and weaknesses among Arabic non-native speakers and offers insight into tailored instructional strategies.

Concerning the importance of reading Arabic news anchors as part of language skills training, this study aims to compare the performance of Indonesian and Malaysian students in presenting Arabic news anchors. Their performance is analyzed through the theories of reading and speaking evaluation. Hence, the strengths and weaknesses of each student from both countries can be analyzed and evaluated to deepen their mastery of Arabic skills.

This study also contributes to providing teachers with an overview of various potential factors that influence students' performance in Arabic news anchoring from both countries. This research is also expected to become a reference for Arabic teachers who consider Arabic news one of their reading materials. Additionally, it motivates students to access Arabic news anchors and practice to develop their Arabic skills.

METHOD

This research applies the comparative method with a qualitative approach. The comparative method was selected because the purpose of this study is to compare Indonesian and Malaysian students' competency in reading Arabic news. The sample in this study was determined using purposive sampling techniques. Participants were all of the training participants in an Arabic news reading training organized

in collaboration between Ahmad Dahlan University, Indonesia, and Universiti Teknologi Mara, Malaysia. The training took place online via Zoom Meeting for two days on August 23 and 24, 2022. It was attended by 10 students, five from Ahmad Dahlan University, Indonesia, and five from Universiti Teknologi Mara, Malaysia. All participants from Indonesia and Malaysia attended the training simultaneously. The inclusion criteria for students participating in this training, who subsequently formed the sample for this study, were active students from both campuses enrolled in Arabic Studies and who participated in the training from beginning to end. The researcher did not impose restrictions based on age, semester, or gender in determining the sample. Conversely, the exclusion criteria included individuals who were inactive students, not enrolled in Arabic Studies, or who had graduated or did not complete the training. The second criterion is essential to ensure that the students sampled from both universities received the same foundational knowledge related to Arabic news anchoring. The topics discussed in the training consisted of Arabic news anchors in improving Arabic speaking and reading skills for non-native speakers, the role of Arabic dialect in Arabic news anchors, public speaking and translation in Arabic news anchors, and Arabic news anchor practices.

The data are generated from students' videos of reading Arabic news. Students are free to choose the news topic. Since it is challenging to define, observe, measure,

characterize, and categorize the concept of strategy, research into second-language reading comprehension strategies has proven challenging (Abbott, 2010). Specifically, this research uses the same evaluation rubric/component, which is based on the assumption that when reading a text, one automatically demonstrates a speaking capability (Fuchs et al., 2001). The data was then analyzed using a qualitative comparative method. The procedures of this research are collecting videos and writing Arabic news reports from Indonesian and Malaysian students. The researchers then watched each video repeatedly to analyze the students' fluency in delivering Arabic news based on the multidimensional fluency scale proposed by Rasinski (2004), as shown in

Table 1. The multidimensional fluency scale is a tool designed to assess (1) expression and volume, which evaluate the naturalness and emotional engagement of the reader's voice; (2) phrasing, which measures the ability to group words meaningfully and use appropriate intonation; (3) smoothness that evaluates the fluidity of reading and the reader's ability to self-correct errors; and (4) pace that examines the reading speed, ensuring it is neither too slow nor too rushed. This scale has been validated and proven reliable and effective in educational and research contexts (González-Trujillo et al., 2014). Each participant's performance was graded on a 1–4 scale across these dimensions, linking observed patterns to the theoretical underpinnings of the

Table 1
Multidimensional fluency scale (Rasinski, 2004)

Dimension	1	2	3	4
Expression and Volume	Voice lacks passion or enthusiasm when reading.	Inconsistency in using the voices: High and low voices.	In general, volume is appropriate, with occasional emotionless reading.	Reads with good expression and enthusiasm throughout the text. Sounds natural.
Phrasing	Word-by-word reading is due to the monotony and lack of awareness of phrase boundaries.	Inappropriate stress and intonation that fail to denote the conclusion of sentences and clauses.	There is a mixture of run-on pauses for air in the middle of sentences and potentially some choppiness.	Well-written, primarily in clause and sentence units, with enough expression.
Smoothness	Lengthy pauses, hesitancy, incorrect beginnings, sound-outs, and repetitions	There are several "rough places" in the text with extended pauses and hesitancies.	Occasional disruptions in fluency due to difficulty with particular words and/or structures.	Fluid with a few pauses, but word and structure problems are corrected rapidly.
Pace (during sections of minimal disruption)	Slow and laborious.	Moderately slow.	Uneven combination of quick and slow reading speeds.	Invariably conversational.

