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Enthusiasm and Participation in Arabic Language Learning: A Qualitative Case Study in an Islamic Primary School Based on Curran's Theory

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Abstract

This study identifies problems in Arabic language learning by examining student enthusiasm, participation and influencing factors. Using qualitative case explanatory field research, data were collected through observation, interviews, and open-ended questionnaires from fifth grade students of the Islamic Special Program (Takhasus) at Madrasah Ibtida'iyah (MI) Taufiqiyah Semarang. The findings indicated that low enthusiasm and participation are influenced by limited learning motivation, insufficient teacher resources, perceptions of Arabic as a difficult subject, and limited instructional variation. These findings align with Charles Curran's theory, which emphasizes emotional support and a sense of security in learning. The use of interactive strategies such as educational games, group discussion, quizzes, and reward programs, was found to increase student engagement and interest. This study contributes theoretically and practically by enriching the literature and providing evidence-based insights for instructional practices in Islamic elementary education, and recommends further quantitative or mixed-method research.

Keywords: *Arabic Language Learning, Student Enthusiasm, Student Participation*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengidentifikasi masalah dalam pembelajaran bahasa Arab dengan meninjau antusiasme dan partisipasi siswa serta faktor-faktor yang memengaruhinya. Metode yang digunakan adalah penelitian lapangan dengan pendekatan kualitatif studi kasus eksplanatori, melalui

observasi, wawancara, dan angket terbuka, penelitian dilakukan pada siswa kelas V Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) Taufiqiyah Semarang. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa rendahnya antusiasme dan partisipasi dipengaruhi oleh kurangnya motivasi belajar, keterbatasan guru, anggapan bahwa pelajaran sulit, serta kurangnya variasi metode pembelajaran. Temuan ini sejalan dengan teori *Charles Curran* yang menekankan pentingnya rasa aman dan dukungan emosional dalam belajar bahasa Arab. Penerapan strategi pembelajaran interaktif seperti permainan edukatif, diskusi kelompok, kuis, dan pemberian *reward* terbukti meningkatkan keterlibatan dan minat siswa. Studi ini berkontribusi secara teoritis dan praktis dengan memperkaya literatur serta memberikan wawasan berbasis bukti bagi praktik pembelajaran di pendidikan dasar Islam, serta merekomendasikan penelitian lanjutan dengan metode kuantitatif atau campuran.

Kata Kunci: *Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab, Antusiasme Siswa, Partisipasi Siswa*

Introduction

In the Arabic language learning (ALL), various challenges frequently emerge, including difficulties in writing skills, grammatical mastery, limited use of engaging learning media or games, and constraints in managing both online and face to face classes.¹ These pedagogical issues often lead to decreased student interest, which plays a crucial role in shaping students' engagement and participation in the learning process.² Learning interest functions as an internal motivational factor that encourages students to actively participate in classroom activities and persist in overcoming learning difficulties.³ Moreover, an inclusive and supportive learning environment that promotes psychological safety is essential in fostering students confidence and willingness to use Arabic. When students feel secure and emotionally supported, they are more likely to enjoy learning and

¹ Hamidulloh Ibda et al., "Problematika Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Di Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Muhammadiyah Botoputih Temanggung," *Jurnal Analisa Pemikiran Insaan Cendikia* 6, no. 1 (June 2023): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.54583/apic.vol6.no1.105>.

² Rahayu Lestari, Bahrin Ali Murtopo, and Maryanto Maryanto, "Analisis Minat Belajar Siswa dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Melalui Metode Bernyanyi di Kelas V MI Ma'arif NU Tanjungsari," *IBTIDA-Jurnal Kajian Pendidikan Dasar* 2, no. 2 (December 2022): 128–37, <https://doi.org/10.33507/ibtida.v2i2.769>.

³ Fitri Fitri and Muhammad Hasbi, "The Relationship between Interest and Learning Motivation to Natural Science Learning Outcomes: A Narrative Review Study," *ETDC: Indonesian Journal of Research and Educational Review* 4, no. 4 (September 2025): 1478–87, <https://doi.org/10.51574/ijrer.v4i4.3870>.

participate actively.⁴ However, in many Islamic Schools, Arabic instruction is still constrained by limited teacher readiness, inadequate instructional strategies, and a lack of varied learning methods. As a result, Arabic learning becomes less effective, leading to reduced student enthusiasm and participation. This condition highlights the need for pedagogical approaches that address both emotional and instructional aspects of ALL.

ALL at MI Taufiqiyah, student enthusiasm and participation are important for understanding the lessons. When students are active in learning, their skills improve. At first, the students were not interested in Arabic. After the lessons became more varied and fun, their enthusiasm and participation increased. This shows that the learning method is very important. The lack of enthusiasm and participation of students has a direct impact on their low understanding of the Arabic language material being taught.⁵

However, classroom observations indicate that student enthusiasm and participation remain unstable. Some students remain passive and unengaged, resulting in suboptimal learning and potentially lowering their motivation. Teachers teaching methods play a crucial role in shaping the effectiveness of the learning process.⁶ Inappropriate or less engaging methods may limit students active involvement and hinder their understanding of learning materials. Therefore, the selection of appropriate learning methods is essential to foster student enthusiasm and participation in ALL.

