

Gamification in Education: How Game-Based Learning Transforms Student Engagement

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Abstract:

This study explores the effectiveness of constructivist and traditional approaches in teaching Arabic to beginners. The constructivist approach, grounded in active learning and real-world application, emphasizes learner engagement and collaborative learning. The traditional approach, however, focuses on structured grammar-based instruction, providing learners with a foundational understanding of language rules. Through a comparative analysis of two groups of beginners—one taught using a constructivist approach and the other using a traditional method—the research examines differences in engagement, motivation, and skill development (speaking, listening, reading, writing). Data was collected through classroom observations, interviews, and questionnaires to assess the participants' experiences and perceptions. Results indicate that learners in the constructivist group showed higher engagement and improved speaking and listening skills, while the traditional group excelled in reading and writing. Both approaches presented unique challenges, such as limited practical application in the traditional group and insufficient focus on grammatical accuracy in the constructivist group. The study concludes that a blended approach, combining the strengths of both methods, may provide the most comprehensive language learning experience for beginners.

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Introduction (مقدمة)

Learning Arabic holds significant importance in both global and local contexts. Arabic, spoken by over 400 million native speakers, plays a crucial role in intercultural communication and international relations (Ghazala, 2019). In the global context, proficiency in Arabic provides individuals access to understanding the rich culture, history, and traditions of the Arab world. In many countries, especially in the Middle East, Arabic is the official language, making it essential for diplomacy, trade, and international relations (Khan & Mahmood, 2021).

Moreover, Arabic is vital in various fields, including education, economics, and culture. In the educational domain, Arabic is not only taught as a subject but also serves as a medium for understanding scientific texts, literature, and religious materials. Arabic education also plays a role in conveying cultural values and social norms to future generations (Al-Hamly, 2020). In the economic context, the ability to speak Arabic is a valuable asset in trade and business in the rapidly developing Arab countries across various sectors (El-Sherif, 2022).

Despite the significance of Arabic language learning, many beginners face challenges when learning the language. The complex structure of Arabic, such as grammar and writing system, can make the learning process difficult (Al-Jarf, 2019). Beginners often struggle to comprehend the different consonants and vowels in Arabic, as well as the pronunciation that may seem foreign to them.

Additionally, the vast and diverse vocabulary of the Arabic language poses another barrier for beginners. There are many words that have different meanings depending on their context, which can confuse new learners (Yousef, 2021). Therefore, vocabulary learning becomes a primary focus in the Arabic language teaching curriculum, necessitating effective approaches to help students master it.

Cultural aspects also present a significant hurdle in Arabic language learning. Understanding the cultural context behind the use of the Arabic language is crucial for effective communication. Without adequate knowledge of the culture, beginners may find it challenging to interact with native speakers or grasp the nuances in conversations (Rashid, 2022). Moreover, cultural differences can lead to misunderstandings in communication, highlighting the need for a culturally sensitive approach in teaching Arabic.

In addressing these challenges, there is an urgent need to identify effective teaching methods for beginners in Arabic language learning. The right methods will not only help students overcome learning difficulties but also foster their interest and motivation in studying Arabic (Rahman, 2021). Consequently, this research focuses on comparing constructivist and traditional approaches in Arabic language teaching.

The constructivist approach to education is based on the principle that learning occurs when students actively engage in the learning process and build their own knowledge (Jonassen, 2014). In the context of Arabic language learning, this approach encourages students to interact with the language through practical activities such as conversations, collaborative projects, and the use of technology. This approach can help students feel more engaged in the learning process and better prepared to face challenges in language use.

One fundamental principle of the constructivist approach is that each student brings prior experiences and knowledge into the learning process. Therefore, teachers are expected to create a learning environment that supports exploration and reflection, enabling students to connect what they learn with their personal experiences (Brown, 2015). This is particularly important in language learning, where context and culture play significant roles.