multidimensional fluency scale. The researchers also watched each video while noting down each mistake made by each student. Data related to the mistakes made by the students were then classified through coding techniques and then compared between the two countries.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Multidimensional Fluency Scale

Regarding fluency, this study employed a multidimensional fluency scale, as shown in Table 1, to evaluate students' performance in reading Arabic news. Fluent public speakers incorporate the same components related to reading fluency into their voices: accuracy in speaking, proper speed, and expression and phrasing. The speaker's employment of these qualities of fluency promotes comprehension by the audience. Speaking inappropriate phrases, emphasizing keywords, increasing and decreasing volume, and adjusting intonation aid the listener in comprehending the speaker's message (Rasinski, 2004). The

scores obtained by each participant can be seen in Table 2.

From the assessment of student performance in reading Arabic news, as shown in Table 2, an interesting fact was found that Indonesian students obtained the lowest scores in the expression and volume aspects, with an average score of 2.8 out of the four aspects assessed. In this aspect, most students could read Arabic news like native speakers in almost all sections. However, they often focused on pronouncing words, especially when they found unfamiliar words, causing them to read without expression. Even Indonesian students 2 and 3 read Arabic news in a low voice from the beginning to the end. On the other hand, the lowest score for Malaysian students was in the pace aspect, with an average score of 2.6. This can be seen in Malaysian students 1, 2, and 3, who read Arabic news slowly. They seemed to be careful in pronouncing every word they read. At the same time, the highest scores for Indonesian and Malaysian students

Table 2
Student performances

Name	Expression and volume	Phrasing	Smoothness	Pace
Indonesian Student 1	4	4	4	4
Indonesian Student 2	3	3	3	4
Indonesian Student 3	2	3	3	2
Indonesian Student 4	2	3	4	2
Indonesian Student 5	3	3	4	3
Malaysian Student 1	3	3	3	2
Malaysian Student 2	2	2	3	2
Malaysian Student 3	2	2	3	2
Malaysian Student 4	3	4	4	4
Malaysian Student 5	4	3	3	3

were in the same aspect: smoothness. In this aspect, students were generally able to read Arabic news fluently with several pauses. Some experienced fluency disorders and difficulties with certain words or structures that were foreign to them. However, they can overcome these fluency disorders and difficulties through self-correction. Although, understandably, few language learners are capable of achieving native-like proficiency (Samimy, 2008). Table 2 shows that one Indonesian student successfully achieved the maximum reading and speaking proficiency test score close to a native speaker's proficiency. Meanwhile, one Malaysian student almost achieved three of the best scores out of four. In general, the students' abilities are equally distributed.

The performance differences between Indonesian and Malaysian students in Arabic reading can be attributed to several key factors, including textbook readability, motivation levels, limited interaction with Arabic texts, educational methods, and environmental support. In Malaysia, the readability of Arabic textbooks is a significant concern. Research indicates that the Bahasa Arab Tinggi Tingkatan Empat (BATTE) textbook, utilized by Malaysian students, is at a frustration level, rendering it unsuitable for effective learning and independent reading (Ghani, 2011; Ghani et al., 2014). This mismatch between the difficulty of the textbook and students' language abilities likely hampers their reading proficiency. Furthermore, Malaysian students demonstrate high levels of extrinsic motivation (e.g., grades, recognition) but

only moderate intrinsic motivation for reading Arabic texts (Yah & Lubis, 2018). In Indonesia, a lack of regular interaction with Arabic texts hinders students' ability to become proficient readers. This challenge is further exacerbated by insufficient exposure to effective reading strategies (Haris, 2022). The use of traditional or ineffective teaching methods, along with limited learning hours, further contributes to these difficulties (Aziz et al., 2022). Limited learning facilities and inadequate environmental support, such as insufficient opportunities to practice speaking Arabic, further exacerbate the problem (Zurqoni et al., 2020).

The balance between expression and volume, phrasing, smoothness, and pace is very much needed to achieve reading fluency and even reading comprehension. The literature states that reading with expression is important because it shows that students achieve reading fluency (Schwanenflugel et al., 2004). Meanwhile, speed of reading and prosodic values are important because they can be predictors of the reading comprehension percentage (Bilge & Uysal, 2019). Additionally, Kultas and Ulusoy (2023) stated that to read fluently, a person must read the text at the right speed and not make excessive reading errors such as misspelling, misreading, incomplete reading, repeating and skipping, and reading the text by paying attention to the correct emphasis and intonation. The ability to read text fluently is related to the reader's recognition of words in the text because people who have difficulty recognizing words will pay more attention

to decoding the words. The person's goal in this situation is to be able to pronounce the word rather than understand it.