This study is grounded in Charles Curran's humanistic learning theory, which emphasizes the importance of emotional security, interpersonal relationships, and psychological support in the language learning process.⁷ According to Curran, learners are more willing to

⁴ Yanhong Shao et al., "Teacher Support and Secondary School Students' Learning Engagement: A Moderated Mediation Model," *Scientific Reports* 15, no. 1 (January 2025): 2974, <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-87366-0>.

⁵ Jian Li and Eryong Xue, "Dynamic Interaction between Student Learning Behaviour and Learning Environment: Meta-Analysis of Student Engagement and Its Influencing Factors," *Behavioral Sciences* 13, no. 1 (January 2023): 59, <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs13010059>.

⁶ Hadi Prayitno et al., "Analysis of The Influence of Effective Teaching Methodology, Knowledge of Curriculum Design and Class Mastery on The Effectiveness of Teaching and Learning Activities," *Journal on Education* 6, no. 4 (June 2024): 20641–46, <https://doi.org/10.31004/joe.v6i4.6156>.

⁷ Shofia Hanna Nisa, Mega Febriani Sya, and Rachmah Amalia, "Community Language Learning di Sekolah Dasar: Pendekatan Pembelajaran Bahasa

participate and communicate when they feel safe and supported within a learning community. This perspective is reflected in Community Language Learning (CLL), a method developed by Charles A. Curran and influenced by Carl Rogers humanistic approach, which views learners as whole persons whose emotional and social needs are integral to effective language learning. In this study, Curran's theory provides a conceptual framework for understanding students enthusiasm and participation in ALL. It focuses on student centered learning. In this method, student are active, and the teacher acts like a counselor who supports them and creates a positive atmosphere.⁸ When the learning environment fails to provide an adequate sense of psychological safety, students tend to experience decreased enthusiasm and participation, hindering language acquisition. Therefore, CLL aims to minimize learning anxiety by optimizing interpersonal relationships and creating interactions that foster a sense of safety, so that students are more prepared to participate and engage in learning.

In Charles Curran's theory, using the CLL approach, he explains that the learning process takes place through several stages,⁹ The process begins with the birth stage, in which students develop a sense of security within the learning community. This is followed by the freedom stage, where learning experiences gradually foster greater learner independence. Next is the free speech stage, during which students begin to express themselves more freely, although they may occasionally resist certain directions. Subsequently, learners enter the accepting criticism *stage*, in which they become more receptive to feedback aimed at improving their language skills. Finally, students reach the improving language style stage, where they begin to develop their language abilities more naturally and independently.

Wang (2022) demonstrated that teacher engagement has a direct positive effect on students achievement in foreign language learning, with autonomous motivation and positive academic emotions mediating

Inggris," *Karimah Tauhid* 3, no. 7 (July 2024): 7749–60, <https://doi.org/10.30997/karimahtauhid.v3i7.14173>.

⁸ Tiana Nur Azizah Suparman, Channah Qotrunnada, and Ahmad Khalil, "Pendekatan Community Language Learning dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab: kajian Konseptual dan Implementatif," *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra* 5, no. 2 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.53769/deiktis.v5i3.1835>.

⁹ Ela Isnani Munawwaroh, "Humanistic Method dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab," *Tarbawy: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 5, no. 2 (December 2018): 109–15, <https://doi.org/10.32923/tarbawy.v5i2.838>.

students engagement and participation.¹⁰ Egitim (2025) International studies have shown that students oral participation in foreign language classrooms is closely related to teachers ability to create psychological safety and supportive learning environments.¹¹ Al Maqbali (2025) A descriptive study involving non-native Arabic learners in Oman found a significant relationship between social engagement and Arabic language learning, highlighting the importance of learners participation in social and communicative contexts to support language development.¹² Selim (2022) Previous studies on Arabic learning in Islamic schools have shown that although learners motivation to study Arabic is predominantly religious, various contextual and affective factors can lead to disengagement, indicating that these dimensions play a crucial role in students participation in Arabic learning across different context and age groups.¹³ Nur Afiqah (2023) Previous research has indicated that students engagement in Arabic learning tends to be lower in productive skills than in receptive skills, with internal and environmental factors identified as the main constants to active participation.¹⁴

However, most of the existing studies have focused on adolescent or adult learners, employed predominantly quantitative

¹⁰ Jianhua Wang, Xi Zhang, and Lawrence Jun Zhang, "Effects of Teacher Engagement on Students' Achievement in an Online English as a Foreign Language Classroom: The Mediating Role of Autonomous Motivation and Positive Emotions," *Frontiers in Psychology* 13 (July 2022): 950652, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.950652>.

¹¹ Soyhan Egitim, "Does Language Teachers' Intercultural Competence Influence Oral Participation in EFL Classrooms?: Unveiling Learner Perspectives through a Mixed Methods Inquiry," *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 46, no. 9 (October 2025): 2778–93, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2024.2306169>.

¹² Latifa Rashid Salim Al Maqbali, "The Relationship between Social Engagement and Learning Arabic for Non-Native Speakers in the Sultanate of Oman," *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 15, no. 1 (January 2025): 1056–64, <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v15-i1/24586>.