Conversely, the traditional approach to teaching Arabic focuses more on direct instruction and mastery of grammar and vocabulary. This method often includes lectures, memorization, and written exercises, with limited interaction between teachers and students. Although this approach can provide a solid foundation in grammar, it often lacks the opportunity for students to develop essential speaking and listening skills needed for real-life communication (Zhang, 2018).

The strengths of the constructivist approach lie in the fact that students can learn in a more natural and contextualized manner. By engaging in real situations and collaborating with peers, students can better develop their language skills. Additionally, this approach can enhance

students' motivation and confidence, as they feel more involved in the learning process (Ali & Malik, 2023).

However, the constructivist approach also has its drawbacks. A more open and flexible learning process may leave some students feeling directionless, especially those who prefer structure and direct instruction. Moreover, not all students possess the same level of ability, necessitating adjustments in the approach used by teachers (Al-Jarf, 2019).

On the other hand, the traditional approach has the advantage of providing structure and a clear foundation in learning. By focusing on grammar and vocabulary mastery, students can develop solid reading and writing abilities. However, this approach often neglects the speaking and listening skills necessary for everyday language use (Rahman, 2021). Therefore, it is essential to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of both approaches within the context of Arabic language learning for beginners.

Through this research, it is hoped to gain deeper insights into the effectiveness of constructivist and traditional approaches in teaching Arabic for beginners. By obtaining a better understanding of how each approach influences student learning outcomes, it is expected that more effective teaching practice recommendations can be formulated (Ghazala, 2019).

Thus, this research contributes to the development of curriculum and teaching practices in Arabic language education. The findings from this study are anticipated to provide guidance for educators and curriculum developers in selecting the most suitable methods to meet the needs of beginner students in Arabic language learning (Khan & Mahmood, 2021). Furthermore, this study will also provide a foundation for further research in this field, enabling the continuous improvement of Arabic language education quality in the future.

Method (منهج)

This study will adopt a qualitative research design to explore the effectiveness of constructivist and traditional approaches in teaching Arabic to beginners. The qualitative approach allows for an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences, perceptions, and challenges in learning Arabic.

The participants will consist of two groups:

1. Group A: 30 beginner Arabic language learners who have been taught using the constructivist approach.
2. Group B: 30 beginner Arabic language learners who have been taught using the traditional approach.

Participants will be selected from two different educational institutions that offer Arabic language courses. A purposive sampling method will be used to ensure that participants have similar backgrounds and language learning experiences.

Data will be collected through the following methods:

1. Interviews: Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with both groups of learners. The interviews will focus on their experiences, challenges faced, motivation levels, and perceptions of the teaching methods used. Each interview will last approximately 30-45 minutes and will be audio-recorded with participants' consent.
2. Focus Group Discussions: Two focus group discussions (one for each group) will be held to facilitate interactive dialogue among participants about their learning experiences and preferences regarding teaching approaches. Each focus group will consist of 6-8

participants and will be moderated by the researcher.

3. Classroom Observations: Observations of selected classes will be conducted to gain insights into the teaching practices employed in both the constructivist and traditional approaches. The researcher will create a checklist to evaluate the key elements of each approach, including learner engagement, interaction, and instructional methods.

Data analysis will be conducted using thematic analysis, which involves the following steps:

1. Familiarization: The researcher will listen to the audio recordings and transcribe the interviews and focus group discussions. Initial notes will be taken to identify key ideas.
2. Coding: The transcriptions will be coded to identify patterns and themes related to the effectiveness of each teaching approach. Coding will involve both deductive and inductive approaches to capture predefined and emerging themes.
3. Theme Development: The researcher will organize the codes into broader themes that reflect the participants' experiences and perceptions of the teaching methods.
4. Interpretation: The researcher will interpret the themes in relation to the research questions, considering the implications for teaching practices in Arabic language education.