Teachers can implement several teaching strategies to enhance students' reading fluency. First, they can utilize dual-language reading materials, as research indicates that presenting reading materials in both Arabic and the mother tongue significantly improves comprehension and translation skills compared to using a single language (Dillon et al., 2021). Second, phonological awareness activities should be focused on at an early stage. The early development of phonological awareness helps children recognize letters, words, and sentences more effectively, thereby reducing reading difficulties later on (Karroum et al., 2024). Third, employing think-aloud protocols can help identify and teach effective reading strategies. High-ability readers utilize a variety of strategies that can be taught to lower-ability readers to enhance their performance (Qahtani, 2020). By implementing these strategies, teachers can address gaps in reading performance and improve the overall reading experience.

Applying This study applied a multidimensional fluency scale, which provided a nuanced understanding of fluency in non-native Arabic learners. The scale's multidimensional approach revealed that both groups excelled at achieving balanced fluency. This finding reinforces Rasinski's argument that fluency is not a singular skill but an integration of multiple dimensions, each requiring targeted instruction.

Error Comparison

Apart from analyzing students' fluency in reading Arabic news, this research also mapped the errors made by Indonesian and Malaysian students in reading Arabic news. Reading is a complex skill that requires learning and practice; unlike other language-related abilities, it is not innate (Midraj & Midraj, 2013). The errors analyzed in this research include grammatical errors, vocalization of words, and construction of sentences (Mustapha & Mustapha, 2017).

To read the text correctly, students should know the grammatical relationship between the components of the sentences (Shaban, 2014). Arabic words are a result of a combination of consonants and short or long vowels. Reading Arabic accurately can be achieved if the student correctly vowelizes word endings according to the grammatical function in the sentence. This correctness requires the ability to master phonological and syntactical knowledge (Abu-Rabia, 2001). Based on this fact, the first mistake to be analyzed is related to grammatical errors, especially the Arabic syntax. This mistake is the most common among Indonesian and Malaysian students while reading Arabic news. Some of these mistakes are shown in Table 3.

The second error is the vocalization of words. In this part, the error is divided into two parts. The first one is related to pronouncing the *hijaiyah* or Arabic letters. Arabic is an inflectional language. The 28 letters that make up the Arabic alphabetic system are essentially consonants (Boumaraf & Macoir, 2016). This research

Table 3
Arabic syntax error comparison

Syntax Error	Indonesian Student	Malaysian Student
<i>Maf'ūl bihi</i>	<i>Da'na nalqi <u>nazratun</u></i>	-
<i>Fā'il</i>	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A'lantuhu <u>munazzamati</u> al-'ālimiyyati</i> • <i>Waḍa'at al-<u>munazzamati</u> al-hukumāti</i> • <i>Waṣafat <u>bawwābatil</u> aḥadil akhbariyyah</i>
<i>Ism kāna</i>	<i>Wa sayakūnu <u>safarahu</u> bidāyatan minat tārīkh</i>	-
<i>Jarr-majrūr</i>	<i>Baina waẓaratai at-ta'<u>limu</u> wa aṣ-ṣiḥḥah</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Min <u>dūna</u></i> • <i>Fī <u>mu'tamaru</u></i>
<i>Zarf-maẓrūf</i>	<i>Allazī yumkinu al-wuṣūl ilaihi '<u>abru</u> hāza ar-rābiṭ</i>	<i>Amāma al-<u>muhādirūn</u></i>
<i>Iḍāfah</i>	<i>Litablīghī <u>akhbārul</u> hārrah</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bihadafi tahsīni <u>sab'ūn</u> bil mi'ah</i> • <i>Qāmat munazzamatu <u>aṣ-siḥhatu</u> al-ālimiyyatu</i>
<i>Taṣrīf iṣtilāhiy</i>	<i>Lilḥuṣūli 'alā <u>ra'a</u> 'amīqah wa daqīqah</i>	
<i>Taṣrīf lughawiy</i>	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A'lantuhu munazzamati al-'ālimiyyati</i> • <i>Antum <u>yusajjilūn</u></i> • <i>Yumkinukum an <u>yaktubūn</u></i>
<i>Na't</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ilā al-ashyā' <u>asāsīyyah</u></i> • <i>Ilā al-liqāi fī al-akhbār al-<u>ātiy</u></i> • <i>Wa hākaẓa 'alā al-akhbārīl <u>yaum</u></i> 	-
<i>Ma'rīfah-nakirah</i>	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Wa ar-<u>rābi'an</u></i> • <i>Wā at-<u>tikhnūlūjiyyan</u></i>
<i>Ism tafḍīl</i>	-	<i><u>Adh'afah</u> min syabakātil ankabūt.</i>

finds that Indonesian and Malaysian students often had difficulty distinguishing the pronunciation of the letters *ḥ* and *h* and vice versa. The mispronouncing of the letter *ḥ* into *h* can be heard when the student mentions *ḥayyākumullah* where it sounds *hayyākumullah*. Meanwhile, on the contrary, Indonesian student 4 read:

“*ayyūhal musyahidūna aḥlan bikum*”
(Indonesia Student 4)

The sentence is heard as *aḥlan bikum*, which should be pronounced using *h*, not *ḥ*. Also, the word *al-jihatu* in the sentence

fa ḥāwalat al-jihatu al-mukhtaṣṣatu, which should be pronounced using *h*, was pronounced using *ḥ*. Another misspelling word is found when Indonesian and Malaysian students pronounce the letter *kh*. For example, the word *syakhṣun*, but it was said *syaqsun*. Besides, the word *al-akhbār* in the sentence *li nasyri al-akhbār al-'Arab* was pronounced as *al-aqbār*. Additionally, often, Malaysian students misspell the letter *z* with *z* in the word *munzu* in the sentence *munzu bidāyati al-'āmi* and pronounce *ḍ* into *d* in the word *waḍa'at* in the sentence *waḍa'at al-munazzamati*

al-hukumāti. Another incorrectness in pronouncing letters occurred when mentioning two consecutive letters. For instance, Indonesian students said, ‘*alā istikhdām manhaj*. In this case, the first word *istikhdām*, which ends with *m*, should be read as *istikhdāmi* with the short vowel *kasrah i* at the end and continued with the word *manhaj*, which begins with the letter *m*. The second mistake is related to the long-short vowel, including the Arabic orthography, where the diacritical marks are essential to be noticed (Abu-Rabia, 2001). Researchers found this error was made by both Indonesian and Malaysian students when pronouncing the word *qāṣirah* in the sentence *sa urāfiqukum lī muddatin qāṣirah*, which should be read as *qāṣirah*. In this case, the long vowel is located after the letter *ṣ*. However, students read the long vowel after the word *q*, which is incorrect. Also, the word *manhāj* should be read *manhaj*; reading *hukumāt* where it should be *al-hukūmah*, and saying *al-majaniyyah*, where it should be read as *al-majjāniyyah*.

The third error concerns the construction of sentences, including the vocabulary. Their limited vocabulary knowledge could cause it. The text that the students read was not vowelized. Unvowelized Arabic sentences can mostly only be read by skilled readers. Meanwhile, beginner readers often need help with the vowelization of sentences because of their limited morphological knowledge (Hassanein et al., 2021). One should know the spelling, grammatical role, and context to read the correct vowelized word or sentence (Taouka & Coltheart,

2004). One of the mistakes can be seen in one of the Indonesian students who read *marīh* instead of using the short vowel *fathah (ma)* in the beginning word. This word should be read *murīh* with the short vowel *ḍamah (mu)* in the beginning word. In addition to that, an Indonesian student also mentions *wazāratai at-ta’līm wa aṣ-ṣihhah*, where the word *wazāratai* (ministry) is read (*wa*) with the short vowel *fathah*. This word should be read *wizāratai* using the short vowel *kasrah (wi)*. Meanwhile, Malaysian students mistakenly read:

“*ma’akum Nūr ‘Izza Syazana binti Muhammad Khairi ka mazī’atil yaumi*”
(Malaysian Student 2)

Malaysian student 2 read the word *mazī’ah* in that sentence using the short vowel *fathah (ma)* at the beginning of a word, where it should be read *muṣī’ah* (anchor) with the short vowel *ḍamah (mu)* at the beginning of the word. Also, one of them read *al-khiṭā’* in the sentence *nast’afīkum min jamī’il khiṭā’* with the short vowel *kasrah (khi)*, where the word should be read *al-khaṭa’* (mistake) with the short vowel *fathah (kha)*.