¹³ Nadia Selim and Mohamad Abdalla, "Exploring Motivation and Engagement: Voices of Adolescent Non-Arab Muslim Learners of Arabic at Australian Islamic Schools," *Religions* 13, no. 6 (June 2022): 560, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13060560>.

¹⁴ Nur Afiqah Athirah Mohd Rushdi and Lily Hanefarezan 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 (June 2023): 1739–52, <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v12-i2/17265>.

research designs, and rarely examined Arabic language learning at the primary school level. More importantly, limited attention has been given to analyzing students' enthusiasm and participation through the lens of Charles A. Curran's Counseling-Learning Theory in Arabic learning contexts. Previous research has also not sufficiently explored how enthusiasm and participation contribute to the emergence of learning problems in Arabic language classrooms, particularly in elementary madrasah settings that often face limited teacher resources, varied instructional methods, and low environmental support for learning. Therefore, this study addresses these empirical and theoretical gaps by focusing on students' enthusiasm and participation and linking them to Charles A. Curran's theory to provide a more comprehensive understanding of Arabic learning problems based on the real classroom conditions at MI Taufiqiyah.

Based on this background, this research is formulated into two main questions: (1) what factors influence the low enthusiasm and participation of students in learning Arabic in class V of the special Islamic school of MI Taufiqiyah (2) what efforts can be made to improve these two aspects. Thus, this research not only provides new understanding regarding the factors that cause the low effectiveness of Arabic learning, but also offers solutions through efforts to increase student enthusiasm and participation as a step to improve the quality of Arabic learning at MI Taufiqiyah.

Method

This research uses a qualitative case explanatory field research¹⁵, because the research focuses on understanding student enthusiasm, participation, and emotional experiences in ALL, which cannot be adequately captured through quantitative measurement alone. A qualitative approach allows the researcher to explore student learning experiences in depth and to examine how instructional practices, classroom interactions, and emotional support influence their engagement. Furthermore, this approach allows for a context specific understanding of learning situations and classroom dynamics as they

¹⁵ Muhammad Ahsanul Husna et al., "Project-Based Learning on Direct Translation Material with Pop-Up for Students of Walisongo State Islamic University Semarang," *ALSUNIYAT: Jurnal Penelitian Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Budaya Arab* 8, no. 1 (2025): 266–90, <https://doi.org/10.17509/alsuniyat.v8i1.77945>.

occur.¹⁶ The use of field research facilitates direct observation and interaction with participants, enabling the collection of rich data that reflect real classroom conditions.¹⁷ This methodological approach is also consistent with Charles Curran’s humanistic learning theory, which emphasizes emotional security and interpersonal relationships as essential elements in the learning process.

The subjects of this study were 27 fifth-grade students in the Islamic Special Program (*Takhasus*) at MI Taufiqiyah Semarang. These students were selected because they were actively involved in ALL within a program that emphasizes intensive Arabic instruction, making them relevant to the focus of this study on student enthusiasm and participation. In addition, the researcher’s role as an Arabic teacher during PLP II enabled continuous observation of students’ engagement, participation, and classroom interactions during daily lessons and discussions.

To obtain in-depth data, researchers used participatory observation techniques, interviews and open questionnaires.¹⁸ Participatory observation was used to see how fifth-grade students took part in Arabic learning. The researcher recorded their responses on observation sheets, with input from the supervising teacher. Several observations during PLP II helped identify student problems and their level of engagement.

Table 1. Data Collection Indicators

No	Instrument	Focus	Main Indicator
1	Observation	Student Enthusiasm and Participation.	Interest in learning, active participation in activities.
2	Interview	Student Perception.	Reasons for liking/disliking Arabic.
3	Open Questionnaire	Student Perception.	Feedback on learning methods, activities, and atmosphere.

¹⁶ Alex Sandro Gomes Pessoa et al., “Using Reflexive Interviewing to Foster Deep Understanding of Research Participants’ Perspectives,” *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 18 (January 2019): 1609406918825026, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406918825026>.

¹⁷ Fildza Malahati et al., “Kualitatif: Memahami Karakteristik Penelitian Sebagai Metodologi,” *JURNAL PENDIDIKAN DASAR* 11, no. 2 (December 2023): 341–48, <https://doi.org/10.46368/jpd.v11i2.902>.

¹⁸ Ardiansyah, Risnita, and M. Syahrani Jailani, “Teknik Pengumpulan Data Dan Instrumen Penelitian Ilmiah Pendidikan Pada Pendekatan Kualitatif dan Kuantitatif,” *Jurnal IHSAN: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 1, no. 2 (July 2023): 1–9, <https://doi.org/10.61104/ihsan.v1i2.57>.

Table 1 shows the indicators used in data collection. Each instrument was designed to explore students' enthusiasm, participation, and perceptions of ALL, resulting in more targeted data.

Interviews were conducted with supervising teachers and several fifth-grade students with a special education program (*Takhasus*) to determine the reasons for students' lack of interest in Arabic lessons and the factors contributing to their low enthusiasm and participation. Supervising teachers were also asked for their opinions on challenges in the classroom. Furthermore, researchers administered an open-ended questionnaire to students to gather their experiences and perspectives on enthusiasm and participation in learning.