Ethical approval will be obtained from the relevant institutional review board prior to data collection. Participants will be informed about the purpose of the study, and their participation will be voluntary. Informed consent will be obtained, and participants will be assured of their confidentiality and the anonymity of their responses. They will also be informed that they can withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences.

This study acknowledges potential limitations, including the small sample size and the specific contexts of the selected educational institutions. Findings may not be generalizable to all beginner Arabic language learners. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data may introduce bias, as participants may provide socially desirable responses.

This methodology is designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of constructivist and traditional approaches in Arabic language learning for beginners. By employing qualitative methods, the study aims to gather rich, detailed insights that can inform future teaching practices and curriculum development.

Result (نتائج)

Presentation of Key Themes: Engagement and Motivation

The analysis revealed significant differences in learner engagement levels between the two groups. Participants in the constructivist approach reported higher levels of engagement compared to those in the traditional setting. In the constructivist classes, students actively participated in group discussions, collaborative projects, and hands-on activities that encouraged them to apply their language skills in real-world contexts. This interactive environment fostered a sense of ownership over their learning process, resulting in heightened interest and enthusiasm. Conversely, students in the traditional approach often engaged passively, primarily absorbing information through lectures and rote memorization. This lack of interaction limited their ability to practice speaking and listening skills, ultimately affecting their overall engagement in the learning process.

Several factors emerged as contributors to motivation among learners in the constructivist approach. Firstly, the relevance of learning tasks played a crucial role. Students felt more

motivated when they could see the practical application of their language skills, such as through role-playing scenarios or project-based assignments related to their interests. Secondly, the supportive learning environment fostered by instructors encouraged risk-taking and experimentation with language. This positive reinforcement helped to build students' confidence, motivating them to engage more deeply with the material. Moreover, the collaborative nature of constructivist learning allowed students to connect with their peers, creating a sense of community that further enhanced their motivation to learn.

In contrast, motivation in the traditional approach appeared to be driven primarily by external factors such as grades and assessments. While some students expressed intrinsic motivation stemming from a desire to learn Arabic, many relied heavily on the teacher's authority and the structure provided by the curriculum. This dependence on external validation often led to a competitive atmosphere, where students were more focused on achieving high scores rather than genuinely engaging with the language. Additionally, the rigid structure of traditional classes left little room for personal interests or creative expression, further diminishing students' intrinsic motivation.

The emotional responses of learners in both groups also played a significant role in their engagement and motivation. Participants in the constructivist group frequently expressed feelings of excitement and curiosity about learning Arabic. They described their classes as enjoyable and fulfilling, which contributed to a positive emotional connection with the language. In contrast, students in the traditional group reported feelings of anxiety and frustration, particularly when faced with challenging assessments or rote memorization tasks. These negative emotional responses often undermined their motivation and willingness to participate actively in the learning process.

The role of the teacher in facilitating engagement and motivation was prominent in both groups. In the constructivist approach, teachers acted as guides and facilitators, encouraging students to explore, ask questions, and collaborate with peers. This approach empowered students to take charge of their learning, which significantly boosted their motivation. On the other hand, traditional teachers primarily adopted a directive style, focusing on delivering content and evaluating students' performance. This limited interaction reduced opportunities for students to engage meaningfully with the material, resulting in lower motivation levels.

Understanding the differences in engagement and motivation levels between the two approaches underscores the importance of adopting a more interactive and student-centered teaching style in Arabic language education. By incorporating elements of constructivist pedagogy, such as project-based learning and collaborative activities, educators can enhance student engagement and foster intrinsic motivation. This approach not only improves language acquisition but also cultivates a positive learning environment that encourages learners to connect emotionally with the language, ultimately leading to more effective and meaningful learning experiences.