In general, the causes of errors made by students, as mentioned above, consist of interlingual and intralingual errors (Richards, 1971). Interlingual errors occur when elements or rules of the mother tongue influence the second language, including a lack of understanding of Arabic syntax and morphology and limited Arabic vocabulary (Agussalim et al., 2023). Meanwhile, intralingual errors

are defined as a lack of understanding by language learners regarding the rules or regulations of a second language, including over-generalization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, and false concepts hypothesized (Richards, 1971). The impact of interlingual errors on students' reading fluency is evident from the differences between the orthography of their mother tongue and that of Arabic (Ergül et al., 2024). Additionally, several Arabic letters not present in their mother tongue also hinder their pronunciation. Finally, the differences between students' mother tongue dialects and Arabic also affect their intonation when reading Arabic news, which subsequently impacts their accuracy in pronouncing long and short vowels. Furthermore, intralingual errors related to word-reading fluency and decoding skills affect students' ability to predict text while reading, which in turn influences reading comprehension (Crosson & Lesaux, 2010).

Wijaya and Zulkarnain (2023) also mentioned various causes of students' errors in speaking Arabic, such as the influence of the mother tongue, lack of understanding of Arabic grammar, and the teachers not correcting students' errors, so that they become habits. They also offer solutions to overcome Arabic speaking errors where teachers need to play an active role and provide good examples in learning Arabic, enrich vocabulary, and eliminate the habit of students who tend to equate Arabic with their mother tongue (Wijaya & Oktaviani, 2022; Wijaya & Zulkarnain, 2023).

CONCLUSION

This study underscores the utility of the multidimensional fluency scale as a robust framework for evaluating reading fluency among non-native Arabic speakers. By applying this scale, the research identifies specific strengths, such as smoothness, and areas for improvement, including expression and pace. The results also found errors in Indonesian and Malaysian students in Arabic news anchors, including Arabic syntax, pronouncing the *hijaiyah*, long-short vowels, and errors in reading unvowelized sentences caused by limited vocabulary.

In conclusion, this study reveals varied competency levels among Indonesian and Malaysian students reading Arabic news. Authentic materials, such as Arabic news, play a crucial role in language learning, motivating students and enhancing comprehension. Both authentic and non-authentic materials contribute to skill development, addressing diverse learning needs. Authentic materials can subsequently be integrated through several teaching strategies, such as dual-language reading materials, focusing on phonological awareness activities, and employing think-aloud protocols. Addressing identified errors, including grammatical, pronunciation, and sentence construction issues, is essential for improving reading proficiency. Therefore, teachers should correct and not overlook the errors made by students as early as possible to prevent the occurrence of persistent mistakes. Besides, teachers should integrate prosody-focused activities and pacing exercises to address these gaps, ultimately

enhancing students' ability to read and comprehend authentic Arabic texts.

Implications for Theory and Practice

This study contributed to understanding the comparison of strengths and weaknesses between Indonesian and Malaysian students in Arabic news anchoring from the perspective of the multidimensional fluency scale. Students from both countries demonstrated strengths in the aspect of smoothness, as they were generally able to read Arabic news fluently, with occasional pauses and fluency disruptions. These disruptions and difficulties, often caused by unfamiliar words or structures, were typically resolved through self-correction. Indonesian students, however, exhibited weaknesses in the aspect of expression and volume, often focusing on pronouncing words, particularly unfamiliar ones, which led to reading without expression. Conversely, Malaysian students showed weaknesses in the aspect of pace, appearing overly cautious in pronouncing each word they read. These findings suggest that Arabic news, as authentic material, combined with the multidimensional fluency scale as an assessment rubric, can be effectively used to evaluate students' reading skills in detail. Moreover, errors identified among students from both countries in Arabic news anchoring confirmed and expanded on previous research, which highlighted that non-native speakers face challenges in Arabic syntax and morphology (Khasanah & Tantowi, 2023).

Furthermore, by fostering collaborative efforts in language education, we can empower students to become proficient users of Arabic. Teachers should utilize authentic materials and targeted instruction to support students in mastering Arabic skills. Additionally, this study proposes recommendations for teachers and policymakers to strengthen syntax instruction in Arabic teaching and enhance the phonological aspect by implementing specific methods and paying particular attention to the correct pronunciation of Arabic letters. Typically, Arabic language instruction begins with vocabulary and expressions, often neglecting the pronunciation of each letter.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Studies

This study has limitations in that students' performance in reading Arabic news is analyzed through the videos they produce rather than through direct observation in front of researchers. This limitation makes it challenging for the researchers to accurately assess students' reading due to background noise present in some video segments. Another shortcoming is the small number of research samples, which limits the potential to generalize the findings. Future research should explore innovative teaching approaches and assess their effectiveness in promoting language proficiency. Additionally, future studies could investigate the integration of news anchors on digital platforms or the use of active learning strategies to enhance reading skills.

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