The data analysis process in this study followed the stages developed by Spradley. To provide a more systematic overview of the analysis flow, a visualization of these stages is shown in the figure below.

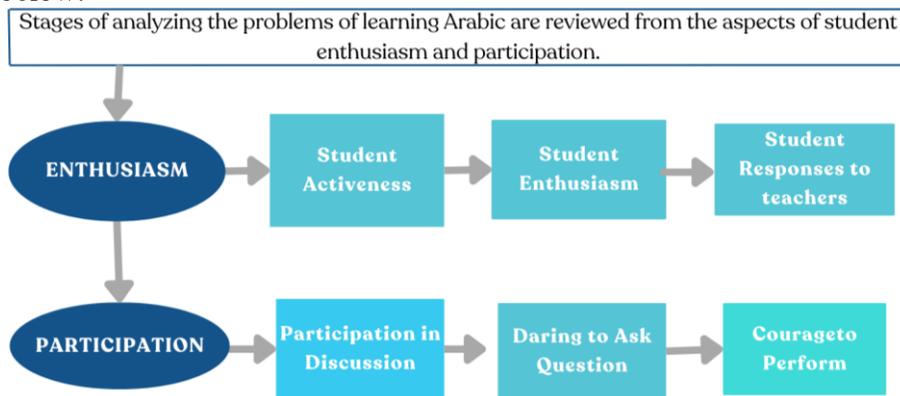


Figure 1. Analyzing the Problems of Learning Arabic are Reviewed from the Aspects of Student Enthusiasm and Participation

Figure 1 shows the stages of data analysis used in this study, to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the data, the validity of the findings is strengthened through data analysis techniques carried out using the Spradley model which consists of four stages,¹⁹ namely

¹⁹ Inayah Inayah et al., "Word Wall Games-Based Learning in ALT (Availability in the Project Life Cycle at Walisongo State Islamic University, Semarang) / التعلّم القائم على وورد وول جامس في تعليم اللغة العربية (متوافرا بدورة حياة المشروع لجامعة) / والى سونجو الإسلامية الحكومية سمارا" in *Mudalla : Proceeding International Conference on Arabic Language*, ed. Muhammd Irham Ghaffar (Malang, Indonesia: Department of Arabic Literature, Faculty of Letters, Universitas Negeri Malang, 2025), 259–76; Inayah Inayah et al., "Ikhtibār Mi'yār al-Kafā'ah Fī al-Lugah al-'Arabiyyah Bi-Mutaṣaffih al-Imtiḥān al-Āmin Fī Jāmi'ah Walisongo al-Islāmiyyah al-Ḥukūmiyyah Semarang," *Lisania: Journal of Arabic Education and Literature* 7, no. 2 (December

Domain analysis (*tahlil al-majal*), Taxonomy analysis (*al-tahlil al-dlaribiy*), Component analysis (*tahlil al-mukawwanat*), and Cultural Theme Analysis (*tahlil al-maudlu' al-tsaqafiy*). First, in the Domain Analysis stage, researchers identified a general picture of student enthusiasm and participation in Arabic language learning. Second, in the Taxonomy Analysis, this picture was detailed into more specific forms such as student activeness, student enthusiasm, student responses to teachers, participating in discussions, daring to ask questions, and courage to perform. Third, in the Component Analysis, researchers looked at the patterns or variations of each form of enthusiasm and participation. Finally, in the Cultural Theme Analysis, researchers explored the causal factors behind the problems of student enthusiasm and participation in the context of Charles Curran's theory.

Results and Discussion

The results are organized into three main parts: (1) Students initial perceptions and learning conditions, (2) Observed patterns of enthusiasm and participations during classroom activities, and (3) Thematic findings derived from observations, interviews, and open-ended questionnaires.

Preliminary observations and interviews indicated that many fifth-grade students showed low enthusiasm and limited participation in ALL. Several students described Arabic as a difficult and boring subject, which was reflected in their passive classroom behavior, minimal responses during lessons, and reluctance to participate in learning activities. These initial conditions suggest that students enthusiasm and participation were influenced by their negative perceptions of Arabic Learning, limited learning motivation, and the lack of engaging instructional experiences prior to the study. These findings form the basis for identifying the challenges in ALL at the pre-intervention stage.

2023): 198–216, <https://doi.org/10.18326/lisania.v7i2.198-216>; Ummu Zahrotun Ni'mah et al., "Implementation of Imla Method in Mahārah Al-Kitābah Learning to Students'IX Class MTsNU Nurul-Huda Mangkang Semarang," *Al Mahāra Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 11, no. 1 (2025): 48–68, <https://doi.org/10.14421/almahara.2025.0111-03>; Khansa Nabila et al., "Tāthbīq Nāmūdhaj Āt-Tā 'Āllum Āl-Qā'Im 'Ālā Āl-Māshārī' Bī-Istikhdam Wāsāith Powtoon Lī-Tāhsīn Māhārāt Āl-Kālām Lādāy Āt-Tullāb," *Mantiqū Tayr: Journal of Arabic Language* 5, no. 2 (2025): 183–205, <https://doi.org/10.25217/mantiqutayr.v5i2.5815>.