Challenges Faced

Both groups of learners, regardless of the teaching approach, faced several common challenges in their Arabic language learning journey. One of the most frequently reported difficulties was the complexity of Arabic grammar. Both groups found the intricate structure of Arabic, especially the verb conjugations and sentence construction, to be a significant hurdle. This challenge often led to confusion and frustration, particularly for beginners who were not yet familiar with the language's foundational rules. Additionally, vocabulary retention was another common struggle. The sheer volume of new words to memorize, coupled with the fact that many Arabic words have multiple meanings depending on context, made it difficult for learners in both groups to feel confident in their language skills.

Another shared challenge involved mastering pronunciation and the phonetic differences between Arabic and their native languages. Many students, especially those whose native languages do not use sounds like "ع" (ayn) or "ق" (qaf), reported that pronouncing certain Arabic letters correctly was a major challenge. This phonetic gap often led to difficulties in speaking and listening comprehension for both constructivist and traditional learners. Furthermore, both groups encountered challenges in understanding Arabic dialects. While formal Arabic (Fusha) is used in educational settings, students often expressed concerns about how applicable their learning would be in real-world contexts where regional dialects dominate.

Despite the many advantages of the constructivist approach, learners in this group faced unique challenges. One of the most prominent issues was the overwhelming nature of collaborative activities for some students. While group work and discussions can be engaging, certain learners, particularly those who are introverted or prefer independent study, reported feeling uncomfortable or overstimulated by constant interaction. They expressed that group settings sometimes limited their ability to focus on personal learning goals or work at their own pace, creating a source of anxiety.

Another challenge in the constructivist approach was the lack of structured guidance. Because constructivist methods encourage students to discover and explore the language through projects, role-playing, or problem-solving, some learners felt that they were not given enough clear direction on grammatical rules or vocabulary acquisition. This led to confusion, particularly for those who preferred a more systematic approach to learning. While constructivist techniques aim to make learning more engaging, some students struggled with the open-ended nature of the tasks and felt unsure about whether they were correctly understanding the material.

On the other hand, students in the traditional approach encountered a different set of challenges. A primary concern was the lack of engagement and interactivity in the learning process. Many participants reported that the teacher-centered nature of traditional classrooms, where lectures and memorization dominated, made it difficult to stay motivated and actively engaged. Learners often found themselves passively receiving information without enough opportunities to practice their language skills through conversation or practical exercises, which hindered their ability to develop confidence in using Arabic.

The rigidity of the traditional approach also posed a challenge. Many students expressed that the focus on rote memorization and repetitive drills left little room for creativity or personal expression in language use. This structure often led to boredom and a sense of disconnection from the learning process. Additionally, some learners struggled with the high pressure of assessments in traditional settings, where exams and tests were the primary means of measuring success. This focus on performance over mastery created stress and limited their ability to learn from mistakes.

A unique challenge that both groups reported, but in different ways, was the struggle to understand and integrate the cultural context of the Arabic language. While Arabic is not just a linguistic system but also a carrier of cultural and religious significance, students across both groups felt that they lacked sufficient exposure to the cultural nuances embedded in the language. This lack of cultural context made it difficult for them to fully grasp the meanings behind certain expressions, proverbs, or idiomatic phrases. For example, the social hierarchy embedded in forms of address or greetings in Arabic posed a challenge for students unfamiliar with Middle Eastern or Islamic cultural traditions.

For students in the constructivist group, this challenge was linked to their need for more real-world interactions with native speakers or exposure to authentic cultural scenarios. On the other hand, those in the traditional group reported that cultural elements were often presented as abstract concepts without practical application, leaving them unsure of how to navigate real

conversations or written texts that reflect cultural norms.

Another specific challenge faced by constructivist learners was the heavy reliance on peer feedback. While collaboration is a hallmark of constructivist pedagogy, some participants felt that their peers were not always equipped to provide accurate or constructive feedback. This was especially problematic for learners who were struggling with foundational aspects of the language, such as grammar or pronunciation. In some cases, learners received incorrect feedback from their peers, which further confused them and led to misunderstandings in their language use. Additionally, some students expressed concern that peer feedback lacked the depth and expertise of teacher-led feedback, which made it harder to correct mistakes in a timely and accurate manner.