Table 2. Qualitative Findings Table Based on Thematic Categories

Thematic Categories	Description of Findings	Data source
Student Learning Preferences	Students prefer science and mathematics lessons because they are considered fun.	Classroom observation, student interviews
Early Attitudes Toward Arabic	Many students do not like Arabic.	Student interviews
Reasons for Disinterest	Students consider learning Arabic difficult and boring.	Student interviews

Tabel 2 presents the initial qualitative findings based on thematic categories, including students learning preferences, early attitudes toward Arabic, and reasons for disinterest. The table highlights that many students preferred other subjects such as science and mathematics, while Arabic was often perceived as challenging and less enjoyable.

These observations illustrate differing patterns of student engagement across classroom contexts, rather than indicating causal effects. These observations do not indicate direct causality but rather illustrate changes in student behavior and engagement patterns within the classroom context. During the first meeting, project based learning activities were implemented through mind mapping tasks. Students appeared more willing to collaborate in groups, participate in discussions, and present their work in front of the class. Observations showed increased interaction among students and greater confidence



Figure 2. The process of making mind maps by students

Figure 2 illustrates the process of students creating mind maps related to Arabic animal vocabulary. The images show students working collaboratively, organizing vocabulary into categories, and presenting their ideas, indicating active involvement in the learning process.

In the second meeting students participated in a chain message activity related to Arabic vocabulary. In this activity, students were organized into groups and asked to convey Arabic vocabulary messages sequentially to their peers. Observations indicated that students demonstrated attentive behavior and active participation during the activity. Students listened carefully to instructions, cooperated with group members, and actively attempted to recall and transmit the vocabulary messages accurately.



Figure 3. Chain messages activity with students

As shown in Figure 3, students were engaged in cooperative interaction during the chain message activity. The activity required students to focus, communicate with peers, and work collaboratively, which involved peer interaction and required students to communicate collaboratively.

During the third meeting, students worked on varied LKPD tasks involving letter recognition, vocabulary writing, and image-based activities. Students appeared focused and serious while completing the tasks.



Figure 4. Student work process for LKPD

Figure 4 shows students working on the LKPD with concentration and enthusiasm. The variety of tasks provided opportunities for students to engage actively and demonstrate their understanding of Arabic vocabulary.

In the fourth meeting, learning focused on Arabic language rules related to animal vocabulary. Students' enthusiasm and participation were observed through question and answer interactions, individual guidance, and responses to rewards.



Figure 5. Question and answer activity and giving student rewards

As illustrated in Figure 5, students demonstrated attention, willingness to ask questions, and positive emotional responses when receiving feedback and rewards. These observations suggest that recognition and interaction were associated with students continued during the activity.

Data from classroom observations, interviews, open-ended questionnaires, and supervisor teacher notes were analyzed using thematic analysis. Table 3 presents the main themes identified, including students' enthusiasm, obstacles to learning Arabic, learning method preferences, social support, and learning outcomes.

Table 3. Data Categorization

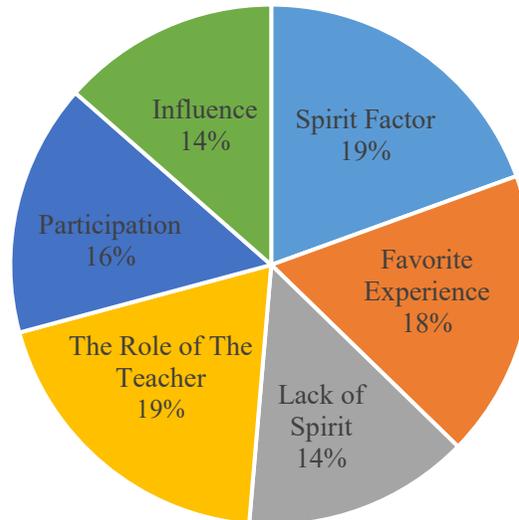
Code	Initial Theme	Emergence Indicator	Data source	Narrative Quotes/Examples
K1	Students' Enthusiasm	Students appeared enthusiastic, actively asked questions and showed positive expressions.	Observation, Supervisor Teacher's Notes	Students appear focused on learning when researchers teach using a variety of methods and media.
K2	Obstacles to the Enthusiasm for Learning	Twenty-four students stated that there were no obstacles because learning Arabic	Student Open Questionnaire Answers	Students experience obstacles in learning Arabic when they don't understand how to

	Arabic	was fun, while three other students stated that the difficult material and the classroom atmosphere being too noisy were obstacles to student learning.		learn and when they are faced with too much homework.
K3	Suggestions for Learning	Students participate in learning activities, dare to appear in front of the class or play an active role in activities, and demonstrate cooperation during activities.	Observation, Supervisor Teacher's Notes	Students show an active attitude when answering questions and group discussions in ALL
K4	learning method suggestions	Students stated that it is easier to learn when learning methods and activities are made interesting.	Student Open Questionnaire Answers	"increase the number of games in ALL"- Student A
K5	Social Support	Students stated that teachers, friends, parents, and everyone who supports them have a big influence on their enthusiasm for learning.	Student Open Questionnaire Answers	"Teachers, friends, parents all influence me to be enthusiastic about studying" - Student A
K6	Learning outcomes	New vocabulary, reading simple texts, basic writing, and Arabic conversation.	Interview, Student Open Questionnaire Answers	Students are able to memorize new vocabulary, read simple texts, write basic words, and conduct short Arabic conversations.