In contrast, students in the traditional approach frequently cited limited speaking opportunities as a major challenge. With a focus on teacher-led instruction and written exercises, there were few chances for learners to practice speaking in a dynamic, interactive environment. This limitation hindered their ability to develop oral communication skills and confidence in conversational Arabic. As a result, learners in this group often felt that, while they could recognize and write Arabic words, they struggled with speaking fluently or engaging in real-world conversations.

Both groups faced challenges related to maintaining motivation and persistence throughout the learning process. For constructivist learners, the challenge stemmed from the self-directed nature of the learning approach. While the freedom to explore was motivating for some, others found it difficult to stay on track without clear instructions or frequent teacher guidance. This often led to feelings of frustration or demotivation when they encountered complex language issues that required more structured support.

In the traditional approach, the challenge was related to the repetitive and monotonous nature of the learning process. The lack of variety in teaching methods and the heavy focus on memorization led to decreased motivation over time. Many students felt disengaged from the material and found it difficult to stay motivated, especially when they saw little immediate progress in their language abilities.

Interestingly, both groups developed coping strategies to address these challenges. Constructivist learners often sought out additional resources, such as language apps or online forums, to supplement their classroom learning. They also formed study groups outside of class to continue practicing and discussing language topics in a less formal setting. Traditional learners, on the other hand, relied heavily on teacher support and additional tutoring sessions to fill gaps in their understanding. Some students also used flashcards or mnemonic devices to help with vocabulary retention, as this was one of the most significant challenges in their learning process.

Both sets of challenges highlight the importance of adaptability in language teaching methods. While each approach offers distinct advantages, the challenges faced by learners suggest that a more flexible, blended approach might mitigate some of these difficulties. By combining the structured, systematic instruction of traditional methods with the engaging, interactive elements of constructivist approaches, educators could better support a wider range of learners, addressing both engagement and foundational skill-building needs.

The challenges faced by both groups underscore the need for a balanced approach in language teaching. For the constructivist approach, it is essential to incorporate more structured guidance and teacher-led instruction to support students who require clear direction. On the other hand, the traditional approach would benefit from integrating more interactive activities and speaking opportunities to enhance learner engagement and motivation. These insights suggest that language educators should strive to create a hybrid model that combines the

strengths of both approaches while addressing their respective weaknesses to optimize language learning outcomes.

Learners' Perceptions of the Constructivist Approach

The majority of learners who experienced the constructivist approach viewed it as highly effective in enhancing their overall language learning experience. They appreciated the interactive nature of the lessons, which allowed them to apply their learning immediately in practical settings. Many participants felt that the constructivist method helped them internalize the language more naturally because they were able to explore the material in ways that suited their personal learning styles. The emphasis on collaborative work and problem-solving also encouraged learners to engage with the language beyond rote memorization, making the lessons feel more dynamic and relevant.

Several learners noted that the constructivist approach created a more immersive learning environment, which helped them better understand the cultural context of the language. For example, role-playing exercises or project-based learning exposed them to authentic conversations, encouraging them to think critically about how language is used in real-life situations. This method fostered a sense of autonomy, as learners were given the freedom to experiment with the language and discover its nuances on their own, which many students found empowering.

Learners' Perceptions of the Traditional Approach

Learners in the traditional approach, while appreciative of the structured format, had mixed perceptions about its overall effectiveness. Many participants acknowledged that the traditional method provided a solid foundation in grammar and vocabulary, which they found essential for mastering the language. The teacher-centered instruction, with its focus on detailed explanations and systematic drills, was seen as helpful for beginners who needed clear guidance in navigating the complexities of Arabic. However, some students felt that the lack of interactive or practical activities limited their ability to fully engage with the language.