The analysis revealed that students' enthusiasm and participation were closely related to instructional variety, classroom atmosphere, social support from teachers and peers, and students' perceptions of the

learning experience. Open-ended questionnaire responses indicated that students preferred learning activities involving games, quizzes, singing, group collaboration, and rewards.

To clarify the findings from the open-ended questionnaire, the data were presented in a pie chart showing student enthusiasm and participation in ALL.



Graph 1. Percentage of Categories of Open Questionnaire

Based on Graph 1, enthusiasm and the teacher's role were the most frequently mentioned categories in students' responses, each accounting for 19%. Preferred learning experiences accounted for 18%, followed by participation at 16%. Categories related to lack of enthusiasm and other influencing factors each represented 14% of the responses. These results indicate that students most often referred to enthusiasm, the teacher's role, and preferred learning experiences when describing their Arabic language learning. The graph provides a visual overview of response patterns, which are further elaborated through thematic analysis presented in Table 3, including data sources, indicators, and representative quotes.

Overall, the findings indicate that students' low enthusiasm and participation were initially influenced by negative perceptions of Arabic as a difficult and uninteresting subject, as well as limited instructional variation. Observations during the study illustrate that

students displayed different patterns of enthusiasm and participation when across varied classroom activities. These findings highlight the importance of considering emotional, instructional, and social factors when examining student engagement in Arabic language learning.

The results of the study showed a gradual increase in student enthusiasm and participation over the four meetings, consistent with the dynamics of student responses to the learning variations implemented by the researcher. In the initial phase, when the researcher introduced educational games, icebreakers, and a friendly approach, students showed signs of feeling safe to engage, as evidenced by their initial willingness to follow basic instructions. This condition reflects Curran's birth phase, which is the emergence of a sense of security within the learning community.

Entering the next stage, researchers used mind mapping activities, group discussions, and singing while studying to encourage students to start taking a more active role, marking the self-assertion stage when students begin to show initial independence. Furthermore, activities such as charades and quizzes made students appear more spontaneous, daring to answer without being asked, and showing free expression in participating, which is in accordance with the free expression stage. Once their engagement stabilized, students appeared able to accept teacher and peer input during group presentations or assignments, reflecting the tolerance of criticism stage.

In the final phase, when students successfully demonstrate their abilities independently, understand vocabulary without guidance, and actively participate in Q&A sessions, this situation reflects the self-growth stage. Overall, the research results show that the increase in student enthusiasm and participation follows a natural developmental pattern as described by Curran, namely, progressing from initial security to independent language skills through varied and enjoyable learning.

Based on the results of classroom observations and questionnaires distributed to 27 students, all of these efforts had a significant positive impact. Students appeared more enthusiastic about participating in learning, more actively responding to teacher instructions, more confident in group activities, and showed increased participation in various class activities. This improvement was evident when teachers were able to create a safe, comfortable, and supportive learning environment, so that students did not feel anxious or hesitant to get involved and express their abilities. Thus, the combination of varied,

enjoyable, collaboration-based learning activities and a positive emotional environment were important elements in increasing student enthusiasm and participation in Arabic language learning in class V (*Takhasus*) MI Taufiqiyah.

Discussion

This study reveals that low enthusiasm and participation in Arabic language learning among fifth-grade students at MI Taufiqiyah are primarily rooted in students' negative initial perceptions of Arabic as a difficult and uninteresting subject. Students in grade V of the special education program at MI Taufiqiyah perceive Arabic as difficult and boring, which creates psychological barriers that limit their engagement in learning activities. These negative perceptions contribute to students' reluctance and low self-confidence, which are reflected in their minimal responses and limited willingness to participate in classroom interactions. In this study, enthusiasm is identified through students' interest, emotional expression, and observable excitement, while participation is reflected in their courage to appear, involvement in discussions, and activeness during learning activities. The findings indicate that both enthusiasm and participation were generally low during the initial learning phase, making these two aspects the central focus of the subsequent analysis. This finding is consistent with previous studies indicating that perceptions of material difficulty and the absence of engaging instructional methods negatively affect students' learning interest and classroom engagement.²⁰

The findings are further clarified through classroom observations and open-ended questionnaires administered to fifth-grade students in the special education program. The analysis identified several interconnected categories, including student responses, interest, enthusiasm, emotional expression, activeness, courage, and involvement in learning activities. The data indicate that low enthusiasm and limited participation did not occur independently but appeared as interrelated behavioral patterns, where low emotional engagement was consistently accompanied by passive classroom behavior.²¹ This pattern is consistent with previous studies showing that

²⁰ Duratul Ain Tholibon et al., "The Factors of Students' Involvement on Student-Centered Learning Method," *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education (IJERE)* 11, no. 4 (December 2022): 1637, <https://doi.org/10.11591/ijere.v11i4.22314>.