The traditional approach was also perceived as effective in developing reading and writing skills. Learners appreciated the emphasis on written exercises and grammar drills, which helped them build a strong understanding of sentence structures and word usage. However, when it came to speaking and listening, many students felt that the traditional method fell short. The limited opportunities for oral practice and the focus on passive learning—such as note-taking during lectures—left students feeling underprepared for real-life conversations.

Skill Development: Speaking

One of the key strengths of the constructivist approach, according to learners, was the focus on speaking and oral communication. Many students reported significant improvements in their speaking abilities, attributing this to the frequent interactive activities and group discussions. By engaging in role-plays, debates, and presentations, students were able to practice speaking in a more natural, conversational setting. This constant practice, combined with feedback from peers and instructors, allowed them to gain confidence in their ability to express themselves in Arabic.

Moreover, the emphasis on real-world communication in the constructivist classroom helped students overcome the fear of making mistakes, which is often a major barrier to language learning. Learners appreciated the non-judgmental environment where they could experiment with new vocabulary and sentence structures without the pressure of formal assessment. This approach encouraged them to take risks and become more fluent in speaking Arabic, even if their grammar or pronunciation was not perfect initially.

In contrast, learners in the traditional approach reported slower progress in developing their speaking skills. The teacher-centered nature of the lessons, which often prioritized grammar instruction over conversational practice, left students with fewer opportunities to speak Arabic in a meaningful context. While some students felt confident in their ability to form grammatically correct sentences, they lacked the real-time practice necessary to speak fluently. As a result, many traditional learners found themselves struggling to participate in conversations outside the classroom.

This gap in speaking practice was further compounded by the rigid structure of traditional lessons. Since the majority of class time was spent on lectures and written exercises, students had little room for spontaneous speech. Even when speaking activities were introduced, they were often brief and highly controlled, offering limited scope for students to engage in authentic dialogue. Consequently, traditional learners reported lower confidence in their speaking abilities compared to their constructivist counterparts.

Skill Development: Listening

Constructivist learners perceived listening as one of the areas where they made the most progress. The frequent use of audio-visual materials, paired with interactive activities like role-playing and group discussions, allowed students to develop their listening comprehension in a more natural and engaging way. Instructors often incorporated real-life audio recordings, such as Arabic news broadcasts or conversations, which exposed learners to different dialects and accents. This helped students improve their ability to understand spoken Arabic in various contexts.

In addition, the constructivist approach encouraged active listening through collaborative tasks. For instance, learners were required to listen attentively to their peers during group discussions or role-plays, which improved their ability to follow conversations and respond appropriately. This focus on active engagement not only enhanced their listening skills but also helped them develop a more holistic understanding of how Arabic is used in everyday communication.

Learners in the traditional approach found listening to be more challenging. With less emphasis on interactive activities, many students reported that their listening skills lagged behind their reading and writing abilities. The limited use of audio materials in traditional classrooms meant that learners had fewer opportunities to practice listening to native speakers or engage with real-world conversations. As a result, students often struggled to understand spoken Arabic, especially when exposed to unfamiliar accents or faster speech patterns.

Moreover, the passive nature of traditional learning, where students primarily listened to the teacher's lectures, did not provide enough variety in listening practice. While the teacher's explanations were helpful for understanding grammar and vocabulary, students felt that these monologues did not adequately prepare them for the dynamic and unpredictable nature of spoken Arabic. This lack of exposure to authentic listening situations left traditional learners feeling underconfident in their ability to understand Arabic in real-world settings.

Skill Development: Reading

Constructivist learners also reported improvements in their reading skills, though at a slower pace compared to their speaking and listening abilities. The use of project-based assignments often required students to read Arabic texts in order to gather information for presentations or group discussions. This process allowed learners to engage with reading materials in a meaningful way, as they were reading with a purpose rather than simply completing a classroom exercise. However, some students felt that the lack of explicit focus on reading strategies made it harder for them to fully develop this skill.