²¹ Manisha Hari Rajan, Cristan Herbert, and Patsie Polly, "Disrupted Student Engagement and Motivation: Observations from Online and Face-to-Face University

active student participation is reflected in students' courage to express opinions, respond to teachers, and engage in group work.²² From the perspective of Charles Curran's humanistic learning theory, these findings suggest that students had not yet developed a sufficient sense of security to use the target language confidently in the classroom.²³ Therefore, the behaviors observed in this study correspond to the characteristics of the initial stage of learning in Curran's humanistic approach, where emotional safety precedes active language use.

After the implementation of varied learning activities such as games, quizzes, songs, icebreakers, group work, projects, and diverse worksheets, the analysis revealed observable changes in student behavior.²⁴ Students became more active in responding to instructions, more willing to collaborate in groups, and more confident in expressing ideas during classroom activities.²⁵ This finding supports previous studies indicating that interactive learning methods encourage student participation by making learning experiences more enjoyable and

Learning Environments," *Frontiers in Education* 8 (January 2024): 1320822, <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2023.1320822>; Larissa Carniel, Tobias Espinosa, and Leonardo Heidemann, "Student Engagement: An Analysis Of Indicators, Facilitators, and Measurement Methods in Literature Reviews," *Educação Em Revista* 41 (2025): e53973, <https://doi.org/10.1590/0102-469853973t>.

²² Shofwatul Fu'adah, "Tathbîq Tiknûlûjîyâ (Istirâtîjîyah al-Kharîthah al-Dzihniyah) li Hilli Musykilah Ta'lim Mufradât al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah Lada Thullâb al-Fashl al-Sâbi' fî al-Madrasah al-Tsânawiyah 'Nurul Jadid Banyuputih - Situbondo,'" *Alibbaa': Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 1, no. 2 (August 2020): 197–209, <https://doi.org/10.19105/alb.v1i2.3572>; Tomáš Lintner, Tomáš Diviák, and Barbora Nekardová, "Interaction Dynamics in Classroom Group Work," *Social Networks* 79 (October 2024): 14–24, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socnet.2024.05.002>.

²³ Xiaowei Tu, "The Role of Classroom Culture and Psychological Safety in EFL Students' Engagement," *Frontiers in Psychology* 12 (September 2021): 760903, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.760903>.

²⁴ عيد الحكيم عبد الرحمن حسين, "Muhaffazât al-Al'âb al-Raqmiyyah (Gamification) fî Ta'limi al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah: Dirâsatu al-Abhâts al-Mansyûrah fî Tathbîqi Muhaffazâti al-Al'âb al-'Arabiyyah fî Indûnîsiyâ," *Alibbaa': Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 5, no. 1 (January 2024): 1–29, <https://doi.org/10.19105/ajpba.v5i1.10961>.

²⁵ Tarisha Putri and Sahkholid Nasution, "Gamified Digital Tools in Arabic Language Instruction: The Case of Froggy Jumps in an Indonesian Secondary Islamic School," *Alibbaa': Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 6, no. 2 (August 2025): 412–27, <https://doi.org/10.19105/ajpba.v6i2.21379>; Wira Nama Wira Bangsa, "Pengembangan Model Pembelajaran Interaktif Untuk Meningkatkan Motivasi Dalam Belajar Bahasa Arab," *Pelita: Jurnal Studi Islam Mahasiswa UII Dalwa* 1, no. 2 (May 2024): 208–15, <https://doi.org/10.38073/pelita.v1i2.1841>.

reducing learning related anxiety.²⁶ In addition, the provision of rewards and consistent teacher support contributed to increased student motivation and self-confidence.²⁷

From the perspective of Charles Curran's theory, this pattern reflects a gradual growth of learner courage when emotional support and appreciation are present in the learning environment.²⁸ The findings further indicate that instructional variation alone was insufficient without a safe and supportive classroom atmosphere.²⁹ A friendly teacher attitude, continuous encouragement, and an inclusive learning climate helped reduce students' fear of making mistakes and encouraged them to participate more actively.³⁰ Thematic analysis also shows that these practices gradually fostered a more collaborative, supportive, and positive classroom culture. This classroom culture emerged from the interaction between varied instructional methods and positive interpersonal relationships between teachers and students.³¹ Within Curran's humanistic framework, this condition corresponds to

²⁶ Yinghua Wang, "An Interactive Online Educational Environment to Reduce Anxiety, Improve Emotional Well-Being, and Critical Thinking for College Students," *Acta Psychologica* 248 (August 2024): 104347, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2024.104347>.

²⁷ Desi Pangestu et al., "Teachers' Support and Its Effect on Students' Learning Motivation," *International Journal of Language Teaching and Education* 9, no. 2 (December 2025): 153–62, <https://doi.org/10.22437/ijolte.v9i2.47354>.

²⁸ Raden Taufikurrahman and Unayyizaturrafiatul Aliyah, "Musykilâtul al-Mudarris fî Tashmîmi Tadrîs al-Lughah al-'Arabiyah fî al-Shaffî al-Tâsnî min Madrasati al-Falâh al-'Âliyah al-Islâmiyah Sumber Gayam Kadur," *Alibbaa': Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 1, no. 1 (July 2020): 46–64, <https://doi.org/10.19105/alb.v1i1.3508>.

²⁹ Vera Monteiro, Carolina Carvalho, and Natalie Nóbrega Santos, "Creating a Supportive Classroom Environment Through Effective Feedback: Effects on Students' School Identification and Behavioral Engagement," *Frontiers in Education* 6 (June 2021): 661736, <https://doi.org/10.3389/educ.2021.661736>.

³⁰ Jianzhou Ni, "Positive Teacher Feedback and Academic Emotions among Primary School Children in China: A Study within the Control-Value Theory Framework," *International Journal of Educational Research Open* 8 (June 2025): 100409, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedro.2024.100409>; Xintong Li, Christi Bergin, and Amanda A. Olsen, "Positive Teacher-Student Relationships May Lead to Better Teaching," *Learning and Instruction* 80 (August 2022): 101581, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2022.101581>.

³¹ Heping Zhang, Junjie Yang, and Zhiyuan Liu, "Effect of Teachers' Teaching Strategies on Students' Learning Engagement: Moderated Mediation Model," *Frontiers in Psychology* 15 (December 2024): 1475048, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1475048>; Zhang, Yang, and Liu, "Effect of Teachers' Teaching Strategies on Students' Learning Engagement."

the security stage, in which students feel emotionally safe and are willing to experiment with a new language without anxiety.³² Therefore, the findings suggest that student enthusiasm and participation increased not merely because of varied learning methods, but because these methods were implemented within a comfortable and emotionally secure classroom culture.³³ In this context, the classroom culture that is formed becomes a determining factor in increasing student enthusiasm and participation in learning Arabic.

The findings indicate that efforts to enhance student enthusiasm and participation among fifth-grade students in the Islamic special education program at MI Taufiqiyah were associated with the implementation of more varied learning activities, including educational games, quizzes, icebreakers, group discussions, singing-based activities, and the provision of rewards.³⁴ Observation and open-ended questionnaire data show that these activities were followed by increased student responsiveness, greater involvement in group tasks, and a higher willingness to participate during classroom interactions.³⁵

³² Nanang Kosim and Ami Gusmiati, "Implementasi Community Language Learning dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab," *Ta'lim al-'Arabiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab & Kebahasaaraban* 2, no. 2 (December 2018): 122–32, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpba.v2i2.9560>.

³³ L. J. Bradley et al., "Do Active Learning Techniques Promote Higher Academic Performance in an Online Graduate Anatomy Course?," *Anatomical Sciences Education* 18, no. 9 (September 2025): 972–84, <https://doi.org/10.1002/ase.70066>.

³⁴ Heriyanto Heriyanto, Achmad Cahyadi, and Jarot S. Suroso, "The Effectiveness of Using Quizizz in Improving Learners' Motivation and Engagement in Learning," *Sebatik* 28, no. 2 (December 2024), <https://doi.org/10.46984/sebatik.v28i2.2526>; John Michael V Sasan, Gica M. Tugbong, and Kent Lancer C. Alistre, "An Exploration Of Icebreakers And Their Impact On Student Engagement In The Classroom," *International Journal of Social Service and Research* 3, no. 11 (November 2023): 2921–30, <https://doi.org/10.46799/ijssr.v3i11.566>; Karina Cahya Sari, Rusfandi Rusfandi, and Siane Herawati, "Exploring the Use of Game-Based Ice-Breaking Activities by English Teachers during the Teaching and Learning Process," *Journal of English Language and Education* 9, no. 6 (November 2024): 28–42, <https://doi.org/10.31004/jele.v9i6.584>.

³⁵ Yenny Dwi Andari, Waris Waris, and Fauzan Adhim, "Impact of Game-Based Discovery Learning on Elementary Students' Engagement and Learning Motivation in Social Studies," *Journal La Edusci* 6, no. 2 (July 2025): 309–20, <https://doi.org/10.37899/journallaedusci.v6i2.2270>; Jingjing Sun et al., "Children's Engagement during Collaborative Learning and Direct Instruction through the Lens of

Rather than indicating a direct causal effect, these findings illustrate a consistent pattern in which enjoyable and collaborative learning activities coincided with higher levels of enthusiasm and participation. This pattern is consistent with previous studies reporting that fun, interactive, and collaborative learning experiences are closely related to increased student interest and classroom activeness.

Conclusion

This qualitative case study aimed to examine the problems of student enthusiasm and participation in Arabic language learning at MI Taufiqiyah through the lens of Charles Curran's humanistic theory. The findings demonstrate that low enthusiasm and participation are not solely the result of linguistic difficulty, but are closely associated with students' negative initial perceptions of Arabic, limited instructional variation, and unmet emotional needs within the classroom. The study advances the current understanding of Arabic language learning by providing empirical evidence that students' emotional security and classroom atmosphere play a central role in shaping participation patterns, thereby positioning Curran's concept of security as a critical analytical framework rather than an intervention model. Scientifically, this research contributes to the field by clarifying the emotional and contextual dimensions underlying Arabic learning problems at the elementary level, which have received limited attention in prior studies. Practically, the findings offer insights for educators to design learning environments that are emotionally supportive and responsive to student needs, particularly in special education contexts. Future research is encouraged to involve broader participant groups, examine external influences such as family support, or employ mixed-method approaches to deepen the understanding of enthusiasm and participation in Arabic language learning.

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