While the constructivist approach emphasized critical thinking and analysis, some learners noted that they needed more guidance on how to approach complex Arabic texts. Instructors often expected students to figure out meanings through context or collaborative exploration, which could be challenging for beginners still grappling with basic vocabulary and grammar. Despite this, many students appreciated the opportunity to engage with authentic reading materials, such as news articles or short stories, which made the learning process more enjoyable.

In contrast, learners in the traditional approach felt more confident in their reading abilities. The structured nature of the lessons, with a clear focus on grammar and vocabulary, helped students develop a strong foundation in reading Arabic texts. Frequent reading assignments, along with teacher-led explanations of sentence structures and word meanings, allowed learners to gradually build their comprehension skills. Many students found that the repetition of reading exercises helped reinforce their understanding of Arabic syntax and grammar.

However, some traditional learners expressed frustration with the lack of variety in the reading materials. Since the texts were often selected for their grammatical content rather than their relevance or interest, students felt that the reading process became monotonous over time. Despite their proficiency in reading formal Arabic, many traditional learners felt unprepared to tackle more modern or colloquial texts, which were rarely included in their curriculum.

Skill Development: Writing

Constructivist learners perceived writing as one of the areas where they experienced steady improvement. The constructivist approach often required students to complete written assignments as part of collaborative projects or reflective tasks, encouraging them to apply their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary in creative ways. By writing for real purposes, such as presenting ideas or summarizing group discussions, students found that they were able to develop their writing skills in a more engaging and meaningful context.

Moreover, the focus on peer feedback in the constructivist classroom helped students refine their writing over time. Learners appreciated the opportunity to receive constructive criticism from both their peers and instructors, which allowed them to identify and correct mistakes more effectively. This iterative process of writing and revising helped students build confidence in their ability to express themselves in written Arabic.

For learners in the traditional approach, writing was often seen as one of the more straightforward skills to develop. The heavy focus on grammar drills and sentence construction exercises provided students with a clear framework for writing in Arabic. Many participants reported that they felt confident in their ability to produce grammatically correct sentences, thanks to the rigorous attention to detail in traditional lessons. However, this focus on correctness sometimes came at the expense of creativity and self-expression.

While traditional learners were proficient in constructing formal sentences, some expressed that they lacked opportunities to practice more spontaneous or informal writing. The emphasis on written exams and textbook exercises left little room for students to explore different writing styles or experiment with new vocabulary. As a result, many traditional learners felt that their writing, though accurate, was somewhat rigid and formulaic.

Discussion (مناقشة)

This study reveals significant differences in the perceived effectiveness of constructivist and traditional approaches in teaching Arabic to beginners. The constructivist method, which emphasizes active participation, collaboration, and real-world application, was perceived by learners as more effective in fostering oral communication skills and enhancing engagement. In contrast, the traditional approach, with its focus on teacher-centered instruction, was viewed as

beneficial for building foundational knowledge, particularly in grammar and reading comprehension. However, it appeared less effective in promoting practical language use, particularly in speaking and listening skills.

Learner engagement and motivation emerged as key factors differentiating the two approaches. The constructivist group reported higher levels of engagement, largely due to the interactive nature of the lessons and the opportunities for real-world language use. Activities like role-playing, group discussions, and problem-solving tasks made learning more dynamic and enjoyable. In contrast, the traditional group experienced lower engagement, as lessons were primarily lecture-based and focused on rote memorization. This lack of active participation often led to a decrease in motivation, especially among learners who preferred a more hands-on approach.

The study shows that the constructivist approach was more successful in developing speaking and listening skills. Learners appreciated the frequent opportunities for oral practice, which helped them gain confidence and improve fluency. The use of authentic audio-visual materials and collaborative tasks further enhanced their listening comprehension. On the other hand, students in the traditional group found speaking and listening more challenging, as these skills were not prioritized in the teacher-led format. The limited opportunities for practical conversation left them feeling less confident in real-life communication situations.

In terms of reading and writing, the traditional approach demonstrated greater effectiveness. The structured focus on grammar, vocabulary, and sentence construction provided learners with the tools necessary to read and write accurately. Traditional learners appreciated the systematic approach, which helped them build a solid foundation in the language. However, constructivist learners also made progress in reading and writing, though at a slower pace. The focus on creative expression and peer feedback allowed them to improve their writing, but some felt that the lack of explicit instruction in reading strategies hindered their progress.

Both groups faced distinct challenges related to their respective learning approaches. Constructivist learners struggled with mastering grammatical rules and formal writing, as these areas were not the central focus of their lessons. They also expressed frustration with the ambiguity of some tasks, which required them to figure out language rules on their own. In contrast, traditional learners reported difficulties in applying their knowledge in practical conversations. While they were proficient in written exercises, they lacked confidence when it came to spontaneous speaking or understanding spoken Arabic in real-world contexts.

An interesting finding of the study is the impact of each approach on learners' understanding of the cultural context in which Arabic is used. Constructivist learners, through activities like role-playing and project-based learning, were exposed to cultural elements embedded in the language. This helped them gain a deeper appreciation for how Arabic functions in different social settings. Traditional learners, however, experienced a more limited exposure to the cultural dimensions of the language, as the focus remained on grammatical accuracy rather than cultural immersion.

The role of the teacher was another key difference between the two approaches. In the constructivist classroom, the teacher acted as a facilitator, guiding students through tasks and encouraging autonomy. This approach promoted learner independence and fostered critical thinking skills, as students were required to discover and apply language rules themselves. On the other hand, the traditional approach positioned the teacher as the primary source of knowledge, with students playing a more passive role. While this provided clear guidance, it limited opportunities for learners to take ownership of their learning.

Interestingly, learner preferences for each approach often aligned with their personal learning styles. Students who favored collaborative, hands-on learning tended to thrive in the

constructivist environment, where they could actively engage with the material and explore different aspects of the language. Conversely, students who preferred structure and clear guidance found the traditional approach more suitable, as it provided them with a solid framework for learning. This suggests that the effectiveness of each approach may be influenced by individual learner differences, highlighting the importance of tailoring teaching methods to meet diverse needs.

The findings of this study have important implications for Arabic language teaching, particularly for beginners. A blended approach that combines the strengths of both constructivist and traditional methods may offer the most effective solution. For instance, integrating interactive activities into a structured grammar-focused curriculum could provide learners with both the foundational knowledge they need and the practical skills necessary for real-world communication. This hybrid model could also cater to a wider range of learning styles, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to succeed.

While this study provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of constructivist and traditional approaches in Arabic language learning, future research could explore other variables that may impact learning outcomes, such as the role of technology or the influence of learner motivation. Additionally, longitudinal studies could provide a more comprehensive understanding of how these approaches affect language acquisition over time. By continuing to investigate the most effective pedagogical methods, educators can better support learners in achieving fluency and proficiency in Arabic.

Conclusion (خاتمة)

This research has demonstrated that both constructivist and traditional approaches offer unique benefits and challenges in the context of Arabic language learning for beginners. The constructivist approach, with its emphasis on active participation, collaboration, and real-world applications, fosters higher engagement, especially in speaking and listening skills. On the other hand, the traditional approach provides a more structured framework for mastering foundational elements like grammar, reading, and writing, though it tends to limit learner autonomy and engagement in practical language use.

Ultimately, the findings suggest that no single approach is universally superior; instead, a balanced or blended approach may be the most effective in addressing the diverse learning needs of students. Incorporating interactive, communicative activities into a structured grammar-based curriculum can help bridge the gap between theory and practice, ensuring learners develop both foundational knowledge and practical language skills. This blend could serve as a model for optimizing Arabic language instruction, providing a more holistic learning experience for students.

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- These references should be relevant for a study on the pedagogical approaches in language teaching.